DECIPHERING GRADUATE EMPLOYABILITY: ASSESSING THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN EMPLOYABILITY, WORK-READINESS AND CAREER-READINESS IN A WORK INTEGRATED LEARNING PROGRAM

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ABSTRACT

Graduate employability has made it onto the higher education sector priority list, however its definition lacks clarity (Healy et al., 2022). Work integrated learning (WIL) has been the applied solution for embedding employability skills into higher education qualifications, with many institutions expanding their WIL program options for students (Jackson & Wilton, 2016; Jackson et al., 2024; Rowe & Zegwaard, 2017). This thesis evaluates a current WIL program within a private higher education hospitality industry-focused institution – the International College of Hotel Management (ICHM), offering a unique contribution to the graduate employability literature given its singular approach to a WIL program within the Australian HE sector. Existing research offers limited constructive evidence to guide teachers who support student transitions to the world of work (Cabellero & Walker, 2010; Casner-Lotto & Barrington, 2006; Healy 2023; Jackson & Dean, 2023; Smith et al., 2014). Existing higher education literature also does not provide clear guidance on how educators can design, implement and evaluate WIL programs (Cabellero & Walker, 2010; Kay et al., 2019; Smith et al., 2014). This lack of clarity arguably stems from the multilayered conceptions within the umbrella term of "employability". Two studies were conducted using a qualitative research approach; both studies employed the semi-structured interview method. Study 1 involved student participants (N = 12) and Study 2 involved lecturer participants (N = 8). Both studies investigated participant conceptions of work-readiness, career-readiness, and their connection to graduate employability within a private higher education WIL program. Thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006) revealed the following major themes: student self-efficacy, assessment of WIL, career management, pedagogy of career management, higher education and industry crossroads and the employability, work-readiness and career readiness transition. All themes informed the proposed adaptation of the Career EDGE model of employability, inclusive of work-readiness and career-readiness to provide additional clarity of terminology. The limited scholarly activity to clearly guide educators on how best to integrate employability and career development learning into their pedagogical approaches and development of assessment found to be a clear hurdle for academic faculty. This finding also impacting the ability of Academic Faculty to engage industry stakeholders in assessment for enhanced student outcomes. Two recommendations for future research are presented; the need for investigation into the impact of educator self-efficacy as it relates to pedagogical practice and assessment construction for employability and CDL outcomes and the need to include future action-

based research defining best practice examples of whole institution integrated graduate employability and CDL frameworks.

CERTIFICATION OF THESIS

I Kellie Lumsden declare that the Thesis entitled ***Deciphering Graduate Employability: Assessing the Relationship Between Employability, Work-Readiness and Career-Readiness in a Work Integrated Learning Program*** is not more than 100,000 words in length including quotes and exclusive of tables, figures, appendices, bibliography, references, and footnotes. The thesis contains no material that has been submitted previously, in whole or in part, for the award of any other academic degree or diploma. Except where otherwise indicated, this thesis is my own work.

Date: 10th of August 2024

Endorsed by:

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Students' and supervisors' signatures of endorsement are held at the University.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1. The changing nature of graduate employability

The fourth industrial revolution is impacting the world of work (World Economic Forum, 2024). Skills and talent shortages have given rise to the need for a "skills-first" approach which focuses more on role competencies and associated skills than on academic theoretical achievement (World Economic Forum, 2024). It is creating exponential pressure on higher education graduates to enter industry with a level of preparedness commensurate with industry's expectations. The higher education sector is under significant pressure to ensure the quality and consistency of graduate outcomes for economic and industry success. Therefore, preparing students for the evolving professional work landscape has become a central objective for higher education institutions (Bridgstock, 2016; Jackson & Bridgstock, 2021; Jackson et al., 2024;). Government policymakers and scholars have also driven this agenda, focusing on the need for an effective transition from student to graduate to employee – one who is capable of meeting the increasing demands of industry within an uncertain labour market (Alves, 2016; Campbell et al., 2019; Tomlinson, 2012). Previously, the unwritten virtual guarantee of work within the student's desired industry upon completion of a university qualification was the norm. Now graduates must adapt to a fluctuating job market which contains an unprecedented level of competition and shifting requirements (Bridgstock, 2016). Ongoing dialogue between higher education institutions, policymakers, and industry continues to evolve, with employers expressing significant dissatisfaction with the skill sets that graduates are bringing to the workplace. This research will examine how educators conceptualise and support students' development of and progression from work-readiness to career-readiness using effective assessment.

One of the ways in which higher education institutions are addressing the gap between graduate employability outcomes and industry expectation is through the use of Work Integrated Learning (WIL) programs (Jackson et al., 2024; Winchester-Seeto, 2019). The way these programs are integrated into the curriculum varies between institutions and there is limited evidence about how explicitly WIL positively impacts graduate outcomes (Smith et al., 2014). One way of evaluating the impact of WIL is by appraising industry perception of student performance within the workplace. However, the link between student performance and WIL assessments, and noted inconsistencies between academic and employer conceptions of assessment outcomes and graduate employability, make this connection more complex (Kinash et al., 2018).

Although WIL is the main strategy used to introduce co-curricular activities in higher education curriculum (Jackson & Dean, 2023), there has been increased understanding of the need to partner the employability curriculum with career development learning (CDL) (Bridgstock, 2009; Healy, 2023; Jackson & Dean 2023; Jackson et al., 2024). CDL has been described as an integral component of employability since the development of Dacre Pool and Sewell's Career EDGE Model (2007). However, there has been limited scholarly activity to develop its connection with and integration into employability and WIL-based curriculum (Healy, 2023). Since the commencement of this research, there has been a small increase in research which has demonstrated the positive impact of CDL on graduate employability outcomes (Jackson & Bridgstock, 2021; Jackson et al., 2024).

1.2. The present research

The present research evaluates a current WIL program within a private HE hospitality industry-focused institution – the International College of Hotel Management (ICHM). The College specifically employs a large number of industry-based academics across its various disciplines. Its WIL program accounts for 50% of the 3-year Bachelor in Business (Hotel Management). The effectiveness of the WIL portion of the program has come under scrutiny by the College. Specifically, there are questions about whether WIL as the sole focus of the degree program provides the necessary skills and attributes that will enable students to be graduate career-ready and able to obtain industry employment in their desired role and workplace.

1.3. Research questions

Based on the current literature, it is clear that there is gap in the understanding of employability, work-readiness and career-readiness. The terms appear to be used interchangeably and there is no clear definition or scholarly approach which incorporates each element or guides how they may or may not interact with each other. To assist the researcher to understand the impact of this, and to ascertain the perspectives of the stakeholders (lecturers and students), the following research questions were developed:

> Research Question 1 (RQ1) What are current academic faculty conception's of work-readiness and career-readiness and their connection to graduate employability within a private higher education WIL program?

Research Question 2 (RQ2) How can educators reconceptualise work-readiness and career-readiness as a foundation for an evidence-based approach to authentic assessment?

Research Question 3 (RQ3) Which authentic assessment strategies will help to evaluate a student's work-readiness and career-readiness within a WIL program to ensure the optimisation of their sustainable success within the work environment?

1.4. Methodology

The research draws upon 3 underpinning theories: Bandura's (1986) Social Cognitive Theory, Lent and Brown's (2013) Social Cognitive Career Theory, and Piaget's (1932) Constructivist Learning Theory. An interpretive research paradigm enabled the researcher to apply an inductive qualitative approach, using semi-structured interviews to gather the subjective experiences of each individual. Two participant groups were interviewed – Study 1 Students (N = 12) and Study 2 Lecturers (N = 8). Both studies investigated the participants' conceptions of work-readiness, career-readiness, and their connection to graduate employability within a private higher education WIL program. It also assessed the impact of authentic assessment strategies. Thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006) was used to extrapolate the major themes from the participant interviews.

1.5. Researchers interest

I have enjoyed multiple career changes in several industries. From a fast food retail to a multinational corporation setting, I have experienced being a regional vocational education and training manager, secondary school teacher, lecturer, academic director and head of an institute of higher education. Each role involved an assortment of challenging tasks and personal interactions. I experienced limited WIL and CDL opportunities whilst attaining my Bachelor of International Business and Master of Teaching. When I commenced working at ICHM, the impact of the 50% WIL program within the Bachelor of Business (Hospitality Management) sparked an interest to articulate the impact of the WIL program on the students' employability outcomes. When I attempted to articulate the student development journey, I found the lack of clarity and definition across employability terminology frustrating and came across a clear gap that was impacting the ICHM lecturers' ability to create curriculum and assessment that would enhance student employability outcomes. I also felt that something was missing from the WIL program, which I later discovered was a

curriculum embedded CDL framework. The research has been a way for me to educate ICHM lecturers and students and enhance their WIL, employability and CDL pedagogical approaches.

1.6. Anticipated contributions to research

Existing research offers limited constructive evidence to guide teacher support of student transition to the world of work (Cabellero & Walker, 2010; Casner-Lotto & Barrington, 2006; Healy, 2023; Jackson & Dean, 2022; Smith et al., 2014). The existing higher education literature also does not provide clear guidance on how educators can design, implement and evaluate WIL programs (Cabellero & Walker, 2010; Smith et al., 2014). This lack of clarity arguably stems from the multilayered conceptions within the umbrella term of "employability". It may also be because of the interchangeable use of these terms and the resulting confusion created by authors using "employability" to flag related concepts such as "work-readiness" (Clark, 2013), "career-readiness" (Career Readiness Partnership Council, 2012) and "CDL" (Knight & Yorke, 2004b).

The present qualitative research will address this problem in context by scrutinising the lecturer's and students' perception of assessment and its delivery within a WIL program at ICHM. The focus is on assessment for work-readiness and career-readiness development. One expected outcome of this research is clearer differentiation between employability concepts such as work-readiness and career-readiness, with the potential opportunity to provide clear and affirmative definitions of both terms as they relate to employability. Another anticipated outcome is validating assessments that develop and evaluate student competencies and dispositions associated with these concepts. The research aims to determine assessment strategies that will help to evaluate a student's work-readiness and career readiness within a WIL program to ensure optimisation of their sustainable success within the work environment.

1.7. Thesis structure

The research focuses on ascertaining the lecturer's and students' conceptions of assessment within a WIL program embedded within a higher education institute – the ICHM, based in Adelaide, Australia. The WIL program experience is also used to identify the understanding of both lecturers and students of the terms "employability", "work-readiness" and "career-readiness" as they relate to the delivery of a WIL program and its associated assessment outcomes.

The introductory chapter has provided an overview of the rationale for the chosen research. Chapter 2 presents a literature review which underpins the research involving the 2 study participant groups – lecturers and students. The research questions posed to each participant group are provided at the conclusion of the chapter, followed by a context of the present research explaining ICHM's background its bachelor degree structure and delivery.

Chapter 3 outlines the research design and methodology details. It explains the conceptual framework and the use of an interpretive research paradigm, which involved an inductive qualitative approach, using interviews to gather the subjective experiences of the two participant groups (Lucas et al., 2018; Yin, 2009). A researcher in context statement has been included, due to the direct involvement of the researcher with both the institution and the research participants. This has been provided to reduce any bias or its potential impact on the research itself. The chapter closes with ethical considerations and an overview of the data analysis.

Chapter 4 consists of the thematic analysis of interviews undertaken with Study 1 participants – students. Study 1 sought the participants' views on assessment within a WIL program and their understanding of the terms "employability", "work-readiness" and "career-readiness" within a higher education environment. The analysis involved using codes that led to sub-themes and finally themes. These are discussed through the use of quotes, supporting literature and the researcher's interpretation of participant observations during the interviews.

Chapter 5 consists of the thematic analysis of the interviews completed with Study 2 participants – lecturers. Study 2 sought the participants' views on assessment within a WIL program and their understanding of the terms "employability", "work-readiness" and "career-readiness" within a higher education environment. The analysis involved using codes that led to sub-themes and finally themes. These are discussed through the use of quotes, supporting literature and the researcher's interpretation of participant observations during the interviews.

Chapter 6 concludes the thesis with a discussion of the key findings. Theoretical implications are discussed and connected to the research via the academic research contained within all chapters of the thesis. Methodological implications and any limitations discovered will be highlighted and discussed. The chapter concludes with recommendations and suggestions for future directions for the research.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Overview

The future of work will see a change in pace surpassing anything that has been seen before. Work will also be impacted by increased global connectivity and advances in science and technology which will change the political, economic and social landscape (Oliver, 2015; World Economic Forum, 2024). Higher education institutions still operate largely within the traditional industrial paradigms from which they originated (Bridgstock, 2016). Using traditional teaching techniques, knowledge is being constructed by students, which is quickly outdated and far from learner-centred. Neary and Winn (2009) argued that institutions need to challenge these basic assumptions and instead, using authentic teaching pedagogies, guide students to produce and create knowledge based on current and future workplace situations. Traditional pedagogies such as lectures, tutorials, essays and exams are still used frequently to assess and teach. This traditional approach is in direct contrast to the skills required to achieve success within most professional contexts outside of academia. Such traditional assessment practices are inauthentic and are unlikely to lead to the development of graduates who are prepared to manage the nuances and diverse range of skills required to be successful within the workplace (Bridgstock, 2016). Students need to gain skills which will enable them to foster future learning and contextualise workplace learning far beyond graduation (Boud & Falchikov, 2006). The call for more authentic assessment is driving higher education's adaptation of teaching and learning approaches, with a renewed focus on WIL programs to deliver on industry expectations (Oliver, 2015; Smith et al., 2014; Winchester-Seeto, 2019). The current focus of WIL is on the curriculum and its connection to industry-based experiences (Jackson, 2018; Orrell, 2011; Stirling et al., 2016; Winchester-Seeto, 2019). There is limited literature that reviews effective and sustainable assessment practices that assess student employability outcomes.

2.1.1. The concept of employability

Recently, the concept of employability within the higher education sector has taken a new road. It is now centred on its embedded nature within the curriculum and its use as a tool to measure graduate success with employment outcomes. To explore the increased impact of employability on how purposefully designed curriculum and current pedagogical practice is developed, there must be an understanding of how its meaning has been interpreted over time.

Within higher education, employability appears to have taken an umbrella approach and subsumed cognate concepts such as work-readiness, career-readiness, graduate attributes and graduate outcomes in such a way that these concepts are used interchangeably rather than as salient independent concepts that impact student employability development (Oliver & Jorre de St Jorre, 2018). Although graduate employability has been researched across a broad range of disciplines, the terminology used is inconsistent and diverse, which has created a concentration of various definitions and frameworks (Römgens et al., 2019; Small et al., 2017).

The meaning of employability has shifted over time. It once referred to the dichotomy of either being employed or being unemployed. More recently, researchers have shifted the focus to the development of an individual's adaptability and career self-efficacy (Williams et al., 2016). An early definition by Hillage and Pollard (1982, p. 2) described employability as "the capability to move self-sufficiently within the labour market to realise potential through sustainable employment". This would be critiqued today as ignoring labour market and economic realities (Speight et al., 2013) and not maintaining an outlook on the changing nature of employment and the changing context of sustainable employment.

Employability theories have become increasingly complex and multidimensional, making the concept of employability increasingly hard to define (Artess et al., 2017; Rothwell et al., 2008; Speight et al., 2013; Vanhercke et al., 2014; Williams et al., 2016). There are two broad groupings within the literature that conceptualise employability differently, and a third view is making itself know on the horizon. One grouping has emerged from vocational psychological research and promotes what is known as the "dispositional approach" (Fugate & Kinicki, 2008; Vanhercke et al., 2014; Wittekind et al., 2010) to employability. Researchers in this grouping argue that employee dispositions are made up of individual traits and characteristics that influence an individual's perception of their employability. Their primary focus is on personal adaptability, career identity and social and human capital, otherwise known as "person-centred factors" (Fugate et al., 2004, p. 16).

Another distinguishing feature of the dispositional approach is its focus on the role of reciprocal determination and its influence on employability. Reciprocal determination is the idea that a person's behaviour both influences and is influenced by their personal and social environment. This has led to a highly cited definition of employability provided by Fugate et al. (2004, p. 25): "employability is a psychosocial construct that embodies individual characteristics that foster adaptive cognition, behaviour, and affect, and enhances the individual-work interface". This definition assumes that skills are not part of the construct

underpinning the concept of employability. As McIlveen (2018, p. 2) contended, "employability is not knowledge and skills per se; it is the propensity [of the individual] to understand their personal value and act toward their acquisition for deployment in a specific context". McIlveen (2018) placed emphasis on the importance of the shift in focus from skills development only to a partnership with a student's self-efficacy in achieving employment outcomes. As an extension to the Fugate et al. (2004) focus on employability as a psychosocial construct, Dollinger et al. (2024) consider how a biopsychosocial model of disability could impact approaches to employability within higher education with a focus on "Employability for Inclusion" (p.114). Dollinger et al. (2024) define the concept of employability for inclusion as:

> The shared recognition that employability and disability are temporal, contextual, influenced by positions of status and class, and relational. Employability thus sits at the nexus of an individual's being and larger sociocultural and environmental factors, which can either serve to support or diminish opportunities for participation. Employability for inclusion further calls for intentional action and shared responsibility on the part of industry, universities, and nations to recognise employability as an indicator of the inclusiveness of our societies (p. 114).

Ensuring equity in participation within higher education WIL programs and dedicated employability activities is salient given the increasing participation within higher education programs by people with disabilities (Yusof et al., 2020).

Harvey (2005) conceptualised employability as both distinct from and part of employment-led individual development. From this perspective, employability is affected by the continued development of knowledge and accumulation of experiences within the workplace. Harvey (2005, p. 13) explained that "employability is not just about getting a job; it's about developing attitudes, techniques and experiences for life". This implies that employability is not just a personal condition, where an individual seeks to gain any type of employment; rather, it is a notion that employable individuals have a higher propensity to gain employment and continue to show growth based on continued industry experiences. The terms "attitude" and "techniques" within Harvey's (2005) definition emphasise the need to develop work-related experiences and skills and shows a corresponding link to Cabellero and Walker's (2010) definition of work-readiness. From this perspective, graduate employability is not only the means for graduates to gain employment, but also refers to their ability to develop a range of generic skills or competencies that enable them to succeed in their desired industry and field of choice.

The second grouping within the employability literature takes a competency-based approach to employability. Yorke and Knight (2006) provided a definition which has been adopted by the UK's Advance HE, formerly known as the Higher Education Academy. They describe it as:

> A set of achievements – skills, understandings and personal attributes – that make individuals more likely to gain employment and be successful in their chosen occupations, which benefits themselves, the workforce, the community and the economy (Yorke & Knight, 2006, p. 8).

One aspect of Knight and Yorke's concept relates to how an individual perceives their abilities, personal attributes and skills and is able to pursue and gain employment opportunities in areas specific to their interest and expertise (Knight & Yorke, 2004a). However, competency-based grouping more generally maintains a focus on skills, knowledge, and attributes.

Employability skills and knowledge are generally categorised into 2 distinct areas: discipline-specific and generic/transferable (Clanchy & Ballard, 1995). There is a range of literature focused on the different competencies an individual is required to develop to increase their employability (Andrews & Russell, 2012; Barrie, 2006; Cavanagh et al., 2015; Jackson, 2014; Kalfa & Taksa, 2015). These various competency-based frameworks have identified a list of possible skills or attributes (Artess et al., 2017, p. 17) that a graduate needs to be perceived as having an appropriate level of employability (see Table 21). It is important to consider the applicability of these listed skills and attributes to the specific development of the student. For example, some skills may be developed quickly and with little guidance whilst others may require development over an entire 3-year degree program.

Navigating the various discussions on graduate attributes within Australia is challenging. There appears to be no consensus as to which should be included within employability skills lists within a higher education setting (Bridgstock, 2016). For example, in one debate within the literature, researchers have argued for a more nuanced approach to generic skills and/or graduate attributes (Barrie, 2006; Bridgstock, 2016; Jorre de St Jorre & Oliver, 2018; Whelan et al., 2010). Barrie (2006) critically examined generic skills and their interrelationship with disciplinary knowledge, which he argued is highly contingent, and claimed that these generic skills should not be expected to easily transfer from university to the work environment. He concluded that the gap that students are required to bridge between

their higher education institution and the workplace is significant and needs to be reduced through collaboration between the two (Barrie, 2006).

The third emerging view of employability is the "learning view" (Smith et al., 2019 p.18). This view places employability at the heart of curriculum design and pedagogical teaching and learning approaches within higher education (Campbell et al., 2019). Underpinning this view is an understanding that experts in the field of employability such as student advisors, career educators, WIL placement officers gather together with academics and learning advisors to curate an employability journey, with a qualification leading to student employability outcomes. Campbell et al. (2019) spoke to the importance of repositioning roles which are traditionally known as support roles so that they become partners in developing curriculum with embedded employability principles. Although WIL is strongly connected to the concept of employability (Jackson, 2013; Rowe & Zegwaard, 2017) and is an educational approach in its own right, in most institutional programs it is an "add on" component tacked on to the end of a degree or labelled as a capstone. Although the latter continues to have great purpose it is often not planned and is included as a final scaffolded component of a broader employability plan, embedded and mapped throughout the qualification's overall curriculum or degree learning outcomes.

The learning view allows authentic industry connection and experience to be the foundation of a learning experience. This then leads to the innate ability for a WIL program to sit at the heart of the qualification to lead the employability outcomes required by the student. The added bonus is that the higher education institute can also use it as a measurable tool.

In addition to the differing views on employability, 2 well-known models of employability continue to find their way into the research literature. The first, Bridgstock's (2009) employability model, is structured around several key components, each contributing to a holistic approach to preparing graduates for the workforce:

- discipline-specific skills
- generic skills
- self-management skills
- career building skills
- underpinning traits and dispositions
- career management.

Bridgstock (2009) noted that for graduates to be truly employable, these components must be integrated into the higher education curriculum. This requires a shift from traditional teaching methods to more experiential and student-centred approaches. WIL and authentic project-based learning, such as capstones, are essential strategies for embedding these skills within academic programs. The second graduate employability model is that developed by Dacre Pool and Sewell (2007) known as the CareerEDGE model. This model provides a holistic approach to employability, emphasising the importance of both academic and non-academic experiences such as CDL. By fostering CDL, gaining practical experiences through WIL-based programs, building discipline-specific and generic skills, and enhancing emotional intelligence, higher education institutions can better prepare graduates for successful careers.

Both models focus on the central role of reflective learning that ensures that students can continually develop and adapt and maintain their employability in a dynamic job market. Navigating the number of other views, models and definitions of employability, some common themes appear:

- individualism
- behaviour
- life experiences and engagement
- personal value
- authentic experience.

The holistic and personal nature of employability lends itself to being an overarching concept that interlaces a number of critical components to provide an overall student outcome of achieving employment in a desired situation. Based on a number of highly regarded and cited definitions of employability (Fugate et al., 2004; Harvey, 2005; York & Knight, 2006) with which my work has been aligned, an alternate definition of employability has been curated and will be adopted throughout this thesis:

> Employability is the culmination of skilful practice and knowledge, developed reflectiveness and adaptive behaviour which leads to an understanding of personal value and self-efficacy to gain employment within a chosen field.

2.1.2. Defining work-readiness

The concept of work-readiness has been subsumed beneath a wave of research on graduate attributes and graduate employability. As with the concept of employability (Artess et al., 2017; Fugate & Kinicki, 2008; Knight & Yorke, 2004b; Rothwell et al., 2008; Speight et al., 2013; Vanhercke et al., 2014; Williams et al., 2016; Wittekind et al., 2010), there is disagreement about what constitutes a work-ready student. This has resulted in stakeholders using various terms associated with work-readiness, at times interchangeably, including career-readiness, employability skills, graduate readiness, generic skills, soft skills, core skills and basic skills (Cabellero & Walker, 2010; Casner-Lotto & Barrington, 2006; Smith et al., 2014). This confusion of terms and the dominance of the concepts of employability and graduate attributes could also explain the limited use and understanding of work-readiness and its implications for the higher education curriculum (Cabellero & Walker, 2010; Stewart & Knowles, 2000).

Given the dominance of employability as a term, and current practices of using employability-related terms interchangeably, definitions of work-readiness are limited. Cabellero and Walker (2010, p. 42) defined work-readiness as "the extent to which graduates are perceived to possess the attitudes and attributes that make them prepared or ready for success in the work environment". Other work-readiness literature defines success as increased job performance, and/or career advancement and promotion opportunities (Caballero et al., 2011; Cabellero & Walker, 2010; Casner-Lotto & Barrington, 2006; Hambur & Rowe, 2002; Stewart & Knowles, 2000).

Clark (2013, p. 3) offered an alternative definition: "A work ready individual possesses the foundational skills needed to be minimally qualified for a specific occupation as determined through a job analysis or occupational profile". Clark (2013, p. 3) extended the definition by differentiating foundational skills into two categories – cognitive and non-cognitive skills such as interpersonal skills, communication and those skills otherwise known as "soft" (Clark, 2013, p. 3). This reference to cognitive and non-cognitive skills provides more useful detail than can be found in relation to the term "attitude" in Cabellero and Walker's (2010) definition. Clark's (2013) use of the terms "cognitive" and "non-cognitive skills" provides visible competencies, which can be targeted by HE teachers.

A final definition highlights the confusion and interchangeability between concepts such as work-readiness and employability. As part of their report, Smith et al. (2014, p. 6) explained that "The term employability is used throughout the report in reference to student's work-readiness". They highlighted six "employability" dimensions (Smith et al., 2014, p. 6):

1. professional practice and standards
2. integration of theory and practice
3. lifelong learning
4. collaboration
5. informed decision-making
6. commencement readiness (confidence to start a job in a discipline).

The poorly delineated, interchangeable approach used here and elsewhere in the literature highlights the need for greater clarification that enables educators to design and validly assess student effectiveness within the proposed WIL program research.

2.1.3. Career-readiness

A strategic focus in today's higher education environment is career-readiness and its integration within WIL curriculum. In the case of WIL-based career development activities, suitable opportunities are sourced within industry that can help a student continue to develop confidence and capabilities (Jackson, 2018). WIL is an avenue for students to learn about themselves within an actual or simulated working environment. Students are able to practise skills and develop personal attributes, gain a deeper understanding of themselves, and learn how to self-manage within a workplace setting (McIlveen et al., 2011). The ability of a student to discover the reach of their capabilities helps them to gauge self-efficacy levels.

Self-efficacy is a key component in definitions of career-readiness. Bandura's (1986) Social Cognitive Theory states that behaviour is the general by-product of a person's interaction with their environment and that this action will "influence the situations that, in turn affect their thoughts and subsequent behaviour" (Bandura, 1982, p. 4). However, there is limited literature on career-readiness that explores the role of self-efficacy within its definition. Jackson (2018) defined career-readiness as "capabilities and attributes required by graduates to successfully navigate a labour market characterised by rapid technological change and precarious employment practices" (p. 2). The Career Readiness Partnership Council (2012, p. 2) defined career-readiness as an ability to "effectively navigate pathways that connect education and employment to achieve a fulfilling, financially secure and successful career". Similar to Clark (2013), the Career Readiness Partnership Council (2012) also places emphasis on two distinct areas in an individual's personal development:

- Academic and technical skills. These are the core academic subjects relevant to the discipline area along with foundational skills and competencies that allow an individual to complete a task within a workplace environment.
- Employability knowledge, skills and dispositions. This is a level of self-efficacy that enables a clear understanding of strengths and weaknesses aligned with structure and planned personal growth.

Zimmerman (1995, p. 356) echoed this concept of self-efficacy in his adaption of Bandura's (1997) definition of self-efficacy: "people's beliefs about their capabilities to learn or perform actions at designated levels". The greatest connection between self-efficacy and career is noted within Social Cognitive Career Theory (Lent et al., 1994). A derivative of Bandura's (1986) Social Cognitive Theory, Social Cognitive Career Theory aims to explain how a person's academic and career interests develop, and how they then go on to make certain career choices that impact their ability to perform within that career successfully (Lent et al., 1994). Self-efficacy has been found to relate to a student's outcome expectations. Therefore, there is the potential for goal setting within WIL programs, such as the one under study, to adversely impact the development of an individual's self-efficacy (Lent et al., 1994). Similarly, self-efficacy and a student's beliefs about their employability may also be impacted by the branding and reputation of a given higher education institution (Rothwell et al., 2008). In this instance, ICHM is perceived by students to hold a competitive advantage over other institutions (QILT, 2018). One of the strengths and differentiating factors of ICHM is the proportion of WIL-based learning within its programs.

2.1.4. Career development

The concept of career development contains a number of foundational theories, models and definitions (Bandura, 1977; Holland, 1997; Parsons, 1909; Super, 1990; Wolf & Kolb 1980; Law, 1996; Yorke, 2006). A passage of literature which remains contemporary and resonates across the multiple definitions was provided by Wolf and Kolb, 1980, pp. 1–2).

> Career development involves one's whole life, not just occupation. As such, it concerns the whole person…More than that, it concerns him or her in the ever-changing contexts of his or her life. The environmental pressures and constraints, the bonds that tie him or her to significant others, responsibilities to children and aging parents, the total structure of one's circumstances are also

> factors that must be understood and reckoned with. In these terms, career development and personal development converge. Self and circumstances – evolving, changing, unfolding in mutual interaction – constitute the focus and drama of career development.

Two distinct views on employability and career development have been formed within academia and there is little research that shows the synergies pertaining to student outcomes between the two (Artess et al., 2017; Clarke, 2018; Healy et al., 2022).

Holland (1976) described career development as a "continuous lifelong process of developmental experiences that focuses on seeking, obtaining and processing information about self, occupational and educational alternatives, lifestyles and role options" (p. 21). Career guidance contains a number of frameworks and theories which notably sit in four categories:

1. Trait factor. This is one of the earliest theories, proposed by Frank Parsons in the early 20th century, and it emphasises the alignment of individual traits (abilities, interests, personality) with job factors (requirements, conditions). This theory posits that career success and satisfaction are achieved when there is a good fit between a person and their job (Parsons, 1909).

2. Psychological. This covers the intrinsic or environmental context of an individual and its influence on career development. Holland (1997) proposed that individuals and work environments can be categorized into 6 types: Realistic, Investigative, Artistic, Social, Enterprising, and Conventional (RIASEC). According to Holland, career satisfaction and success are highest when there is congruence between an individual's personality type and their work environment.

3. Decision. This is based on Bandura's 1970's work on self-efficacy. Self-efficacy, as defined by Bandura (1977), refers to an individual's belief in their capability to execute behaviours necessary to produce specific performance abilities. The concept of self-efficacy is central to Bandura's Social Cognitive Theory which encompasses human agency, which is the capacity to intentionally make things happen through one's actions. He argued that self-efficacy is essential for exercising control over one's environment and achieving desired outcomes (Bandura, 1982). Self-efficacy

beliefs influence the goals that individuals set for themselves, their commitment to those goals, and their resilience in the face of obstacles. This concept is vital in understanding how people engage with their environments and how they initiate and sustain goal-directed behaviour.

4. Developmental. Super's (1990) Life-Span Theory emphasises that career development is a lifelong process involving multiple stages (growth, exploration, establishment, maintenance, and decline). Super also introduced the concept of life roles, suggesting that career decisions are influenced by various life roles held by the individual over time, such as parent, student, retiree, worker.

The connection between career development and employability is multifaceted, involving the development of skills, attributes, and experiences that enhance an individual's capacity to secure and sustain employment. The relationship between career development and employability can be explained through the following connecting elements:

- Career development involves the continuous acquisition of skills essential for employability. These include technical or job-specific skills, as well as transferable skills such as communication, teamwork, problem-solving, and adaptability (Yorke, 2006). The dynamic nature of the labour market necessitates that individuals engage in lifelong learning to remain employable.

- Career adaptability, a concept derived from Super's (1980) Life-Span Theory, Life-Space Theory, refers to an individual's readiness and resources to cope with changing work and career conditions. Savickas and Porfeli (2012) identified 4 dimensions of career adaptability: concern, control, curiosity, and confidence. These dimensions enable individuals to navigate career transitions and challenges, thereby enhancing employability.

- Self-Efficacy and Employability posits that self-efficacy beliefs significantly influence career-related behaviours and decisions (Lent et al., 2000). Higher self-efficacy is associated with greater confidence in job search activities, resilience in the face of setbacks, and proactive career management, all of which are critical components of employability.

- Effective career development involves the cultivation of career management skills, which include goal setting, career planning, networking, and job search strategies, among others (Bridgstock, 2009). These skills empower individuals to take control of their career paths and enhance their employability by aligning their career actions with market demands.

- CDL is one approach for developing student employability "that enables students to reflect on and plan their future career through engaging in activities outside or within their degree" (Dean et al., 2022, p. 142). CDL can be used by institutions to enhance employability outcomes through purposeful strategies to "help students self-actualise, transition to the labour market, make the best use of their skills and knowledge and live happy and fulfilled lives" (Artess et al., 2017, p. 39).

- WIL programs, which integrate academic learning with practical work experience, are crucial for bridging the gap between education and employment. WIL enhances employability by providing students with real-world experience, industry insights, and professional networks (Smith et al., 2014). Research indicates that WIL participants often exhibit improved job readiness and higher employment rates post-graduation.

- The concept of lifelong learning is integral to both career development and employability. As the job market evolves due to technological advancements and economic shifts, continuous learning and professional development are essential to maintain employability (Billett, 2010). Lifelong learning fosters adaptability, ensuring that individuals remain competitive in the labour market.

Despite the clear link between career development and employability, challenges remain. One significant challenge is ensuring equitable access to career development resources and opportunities. Socioeconomic barriers, lack of access to quality education, and limited exposure to career guidance can impede an individual's ability to develop employability skills (Tomlinson, 2017).

2.1.5. Work Integrated Learning

WIL is not a new phenomenon. There is a renewed focus within higher education on WIL that is driven by the expectation that institutions produce students capable of meeting industry standards in a rapidly changing world of work. This increased expectation is leading to the integration of career learning within the WIL curriculum. The future requirements of the workplace is placing a lens on the type of employee industry is seeking for continued success. Concepts such as the "protean worker" (De Vos & Soens, 2008; Hall, 2004), rest on the idea of an individual who can adapt behaviours that enable them to develop and preserve their career identity (Fugate et al., 2004). The "networked career" or the rise in sideways, interdepartmental and portfolio work is becoming more prevalent within the newly formed work ecosystem (Direnzo et al., 2015). Arthur et al. (2005, p. 177) proposed the concept of the "boundaryless career", "where career opportunities transcend one single employer". Continually evolving workforce conditions are causing academics to look to how they can effectively develop and use the curriculum to increase graduate preparedness for this area. Given the ability for WIL to be placed within a multitude of workplace environments, correctly constructed WIL curriculum can prepare students for the multitude of careers they will likely have access to in the proposed future of work.

Orrell (2011, p. 3) defined WIL as "the intentional integration of theory and practice knowledge. A WIL program provides the means to enable this integration and may include a placement in a workplace, or a community or civic arena". At face value, this definition is forgiving of the complexity surrounding an academic's ability to integrate workplace experiences within the curriculum. The use and design of sound, authentic assessment, which incorporates the nuances of the conceptual frameworks surrounding employability and work-readiness, is difficult due to the limited literature in this area. Most WIL research has focused on quality indicators and criteria for best practice programs (Harvey et al., 2010; Orrell, 2011; Sachs et al., 2016; Smith et al., 2014; Stirling et al., 2016). The proposed criteria of a successful WIL program include:

- Shared vision of WIL within the institution.
- Clear induction for both students and industry partners.
- Provision of authentic experiences.
- Strong links between theoretical learning and program experiences.
- Structured, critically reflective learning.
- Curriculum integration.

- Collaboration between stakeholders when developing WIL programs (Orrell, 2011; Sachs et al., 2016; Sim et al., 2015; Stirling et al., 2016).

There are different perspectives in the literature about the characteristics of a successful WIL program. However, there is little empirical evidence, guidance or clarity on how to evaluate the student throughout the program as they develop the skills and attributes they need to be work-ready, as well as the dispositions, including self-efficacy and beliefs about their employability, to be career-ready (Blume et al., 2010; Jackson, 2015).

Moving forward, this research will use the contemporary definition provided by Zegwaard, Pretti et al. (2023, p. 38) from the *International Journal of Work Integrated Learning*:

> an educational approach that uses relevant work-based experiences to allow students to integrate theory with the meaningful practice of work as an intentional component of the curriculum. Defining elements of this educational approach require that students engage in authentic and meaningful work-related tasks, and involve three stakeholders: the student, the university, and the workplace/community.

2.1.6. WIL stakeholders

The success of WIL programs hinges on the collaborative efforts of its stakeholders: students, higher education institutions and their staff and industry partnerships. As employers are demanding graduates with relevant experience and evidence of work-readiness, these collaborations are pivotal to developing students' employability skills that meet the expectations of the labour market. Effective WIL programs rely on strong partnerships between each of the stakeholders to ensure that they are constructed in such a way that embeds them in the broader qualification curriculum and its overarching course learning outcomes. Billett (2011) spoke to the importance of scaffolded curriculum across a WIL program to ensure that student learning is developed before, during and after WIL activities. According to a study completed by Jackson and Collings (2018), 77% of graduates who obtained full-time employment attributed their success to WIL programs, stating that they were of pivotal importance.

Despite the many benefits that WIL provides each of its stakeholders, a number of barriers continue to prevent all stakeholders from working well together and partnering to

provide excellent WIL opportunities for students. With the importance of WIL increasing and having recently been a highlight of the Australian Universities Accord (2024), more industry organisations willing to engage in WIL will be required over the coming years. Jackson et al. (2017) noted a number of barriers to engaging industry in WIL programs:

- There are insufficient resources to engage WIL placements. This is linked to limited supervision of students whilst in the workplace.
- There is a lack of shared understanding by potential organisations of what WIL entails and what they will need to do to support the student.
- There is a lack of understanding as to how to get involved in becoming a host organisation.
- It is difficult to find a suitable student with the appropriate skill level who can be placed within a workplace at an appropriate location and time that works for both the student engaged in the WIL program and the host organisation.
- Expectations across the stakeholder group are misaligned. This creates tension and disengagement from WIL activities.

Higher education institutions need to ensure that they have mechanisms in place to educate industry, government and the community on the benefits of WIL activities and how to become actively involved. Reciprocity, efficiency and legitimacy (Fleming & Hickey, (2013) are key factors that motivate industry to engage with WIL programs; however, many studies have noted that WIL stakeholder engagement is still strongly led by existing relationships which have been nurtured over time (Dickson & Kaider, 2012; Jackson et al., 2017; Zegwaard et al., 2023).

The student is the pivotal stakeholder in WIL programs but they have limited ability to make decisions within curriculum development and often only hold a consultative role (Bovill et al., 2015). The rise of the student voice in recent years has focused on institutional governance, equity and inclusion and quality of student life (Bishop, 2018). Limited literature is available that substantiates the need for a student voice within WIL programs. Students being accountable for their learning, from pedagogical development through to delivery partnership, could reap great rewards. Cook-Sather et al. (2014) defined a partnership as “a collaborative, reciprocal process through which all participants have the opportunity to contribute equally, although not necessarily in the same ways, to curricular or pedagogical

conceptualization, decision-making, implementation, investigation, or analysis" (2014, pp. 6–7). The student as a key stakeholder and partner in education has scope for further research.

2.1.7. Assessment for learning in WIL

The one characteristic that WIL studies have in common is the importance of assessment. Everyday problems in the workplace contain elements which can be mapped to authentic assessment in a way that enables students to draw on metacognitive skills to enhance generic employability skills (Yorke, 2011). These problems are often unpredictable and multidimensional, making them multidisciplinary in nature. They require the individual to make decisions with limited and or missing information. Work problems are undefined and often require collaboration and the involvement of others (Yorke, 2011). The complexity of authentic assessment along with its connections to WIL and professional work placements, presents challenges for higher education institutions. This is because these complex problems not only require management and assessment by the educators and students but also by industry.

Unfortunately, each of these stakeholders has varying views on and beliefs about the salience of assessment and its impact on the development of student employability skills (Kinash et al., 2018). Educators may value the idea of authentic assessment but can also resist implementing these complex, time-consuming tasks that enhance student employability. When reviewing the link between employability and assessment, Kinash et al. (2018) found that employers appeared disconnected from assessment and did not see the connection to employability outcomes. Yet, industry professionals also believed that higher education institutions should take sole responsibility for graduates acquiring the appropriate skills and knowledge prior to their entry into the workforce (Kinash et al., 2018). Not only is industry's lack of knowledge regarding assessment problematic, its lack of engagement with the idea that industry should also be accountable partners in developing employable graduates makes shared roles and responsibilities associated with WIL units difficult for higher education institutions to navigate (Bridgstock, 2016).

Despite these challenges, authentic assessments developed for WIL experiences allow students to explore the world of work and develop self-efficacy in connection with prescribed learning outcomes. Yet, an educator's ability to develop assessment which allows students to develop and apply what they have learned, as well as learn about themselves through personal reflection, can be a difficult task. An understanding of CDL can assist in bridging

this gap. CDL is an educational approach that aims to develop student career-readiness through self-reflection. CDL is defined by McMahon et al. (2003) as:

> Learning about the content and process of career development or life/career management. The content of career development learning in essence represents learning about self and learning about the world of work. Process learning represents the development of the skills necessary to navigate a successful and satisfying life/career(p. 6).

CDL, and its juxtaposition of learning about the world of work incorporating learning about self may provide a foundation for educators to develop learning related to elements of both work-readiness and career-readiness. This, in turn, may provide the basis for designing authentic, valid assessments that develop and assess student readiness with a greater level of precision and purpose. Authentic WIL assessment can improve a student's career readiness by providing opportunities to develop their perceived self-efficacy as it relates to both required tasks and their career identity. WIL assessments can also be designed to focus on developing student work-readiness, including the ability to understand workplace culture and professional role expectations (Jackson, 2016).

Over time there have been many approaches to assessment in WIL and this has generated great discussion in the literature (Ajjawi et al., 2020; Bosco & Ferns, 2014; Brodie & Irving, 2007; Campbell et al., 2019; Ferns et al., 2009; Kay et al., 2021). Assessment allows the student to focus on the areas of the WIL experience that are most important to their overall employability development. Assessment of WIL takes on a different meaning and purpose for each stakeholder involved. Sound WIL assessment design must incorporate the third stakeholder, industry, not typically included in standard higher education assessment (Ajjawi et al., 2020). For the educator, the importance of using assessment to ensure that learning has occurred is of utmost importance; for industry it provides a common platform for communication between host organisation and institution to ensure that skill and knowledge development are suitable for industry needs; and for students it articulates the component of learning that allows them to develop skills and knowledge for individual growth and attain learning outcomes.

The importance of purpose within WIL assessment to ensure that it is connected to the authentic experience presented leads to a complexity not often seen in other assessment modes. A challenge to this is that assessment is student-orientated and capable of assessing

student development of qualities and dispositions (Jackson, 2010) which can then draw the student away from the identity of employee within an authentic professional placement. Curating an assessment that can connect learner-centred outcomes with industry-based role requirements can be complicated.

Ajjawi et al. (2020) noted the following principles which should be applied when constructing WIL assessments:

- Principle 1: Assessment generates learning.
- Principle 2: Assessment engages students in active portrayal of their achievements and developing professional identity.
- Principle 3: Assessment involves collaboration among the students, academics and industry partners.
- Principle 4: Assessment reflects the nature of the actual learning undertaken by individual students during WIL activities.

WIL placement is a contextualised integrative learning experience (Smith et al., 2010). When assessment is designed effectively, students are able to become reflective practitioners (Schön 2017) – a skill which can be used throughout their career development journey.

The complexity of assessment design for WIL cannot be understated as the variance in student placement experience and the learning to be acquired cannot be fully known in advance, with each stakeholder a variant. Through WIL, students can see the relevance to their theoretical study and contextualise learning outcomes, promoting engagement in their overall study (Patrick et al., 2014). This concept is congruent with constructive alignment, described by Biggs (2003) as a process whereby "students construct meaning through aligned learning activities and learning goals; alignment is something learners have to create for themselves" (p. 2). Bosco and Ferns' (2014) Authentic Assessment Framework (AAF) includes 4 criteria for authentic assessment:

1) student engagement in workplace context/audience
2) high quality cognitive engagement
3) student reflexively evaluates performance
4) industry contributes to assessment.

Bosco and Ferns (2014, p. 2) describe their AAF framework (see also Table 1) as follows:

> The AAF provides a method for gauging student learning within curricula which provides direction for developmentally appropriate, student-focused, and actively engaging assessment (learning) strategies which develop decision

making, communication and leadership skills relevant for future employment. The AAF provides the graphic evidence to challenge curricula to ensure that learning tasks have real-world experience and relevance for learning which can subsequently empower students to direct their own learning.

Table 1

Authentic Assessment Framework (Bosco & Ferns, 2014)

Highly Authentic Task in educational setting		Highly Authentic Task in virtual setting		Highly Authentic Task in a workplace
Task authentic to professional activity 1. Student actively engaged with authentic audience 2. Intellectual engagement with high quality task (Analysing, evaluating, creating) 3. Learner reflexivity evaluates performance 4. Industry contributes to assessment (e.g. establishment of marking criteria, direct marking) Example: Case study, industry expert practitioner delivery (series), simulation, virtual lab, performance, reflection (written or video), fieldwork project analysis, presentation to consumer group		Task authentic to professional activity 1. Student actively engaged in a workplace setting as per curriculum 2. High quality intellectual engagement (analysing, evaluating, creating, performance enactment) 3. Learner reflexivity evaluates performance 4. Industry contributes to assessment (e.g. establishment of marking criteria, direct marking) Example: Fieldwork, work placement, internship, cooperative experience, critical refection		
Task authentic to professional activity 1. Student actively engaged with audience in a contextual setting 2. Medium to beginning level intellectual engagement with task (comprehending, applying, analysing) 3. Critical self-reflection-on-action 4. Academic/peer may contribute to assessment Example: Presentation, sequential exercise, reflection, case study, exam (case-based approach/prac/viva), report, workshop		Task authentic to professional activity 1. Student moderately engaged with industry in workplace setting as per curriculum 2. Medium to beginning level intellectual engagement with task (comprehending, applying, analysing) 3. Critical self-reflection-on-action 4. Industry may contribute to assessment Example: Fieldwork, work placement, internship, cooperative experience		
Task texts theoretical knowledge 1. No student engagement with industry/authentic audience 2. Beginning level intellectual engagement focussed on remembering and comprehending 3. Emergent capacity for critical reflection 4. Only academic involved in assessment Example: Investigation, laboratory test, single loop exercise, essay, exam		Task authentic to professional activity 1. Student passively engaged with authentic audience in setting 2. Beginning level intellectual engagement focussed on remembering and comprehending 3. Emergent capacity for critical reflection 4. Industry does not contribute to assessment Example: Observational experience, site visit		
Educational setting		Virtual setting		Workplace setting

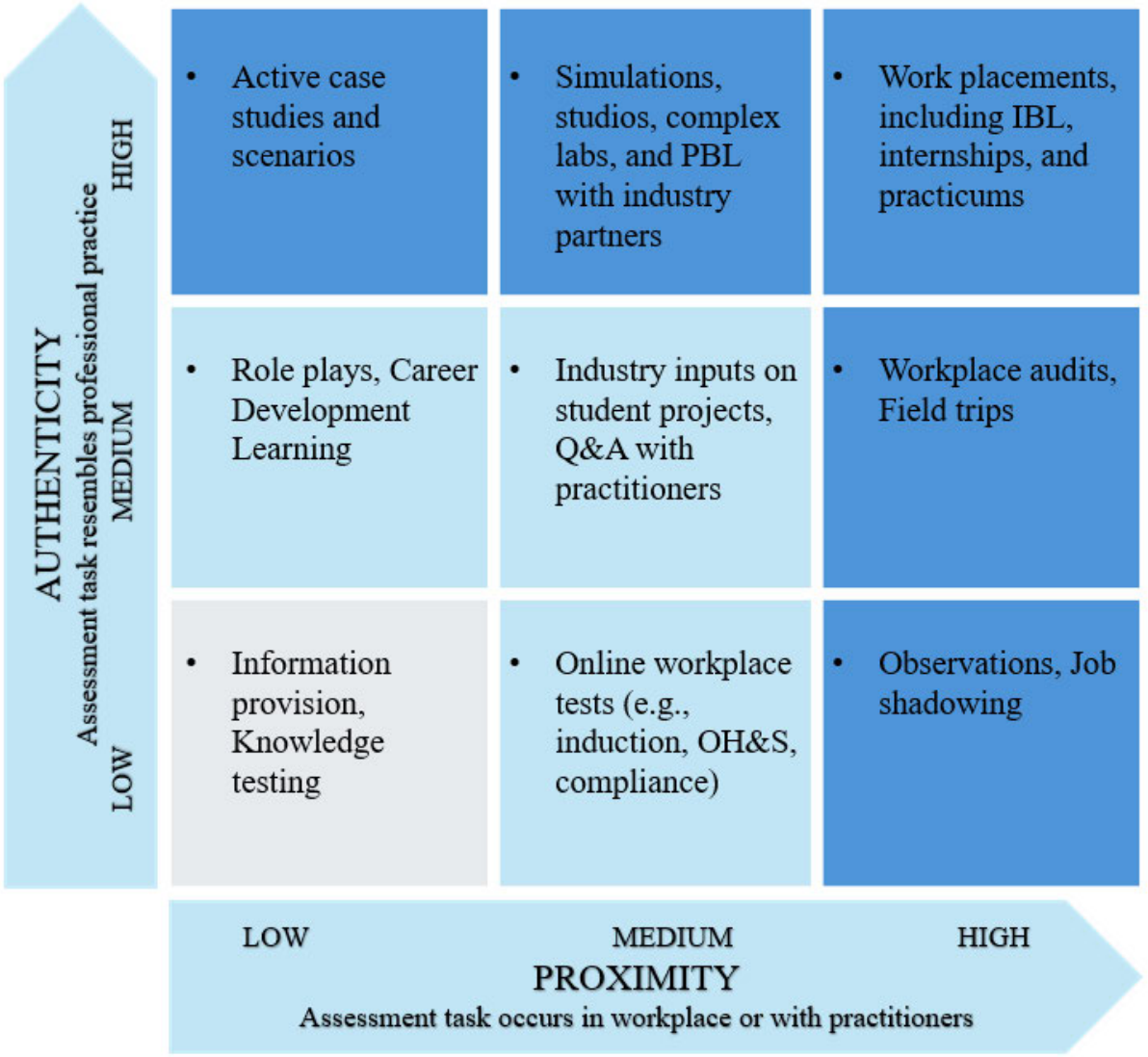
Level of Authenticity (Nil to High)

Proximity to the Workplace (Nil to High)

Building on the Bosco and Ferns' (2014) Authentic Assessment Framework (AAF) and Oliver's (2015) Levels of WIL according to Degrees of Authenticity and Proximity was Kaider et al. (2017) who expanded the authenticity-proximity framework to specifically include a medium category for both authenticity and proximity criteria as seen in Table 2.

Table 2

Expanded authenticity-proximity framework (Kaider et al. (2017)



Kaider et al. (2017) noted the importance of the framework as a tool for academic faculty to develop assessment tasks which scaffolded based on WIL experience:

1. Introductory WIL – Learning activities **without** industry involvement.
2. 2nd and 3rd year WIL – Activities **with** industry involvement.
3. WIL Placements – Activities **within** host organisations (p.159).

2.1.8. Authentic assessment

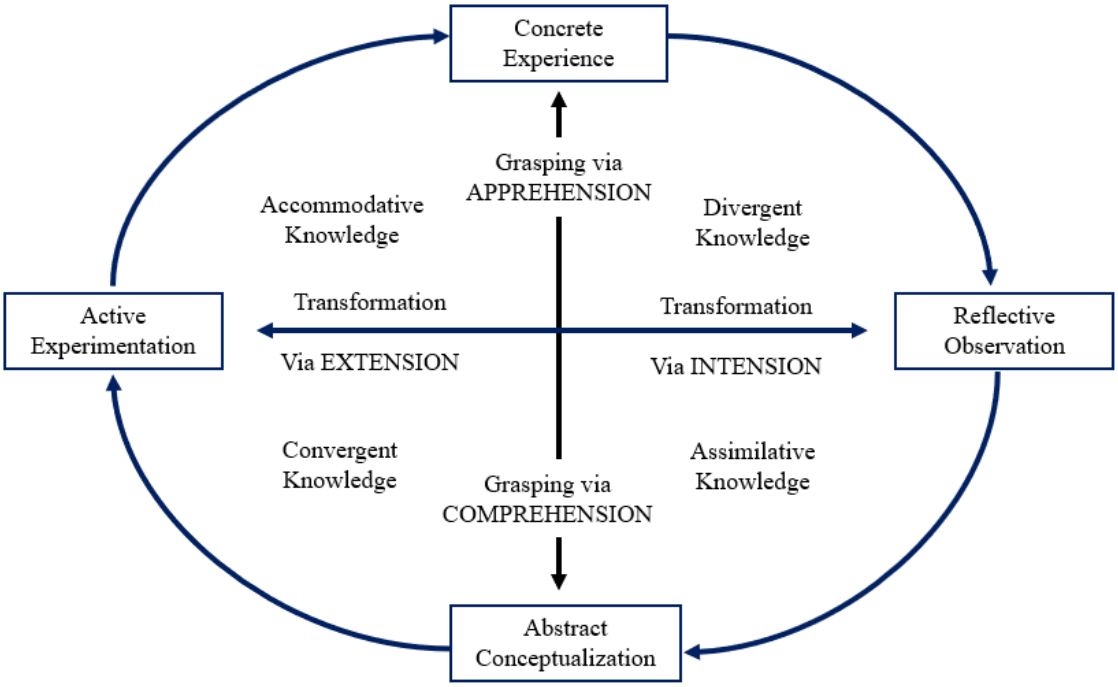
Authentic assessment represents a significant shift in higher education assessment practices from traditional assessment methods such as essays and exams. Aligning with constructivist theories of teaching and learning, it addresses the need for more meaningful and applicable evaluations of student performance. By engaging students in real-world tasks that require the application of knowledge and skills, authentic assessment enhances student engagement, learning, and employability, aligning with WIL curriculum goals.

Authentic assessment is grounded in constructivist learning theories. It emphasises the importance of learners actively constructing their knowledge through meaningful experiences (Biggs & Tang, 2011). Constructivism suggests that knowledge is not passively received but actively built by the learner, making context and relevance critical components of the learning process (Vygotsky, 1980). Authentic assessments align with these principles by engaging students in tasks that are representative of real-world scenarios, thus promoting deeper learning and understanding (Herrington & Herrington, 2006).

Key elements of authentic assessment include using multiple stages of assessment, reflective practices, critical thinking, iterative feedback and professional mirroring processes (Herrington et al., 2014). Examples of assessment types that integrate these elements are portfolios, capstone projects, case studies, simulations and WIL projects which allow students to demonstrate competencies and an authentic, real-world experience. This is a direct shift within the learning paradigm from teaching to learning which incorporates a competency-based model. This model emphasises experiential learning, which was defined by Kolb (1984, p. 41) as “the process by which knowledge is created through the transformation of experience; knowledge results from the combination of understanding and transforming experience”. Figure 1 illustrates Kolb’s (1984) experiential learning model.

Figure 1

Kolb's (1984) experiential learning model



The idea of learning by doing (Lin et al., 2017) allows for deep learning through authentic experiences encapsulating active engagement and reflective practices to develop real world experience. Authentic assessment allows students to consciously reflect on and analyse their cognitive and skill development whilst involved in WIL programs (Nyanjom et al., 2023). Research has shown that authentic assessment has a positive impact on learning, improving motivation, commitment and learning autonomy (Rennert-Ariev, 2005; Villarroel et al., 2018; Wu et al., 2015). Bosco and Ferns (2014) developed the AAF as an evidence-based method of identifying the gaps between assessment design and the impact on WIL programs.

The importance of having an entire curriculum approach when creating authentic assessment has been researched and shown to enhance staff engagement and decision-making and increase a student's overall course experience and their work-readiness skills (Ferns et al., 2009) It is important to note that how students perceive assessment authenticity is of great importance and the researcher expects this to form a strong element of this research.

The 4 dimensions of authentic assessment have been highly researched (Ashford-Rowe et al., 2014; Bosco & Ferns, 2014; Gulikerset al., 2004; Swan & Hofer, 2013;

Villarroel et al., 2018). The first states that students should be required to complete assessment tasks that reflect professional practice or are within the context of the profession in question (Bosc & Ferns, 2014). Second, authentic assessment needs to be cognitively challenging, allowing students to engage in critical thinking and apply problem-solving for decision outcomes, pushing the boundaries of their metacognitive skills (Villarroel et al., 2018). Third, students should be encouraged to reflect on and connect with the development of their self-efficacy and their sense of self, mapping their progressions from student to future professional (Field et al., 2013). Last, the fourth dimension of authentic assessment should encourage students to judge their performance through their personal quality lens (Villarroel et al., 2018). These dimensions require careful constructive alignment with assessment activities to ensure that students can have the autonomy to shape their own learning throughout each assessment task.

2.1.9. Reflective practices

The development of reflective practice in assessment can be derived from the constructivist theories of Dewey, Piaget and Schön. As defined by Dewey (1910, p. 6) reflective practice is "the active, persistent and careful consideration of any belief or supposed form of knowledge in the light of the grounds that support it". Later, Fergusson et al. (2019 p. 291) positioned reflective practice as a skill and defined it as "a critical skill and method that creates a learning situation and ensures a learning outcome which combines previous experience, specific contexts, and theory-guided practice". Harvey et al. (2020) defined reflective learning as an individual's process of considering what they already know or have learned, leading to the generation of new knowledge. Within the constructivist view, learning is knowledge that is assumed to be socially and personally moderated rather than accumulated through parts of theoretical learning.

Reflective practice, also known as metacognition, is a concept of cognitive psychology. Stewart and Landine (1995) stated that it "focuses on the active participation of the individual in his or her thinking process" (p.16). Costa and Kallick (2000) described the process thus: "Intelligent people plan for, reflect upon, and evaluate the quality of their own thinking skills and strategies. Metacognition means becoming increasingly aware of one's actions and the effect of those actions on others and on the environment" (p. 27). Research completed by Eden (2014) showed that reflective learning activities provided students with emotional attachment to their practical experiences, allowing them to develop coping mechanisms for non-academic challenges and enhancing employability skills. This ability of

students to explore norms and assumptions connected to their lived experiences enables greater development of professional knowledge (Husam & Abraham, 2019).

The literature also speaks to various descriptions of the depth of reflective learning. Grossman (2008) noted 4 levels of reflection across a depth continuum: descriptive accounts, mental processing, and transformative vs intensive reflection. Bain et al. (2002) developed the 5Rs framework of reflection, which increase in complexity and ultimately transform practice:

1. reporting
2. responding
3. relating
4. reasoning
5. reconstructing.

There is an abundance of literature that discusses how and to what level reflective learning is being undertaken (Bain et al., 2002; Hatton & Smith, 1995; Mezirow, 2006).

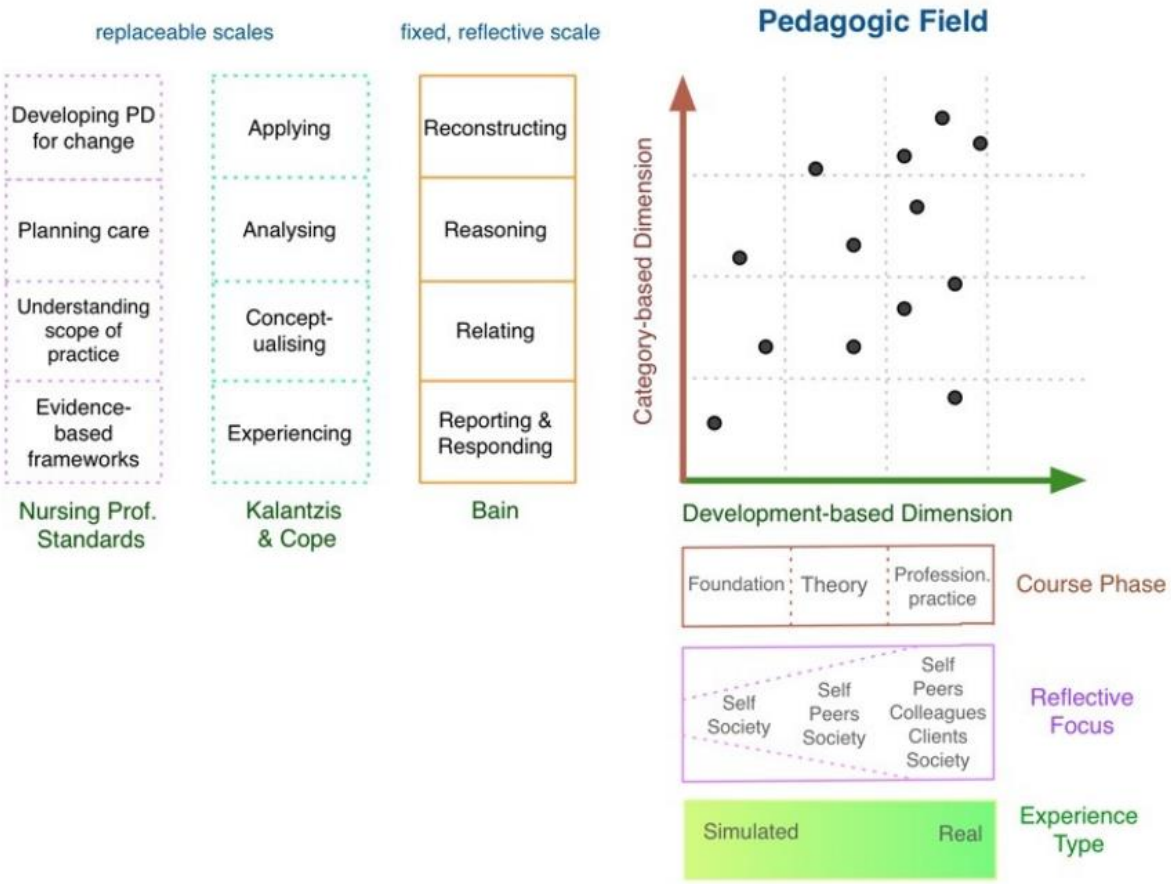
A model for reflective learning and assessment in higher education was developed by Ryan and Ryan (2012), known as the model for Teaching and Assessing Reflective Learning (TARL), shown in Figure 2. The underpinning foundation of the model is that good pedagogical design needs to account for many factors. The model described by Ryan and Ryan (2012),

> We have chosen to represent the levels of reflection as a simple scale, based on the work of Bain et al. (1999) and Carrington & Selva (2010). Just four levels are used: a combined one of Reporting & Responding; Relating; Reasoning; and Reconstructing. The 4Rs provides the vertical axis for our pedagogic field which represents levels of higher-order thinking. The two "replaceable scales" adjacent to the reflective scale on the vertical axis indicate that other learning theories and professional standards can be mapped alongside the 4Rs. The horizontal axis of the pedagogic field represent the phases of a course: foundation, theory and professional practice. The focus of reflection can change over a course. Early in a course, students can readily reflect on their own understandings as well as surrounding social influences that they experience. Later in the course, students can reflect on other actors and events in their professional domain such as professional peers and clients. In concert with this more complex range, experiences typically change from

ones that are simulated in the lecture- or tutorial-room to ones that are situated in real professional practice (such as an internship). These developmental factors are aligned with the course phase on the horizontal axis. The dots represent specific teaching episodes (or, as we refer to them, teaching patterns) that are relevant for students at a particular stage in their course and that target a specific level (and sometimes a range) of reflection. The position of dots illustrates the expectation that increasingly higher levels of reflection are targeted Developing Reflection in Higher Education six as students progress through their course. (pp. 5–6).

Figure 2

Model for Teaching and Assessing Reflective Learning



Although reflective practice might seem to be an assessment in which students should engage easily, the art of reflection must be taught and embedded within the curriculum in a scaffolded approach to allow for the continued development and enhancement of the student's reflective practice skills.

2.1.10. Research questions

This literature review has cited a variety of definitions of employability, work-readiness and career-readiness. The definitions vary widely with the terms associated with employability used interchangeably. Academics face a significant challenge to find clarity and conciseness to guide and advance their teaching and learning practice to support students engaging in WIL programs. The ability to support this learning through effectively constructed and authentic assessment is made more difficult when the terminology associated with WIL, employability and career development are not clearly delineated. To help discover of how the lack of clarity around employability impacts both lecturers and students working and studying within a successful WIL program, three research questions were developed:

RQ1 What are current academic faculty conceptions of work-readiness, career-readiness and their connection to graduate employability within a private higher education WIL program?

RQ2 How can educators reconceptualise work-readiness and career-readiness as a foundation for an evidence-based approach to authentic assessment?

RQ3 Which authentic assessment strategies will help to evaluate a student's work-readiness and career-readiness within a WIL program to ensure the optimisation of their sustainable success within the work environment?

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

3.1. Introduction

This chapter outlines the research design and methodology for this thesis. A rationale is presented, summarising the choice of the selected methods of data collection and analysis used to satisfy the research objectives. An exploratory qualitative research approach was used and will be the main point of discussion in this chapter, along with a rationale for how a singular institution case has been integrated. A description of the initial ethical considerations, data collection techniques, semi-structured interview process and use of thematic analysis are included to provide a holistic account of this project's methodological design and key considerations.

3.1.1. Conceptual framework

The research draws upon three underpinning theories. The first is Bandura's (1986) Social Cognitive Theory. There is a strong link between the WIL process and Social Cognitive Theory because the latter considers the social environment in which behaviours are expected of learners, whilst using the learners past experiences to ensure that they are able to acquire and maintain necessary behaviours (Alexander & Winne, 2006). Six constructs were developed within the Social Cognitive Theory, four of which have a salient connection to the current research:

1. reciprocal determination
2. observational learning
3. reinforcement
4. self-efficacy (Alexander & Winne, 2006)

Social Cognitive Theory and its six constructs are important to the context of this research because the authenticity of a WIL program is the foundation of a student's competency development and consolidation, and the self-assessment of their perceived self-efficacy and the development through the use of authentic assessment practices. The second theory, Social Cognitive Career Theory (Lent & Brown, 2013), is an extension of Bandura's (1986) Social Cognitive Theory. Social Cognitive Career Theory is designed primarily "to address a focused but important set of content questions, such as predicting the types of educational and vocational activity domains toward which people will gravitate and in which they will find satisfaction and relative success" (Lent & Brown, 2013, p. 557). Given the thesis' focus on an independent HE institution within a specific industry, the importance of an adequate

structure of learning experiences to deliver on the individual's satisfaction and determination of success will be critical. As experienced by the researcher as part of her involvement in recruitment and orientation components of ICHM's programs, when joining a hotel school, the student has superficially made a career choice, given the institution's singular discipline approach. Under the current model, this choice is predicated on the underlying assumption that the student has made the correct career determination. Therefore, the remainder of CDL would focus, logically, on developing student self-efficacy through managing outcome expectations. The research has examined how educators might construct assessment as part of a WIL program revision to enhance the probability of an increase in student/graduate self-efficacy, as distinct from capability development and consolidation. Underpinning the research with both Social Cognitive Theory and Social Cognitive Career Theory allows for the exploration of the connection between WIL program experience, CDL and employability outcomes for the student.

The third component of the theoretical framework for this research is Constructivist Learning Theory (Piaget, 1932; Vygotsky, 1980), which concludes that humans construct knowledge from their prior experiences. Bassot (2012, p. 80) related the theory directly to the concept of career development in three ways: "knowledge is constructed through activity and interactions with a variety of people"; "people develop within society and are immersed in and inseparable from their culture"; and "the individual and society are viewed as inseparable". A WIL program fosters Bassot's (2012) concept of inseparability between knowledge creation and the work environment. In addition, this theoretical construct can facilitate the interrogation of received ideas or conceptions, experiences, and teaching methods that academics draw upon within the initial stages of conceptualisation, curriculum development, implementation and assessment of a WIL program aiming for an outcome of career-readiness (Biggs, 1999; Prosser et al., 2003). The researcher does not intend for Constructivist Learning Theory to be explicitly linked to the first and second component of the conceptual framework where the focus is on the development of self-efficacy of the student within a WIL program but as a guide to the importance of the assessment which shapes the reflective practice of the student allowing for greater understanding of their growth and development throughout the WIL journey. This research explores how these conceptions of assessment influence the assessment outcomes within a WIL program. An interpretivist (Willis et al., 2007) lens was applied in this research because the aim was to understand an individual's experiences and progression within a WIL program alongside the educators' conception of each of the relevant terms used during the students' progression. As

someone who is embedded in the organisation under research, this method was particularly salient, because the researcher's own gaze may have contributed to the shape of the research findings.

3.1.2. Research paradigm

Utilisation of an interpretive research paradigm enabled the researcher to apply an inductive qualitative approach, conducting interviews to gather the subjective experiences of the various individuals (Lucas et al., 2018; Yin, 2009). The semi-structured interview method allowed for an in-depth, individualised review of a bounded system. In this case, the bounded system is a current WIL program to which the researcher has open and direct access, including access to the curriculum development process and its participants. This choice of methodology also aligns with the theoretical framework which requires investigation, observation and interpretation of an individual's experiences and personal development within a collaborative environment. As students' experiences logically vary within WIL programs, the need to focus on each individual's development is of particular importance. Thus, the complexity and uniqueness of a student's experience within a WIL program is represented without placing it within a vacuum and restricting its application (Freebody, 2011). This individualised focus is also well suited to qualitative research approaches.

3.1.3. Context of the present research

The researcher chose to focus this research on the ICHM, which is higher education institution that focuses primarily on students completing a Bachelor of Business (Hospitality Management), and its lecturers who deliver the degree. The ICHM Bachelor of Business (Hospitality Management) students (approximately 150 per year) undertake 18 months of their three year degree as organised WIL. This encompasses three placement periods of a minimum of 1,500 hours total across the degree. WIL occurs in the first, second and third years of the degree. This equates to students being required to complete 50% of their degree within an authentic industry placement. A unique element of the WIL placement is that all students enter a paid role with their host organisation and obtain a contract of employment for the total 6-month period of each individual WIL study period. The course progression is outlined in Table 2.

Table 3

ICHM course structure and progression

ICHM Course Structure				
Bachelor of Business (Hospitality Management)				
Year 1	Semester 1 – 21 Weeks 8 Subjects in total 8 subjects across 21 weeks	➡	Semester 2 – 21 Weeks 1 Subject in total (500hrs) WIL Placement	Diploma 1 Year
Year 2	Semester 3 – 21 Weeks 8 Subjects in total 8 subjects across 21 weeks	➡	Semester 4 – 21 Weeks 1 Subject in total (500hrs) WIL Placement	Associate Degree 2 Years
Year 3	Semester 5 – 21 Weeks 8 Subjects in total 8 subjects across 21 weeks	➡	Semester 6 – 21 Weeks 1 Subject in total (500hrs) WIL Placement	Bachelor 3 Years

The researcher chose a single subject approach due to the institution's non-standard approach to delivering a WIL program. This unique approach means that a straightforward cross-sectoral comparative study was not feasible; the detailed analysis of ICHM's WIL program instead foregrounds non-standard approaches to WIL and contributes to the continued research of WIL outside of the standard university sector.

3.1.4. Researcher in context

Due to the qualitative nature of the research, I thought it valuable to provide a history of how I came to this point within my career journey. The research requires an analysis of the qualitative data which draws on self-reflection, past experiences and knowledge. The ability to create trust between myself and the end reader due to the potential bias which can be brought to a qualitative study (Creswell & Creswell, 2017) allows for an understanding of analysis from potential influences.

I completed an initial degree in International Business at Flinders University in Adelaide. Whilst studying, I commenced an entry level role with McDonald's Australia. A corporate career was the goal, post-graduation; however, I found themself in a wave of continuous promotions throughout my studies which continued when I finished my first degree. Although the roles could have been obtained without a higher education degree, I found that my study provided transferable skills which expedited me through the ranks, culminating in a multinational human resource management career. I did not have a WIL program embedded within my higher education degree; however, I valued the experience that my personal work placement had afforded.

I progressed through my career, got married and had two children. After the change in my personal situation, coupled with disengagement with my current career trajectory at the time and with an unexplored interest in education, I embarked on a Master of Teaching (Secondary) at Monash University. Three placement experiences were embedded in the program. There was no choice in the location of these experiences, they placed a strain on personal circumstances and they encompassed no oversight from the university in terms of student growth and progression. This lack of institutional mentorship left me disengaged with the profession of teaching but with a love of educational theory and pedagogical practices.

As a registered teacher with a Master's degree and an extensive corporate career in leadership roles, I left my job and joined an institute of higher education in the role of lecturer. I found my passion as a lecturer, teaching leadership, management and human resources at both Bachelor and Master degree levels. To progress my career, I embarked on a professional doctorate in education. Within six months of commencing, I had moved into an Academic Director role within ICHM due to my commercial acumen. I built a strong connection to ICHM because its curriculum contains high levels of WIL which involves continuous mentorship and guidance during the placement period. This was the basis for choosing the ICHM WIL program as the focus of my thesis.

I would like to note the impact of COVID-19 on my research progression and career. Australia endured a plethora of government restrictions from 2020 to 2022 which impacted my ability to engage in my research in the way I had envisaged. Although my career continued to move forward with the attainment of the Academic Head role at ICHM, the requirement to lead my institution through a period of time not experienced by myself or other leaders took a toll on my ability to engage in the research as I had intended. The pandemic solidified my passion for delivering qualifications within my institution that develop transferable skills in authentic workplaces to allow for student career choice and personal self-efficacy development.

3.1.5. Institution in context

The ICHM was established in 1992 by the Lipman Family in collaboration with the State Government of South Australia and the Swiss Hotel Association (SHA). It is the only hotel school within Australia to be associated with the Swiss Hotel Association, through an audited accreditation process. The Swiss hospitality education model equips students with foundational bottom-up knowledge transitioning to department management and hotel

leadership knowledge required to manage a business effectively. As described by the Swiss Hotel Association (2024):

> Students learn the details of every department and every role, so they know exactly what every one of their employees is supposed to do. This comprehensive method of teaching is what has earned Swiss hotel management schools their elite reputation in the world of international business education.

A key component of a hotel school education is a WIL placement model where a minimum of 50% of the curriculum is delivered within industry. ICHM, initially a Registered Training Organisation, commenced delivering a two year Diploma of Hospitality Management – one year on campus and one year in a WIL industry placement. Hotels schools are highly regarded within the tourism and hospitality sector which has come to rely on skilled students to fill industry job shortages.

In 2012, the ICHM completed a teach-out of its vocational qualifications and was registered as an Institute of Higher Education under the Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency (TEQSA) system. Currently it is registered with no conditions and delivers the following qualifications:

- Bachelor of Business (Hospitality Management)
- Associate Degree of Business (Hospitality Management)
- Diploma of Business (Hospitality Management)
- Master of International Hotel Management
- Graduate Certificate in Hospitality and Hotel Management
- Undergraduate Certificate of Hotel, Tourism and Hospitality Operations
- Graduate Certificate in International Hotel Management
- Graduate Diploma in International Hotel Management

Of its eight qualifications, the Bachelor of Business (Hospitality Management) is its flagship course, built to align directly with the Swiss Hotel School's delivery model. Fifty percent of its qualification is delivered within a paid WIL placement in a hotel environment. The student undertakes 6 months of placement for each year of the three year Bachelor degree.

Due to the strength of the 30-plus year relationship with the hospitality industry, the ICHM places 100% of students with a host organisation where the student becomes a full employee paid in accordance with the relevant Australian award or international remuneration scheme. The student must remain employed with the host organisation for the full 21- to 22-week placement period.

Due to the employment requirement of the ICHM's WIL program, the student commences preparation for their three placement periods from the first day of study. In year one, semester one, the WIL program is also partnered with the subject BBHM109 Employability for Future Hoteliers (subject outline provided in Appendix F). Pre-placement activities at the ICHM are designed to prepare students for their industry placements. These activities include sessions focused on employability skills, professional development, and practical experience. The ICHM has developed a detailed week-by-week overview of the pre-placement activities completed by students over the semester. This structured approach ensures that students are prepared for their placements, and equipped with the necessary skills, experience, and confidence to succeed. The specific activities undertaken by students are outlined in Appendix D.

The ICHM is a teaching intensive institution with the majority of its lecturers coming from industry-based roles in hospitality, tourism and retail. With an average of 29 academic employees to facilitate a rolling cohort of 300 students pre-COVID times and 180 post-COVID outbreak. It has a highly international student cohort demographic – 85% international students and 15% domestic students.

3.1.6. Ethical considerations

Ethics approval was granted by The University of Southern Queensland's Ethics Committee - H20REA096F1. Post-ethics approval, the researcher commenced participant recruitment using a research Participant Consent Form and Participant Information Sheet. The researcher ensured that each participant was put at ease and able to decline the interview at any point during the interview process. Participants were assured that privacy and confidentiality would be maintained through the de-identification of participant information during the data analysis component of the research.

3.1.7. Data collection

This research sought to determine individuals' perceptions and experiences of WIL; this focus demands a qualitative approach. To collect valid data that captures the diversity of

individuals' thoughts and experiences, a limiting instrument such as a survey is inadequate. For this reason, this qualitative research relied primarily on interviews as its primary method and dataset. The qualitative component of this research involved data collected via semi-structured interviews, across two data groups: students (*n = 12*) and lecturers (*n = 8*). Interviews are a common and widely used format used for nuanced individual data collection (Winchester-Seeto & Rowe, 2019). An interview enables both the interviewee and interviewer to exchange thoughts and their interpretations of the subject matter and its interconnectedness with the world around them (Cohen et al., 2002). Although the use of interviews for data collection is a powerful tool with which the researcher can obtain complex and deep sources of information (Cohen et al., 2002) this method of data collection also has a number of limiting features which were addressed in this project's research design. Potter and Hepburn (2012) noted eight challenges for researchers:

- The researcher must make the interview set-up explicit and transparent within the research.
- The researcher must be able to display the active role they took as the interviewer.
- They must represent talk in a way that captures action through the correct use of transcription conventions.
- A researcher must avoid the tendency to "pervasively under analyse their materials" (p. 560).
- There is the potential for a researcher to "flood" (p. 562) the research with their own agenda and assumptions.
- The researcher must understand that interviewees can answer questions from either a personal or institutional capacity and understand the "footing" (p. 563) in which an interviewee poses their answer.
- The researcher must manage their stake in the research project vs the interviewees' interest.
- The researcher must be able to interpret the cognitive language used by the interviewees.

These potential problems within the interview data collection approach were particularly salient to the researcher in the role of Academic Director at the focus institution, the ICHM, at the time of the data collection. Although it enabled a narrative to be built around the findings, allowing for greater insight into the impact of assessment on each interviewee, the

researcher was also extremely cognisant of the impact that her role as an academic leader within ICHM and as the line manager for eight interviewees could have on the interpretation of the research results. Establishing rapport between a researcher and participants is integral and the process should be implemented pre-, during and post-interview to best accommodate this (Glesne, 2011). To encourage this to occur, a number of steps were taken to ensure that each participant engaged freely and without fear of repercussions.

The researcher engaged another ICHM staff member to undertake the recruitment process, to ensure that those who chose to undertake the survey did not feel unduly under duress to do so based on the power imbalance between the researcher and the study participants. The researcher ensured that each participant was clear that their involvement would be pertinent to the continued improvement of the ICHM WIL program for future students. This was achieved using the following interview protocol:

1. An email request for expressions of interest was sent to both students and lecturers.
2. Upon expressions of interest, a participant information sheet with a corresponding consent form was provided. The participant information sheet explained the nature of the research, participation requirements, risks, privacy and confidentiality, expected benefits and complaint mechanisms.
3. Each participant post-consent was provided with a list of proposed questions to be discussed during the semi-structured interview session. Due to the power imbalance between the researcher and interviewee, the provision of questions pre-interview was an additional step to put the interviewee at ease.
4. Prior to the formal commencement of the interview, the researcher allocated an additional 10 minutes to converse with the interviewee and ensure that they were at ease prior.

WIL research has drawn on semi-structured interviews as a sound method for data collection (Ajjawi et al., 2020; Maria et al., 2019). Semi-structured interview questions allow the researcher to elicit understanding of a pre-set group of themes through the use of open-ended questions (Glesne, 2011; Merriam, 2009). This ensures that the data collected within this research can be compared to other interview-based WIL research, allowing for the research findings to align with existing knowledge types.

3.2. Study group overview

The objective of this research study was to explore students' and lecturers' conceptions of assessment within a WIL program at a higher education institute and the correlation to employability. To gather rich data, the following research questions were used in the semi-structured interviews and also form the basis of the forthcoming analysis:

RQ1 What are current academic faculty conceptions of work-readiness, career-readiness and their connection to graduate employability within a private higher education WIL program?

RQ2 How can educators reconceptualise work-readiness and career-readiness as a foundation for an evidence-based approach to authentic assessment?

RQ3 Which authentic assessment strategies will help to evaluate a student's work-readiness and career-readiness within a WIL program to ensure the optimisation of their sustainable success within the work environment?

From these questions a set of lecturer participant questions and student participant questions were established, as provided in Table 4.

Table 4

Study 1 Student and Study 2 Lecturer semi-structured interview questions

Study 1 Student	Study 2 Lecturer
1. What is your understanding of employability?	1. What is your understanding of employability?
2. What is your understanding of student work-readiness and what would it mean for you as a student to be work-ready?	2. What is your understanding of student work-readiness and what does it mean for a student to be work-ready?
3. What is your understanding of career-readiness as it relates you as a student completing a higher education degree?	3. What is your understanding of career-readiness as it relates to students in higher education?
4. Thinking about the three concepts of employability, work-readiness and career-readiness, how has the WIL assessment you have completed connected with these concepts?	4. Thinking about the three concepts of employability, work-readiness and career-readiness, how would you describe their relationship to each other?
5. What is your understanding of the function of assessment within a WIL program? How do you think assessment impacts your WIL experience and learning outcomes?	5. What is your understanding of the function of assessment within a WIL program? To what extent do you think your career journey shaped your conceptions of that?
6. In your view how does industry assessment impact on your development as a student progressing within a WIL program?	6. In your view what impact does industry assessment have on the student progression within a WIL program and how do you evaluate that progression?
	7. How do you believe the concepts of work-readiness and career-readiness should underpin assessment construction? 8.

A review of each study group is provided in sections 3.2.1 and 3.2.2. The analysis of data and findings for Study 1 will be presented in Chapter 4 and for Study 2 in Chapter 5. The findings of both will then be compared and discussed in Chapter 6.

3.2.1. Study 1 students

The 12 student participants in Study 1 had each undertaken no less than one six month industry placement equating to a minimum of 500 hours within a hospitality environment. Each student had also completed 6 to 12 months of academic study, which included the following core first and second study period subjects, ranging from business to hospitality-specific industry training (International College of Hotel Management, n.d.), listed in Table 5.

Table 5

Core first and second study period subjects within the Bachelor of Business (Hospitality Management) (International College of Hotel Management, n.d.)

Study Period 1 subject outlines
CORE
The Contemporary Hospitality and Tourism Industry This subject will enable the student to develop an appropriate understanding of the range and scale of the management of operations in hospitality and tourism. The students will be provided with an overview of the industries including their functions, services, and locations that make up the key characteristics of the international contemporary hospitality and tourism industry.
Food and Beverage Service Standards This subject will enable the student to demonstrate an understanding of the knowledge and skills required in the delivery of food and beverage service standards. The students will examine the operational characteristics of food and beverage service then analyse both the food and beverage product and service in relation to the setting and maintenance of appropriate product and service standards.
Delivering Guest Services Practicum This subject will enable the student to demonstrate the range of professional skills and knowledge required to provide and coordinate complex services to customers in a professional and operational industry setting. This integrates a range of well-developed operational, professional and organisational skills required by staff to provide a range of products and services to multiple, diverse guests in a variety of settings.
Rooms Division Service Standards This subject will enable the student to demonstrate professional knowledge and skills in Rooms Division, particularly in the Housekeeping and Concierge departments. Student will examine some of the common Housekeeping and Concierge operational characteristics as well as the products and services required to ensure standard delivery and guests' safety and security.
Hospitality Business Software Applications This subject will enable the student to understand the nature and implications of the role of information technology in hospitality business activities. The learner will be introduced to a range of software tools and techniques that can be applied to the better management of the hospitality business activity.
Employability Skills for Future Hoteliers This subject will enable students to gain an understanding of contemporary communication skills necessary for the hospitality business environment. Students will develop personal, social and professional skills, knowledge and techniques which can be utilised and applied within a range of hospitality and tourism business contexts.

Study Period 1 subject outlines
CORE
Essential Academic Skills for Success This subject will enable students to develop the skills and knowledge required to develop a sound academic preparedness for undertaking tertiary education. Students are introduced to a range of concepts and strategies that will provide them with the capacity to succeed in higher education.
Culinary Skills This subject will enable the student to demonstrate a basic understanding of theoretical culinary knowledge and practical cooking skills, follow workplace hygiene procedures, and explain the fundamentals of cuisine and kitchen operations as used in international hotels. The subject will also provide the opportunity for the student to develop an appreciation of the food to be experienced in international hotels.

Study Period 2 subject outlines
CORE
Marketing and Sales for Hospitality Businesses This subject will enable the student to develop an analytical approach to the formulation and implementation of sales and marketing for a hospitality business. It will enable students to develop knowledge and understanding of the theories and concepts of sales and marketing and their practical application to functional areas in industry.
Supervising International Hotel Front Office Operations Front office and its departments are pivotal and highly visible in setting the scene for the very first guest service experience and continue to be central in the delivery of the overall hotel experience for a guest. This subject will enable the student to demonstrate the knowledge and competencies required in the delivery, operation and supervision of Front Office service standards in relation to delivering to guest expectations including reservations, front office/reception and executive club/lounge. Students will examine the operational characteristics of these service points. In doing so, they will analyse both the product and service in relation to the setting and maintenance of appropriate product and service standards and develop an appreciation of their associated costs.
Human Resource Management This subject will enable the student to develop an understanding of the knowledge and skills required by human resource managers in the hospitality industry. The learner will be introduced to the key principles involved in the recruitment and selection of human resources and how those resources should be developed for the benefit of the individual and the effectiveness and efficiency of the organisation.
Property, Safety and Security Management This subject will enable the student to develop an understanding of the role and importance in the successful management of facilities within the context of the hospitality business. The learner will be introduced to the range of operational characteristics required in the management of facilities including understanding the complexities and interrelationships within facilities management, safety and security and other areas of the hospitality business. The learner will develop an understanding for the management of safety and security.

Study Period 2 subject outlines
CORE
Measuring Business Finance Performance This subject will enable the student to develop an understanding of the management of business performance from both a financial and an operational position. The learner will develop a range of skills including the use of computer accounting systems to critically analyse and forecast business performance and will be able to recognise the key performance indicators that impact on the effective and efficient management of the hospitality business.

The student interview group was sourced through managers within the ICHM Industry and Career Department (ICD). This department has a strong rapport with the student body and was able to ensure that all students were provided with the requisite information about the research prior to making a decision to participate. The researcher was aware that the power imbalance that existed due to them holding the role of senior academic within the ICHM potentially placed pressure on students to engage in the research, had the request come directly from the researcher. This process was developed during the research ethics application. The following steps were taken to invite members of the ICHM student body to participate:

1. The researcher met with the ICD team to outline the parameters of the research and provide an overview of student eligibility to participate in the research.
2. ICD placed a request in the internal ICHM communication channel, Microsoft Teams, for students to participate in a doctoral research project.
3. Interested students made contact with the ICD team who discussed the elements of the research and informed potential students of the researcher information.
4. Students wishing to assist were provided with a Research Participation Overview and Consent form.
5. Upon return of the forms to the ICHM ICD team, the researcher arranged for an online interview time with the student.

To ensure that a sample student group was obtained for the interviews that was representative of the ICHM WIL program, the ICD team ensured that follow-up communication was provided at each year level of the ICHM Bachelor of Business (Hospitality Management). The final 12 interview candidates were made up of the following demographic factors, ensuring a representative sample of the student body at the ICHM:

- 5 domestic Australian students

- 7 international students
- 8 nationalities represented
- 6 female
- 6 male

The list of student participants can be found in Table 6.

Table 6

Student interview participant list (de-identified)

ID	Gender	Nationality (international/ domestic)	Qualification Study Level	Years of study completed	Number of WIL placements completed
001_FS3	Female	Domestic	Bachelor	3	3
002_FS3	Female	International	Bachelor	3	3
003_FS2	Female	International	Bachelor	2	2
004_FS2	Female	International	Bachelor	2	2
005_MS2	Male	International	Bachelor	2	1
006_MS2	Male	Domestic	Bachelor	2	1
007_MS3	Male	Domestic	Bachelor	3	2
008_FS3	Female	Domestic	Bachelor	3	2
009_MS2	Male	International	Bachelor	2	1
010_MS2	Male	International	Bachelor	2	2
011_MS2	Male	Domestic	Bachelor	2	1
012_FS3	Female	International	Bachelor	3	3

3.2.2. Study 2 Lecturers

Study 2 was comprised of eight lecturers who deliver the Bachelor of Business (Hospitality Management) and also take part in the development and curriculum integration of the ICHM WIL program. The participants were all core curriculum lecturers who had been with the ICHM for as little as six months or as long as six years. Each lecturer came from a variety of business- and hospitality-specific disciplines:

- WIL
- art and design

- marketing
- hotel operations
- culinary arts
- sustainability and ethics
- management, human resources and leadership.

The interview group was sourced by the ICHM Principal, which is an administrative role senior to the researcher. The researcher was aware that the power imbalance that existed due to her being the lecturing group's direct reporting line had potential to place pressure on Lecturers to engage in the research. This process was developed during the research ethics application. The following steps were taken to invite members of the ICHM student body to participate:

1. The researcher met with the Principal to outline the parameters of the research and provide an overview of the eligibility requirements of the lecturing staff.
2. The Principal emailed the lecturers to seek participation in a doctoral research study.
3. Interested lecturing staff made contact with the Principal who discussed the elements of the research and informed potential participants of the researcher information.
4. Lecturers wishing to assist were provided with a Research Participation Overview and Consent form.
5. Upon return of the forms to the Principal, the researcher arranged for an online interview time with the lecturer.

Due to the small size of the institution, each lecturer contained a different discipline of expertise allowing for diversity of knowledge within the Lecturing sample group. The final 8 interview candidates were made up of the following demographic factors, ensuring a representative sample of the ICHM academic faculty:

- 5 lecturers with Australian qualifications and experience
- 3 lecturers with overseas qualifications and experience
- 5 nationalities represented
- 4 female
- 4 male

The list of lecturer participants can be found in Table 7.

Table 7

Lecturer interview participant list (de-identified)

ID	Gender	Nationality (international/ domestic)	Qualification Level	Discipline	Years of Lecturing
001_FL2	Female	Domestic	Masters	Work Integrated Learning	2
002_ML4	Male	Domestic	PhD	Art and Design/ Research	4
003_FL4	Female	Domestic	PhD	Marketing	4
004_ML20	Male	International	PhD	Hospitality Operations	20
005_ML8	Male	Domestic	Masters	Culinary Arts	8
006_FL6	Female	International	Masters	Sustainability and Ethics	6
007_ML3	Male	Domestic	Graduate Certificate	Management, Human Resources and Leadership	3
008_FL5	Female	International	Masters	Marketing/Brand	5

Both the student and lecturer questions were centred primarily around their understandings of employability, work-readiness, career-readiness and assessment of WIL. Existing research offers limited constructive evidence to guide educator support of student transition to the world of work (Cabellero & Walker, 2010; Casner-Lotto & Barrington, 2006; Smith et al., 2014). Furthermore, WIL research uses a number of terms interchangeably (Cabellero & Walker, 2010; Smith et al., 2014). This lack of clarity arguably stems from the multilayered conceptions within the umbrella term of "employability", interchangeable use of conceptions and resultant confusion created by author use of employability to flag related concepts such as "work-readiness" (Clark, 2013) and "career-readiness" (Career Readiness Partnership Council, 2012) and "CDL" (Knight & Yorke, 2004b).

The second focus of the interview questions for both interview groups was on assessment for work-readiness and career-readiness. The student focus in this area was around the importance of assessment as part of their WIL experience. Whereas for the lecturer participants, the researcher focused on the discovery of the interviewee's conceptions of assessment based on their educational backgrounds.

The interviews lasted between 15 and 30 minutes each. Each interview was conducted online synchronously through Microsoft Teams. The researcher's choice to conduct the interviews online rather than face-to-face was solely due to the COVID-19 government

restrictions in place during the period of time the interviews data was being collected. Although a set of interview questions was produced for each group, the researcher took a semi-structured approach to ensure that the interpretation of each answer could be explored, understood and interpreted in a meaningful way.

3.3. Data analysis

Each group of interviews was transcribed and then coded by the researcher and categorised into sub-themes. The researcher was then able to apply a thematic analysis to identify themes and patterns within the qualitative data. The researcher chose not to use an analysis software, to ensure a thorough and organised analysis. The process was time-consuming, ensuring that codes applied were not reduced into a succinct prioritised list; however, also gave the researcher a closer link to the data within the interview transcripts. Thematic analysis was chosen because it is one of the most common forms of analysis within qualitative research (Guest, 2012). There are a number of ways to approach thematic analysis, as described in the studies of Boyatzis (1998), Javadi and Zarea (2016) and Braun and Clarke (2006). The researcher chose to use Braun and Clarke's (2012) approach to thematic analysis with a focus on researcher subjectivity as the primary tool available to them during the reflexive thematic analysis as outlined by Braun and Clarke (2019)Following is the six phase framework outlining the steps and how they were adhered to by the researcher throughout the transcript analysis.

1. ***Phase 1: Familiarise yourself with the data***

   Each interview was recorded via Microsoft Teams. These interviews were transcribed, with the researcher then reviewing and reading each transcript to familiarise themselves with and engage in the narrative of the interviewee's responses. Due to the semi-structured interview question approach, each set of data varied and required revisiting to allow the researcher to connect, make sense of the initial observations and begin to connect to the underlying comments within the transcribed data.

2. ***Phase 2: Generate initial codes***

   The researcher spent extensive time reviewing the transcripts in detail to extract words, sentences or paragraphs that connected to the questions posed within the research. Each transcript was reviewed 3 times to ensure that any data of significance was documented. A latent level of data analysis was used

to ensure that the underlying ideas of each transcript were interpreted by the researcher.

3. ***Phase 3: Search for themes***

   This is the most time consuming and detailed component for the researcher. The researcher kept focus on Braun and Clarke's (2006, p.10) point that "the 'keyness' of a theme is not necessarily dependent on quantifiable measures" and that the "prevalence of a theme can be determined in multiple ways". Braun and Clarke (2006) recommended the use of visual representations to sort codes into themes. A table and a mind map was used to form sub-themes.

4. ***Phase 4: Review potential themes***

   The sub-theme stage made the ability to review potential themes more streamlined. The prevalence of codes across each sub-theme enabled relationships between them to be noted. Three themes each for the lecturer and student data set were extrapolated and then checked against interview transcripts to confirm that the data was effectively reflected across the theme group.

5. ***Phase 5: Define and name themes***

   The essence of each theme was reviewed, and the key point of interest that connected to the overall scope of the research was the focal point for the naming of each theme.

6. ***Phase 6: Produce the report***

   Discussion of the analysis via integrating interview transcript notes and pertinent literature took place. Quotes directly related to the final themes and associated codes were made a focal point and connected to the research literature review.

What led the researcher to use this analysis method was its flexibility and its "independence from any particular epistemological and ontological base" (Braun et al., 2018, p. 9). This flexibility meant that this method of analysis was suitable across the two study groups. The importance of the researcher to be able to analyse the participants' individual experiences as part of the study groups to make sense of and identify a "commonality" (Braun & Clarke, 2012 p. 57) was salient to the overall narrative provided throughout. This allowed the researcher to critically reflect and interrogate their role within the study during

the review of the data, questioning assumptions by reflecting on codes post theme creation and having an ability to shape and mould the final themes as the analysis was in progress.

Creswell and Cresswell (2017) thoughtfully noted that in many qualitative studies there may be little distinction between the act of data collection and the analysis process. These may occur concurrently as an "iterative and reflective process" (Nowell et al., 2017) giving rise to the need to ensure the trustworthiness of the thematic analysis process. To ensure the credibility of the analysis process yet still maintain the positive aspects the concurrent nature of data collection and analysis brings, the researcher followed Guba and Lincoln's (1981) process for establishing trustworthiness during each phase of thematic analysis, as shown in Table 8.

Table 8

Establishing trustworthiness during each phase of thematic analysis (Guba and Lincoln, 1981)

Phases of Thematic Analysis	Means of Establishing Trust worthiness
Phase 1: Familiarise yourself with your data	• Prolong engagement with data • Document theoretical and reflective thoughts • Document thoughts about potential codes/themes • Store raw data transcripts
Phase 2: Generate initial codes	• Researcher triangulation • Audit trail of code generation • Peer debriefing
Phase 3: Search for themes	• Researcher triangulation • Diagramming to make sense of theme connections • Keep detailed notes about development of hierarchies of concepts and themes
Phase 4: Review themes	• Researcher triangulation • Test for referential adequacy by returning to raw data
Phase 5: Define and name themes	• Researcher triangulation • Peer debriefing • Documentation of theme naming
Phase 6: Produce the report	• Peer debriefing • Describe process of coding and analysis in sufficient detail • Report on reasons for theoretical, methodological and analytical choices throughout the research.

A number of Guba and Lincoln's (1981), means of establishing trustworthiness had greater focus placed on them by the researcher during the thematic analysis process due to the

alignment with the study methodology. As part of the familiarisation the researcher utilised a diary to enhance engagement with the data through reflection. This enabled the researcher to question the lens in which they were viewing potential codes and triangulating themes. This reflexive thematic analysis technique as prescribed by Braun and Clarke (2019) allows for a more fluid path between codes and themes to allow for continuous review during the entire analysis process assisting to avoid locking oneself into a theme to early on in the process. Due to the study involving the researcher's place of work peer debriefing was an effective way to test interpretation of the data within the authentic setting in which it was derived.

Utilising an exploratory qualitative research approach, through an interpretive research paradigm, subjective experiences of the students and lecturers were able to be gathered via semi-structured interviews. The researcher has provided a rich personal context along with institutional context to allow the reader to understand how the research study and its associated research questions were developed and the lens in which the researcher will view the data during the analysis completed within Chapters four and five.

CHAPTER 4: STUDY 1 STUDENTS

4.1. Overview

This chapter will detail the findings of the thematic analysis in connection to the research objective and its associated questions for Study 1 Student participants provided in Table 3.

4.2. Study 1: Student semi-structured interview analysis

Semi-structured interviews were held with students from across the second- and third-year cohorts of the 3-year Bachelor of Business (Hospitality Management) qualification delivered by the ICHM. The student participants were put at ease and encouraged to speak openly, with no answer being deemed incorrect. The researcher made a conscious effort to ensure the student's comfort. This was an important element of the commencement of the interviews due to the perceived power imbalance between the researcher and student participant. Each student appeared to be happy upon commencement of the interview session. The students had been provided the questions in advance to allow them additional time to feel comfortable about the interview content and expectations. Students were prompted to include evidence of their classroom study and WIL experiences.

Each participant showed interest in being part of the research and was willing on many occasions to provide additional information and answers to clarify sub-questions when the need arose, in addition to the standard questions captured in Table 3.

After the first stage of thematic analysis, 54 initial codes were identified. It is salient to mention that several of the initial codes were identified across the final themes; however, with varying context, which will be discussed as part of the findings review. These codes were mapped back to the research questions to ensure relevance to the final research. The initial codes were collated into eight sub-themes before three key themes were identified:

- assessment within a student WIL journey
- student self-efficacy and WIL
- employability, work-readiness, career-readiness transition.

Of the eight sub-themes, three were duplicated across the three final themes. It is the eight sub-themes that will drive the researcher's analysis. An overview is provided in Table 9.

Table 9

Themes, sub-themes and initial codes for Study 1 Students

Themes		
Assessment within a student WIL journey	Student self-efficacy and WIL	Employability, work-readiness, career-readiness transition
Sub-themes		
Assessment WIL curriculum Industry Teaching and learning	WIL Assessment Teaching and learning Skills	Work-readiness Career-readiness Employability
Codes		
· Standards · Positive · Reflection · Personal growth · Skills growth · Connection to classroom learning · Self-efficacy · Strengths · Weaknesses · Lecturer driven · Self-awareness · Flexibility development · Timing · Classroom environment · Scaffolded WIL · Institutional support on WIL · Lecturer as mentor · Theory to practice · WIL · Interdepartmental knowledge · Safe environment	· Assessment · Role confidence · Timing · Connection to classroom · Documented growth journey · Expectation of performance · Expectation of WIL completion · Reflection on experience · Growth outcomes · Development of coping strategies · Needs assessment for outcome · Soft skills · Cements learning · Knowledge to practice · Self-efficacy · Environment · Adapting to environment · Scaffolded WIL · Advantage of multiple WIL experiences · Employable · Formal vs informal study	· Experience · Personality · Skills · Practical · Task · Employable · Improved attitude · Confidence in workplace · Attributes · Self-efficacy · Short vs long term · Higher order · Leadership · Experience · Post-work-ready · Role progression · WIL · Career reflection · Industry connection · Aspirations · Competency · Transition to work · Realistic expectations of industry · Transferrable skills

4.3. Theme 1: Assessment within a student WIL journey

Assessment of WIL takes on a different meaning for each stakeholder; for the student, assessment is a theme of great contention. For the ICHM students who are placed into their host organisations as full-time paid employees, assessment becomes secondary to their employment and its associated workload. Engaging in assessment that feels purposeful and worth their limited free time is more salient than in most WIL programs across the higher education sector.

4.3.1. Assessment

Each participant was interested in talking about assessment with the researcher. The theme of assessment can be polarising to students and their committed responses to its impact within their WIL studies was intriguing. The importance of assessment to provide evidence of achievement can assist students to reflect on and understand their own performance and personal development. From an educational perspective, we label this “assessment for learning” (Boud, 2000).

The ICHM requires the completion of 3 assessment points per WIL placement, spread across the 20- to 22-week placement period. The ICHM WIL assessment overview is provided in Table 10.

Table 10

ICHM WIL Assessment overview Year 1 (International College of Hotel Management, n.d.)

	Assessment Type	When assessed within the subject	Weighting	Word count	Subject Learning Outcomes Assessed
1	**Assignment** Students will complete a review of their first 5 weeks within industry, focusing on both their assigned property environment and their initial integration within a workplace setting.	Prior to week 11	20%	1,000 words equivalent	a, b, d
2	**Assignment** Students will investigate and apply concepts and theories from the previous academic semester subjects in relation to their placement experiences.	Prior to week 11	40%	2,000 words equivalent	a, c, d
3	**Applied Learning Review** A critical reflection based on the aspects of the student's personal and professional development, experienced during industry placement.	Prior to completion of subject	40%	2,000 words equivalent	a, d
4	**Completion of hours and Industry observation**	Evidence of hours submitted by student on completion of Industry Placement.	The student must provide evidence of the completion of a minimum of 500 hours of work.	N/A	b, c
Subject Learning Outcomes On successful completion of this subject, students will be able to:					
a)	Demonstrate and reflect on the application of their knowledge and skills in a professional hospitality related workplace setting, making connections between theoretical and practical application.				
b)	Work together with a diverse range of stakeholders and demonstrate a commitment to achieving shared work outcomes.				

Subject Learning Outcomes On successful completion of this subject, students will be able to:	
c)	Demonstrate a range of relevant and appropriate hospitality workplace behaviours and communication strategies.
d)	Reflect on, and evaluate their own professional practice, growth and readiness for employability within the hospitality profession, in alignment with the ICHM Graduate Qualities.

ICHM students have access to assessment webinars that can help them understand and complete their WIL program assessment. The lecturer-led sessions are available prior to commencing their WIL placement and timed to align with the pre-submission of assessment during placement. Sessions are provided online both synchronously and asynchronously.

Overall, the student participant group were very positive about the impacts of assessment within their WIL program. Participant 001 strongly believed that a WIL program without assessment is just work. She went on to say:

> Work Integrated Learning assignments that we've done has helped me reflect on my experiences and has learnt what went well and what hasn't gone well, what I liked and what I disliked, and it's also helped me figure out strategies on how, if I'm in that situation again, I would be able to improve it.

Participant 003 spoke to WIL assessment allowing her to document her growth journey. No participant was directly negative about the value of assessment overall. However, some participants compared the different types of assessment, with some seemingly more impactful than others within their WIL experience. Participant 011 felt that industry assessment was more important than the academic assessment. He felt it gave him greater connection to his value and contribution to the workforce. Participant 006 noted that the reflective assessment was useful to his peers; however, he found it to be less impactful due to his self-critical nature. The reflective practices lowered his sense of self-worth. Participant 004 also felt that the reflective assessment was useful; however, she concentrated primarily on challenges and areas in which she had, in her opinion, failed, rather than use it to her advantage to present a positive outlook on her achievements. Participant 008 described assessment as only helping the lecturer to determine if they had met the teaching and learning requirements of the WIL. She saw assessment purely as a task to be completed, not as a way to continually develop or

reflect on personal growth. The same participant also struggled to describe the assessment tasks she undertook and completed.

Participant 010 made the distinction between perception and understanding of assessment at commencement of their qualification versus the evolution of their understanding and value of the importance of assessment once multiple WIL placements had been undertaken. The student participants who had engaged in more than one WIL placement were able to articulate their conceptions of assessment more clearly and with a stronger connection to the value of assessment to their personal growth and learning outcomes. Participant 004, who had undergone two WIL placements, felt that assessment was a tool to bring all the learning together. She spoke of assessment as a tool to review her application of knowledge and skill developed within the classroom to the workplace environment.

4.3.2. Work Integrated Learning curriculum

The experience of WIL curriculum can be an uncertain practice for students. It requires the student to completely engage and be immersed in the program, connecting with not only their discipline knowledge but their personal perceptions and experiences. Wheelahan (2005, p. 636) stated that WIL curriculum "insists students confront and engage with the uncertainties and dilemmas in their field of knowledge". WIL curriculum requires scaffolded authentic, reflective experiences to allow the student to address the employment requirements within the labour market to obtain employment (Ferns et al. 2014, 2015). Participant 006 described their WIL experience as providing them with the "opportunity to really understand roles...and what I want from my career and future work environment". Ferns (2014) noted that WIL curriculum should allow a student to commence a progression from student to professional.

Participant 002 spoke of the importance of multiple opportunities to access WIL across a qualification:

> I think that was essential to my learning, and I think that it was so interesting when lecturers would say to us, "What experiences did you have?" and they would use our experiences and draw on them to teach us better.

Participant 002 described their experience of learning through discovery and active participation, which Kolb (1984) defined as knowledge created through the transformation of experience. The ability to scaffold WIL across a degree allows the student to achieve and

develop greater outcomes. An integrated WIL curriculum scaffolded through a qualification can provide students with an understanding of how course learning outcomes can contribute to their employability outcomes. Participant 002 spoke confidently about the connection between on-campus learning activities, and how WIL experiences allow for an appreciation of learning:

> WIL really gets you to think about how you used that knowledge that you've got in college, and it really makes you focus more and appreciate more the knowledge that we get from our lecturers and from all of our industry professionals that we look up to here.

Participant 001 believed that WIL enhanced their learning: “It enhances...it cements what I have learnt in class and makes sure I’m not [going to] forget those sorts of things”.

4.3.3. Industry

Within the ICHM WIL program, industry plays a very different role compared to other institution’s WIL programs. Students completing WIL at the ICHM are placed within an industry environment; however, they become full employees of the host organisation. They are provided employment contracts with a minimum 6-month engagement requirement. Although the ICHM Industry and Career Managers provide guidance throughout the WIL study period, the student is managed and developed by the host organisation as one of its own. This creates the most authentic WIL experience possible and allows the student to be paid at award rates. The host organisation has significant control over the student placement, with the institution needing to build a strong relationship to engage collaboratively with industry, should challenges arise.

Based on this model, industry played a significant role in developing the industry observation assessment, engaging with the ICHM as a partner. The rubric was developed through consultation between lecturers, industry and career managers, and industry representatives in human resources, food and beverage, accommodation management and general management. The outcome from the industry assessment collaboration was an observation rubric (see Appendix G).

Although overwhelmingly positive, the participants gave mixed descriptions of their interactions with tasks assessed by industry. There was a strong foundational sense that feedback from industry was crucial and an integral part of the WIL program. Participant 004

had the most intriguing view of their industry assessment interactions, choosing to focus intensely on the negative nature of the feedback provided within their personal WIL experience. Although they viewed the feedback as developmental, instead of building confidence through emphasis on the positive feedback, they focused on the negative and improvement feedback provided by their industry partner. They then went on to say that this, however, also increased their awareness of skills that required improvement and encouraged continual growth. Participant 004 pointed out that the feedback they received was very task- and behaviour-oriented. This participant did not speak of having received career or personal attribute development feedback.

Participant 011 spoke of industry assessment providing recognition of their importance within the workplace environment. The researcher interpreted this as recognition of the participant's belonging and self-worth to the host organisation's outcomes. Participant 011 went on to note that they found the industry assessment "a personal motivator...networking and creating positive relationships with colleagues and supervisors…really important". Participant 012 felt that the assessment provided by industry built her resilience and allowed her to not take things too seriously. Motivation was again mentioned by participant 003 when discussing the observation feedback and acknowledgement from managers. She discussed the flow-on effect of the feedback outcome allowing her to increase her ability to motivate herself through personal acknowledgement, based on the feedback from industry.

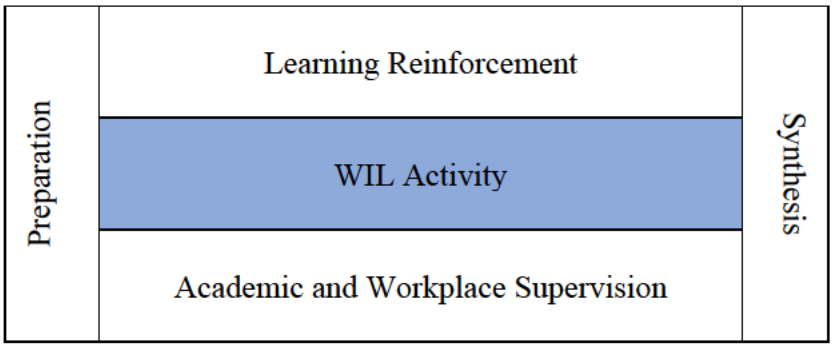
The analysis of this section of the interview highlighted the disparity between host organisations and how they implemented the observation assessment. Participants spoke to an array of focuses and approaches by the industry representatives who performed the assessment, varying from behaviour- and task-orientated through to motivational and affirmative; participant 006 held his career discussions as part of the observation in high regard. He spoke of the mentorship provided by his supervisor and the importance of their relationship. The disparity in approach to the assessment delivery called into question the validity, reliability and equity of the assessment task for the researcher. It cemented the reason for why the industry observation assessment, although required to be completed to pass the WIL subject at ICHM, did not provide the weighting that could influence the ability of the student to successfully progress within the degree.

4.3.4. Teaching and learning

The student experience within WIL programs is the top priority; however, for this to be successful, it needs to be supported by thoughtfully embedded curriculum which prepares the student for the WIL journey they are about to embark on, followed by evaluation mechanisms and opportunities to reflect on their experiences upon their return to the classroom environment. Carefully designed activities and robust teaching and learning strategies allow for the greatest student outcomes that are future-focused and beyond the final years within a degree. Zegwaard and Rowe (2019) called for a more holistic approach within WIL programs to advance employability, WIL and its associated learning. What underpins a holistic teaching and learning approach within WIL programs is that WIL activities cannot be delivered in isolation but must be included across a whole program and embedded within classroom subject delivery (Ferns et al., 2022). Ferns et al. (2022) modelled this in their development of the holistic framework to support student learning in WIL, shown in Figure 3.

Figure 3

Holistic framework to support student learning in WIL



The participants were able to articulate their connection to the on-campus learning and its impact on their WIL experience. They spoke of this as a connection between knowledge acquired from the lecturer in the classroom environment and WIL experience and usefulness of their learning during the preparation and synthesis phases. Participant 002 articulated as follows:

> It's not just your knowledge but it's how you can put that knowledge into practice, because there's no point having knowledge if you don't know how to use it. WIL really gets you to think about how you used that knowledge that

> you've got in college, and it really makes you focus more and appreciate more the knowledge that we get from our lecturers and from all of our industry professionals that we look up to.

This an articulation of the participant's connection to the use of lived experience to extend their theoretical learning. Participant 012 was able to use examples of formative tasks completed within his sustainability subject on campus and his ability to use the learning to showcase to his supervisor his knowledge through completing a workplace initiative to increase sustainable business outcomes. This created a sense of value and achievement for the student.

Included in the ICHM's WIL teaching and learning approach are workplace supervision and placement site visits. It was interesting for the researcher to note that no student spoke of the workplace visits from the ICHM industry and career managers during their WIL placements. When making any reference to knowledge development, the students were very purposeful in their descriptions of knowledge and teaching interactions being confined to campus and skill development, career development and personal growth only referred to within the placement setting. The WIL teaching and learning strategy at ICHM aims for a cross-pollination of knowledge and skill development across campus studies and WIL placement.

4.4. Theme 2: Student self-efficacy and WIL

Student self-efficacy is not only foundational to career development and employability outcomes but is also a key factor for student overall academic achievement. Research has shown that students who engage in WIL placements experience substantial improvement in work self-efficacy (Bates et al., 2013; Raelin et al., 2011). Higher levels of self-efficacy within students lead to increased workplace performance, promotion and more successful graduate outcomes through smooth transitions from study to employment (Thompson et al., 2016).

4.4.1. Work Integrated Learning

The connection to self-awareness was mentioned by 5 participants (001, 003, 004, 011 and 012). Participant 001 discussed the assessments' ability to help her figure out strategies for improvement and how to feel confident when challenges were represented. Personal attributes and their connection to knowledge and skills were discussed in positive

terms by participant 012. Participant 012 did not use correct terminology; however, the researcher's interpretation of his interview showed a strong improvement in confidence and self-efficacy when placed in the work environment because of the experiences he had during his WIL placement. Participant 006 linked WIL to their personal development and understanding of roles within employment:

> So, it also helps me develop on like a personal level and figure out where I sit and where I want to take my career, and it gives me the opportunity to really understand what roles and what I want from my career and my future work environments.

The researcher did not explicitly ask the participants about self-efficacy or self-awareness and growth; however, students who spoke of any form of self-development spoke proudly of their journey and progression during their WIL placement and also when they were able to use their learning back in the classroom environment. Participant 002 showcased this point by referring to the use of WIL when returning to their formal on-campus study. They spoke of the usefulness of WIL in connection to the extended theory. The researcher interpreted this component as a direct connection to the student's use of lived experience as drawn out by an experiential pedagogical approach embedded within the delivery of the on-campus curriculum.

4.4.2. Assessment

The student participant's innate ability to link assessment outcomes to the development of their self-efficacy was a surprise to the researcher. Although participants may not have used associated academic terminology, there comments were intrinsically connected to their personal growth and personal development outcomes achieved through the assessment activities completed within their WIL programs. Student's made clear and concise connections to reflective practice through assessment. The art of reflection was defined by Harvey et al (2016) as "a deliberate and conscientious process that employs a person's cognitive, emotional and somatic capacities to mindfully contemplate past, present or future actions in order to learn, and to better understand and potentially improve their actions."

A number of participants provided direct comments on how reflective practice within the assessment impacted elements of their self-efficacy and personal growth. Participant 010

was able to articulate the connection between reflection within WIL assessment and theoretical study:

> I think the good thing about those assessments is you get to reflect, because most of it was reflection, and the good thing about reflections you know your strengths, you know your weakness, you know what you need to improve on, plus the reflection itself is also connected to what we studied.

Participant 005 articulated how WIL assessment provided them with an understanding of themselves at a deeper level:

> With assessment, it's just really more of a self-reflection; just getting to know yourself more, although, you know, you already know yourself a lot [laughs], but still, it's just a process of learning. Because we change, even though we get older, we still change and everything.

Participant 009 provided a reflection on their personal development, articulated with an essence of maturity: "When you're analysing your mistakes or your achievements, you're able to get a clearer path."

The analysis of participant 004's response to assessment demonstrated their ability to reflect with greater complexity across multiple levels. Their response:

> I think that's one of the biggest things that WIL is about; it's about adapting to your environment, and doing those assessments really makes you think about it, and I think it's also such a confidence boost, because while you're thinking about that, you go, "Oh, wow, I've done all of this." I really don't think students don't think about what they've done until we're made to think about it and write it down for other people, and really work on how we're going to get that across to somebody else; how we're feeling about what we're doing.

4.4.3. Teaching and learning

Participant 001 spoke in strong terms about work-readiness being first developed in the classroom. Her comment highlighted the importance of the teaching and learning environment and its impact: "[work-readiness is] "having experience in a safe environment,

such as a classroom, where we can trial what would be expected of us in industry". This emphasis on feeling safe to make mistakes in a teaching and learning environment is crucial to why the ICHM continues to make simulated environments a core and dominant element of their curriculum and institutional teaching philosophy.

A strong connection existed between theory and knowledge disseminated within the formal classroom setting and its connection to an increased understanding within the WIL environment. This point was highlighted by Participant 005 and evidenced by Participant 012 with an example of how an authentic sustainability project completed in class gave them the knowledge to implement the learnings within their WIL host organisation. Participant 002 was able to make a significant impact on the organisation and their own personal growth and development.

4.4.4. Skills

There are a number of employability skills that are important to all employers; however, Scarinci et al. (2021) noted that communication, teamwork and problem-solving skills were the most desired skills identified by organisations in the Australian hospitality and tourism industry. Messum et al. (2016), Suarta et al. (2018) and McMurray et al. (2016) all conducted similar studies using job advertisements and deduced that communication, problem-solving and teamwork were the skills most frequently looked for in graduates.

When asked to define what employability meant to them, all participants spoke of skills, knowledge or experience. These and other skills noted by the students are presented in Table 11.

Table 11

Analysis of skills reflected on by Study 1 Students

Skill	Frequency Mentioned	Participants
Communication	10	001, 003, 004, 005, 006, 007, 008, 009, 010, 011
Reflective	10	001, 002, 004, 005, 006, 007, 008, 009, 010, 011, 012
Practical	7	001, 005, 006, 008, 009, 010, 011
Teamwork	7	003, 004, 006, 007, 009, 010, 011
Leadership	6	006, 007, 008, 009, 010, 011
Problem-solving	4	008, 009, 010, 012
Critical thinking	4	004, 009, 010, 012
Time management	3	002, 005, 008
Professionalism	3	002, 005, 008
Adaptability	3	002, 007, 012
Self-awareness	3	004, 005, 012
Knowledge application	2	002, 012
Self-reflection	2	005, 009
Initiative	2	005, 012
Understanding of roles	2	001, 010
Management	2	001, 010
Networking	2	009, 011
Reliability	2	003, 004
Punctuality	2	003, 004
Confidence	2	007, 012
Self-belief and self-empowerment	1	011
Creating positive relationships	1	011
Flexibility and openness to criticism	1	012
Personal motivation	1	011

The articulation of skills required to be work-ready was the section within the student interviews where each participant felt most comfortable. The ICHM Bachelor of Business (Hospitality Management) has four core subjects which are heavily focused on developing hospitality-discipline specific skills (shown in Table 12). Successful completion of these subjects must be achieved prior to the student attending a WIL placement within one of the core discipline areas, such as food and beverage or rooms division. Each student enters their WIL placement with a confidence in the skill set they have developed whilst successfully completing their core practical subjects.

Table 12

Core first and second study period subjects within the Bachelor of Business (Hospitality Management) (International College of Hotel Management, n.d.)

Study Period 1 subject outlines
CORE
Food and Beverage Service Standards This subject will enable the student to demonstrate an understanding of the knowledge and skills required in the delivery of food and beverage service standards. The students will examine the operational characteristics of food and beverage service then analyse both the food and beverage product and service in relation to the setting and maintenance of appropriate product and service standards.
Delivering Guest Services Practicum This subject will enable the student to demonstrate the range of professional skills and knowledge required to provide and coordinate complex services to customers in a professional and operational industry setting. This integrates a range of well-developed operational, professional and organisational skills required by staff to provide a range of products and services to multiple, diverse guests in a variety of settings.
Rooms Division Service Standards This subject will enable the student to demonstrate professional knowledge and skills in Rooms Division, particularly in the Housekeeping and Concierge departments. Students will examine some of the common Housekeeping and Concierge operational characteristics as well as the products and services required to ensure standard delivery and guests' safety and security.
Culinary Skills This subject will enable the student to demonstrate a basic understanding of theoretical culinary knowledge and practical cooking skills, follow workplace hygiene procedures, and explain the fundamentals of cuisine and kitchen operations as used in international hotels. The subject will also provide the opportunity for the student to develop an appreciation of the food to be experienced in international hotels.
Study Period 2 subject outlines
CORE
Supervising International Hotel Front Office Operations Front office and its departments are pivotal and highly visible in setting the scene for the very first guest service experience and continue to be central in the delivery of the overall hotel experience for a guest. This subject will enable the student to demonstrate the knowledge and competencies required in the delivery, operation and supervision of Front Office service standards in relation to delivering to guest expectations including reservations, front office/reception and executive club/lounge. Students will examine the operational characteristics of these service points. In doing so, they will analyse both the product and service in relation to the setting and maintenance of appropriate product and service standards and develop an appreciation of their associated costs.

Assessment within the ICHM core practical subjects involve not only developing discipline-based skills but transferrable skills, such as those clearly articulated within Table 11. Table 13 provides an example assessment that each Study 1 participant will have completed to demonstrate transferrable skills.

Table 13

Culinary skills Year 1 core subject assessment example

Assessment Title: Multimedia Portfolio	Word Limit: 1,500 equivalent
Due Date:	Assessment Weighting: 30%
Assessment Instruction	
Based on your recent experience and observations in the ICHM kitchen, produce a multimedia portfolio using Microsoft Word. This portfolio must showcase your experiences in the kitchen and must include videos, images, sound, and text. Your assessment must include the following sections: **1. Mise-en-Place.** This section must include the following elements: • **Define** what mise-en-place is and **explain** why it is important in the ICHM kitchen • **Describe** how you have successfully implemented good mise-en-place in the ICHM kitchen • **Describe** what you can do to make improvements with your mise-en-place • **Illustrate** the information presented in this section with **two (2) relevant artefacts** 2. **Professionalism.** This section must include the following elements: • **Explain** how working in the ICHM kitchen has helped you develop a professional attitude • **Describe** an example of when you demonstrated or observed poor professionalism • **Describe** what you did – or could have done – in response to this situation • **Evaluate** how effective your response to the situation was • **Describe** how you can continue to develop your own professionalism • **Illustrate** the information presented in this section with **two (2) relevant artefacts** **3. Teamwork and Communication.** This section must include the following elements: • **Describe** a situation when you demonstrated or observed poor communication skills in the ICHM kitchen • **Describe** what you did – or could have done – in response to this situation • **Evaluate** how effective your response to the situation was • **Describe** how you can continue to develop your own communication skills • **Explain** the importance of good teamwork in the ICHM kitchen	

- **Illustrate** the information presented in this section with **two (2) relevant artefacts**

4. **Kitchen Hygiene and Safety.** This section must include the following elements:
    - **Describe** an example of when you demonstrated or observed good hygiene and/or safety skills in the ICHM kitchen
    - **Describe** what you did – or could have done – in response to this situation
    - **Evaluate** how effective your response to the situation was
    - **Describe** how you can continue to develop your own hygiene skills
    - **Explain** the implications of poor hygiene in the ICHM kitchen
    - **Illustrate** the information presented in this section with **two (2) relevant artefacts**

Important Notes. The following items also form part of the assessment (refer to assessment rubric for details):

Title Page. A title page with the following elements must be included in your assessment:

- Student name
- Student number
- Subject number and name
- Lecturer name
- Date of submission
- Word count

Artefacts. The artefacts you have collected from Assessment 2 can be used in this assessment, but you also must provide an **additional 4-6 relevant artefacts**.

Artefacts are items you consider **relevant and meaningful** to your assessment and may include, but are not limited to images, videos, links, audio clips, pictures/personal photos. All artefacts must include the following elements:

- Correct label (Figure 1, Figure 2, etc.)
- Concise caption that clearly identifies the image
- Correct reference in-text **and** in the reference list
- Mentioned in the body of the presentation
- Meaningful and relevant to the experience it describes (relates to?)

In-text Citations. Provide in-text citations for **all academically reliable** sources you refer to in your assessment. This section must include the following elements:

- Author/organisation name
- Year

4.5. Theme 3: Employability, work-readiness, career-readiness transition

The National Careers Institute (2024) identified the hospitality sector as a continuing growth area. The ongoing demand for skilled hospitality workers has driven the need to

ensure that ICHM students enter WIL placements work-ready and that they can have an immediate impact on the sector.

4.5.1. Employability

In previous research there has been a lack of student voice, in relation to their perception of employability and what it means to them. This was evidenced by Artess et al. (2017) during their completion of a literature review for the Higher Education Academy. It was evident during the researcher's interviews that this was the first time that anyone had asked this student group for their understanding of employability and other salient terms. Employability as part of the literature has always been described using a two-sided approach of demand versus supply – demand being concerned with labour market and employee concerns and requirements, and supply focusing on the concerns of the individual students to develop skills and attributes to obtain employment (Hillage & Pollard, 1998). It was clear the students only grasped the supply side of employability.

With the definition of employability varying so greatly in the literature, it was salient for the researcher to review the definitions provided by the student group. The student participants as a whole were uncertain about providing a definition and most focused on using their experience to describe their understanding of the terminology. The researcher has compiled their definitions in Table 14.

Table 14

Definitions of employability from Study 1 Students

Participant	Definition
Participant 001	"I believe that employability is the skills the knowledge the experience and the personality that makes someone suitable for a role within an organisation".
Participant 002	"I think that employability stems from your skills that you have and your knowledge. I think those are the two biggest um the biggest sort of aspects to being employable".
Participant 003	"…how well you can perform and the potential that they see in you, and that's what I call employability".
Participant 004	"I think employability is skills that will be needed in the workplace and be required by the employer".
Participant 005	"Employability I think it's an individual's skill to require new work. I think it's...you have to have the right set of skills knowledge and maybe attitude to get that job".
Participant 006	"Employability would be how employable a person is be that like their skills personality [pause] prior knowledge um and experience I guess".
Participant 007	"Employability is having the, um, the commitment and the skills for an appropriate role".
Participant 008	"Um probably like how prepared someone is to enter the workforce".
Participant 009	"Employability? From my point of view it's something to do with the person as in the characteristics or I'd say the attribute of a person to maintain the employment I guess".
Participant 010	"…the term employability might refer to the skills that you require for employability; like how employable I am for someone who wants to employ me...about my skills, about my communication, about my work ethics or my previous references that will help with that".

Participant	Definition
Participant 011	"I believe employability uh is having the ability to gain employment. Um also like maintain the employment um through fulfilling the job role".
Participant 012	"So my understanding of employability it's having the qualities attitudes and skills uh for being employable and this model shows success in your personal life as well as in your in the working environment".

The need for skills was predominant in the students' definitions of employability. The connection between knowledge being transformed into usable skills on the job was also prevalent. Participant 002 noted:

> I think that employability stems from your skills that you have and your knowledge. I think those are the two biggest um the biggest sort of aspects to being employable. It's not just your knowledge but it's how you can put that knowledge into practice because there's no point having knowledge if you don't know how to use it.

As seen from Participant 002, there was an interchangeable use of the terms employability and employed. A continued connection also arose between the understanding of employability and having or acquiring a job. In the literature review, the researcher noted Harvey's (2005, p. 13) definition of employability, where he explained that "employability is not just about getting a job; it's about developing attitudes, techniques and experiences for life". No student was able to distinguish between employability and its associated skills and attributes and the act of being employed. The closest and most succinct definition was provided by participant 010: "Employability means having the skills and abilities that make you employable and being able to show them to potential employers". Overall, the student participants were able to provide a clearer and more succinct understanding of employability as it related to them personally however, the gap which was identified was the lack of reference to career. No participant linked employability to the development of a career that connect to their personal aspirations within a position of choice.

4.5.2. Work-readiness

Given that work-readiness is a relatively new construct in the area of career development and employability, the definitions are varied. The researcher felt this would be one of the more difficult terms for the student participants to conceptualise and articulate as a definition. Each student was able to comfortably provide a definition, even if it was quite narrow in its perception. Skills, as with the definition of employability, were noted by 9 of the 12 participants, including the requirement of skills as part of their work-readiness definition.

Participant 011 was keenly focused not only on transferrable skills but also skills associated with self-efficacy. Displaying connection between work-readiness and the confidence to apply for employment, he provided the following definition:

> Student work readiness is ensuring that us students are equipped with skills um uh like I said before the hard and soft transferrable skills. But also self-belief and sort of um self um empowerment to um... And independence to apply for jobs and feel confident working um in in a workplace.

The connection to self-efficacy was also seen in 3 responses when participants were describing the ability to feel confident once employment was obtained. Participant 006 said, "It's about being able to apply what we've learned in our studies to real-world situations and being confident in our abilities to handle job responsibilities." Participant 003 echoed the sentiment saying, "Also self-belief and sort of self-empowerment to apply for jobs and feel confident working in a workplace."

Although participants talked about themselves within the definitions and how they contribute to work-readiness, Participant 003 also used language that implied a responsibility of the institution to "ensure that us students are equipped with skills". Participant 002 spoke to the importance of having lecturers and mentors able to give a realistic view of industry expectations and to manage challenges. Participants 004 and 006 discussed ensuring that they had the appropriate theoretical knowledge and experience prior to entering the workforce. The connection to support mechanisms to ensure that they could be successful was evident.

The researcher found it interesting that Participant 011 spoke of work-readiness as "a first step". The student participant followed up by noting that career-readiness was an extension of work-readiness, "once skills are fully developed". Participants 006, 007, 004, 005 all spoke of work-readiness being a beginning, a starting point in their employment

journey. An overview of the student participants' definitions of work-readiness is presented in Table 15.

Table 15

Definitions of work-readiness from Study 1 Students

Participant	Definition
Participant 001	"Work readiness from what I understanding is the learning that's needed so that a student can go into a role within industry with confidence and for me that means having experience in a safe environment such as a classroom where we can trial what would be expected of us in industry such as F&B or the housekeeping placements we did and things like that".
Participant 002	"I think that being work-ready is all about having realistic expectations of industry. I think that it's about having people in your life be it lecturers or mentors who give you that realistic view of not every day is going to be perfect...you're going to run into problems but you've just gotta learn from it you've gotta learn from any mistakes that you make and you've just gotta keep pushing through".
Participant 003	"I think it's more about your mental readiness, how open-minded you are for the job, and how you are willing to accept any challenges that you might face".
Participant 004	"Work ready for me means that it will prepare you to know how to work in the real world. It's not just only the next book not just only in the fundamental skills but you can apply it in the real situation".
Participant 005	"It's having that appropriate skills for the appropriate job. I think the best example is from my experience I first studied culinary and then I got an internship in Thailand and I thought 'When I went to Thailand I'm going to get a cooking job' but when I got there they offered me a Front of House work. The thing is I had no idea how Front of House worked and I had a lot of idea about the Back of House. To be honest I wasn't work ready so they had to teach me all of the skills in what I had to do. That's being work ready I guess. Just having the appropriate skills to work right away".

Participant	Definition
Participant 006	"How prepared you are for your like to work in the industry or profession/career that you're looking to go into".
Participant 007	"To be work ready is to be able to cope well under pressure".
Participant 008	"The practical skills like if I was going to be an F&B attendant I would want to feel confident in knowing how to do a three plate carry and understanding the spirits behind the bar and all of that kind of stuff".
Participant 009	"It's to ensure the workers have a basic understanding and us have a basic understanding that we have been through a number of experiences and are ready for an actual job or ready for I guess the real life".
Participant 010	"I think work-readiness for a student would be as soon as you come out of uni are you ready to work in your interest of the one that you've done your degree for".
Participant 011	"Ensuring that us students are equipped with skills um uh like I said before the hard and soft transferrable skills. Um but also self-belief and sort of um self um empowerment to um... And independence to apply for jobs and feel confident working um in in a workplace".
Participant 012	"It's having the capacity…as a student to understand what the market and workplace need…as I said what is relevant to it and what skills are needed... And being work ready for me will be um being prepared and feel confident to feel uh to face the- the work environment um and having like these transferable skills that employers seek that they're looking for".

The researcher has come across a number of analysis points which have led to thoughts on an employability continuum. This thought will continue to be explored throughout the ongoing analysis.

4.5.3. Career-readiness

The ICHM is a discipline-specific college delivering qualifications only within hospitality and hotel management. There has been a preconceived notion that students have made all career decisions required upon commencement at the College. Super (1980) argued that young people cannot make career decisions until they have developed their abilities and

maturity to a specific level. The career-readiness focus is more on role knowledge within hospitality and hotels rather than a focus on the student as a whole person and their career development. The broadness of the hospitality industry and its associated roles, along with the highly transferrable nature of its skills, disguises the overall diversity of final career choice within the industry.

There were a number of similarities between work-readiness and career-readiness in the interview transcripts. The skills and knowledge focus was evident, however slightly elevated. Participant 009 showed this by speaking to career-readiness as providing a smooth transition to a professional role rather than just an ability to enter employment. Participant 008 distinguished between technical skills and career-readiness skills noting that the latter included soft skills. Participant 001 continued on this path, making a connection to professional skills, and Participant 003 talked about the ability to obtain a professional role. There were several refences to ongoing learning and development within the role leading to career development and readiness.

A strong connection to industry was noted by the researcher. Each participant spoke about a need to understand industry and its environment and the ability to move smoothly between and transition to industry roles. Participant 002 said career-readiness "is about having the skills and knowledge to start a job and quickly adapt to new tasks and environments." Participant 005 noted that "It involves understanding the workplace culture and being able to adapt quickly to new environments." The complexity of added stakeholders, skills and knowledge within the development of career-readiness came across strongly to imply that career-readiness developed post work-readiness. An overview of the student participants' definitions of career-readiness is presented in Table 16.

Table 16

Definitions of career-readiness from Study 1 Students

Participant	Definition
Participant 001	"I believe that my degree would give me the knowledge and skills to get the role or to improve on a role or to move up within a hierarchy once I leave college and it will allow me to progress in my career."
Participant 002	"I think that being career ready is knowing how to use my knowledge that I've got and knowing how to draw from past experiences especially the experiences that I've had on WIL. It's knowing that OK this problem has come up before and I knew how I dealt with that and I'm going to do the same thing again or I'm going to something different because that didn't quite work out well".
Participant 003	Unable to define career-readiness.
Participant 004	"Career readiness is supposed to be the transition. When you will complete the study and jump to the real career".
Participant 005	"Career readiness, especially for us we're aiming to be managers or leaders of the future so understanding the process itself as well as having those skills; I think that's being career readiness".
Participant 006	"Career readiness is your progression. So you would pick up levels of career readiness through your different work environments and your different positions that you've held through your career".
Participant 007	"Career readiness is having a passion for a particular industry and really wanting to strive and move your way up into that industry".
Participant 008	"I would say more like skills like learning how to problem solve and communicate in a team and leadership skills. Communication skills".
Participant 009	"Career readiness, it requires more critical thinking. Maybe problem solving as well and like ability to analyse it in making decisions based on or try to overcome a problem".
Participant 010	"I think with career readiness, if I think I'm well prepared to do the work that I've studied for, then I can look forward towards my degree where I want to put my career".

Participant	Definition
Participant 011	"As a student completing a bachelor degree, I believe that the main aspect of career readiness is ensuring you don't just purely receive an academic education but also something that ensures you're getting real life sort of work exposure".
Participant 012	"Career readiness for me would be the achievement of and demonstration of qualities and attributes that generally prepare graduates for successful transition into the workplace".

It was noted that only Participant 001 and 007 alluded to career progression through the use of the word "hierarchy" and the phrase "move your way up". The lack of aspirational connection to the terminology of career was a surprise to the researcher. From the researcher's experience in engaging with students throughout the program aspirational roles such as General Manager and Director are terms commonly utilised by students when talking about life post study however, no direct link was made between career-readiness and higher order employment prospects.

4.6. Conclusion

The analysis of Study 1 Students produced three themes, assessment within a student WIL journey, student self-efficacy and WIL, and employability, work-readiness and career readiness. Across the themes, the students provided inciteful review of their WIL journey and how each of the elements spanning across all themes interconnected across their individual WIL timelines. Although there was a gap in the student's ability to utilise correct terminology, their understanding through experience allowed for a continuum from work-ready to career-ready to form culminating in effective graduate employability outcomes. The development of the transition between work-readiness and career-readiness induced from the analysis will be explored further within Chapter 6.

CHAPTER 5: STUDY 2 LECTURERS

5.1. Study 2: Lecturer semi-structured interview analysis

Semi-structured interviews were held with lecturers employed by ICHM. Each lecturer was encouraged to be open and empowered to expand on each of the questions asked to ensure that their thoughts and opinions in the areas of work-readiness, career-readiness, employability and assessment were adequately gathered. Lecturers were prompted to include current teaching experiences and experiences they had encountered as part of their own study journey. Each participant was enthusiastic about being part of the research and were willing on many occasions to provide additional information and answers to clarify sub-questions when the need arose.

After the first stage of thematic analysis, 19 initial codes were identified. It is salient to mention that several of the initial codes were identified across the final themes; however, with varying contexts which will be discussed as part of the findings review. These codes were mapped back to the three research questions to ensure relevance to the final research discussion. The initial codes were collated into 11 sub-themes before three key themes were identified: career management, higher education and industry crossroads and pedagogy of career management, as identified in Table 17.

Table 17

Themes, sub-themes and initial codes for Study 2 Lecturers

Themes		
Career management	Higher education and industry crossroads	Pedagogy of career management
Sub-themes		
Work-readiness Career-readiness Employability Skills	WIL Institution Industry	Assessment Educator Student Reflection
Codes		
Personal Development Academic Timeline Environment Skills Employment Educator understanding	Teaching and Learning Culture Skills Environment Academic Employability Growth	Educator perception Delivery Resulting Pedagogy Teaching and Learning Personal Development Accountability Growth Assessment Academic

A number of codes and sub-themes were connected, due to duplication of common codes. These were mind mapped to determine the common codes and then enable the researcher to look at the analysis in a holist way.

To provide a level of clarity to the researcher's interpretation of the transcribed semi-structured interviews, as part of the results review several pertinent lecturer participant quotes will be used to illustrate the connection of the findings to the relevant theme.

5.2. **Theme 1: Career management**

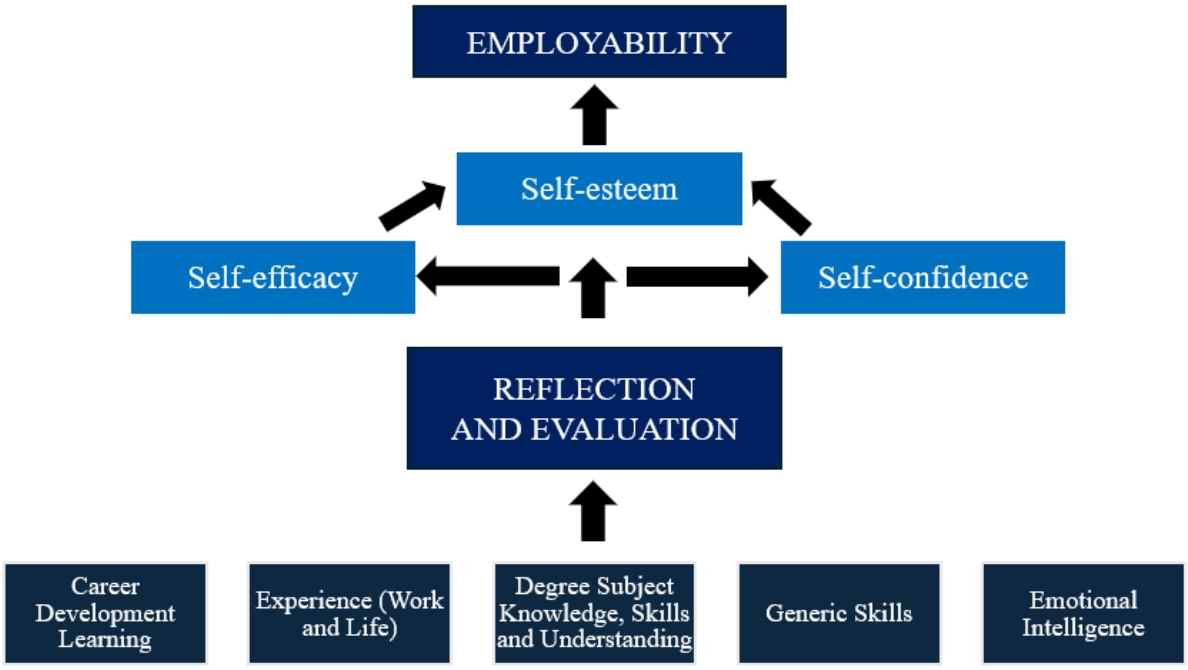
The road to graduate employability for a student is complex and not without its hurdles. The role that higher education institutions play in developing student career management has not been clearly articulated within the research. The concept of CDL has been described by Watts (2006, p. 2) as being "concerned with helping students to acquire knowledge, concepts, skills and attitudes which will equip them to manage their careers, i.e. their lifelong progression in learning and in work".

A whole of institution approach is needed to be able to help a student articulate how academic classroom-based learning, partnered with their WIL experiences, enables them to develop professionally and personally to manage their career aspirations. One model

developed to assist with this is the Career EDGE Model of Graduate Employability, developed by Dacre Pool and Sewell (2007), shown in Figure 4.

Figure 4

Career EDGE Model of Graduate Employability



The interviewees were able to connect with several terms linked to the concept of career management, such as employability, work-readiness and career-readiness, but were not able to clearly define each term or articulate their relationships to each other. The theme of career management was evident through each interview and as the researcher uses the sub-themes and codes to discuss each section, it will showcase the lack of clarity and an inability to use the terminology effectively or consistently across the interview group.

5.2.1. *Sub-theme 1: employability*

The concept of employability proved to be a complex one. Not only were there varied responses and abilities to define the concept of employability by the lecturer participants, but there has also been an ongoing refinement of the definition by scholars (Bowen, 2009; Bridgstock, 2009; Dacre Pool & Sewell, 2007; Hillage & Pollard, 1998; Knight & York 2004b). Dearing (1997) provided an initial view of employability which spoke to it being connected to the acquisition of skills for life. Hillage and Pollard (1998) enhanced the first

simple definition posed in the literature, and theirs is the definition that most interviewees connected with:

“In simple terms, employability is about being capable of getting and keeping fulfilling work. More comprehensively employability is the capability to move self-sufficiently within the labour market to realise potential through sustainable employment” (p. 2). The researcher thought it pertinent to provide the lecturer responses of their understanding of employability (see Table 18) to emphasise the differences in understanding between the lecturer data group.

Table 18

Definitions of employability from Study 2 Lecturers

Participant	Definition
Participant 006	"Employability is, for me, the ability for students when they graduate to be ready to be employed in some kind of role. So, all of the skills that come with that."
Participant 007	"My understanding of employability would be providing an environment in our college and then out in the industry for students to feel confident to learn, but then, ultimately, to feel really confident to go and start their own careers and make their own...in life, as a results of those experiences and those learnings."
Participant 001	"…is transferable skills that contribute towards work readiness and career readiness. So, the ability and, I guess, the knowledge around what sort of transferable skillset might be needed in any workplace…"
Participant 002	"My understanding of employability is having the skills and the aptitude which align with an employer. So, being able to, I suppose, showcase a broad range of skills that can be applicable and useful, maybe even if not listed in a PD statement, maybe having those skills that are actually able to offered to an employer as well."
Participant 003	"What is something that an employer would want of an employee, or an individual in maybe the hiring process. So what characteristics would make that individual employable. I also kind of consider it as, um, kind of like a beginner level of maybe being career ready, or work ready, so that kind of basic level."
Participant 004	"Employability is about being capable of getting and keeping a fulfilling job, and you're doing that, initially, as a new employee, you're probably doing that to gain initial employment, and then slowly you will maintain employment and then hopefully you can obtain new employment through the skills and knowledge that you have gathered."

Each participant had a slightly different understanding of the concept, with no participant able to articulate a full definition or link it to an existing model. This being said, the researcher noted a number of key elements of employability focused on by each participant. Knowledge of certain aspects of employability were apparent. The researcher has mapped the interviewee's responses to the question:

1. What is your understanding of employability?

A review was also completed of the remaining transcripts for connection to the Career EDGE Model of employability to provide an oversight of connection to theory by the participants (see Table 19).

Table 19

Study 2 Lecturer responses mapped to Career EDGE model employability criteria

		Interview Participants							
	Career EDGE Model	001	002	003	004	005	006	007	008
Employability	Self-efficacy								
	Self-esteem								
	Self-confidence								
	Reflection and evaluation								
	Career Development Learning								
	Experience (work and life)								
	Subject knowledge, understanding and skills								
	Generic skills								
	Emotional intelligence								

Participant 001 showed the greatest connection to career management and the Career EDGE model. This participant has experience in industry in the area of human resource management and recruitment. Her interview showed a clear correlation to the context of career and the responsibility of higher education to embed CDL principals both in theory and practical components of the curriculum. Although Participant 001 did not explicitly speak to self-efficacy and self-esteem within this interview session, the researcher believes these items would be a consideration for them and part of their philosophy and pedagogical approach to student interactions based on a number of Participant 001's comments below:

> "…it's also understanding that their skills will evolve and, going in with that learning approach and growth mindset, and expecting that they will learn and develop."

> "…career readiness is that evolution from work ready through to, I guess, developing in career development skills, understanding how someone might progress through

> their career or what might be next steps after a particular job role, and having the ability to then apply some of those thought processes into building a career for themselves."
>
> "…this is where the importance of reflection comes into play and having the opportunity of conversation with the student to understand their reflection and understand how they feel the progression has happened. I think, often, having that dialogue with a student will reveal very accurate information about how they feel their progress was. I think there's only a few rare sorts of situations where a student perhaps needs to be given some perspective in terms of their performance and their progression."

Participant 007, the interviewee with the most industry experience from the interview group, with a 15-year corporate leadership role, was the only other respondent to link the importance of self-efficacy, speaking to the student's belief in driving their career outcomes and developing self-confidence within students during both their classroom and WIL experiences:

> My understanding of employability would be providing an environment in our college and then out in the industry for students to feel confident to learn, but then, ultimately, to feel really confident to go and start their own careers and make their own...in life, as a results of those experiences and those learnings.

It is pertinent to note that Participants 001 and 007, although willing, expressed the most nervousness about their level of academic qualification to participate in the research interview. These participants on paper hold the lowest academic qualification levels and the least teaching experience; however, they were the most able to articulate the Career EDGE model components and a clear connection to the concept of employability, even if each of their definitions were not succinct and were not framed in what would be considered the most appropriate academic theory or models.

Participant 004, the most qualified and experienced academic, expressed strong opinions about the ability of a student to gain employment and keep employment. There was some reference to skill development but his definition was firmly connected to job obtainment: "employability is about being capable of getting and keeping a fulfilling job, and you're doing that, initially, as a new employee, you're probably doing that to gain initial employment…". This participant has a 15-year background in WIL but did not refer to

academic definitions or models of employability; instead, they offered a surface level understanding of the concept.

5.2.2. *Sub-theme 2: work readiness*

The concept of work-readiness does not feature predominantly within WIL curriculum due to its interchangeable nature with concepts such as employability and graduate attributes (Cabellero & Walker, 2010; Casner-Lotto & Barrington, 2006; Smith et al., 2014). To ensure simplicity of the data analysis, the researcher used the definition of work-readiness provided by Clark (2013, p. 3): "A work ready individual possesses the foundational skills needed to be minimally qualified for a specific occupation as determined through a job analysis or occupational profile". This was used as a baseline whilst also keeping alternate definitions available for contemplation and consideration within the data.

It was at this point of the analysis that the researcher noticed a common thread of lecturers wanting to describe work-readiness as a beginning, commencement, or introduction to employment. These explanations led to initial thoughts of a continuum involving the concepts of employability, work-readiness and career-readiness. The researcher extrapolated quotes that sparked the thought of a continuum, with work-readiness being at the extreme beginning. The definitions from each participant are provided in Table 20.

Table 20

Definitions of work-readiness from Study 2 Lecturers

Participant	Definition
Participant 001	"Work-readiness is a basic understanding of the skills required BEFORE entering the workplace".
Participant 008	"Work ready would basically be that someone would be prepared enough to start to work, but potentially in a rather limited capacity".
Participant 007	"If they are work-ready they are employable".
Participant 006	"Work-readiness focused on the practical elements of being able to fulfill a role".
Participant 003	"Beginner…. Anyone can be ready for work. Anyone can get work-ready skills".
Participant 002	"Work-readiness means the student can walk into employment and be ready to perform with little on the job training".

Following on from that, Participant 002 referenced work-readiness as a short-term application and career-readiness as a long-term application. This rationale was also solidified by

Participant 001 who referenced employability as encapsulating both work-readiness and career-readiness as they transitioned from one to the other. This concept of a continuum was noted and was an element cross-checked across all themes throughout the analysis to determine if there was any further evidence to validate further enquiry.

As with the varying viewpoints on the terminology and definition of work-readiness within the academic literature, some lecturer participants struggled to articulate a clear and considered interpretation of work-readiness. Participant 003 used work-ready, career-ready and employability interchangeably throughout their response. Even though the researcher was able to get an overarching understanding that each lecturer participant understood the role they play in developing a student's WIL progression within the ICHM Bachelor degree course, their ability to articulate a clear and concise definition was absent.

5.2.3. ***Sub-theme 3: career readiness***

Common themes within the WIL literature are the ability for students to practise skills and develop personal attributes within an authentic or simulated work environment to gain confidence and to better understand themselves (Jackson, 2018; Smith, 2014; McIlveen et al., 2011). Two focal streams of career-readiness have surfaced in the literature.

1. Self-efficacy: this is a concept that underpins the construct of career-readiness as defined by Bandura (1997) – "people's beliefs about their capabilities to learn or perform actions at designated levels".
2. Skills and employability: as defined by Campbell and Price (2016), these are the "capabilities and attributes required by graduates to successfully navigate a labour market characterised by rapid technological change and precarious employment practices".

It was clear from the data that the lecturer group's understanding of career-readiness was connected to the latter, with skills and knowledge being key within their responses to the question of their understanding of career-readiness. Participant responses did focus on the student as central to career development but in terms of discipline knowledge and personal attributes to progress within a job role, as showcased in responses from participant 001 and 002. Participant 001 said, "Career-readiness is having an understanding of role progressions

and how to build a career" and "Career readiness focuses on the ability to think about future personal development and knowing what skills require development". Participant 002 stated:

> I think that there are some components that are missing that deal even with workplace relations, shall we say, and conflict resolution, and a few of those other skills that are often not maybe explicitly dealt with, or certainly not within the context of how to build a career; its more about how to get a job and how do I keep that job, rather than how do I build this career in this long reaching way and actually an aspirational way as well.

Both Participants 001 and 002 used the language "build a career". The researcher found this interesting, given that the career development literature was so complex – they had simplified the concept into what could be perceived as easily defined and simplified steps.

Once again, a number of lecturer participants spoke to career-readiness as a progression from work-readiness or employability, giving additional credibility to the concept of a continuum between work-readiness, career-readiness and employability. The researcher has again compiled the relevant participant definitions which have led to this overarching concept of an employability continuum in Table 21, to be discussed further within Chapter 6.

Table 21

Definitions of career-readiness from Study 2 Lecturers

Participant	Definition
Participant 001	"Career-readiness is an evolution from work-ready."
Participant 005	"Students can't understand career-readiness until they have experienced the concept of employability."
Participant 002	"Work readiness is an outcome and career readiness is a skill, or is a skill based proposition."
Participant 003	"Career ready made up of multiple components. Beyond the basic."
Participant 005	"Career-readiness building on work-readiness."
Participant 008	"Career readiness is a higher level than the work readiness."

The researcher notes that in these participant definitions, it is clear that the participants believe there is a scaffolded approach to a student's progression under the overall employability umbrella, using words and phrases such as "evolution", "multiple components", "beyond", "building", "higher level".

Continuing the idea of progression, 2 participants directly referred to career-readiness being linked to the completion of higher education study, due to its connection to higher order skills such as critical thinking, leadership and extended communication skills. Participant 004, who has a depth of knowledge within the Australian Vocational Education and Training (VET) system, described higher education as being responsible for career-focused development and VET for work-readiness, due to its reliance on competencies within its dissemination of curriculum. Participant 001 echoed the sentiment that higher education has a stronger requirement to focus on the career-readiness development of the student.

The participant group throughout the data was constantly connected to the student outcome. The researcher feels that it is significant to note that only 2 participants made any connection to student self-efficacy and only 3 to CDL (refer Table 16). Even when these references were made, they were indirect in nature and extrapolated in some form by the researcher. When student self-efficacy is such a foundational element in student career development and strongly linked with the student centric approach, this was a surprising outcome of the analysis process.

Overall, the lecturer participants still portrayed an inability to concisely express a definition of career-readiness or an understanding of the terminology in its own right rather than as interchangeable with employability or work-readiness.

5.2.4. ***Sub-theme 4: skills***

The researcher grappled with the use of the term skills for this sub-them and its associated codes in the analysis. Its connectedness to employability was strong but the term skills was utilised by the lecturer participants extensively and could not be ignored across the data, even if the use was considered inefficient by the researcher. Harvey (2005) used the term "technique" to define employability. This element of Harvey's definition – "employability is not just about getting a job; it's about developing attitudes, techniques and experiences for life" (p.13) – emphasises the need to develop work-related experience and skills.

The participants' views align well with competency-based employability literature (Andrews & Russell, 2012; Barrie, 2006; Cavanagh et al., 2015; Jackson, 2014; Kalfa &

Taksa, 2015; Yorke & Knight, 2006). A number of participant explanations and uses of the term “transferrable skills” in connection to student characteristics/traits aligned with Yorke and Knight’s (2006) employability definition:

> A set of achievements – skills, understandings and personal attributes – that make individuals more likely to gain employment and be successful in their chosen occupations, which benefits themselves, the workforce, the community and the economy. (p. 8)

Participant 001 spoke of transferrable skills being used to bring success to any role. This participant also used the terms employability and transferable skills interchangeably. Participants 006 and 005 listed skills which must be developed for student employability – critical thinking, creativeness, adaptability, communication – all competencies noted throughout the employability literature (Andrews & Russell, 2012; Barrie, 2006; Cavanagh et al., 2015; Jackson, 2014; Kalfa & Taksa, 2015) and expressed in Artess et al.’s (2017) list of possible skills and attributes, located in Table 22.

Table 22

List of graduate attributes and skills (Artess et al., 2017)

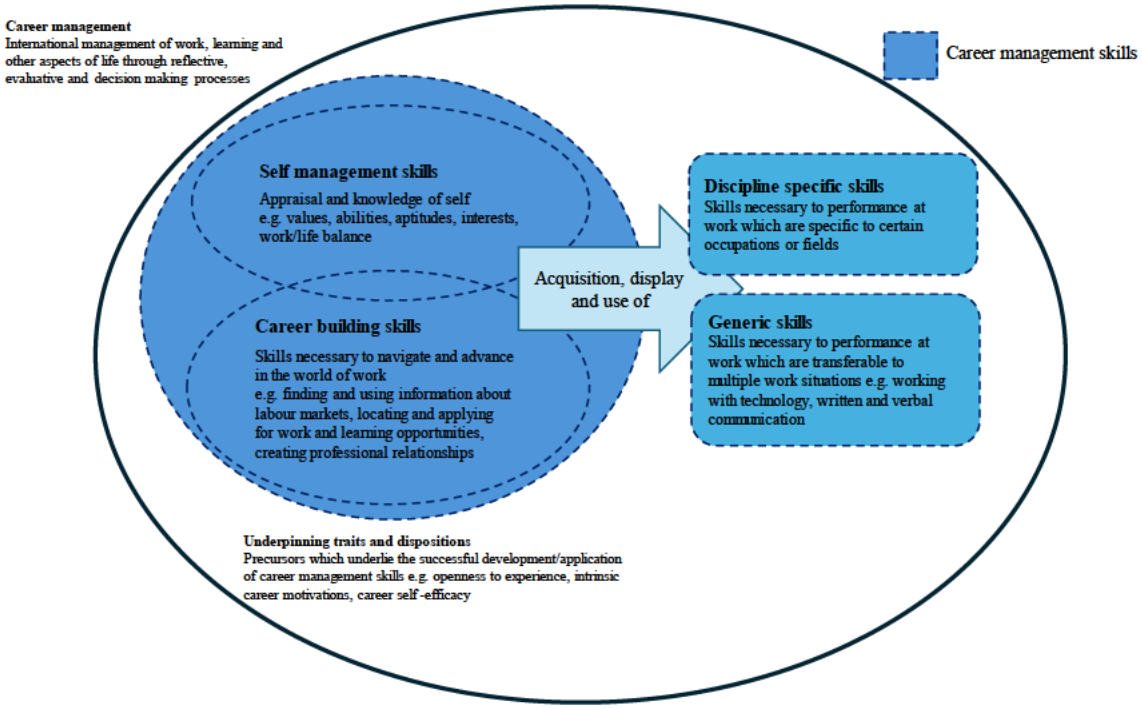
Graduate attributes		
Aspiration	Autonomy	Career management
Communication skills	Creativity	Critical thinking skills
Customer awareness	Digital literacy	Efficiency
Emotional intelligence	Enterprise and entrepreneurship	Ethics
Flexibility and adaptability	Giving and receiving feedback	Independent thinking
Initiative and self-direction	Inter-personal skills	Numeracy
Language skills	Multi-tasking	Opportunity awareness
Positive attitude	Presentation skills	Problem-solving
Professional knowledge	Research skills	Resilience
Self-management	Social intelligence	Team-work
Time management	Willingness to learn	Work ethic
Writing skills		
Career management skills		
Career adaptability	Career planning	Career resilience
Career self-efficacy	Curiosity and an inquiring attitude	Commitment to lifelong learning
Decision-making	Inter-personal and group work skills	Networking skills and managing social capital
Career management skills		
Opportunity awareness	Personal effectiveness/management	Professional or occupational identity formation
Reflection	Self-awareness and self-reflection	Self-management
Transition skills	Understanding how to ask for and access career support	

In the final review of the career management theme, the researcher thought it pertinent to round out the analysis by connecting the data to Bridgstock's (2009) employability model (see Figure 5). The model has an innate ability to encompass the key sub-themes and codes noted in the research. Given the evolving work landscape, an institution's ability to extend beyond providing generic and discipline-specific skills for graduate career development is vital. Bridgstock's model emphasised that:

> Career management skills and knowledge are essential to employability in that they play a large part in determining which, to what extent, in what manner, when and where, generic and discipline-specific skills are learned, displayed (e.g. in applying for a job) and used. (2009, p. 36)

Figure 5

Bridgstock's (2009) employability model



Although the lecturer participants throughout the interviews made no connection to employability models themselves, Bridgstock's model encapsulates the groups' strong need to talk about skills as a factor within the employability, work-ready and career-ready boundaries placed by the researcher question group. When breaking down Bridgstock's (2009) model, the lecturer participants as a whole were not focused on self-management and career building skills but talked very specifically about discipline-specific and generic skills through their continuous use of the term transferable skills. Participant 006 listed a number of generic skills which would contribute to the development of employability: "…broad thinking, creative, adaptable, solutions driven, empathetic, proactive".

5.3. **Theme 2: higher education and industry crossroads**

Universities and Institutes of Higher Education have continued to develop policy and actively seek to embed employability practices within the curriculum and assessments which underpin student success (Bridgstock & Jackson, 2019). The role of higher education has always been to produce human capital (Harvey, 2000; Suleman, 2018), the ability to have a

student develop skills, knowledge and attributes throughout their chosen qualification which enable them to secure employment. Higher education has turned to WIL to bridge the gap between academic knowledge and the skills required to enter the workforce successfully.

5.3.1. *Sub-theme 1: Work Integrated Learning*

WIL programs support the development of student skills and attributes which enhance the employability outcomes and capabilities of graduates (Fern & Lilly, 2015). Throughout the interviews, it became clear that lecturers valued WIL as an integral part of a higher education curriculum. With the ICHM delivering 50% of its bachelor degree as WIL, its value was embedded in the pedagogy of the lecturers interviewed. Participants 007 and 004 were very prescriptive about the importance of creating a teaching and learning environment which is both connected and relevant to the current industry requirements of their students. They commented:

> Obviously we all think about our teaching philosophy and what makes us do what we do. I guess creating an environment, for me, it's about having the students feel like what they do has relevance…and that the tools that we're providing them, the thinking, the theory, and then the practical is all relatable out into industry. (Participant 007)

> You give the kind of simulation of what industry is from the lens of the classroom. So, you are making the classroom as real as it is, and I think the context of teaching practical session or teaching WIL program courses is pretty much trying to bring life into education and education into life. So, by having the opportunity to do that, you are pretty much preparing the students to have that industry experience why they are not in the industry, but when they get to the industry, they are definitely able to simulate whatever they have learnt from the classrooms. (Participant 004)

However, the understanding of the role that WIL plays broadly, its various stakeholders and its connection to employability, work-readiness and career-readiness was limited amongst the interview group. Hagel et al. (2014) described the role of education as impacting 3 levels:

- “economic and intellectual value for individuals
- economic and productivity value for society

- civic benefits for society whereby education nurtures engaged citizens who contribute to society in positive ways".

None of Hagel et al.'s (2014) more sectoral and economic labour-driven views were noted by any lecturer participant. Comfort in the discussion of WIL was only found when linking the ICHM WIL program to curriculum, assessment and classroom-based pedagogical approaches. The lecturer interview group were very student-centric regarding the role that the institution plays in supporting student success whilst completing the ICHM qualification; however, few discussed the connection to the impact those students make on society as they enter the workforce.

Assessment, and WIL and its connection to theory, formed the overarching focus for the lecturers, with many feeling very comfortable about how theory and the WIL experience can be integrated into assessment to impact graduate industry outcomes. Participant 004 spoke of how challenging the evolution of industry in recent times has been for their ability to create curriculum that correlates with industry needs:

> I think with the current rising expectations, stronger competition, as well as the growing diverse in the workforce industry, I think this element represents the increasing challenges for institution when it comes to designing curriculum, evaluate students with current and relevant assessments for institutions to produce employable, and work ready graduates for the workforce. The industry assessment that we looked at in terms in the WIL program has to be rigorous…point number two is it has to be current and relevant to what industry is expecting, and if we are able to do that, be current and relevant in terms of assessments, we are actually aligned to what industry expectation is.

Although comfortable with WIL as a broad concept in connection to assessment and classroom pedagogy, this was only referred to with respect to the current ICHM WIL program and its placement model. No reference was made to the broader definition of WIL and its varying experiences. Zegwaard, Coll and Hodges (2023) provided a contemporary definition of WIL:

> 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. (p. 27)

ICHM's narrow view of WIL experiences came through in the interviewees' interpretations of WIL and their expectations of industry. As noted by Ferns (2018), there are many models of WIL which vary in intensity across a continuum from low to high authenticity. ICHM solely focuses on WIL placement, consequently, this is also where lecturers placed their focus. Although considered a benchmark institution with 100% of students receiving 18 months minimum paid placement experience, this narrow focus is limiting to the evolution of ICHM's curriculum development and student experience. Kay et al. (2019) recently outlined WIL trends research in Table 23.

Table 23

Kay et al.'s (2019) WIL trends

Contemporary Trends	Emerging/Innovative WIL Practices
Focus on preparing students for the 21st Century world of work	• WIL in start-ups, incubators and small to medium enterprises • Expansion of global WIL opportunities • Increase in multidisciplinary teams
Industry seeking greater engagement in WIL to identify talent and enhance graduate employability	• Co-designed with industry (e.g., hackathons) • Deeper long-term partnerships with universities • Event-based partnerships • Active engagement by industry associations • Company employees work with teams of students to solve problems in multidisciplinary teams
Focus on increasing skills in specific industry sectors or demand for skills (e.g., STEM)	• Emergence of brokers for specific industry sectors • Funding available for programs that target specific disciplines
Greater focus on developing entrepreneurial/intrapreneurial skills and capabilities in students	• WIL in incubators • Targeting engagement with start-ups by universities • Students starting businesses for WIL • Brokers targeting start-ups • Engagement with small to medium enterprises • Programs in universities focused on entrepreneurial skills including multidisciplinary projects
Expansion of global universities and increasing demand for global experiences for students	• Partnerships and collaboration between universities for WIL projects regionally and globally • Increased use of technology • Increased use of global networks of alumni
Increased focus on WIL resulting in increased competition between universities for WIL opportunities	• Expansion of partners for WIL including engagement with community organisations • Greater flexibility in duration (e.g., brief placements or micro placements) • Greater use of on-campus opportunities • Increased interest in use of technology and virtual opportunities • Broadening focus of WIL to non-traditional areas for students WIL experiences • Increased use of alumni • Rise of brokers, brokering systems and portals for profit and not-for-profit including industry associations and government
Focus on meeting international students' expectations, including industry experience due to strategic economic importance	• Specific initiatives for international students by universities • Initiatives and funding from state governments and funding from federal government • For profit brokers offering fee for service WIL experiences to international students

5.3.2. *Sub-theme 2: the institution*

The institution's role in developing graduate employability continues to evolve. The use of WIL programs to enhance graduate employability has been widely researched (Kinash et al., 2018; Smith et al., 2014; Winchester-Seeto, 2019). How institutions and industry strike a balanced relationship to support this appears to be more complex. Bridgstock (2016) noted that the ongoing dialogue between higher education institutions and industry is always advancing but industry do continue to express dissatisfaction with the skill sets that graduates bring to the workplace.

The lecturer participants were very focused on their ability to get students ready for placement from a theoretical perspective. However, they were also very passionate about using their own industry experience to connect theoretical learning to its use within industry. Participant 001 talked of their connection to their own industry experience and how they could then share that experience within the classroom to prepare students for placement. Participant 007 passionately noted, "I could teach a student in my class how to land a space shuttle on Mars, but if they can't use that skillset (in industry) then what's the point?".

The lecturer participants as a whole took accountability for institutional outcomes. Participant 007 displayed this when discussing how the institution must take responsibility for having the correct career discussions, "I think there is a large element of responsibility in us preparing a student to have the conversations about career…" The use of pronouns such as "us" and "we" throughout the interview transcripts from the majority of lecturers when referring to the role of the institution, was an interesting phenomenon. Participant 002 drew deeply on their career management experience within their previous studies. They were very definitive that the institution has impacted their experiences in higher education and provided a lack of focus on career development skills and curriculum. This was evidenced in their comment:

> ...because they come to us [industry], and they're not fully formed designers. That's actually a term...you know, they're not fully formed. They're not holistically actually given all of the skills that enables them to be effective in the workplace. I actually sought out additional training and watched a lot of videos in YouTube and things around how to build relationships and all of those career skills that you need.

Although the lecturers drew a lot of industry knowledge from their own previous or current experience, the data did not evidence lecturer discussion regarding interactions with industry from an academic perspective on behalf of the institution. There was no evidence of lecturer interacting with industry to seek guidance on what they needed from students entering WIL placements. However, previous study experience did show up extensively in the data. Lecturer preconceptions of what the institution was responsible for versus what the industry should do, based on their previous experience as students, were insightful. Participant 002 felt that their higher education experience as a student was very focused on the requirement to obtain graduate employment, not how to build a career, saying that their time at university "lacked the aspirational elements of career building".

5.3.3. *Sub-theme 3: industry as partner*

WIL and its associated employability outcomes cannot come to fruition without the assistance of industry who must supply the authentic work environments and the associated support that is required for a student to succeed.

When referencing external stakeholders and the role that industry plays, with particular reference to the 2 dominating points – assessment and equity in WIL placement – lecturers had strong views and noteworthy levels of concern. Brodie and Irving (2007) recognised the quality assurance challenges and equity and assessment standardisation when allowing industry to be part of assessment across a WIL program. Participant 001 had strong views on equitable practices across varying industry assessors in the one cohort of students:

> I think the challenge with having industry assessment impact a student's progression within a WIL program is that we need to make sure that it's a fair measurement across all students, and that's one of the challenging factors if there are multiple industry partners or different employers or even different supervisors, and also different workplaces, because there'll be various pressures, like the pressures in a workplace will differ according to the role, according to the season, according to all sorts of different factors that it's a really difficult thing to have a consistent measure for.

Participant 006, however, took a more commercial view of how industry could contribute to assessing students – potentially through performance reviews and tasks in which they are known to be more successful. That being said, they still spoke of equity challenges

across varying roles being completed by students during a WIL placement. Participant 006 said:

> I think we ask industry to sort of assess students very much in a similar way as maybe they would get a performance review or very much related to that, which I think obviously tests some of their work ready skills that they need in their particular role, but I think that when we're talking more strategically or more about how that continues to develop the student, or even thinking about the industry and how that might be changing, I think that becomes a bit more complex, and I think that's something we're not necessarily assessing at the moment. I think that is a really important component, but there's always also that we're asking the industry to assess, but how qualified are the people in industry, and is that going to be quite different across different roles?

Participant 007 questioned the transparency of industry when discussing the needs of their own workplaces. A lack of transparency does not allow the institution/industry partnership to moderate standards across the relationship to assist students to achieve desired outcomes. Participant 007 commented:

> If industry doesn't hold the same standards, higher or lower, than us, there's no way we can set the student up for success. They need to be transparent with us about what their requirements are and we need to do a good job of...a great job of engaging with them on that…

It became clear during the interviews that the relationship that the institution had with industry was strong when it came to the institution providing students who filled industry work shortages via the placement mechanism of WIL; however, the framework which surrounded the ongoing working relationship whilst the student undertook the placement, and the definition of each party's roles was not defined, as demonstrated by Participant 008's comment:

> I wonder is how much can we influence a person's attributes, or is a person's attributes something that the person actually comes to us with already? I'm not completely certain about this, actually, and whether sometimes our students,

> perhaps industry as well, expect a little bit much of what we, as an academic institution, can actually provide.

It was clear that the interviewees took ownership of assessment and pedagogy but there was a strong push for industry to take a greater responsibility in the area of continuing student career development, as evidenced by Participant 007's comment:

> We've three options in the way that we structure the undergraduate program, and knowing reasonably well the curriculum we offer them, I think there is a large element of responsibility in us preparing a student to have the conversations about career, but I see that as being a massive responsibility for the organisation that they work within as well. We can create skills that they can go and use and make them work ready and employable; we can't force an employer to have good, long-term architectural structure in their business. We can't force them to have good onboarding practices. We can give the student the theories around those, but if there's not a good career progression and mentor program or things like that out in the real world, in the workplace, we can make them career ready, but I'm not sure they can't be truly career without a partner, which would be industry.

Even with the push for industry to take a greater role in developing student career-readiness there was a significant level of distrust expressed by the lecturers, centred on assessment and industry's ability to assess in an equitable and constructive manner. Participant 008 passionately expressed concern that industry assessment was not equitable and that, unlike lecturing staff, industry staff were not able to separate assessment outcomes from personal like or dislike of a student. Participant 006 expressed discomfort with industry as assessor; they could see why it was important but they felt it was "a challenge to manage equitably". Ferns (2014) noted that:

> Students seldom work alone in the workplace – indeed often one of the desired learning outcomes of a WIL placement is the ability to work within professional teams resulting in highly variable learning inputs outside the control of either the student or the university. (p. 1)

It is noteworthy that industry was the only external stakeholder that the interviewees explicitly referred to. Common external stakeholders linked to successful WIL experiences, such as the community, discipline sector, alumni, regulatory bodies and professional associations, were only mentioned by Participant 004 and that was when they referred to industry and broad sector bodies assisting industry and institutions to work proactively together.

5.4. Theme 3: pedagogy of career management

5.4.1. *Sub-theme 1: assessment within a Work Integrated Learning program*

As a key mechanism to evidence student capability within a WIL program, assessment can also impact student engagement and strain the relationship between lecturer and student (Yorke & Knight, 2006; Ramsden, 2003). Assessment has often been described as a challenging component within a WIL program (Coll et al., 2002; Preece, 1993; Yorke, 2005; Zegwaard, Coll, & Hodges, 2003). The need to provide scaffolded assessment within WIL curriculum to enable students to display capabilities developmentally across a qualification is necessary to achieve institutional graduate employability outcomes. With scaffolding assessment in mind, the challenging decision arises as to how and when institutions should focus on CDL. A review of the literature on assessment in WIL shows that career development does not surface as a priority. Two lecturer participants noted the lack of career development focus, Participant 001 saying:

> Should be a greater focus in the assessment on career readiness to assist with students and their articulation of what that is when they move into industry, and this would then assist the graduate to be well prepared where they can then continue to grow their skills post-secondary study.

Participant 002 showed he was clearly negatively impacted by his personal experiences in higher education and the lack of focus on developing career-readiness. In his opinion, industry needs to take the lion's share of student career development during the WIL placement process. Participant 002 also went on to highlight his WIL experience embedded within his degree as "ticking off a checklist of skills for industry". There was no feedback or focus on career development, which would have been beneficial.

Cooper et al. (2010) noted that all 3 stakeholders within a WIL program need to take responsibility for assessment and bring different capabilities and perspectives to student learning and assessment. Participant 002 noted that industry and higher education don't always work "in sync to support students" during placement. Participant 002 noted that "conversations are being had but insular with little outcome". Participant 006 positively discussed the ability of industry to connect its assessment to performance reviews and this is where they feel comfortable. This perspective aligns with consistent research on the importance of students receiving opportunities to bring together personal evidence of achievement which is relevant to their professional identity outlook (Bridgstock, 2009; Clarke, 2018; Jackson & Tomlinson, 2019). A well-constructed and considered performance review during a WIL experience has the potential to assist students to draw these connections with guidance and thoughtfully constructed feedback. Although Participant 006 spoke positively of the importance of industry as part of the WIL assessment cycle, they also strongly questioned the capability, across varying industry employees, to assess equitably and have suitable qualifications and understanding of assessment principles to adequately assess and mentor students. The relationship built between the institution and industry to ensure engagement with alignment and moderation of assessment delivery and outcome activities becomes critical.

Varied assessment types within a WIL program allow a student a number of opportunities to express their learning within the authentic environment. The table of authentic learning activities and assessment examples developed by Kaider et al. (2017) has been utilised as a tool by academics to scaffold assessment across a WIL program. The approach by Kaider et al. (2017) also allows for varying types of assessment to be utilised, therefore reducing the concern of reliance on industry based assessment only. Participant 001 felt strongly that industry assessment should only be used as one evaluation tool of a student's progress within the program. At the ICHM, 3 summative assessment points plus one hurdle assessment of minimum hours completion and one industry evaluation tool are provided during each individual WIL placement. This aligns with Participant 001's extended thoughts on the importance of industry-based assessment being interpreted on an individual student basis. His felt that industry opinion should not be considered in isolation when reviewing a student's progression within the WIL program and their progression within the entire course. The ICHM BBHM111 Work Integrated Learning Subject Statement outlining the assessment requirements is provided in Appendix F.

5.4.2. *Sub-theme 2: the educator*

An educator's own education experience impacts how they conceptualise their teaching practice and integrate their personal and professional experience to form their educator identities and teaching philosophies (Britzman, 2003, Schoonmaker 2002, Kagan 1993). The ICHM academic lecturers all had extensive industry experience prior to accepting academic roles. Their industry and discipline experience and knowledge greatly outweighed their teaching and learning expertise. The ICHM deliberately recruits industry-based professionals and places greater importance on industry experience and expertise over teaching knowledge. The ICHM therefore needs to educate their lecturers on developing teaching philosophies and pedagogy which are necessary to bridge the teaching and learning gap. This provides an explanation for the lack of correct terminology and educational theory within the interview participant responses.

Participant 001 focused on the importance of having a deep understanding of oneself to enable a greater connection with the student. They articulated their own student journey and how they apply this as an educator to gain greater outcomes for their students: "Taking experiences as a student, as a graduate, reflecting on how those sorts of things would impact students and thinking about how they then can be applied (to the classroom)" and "My own reflection does play a part in thinking about assessment and in thinking about my conceptions of assessment".

Understanding the role and impact of the educator was key to Participant 006. She felt very comfortable knowing that her impact may not be felt immediately but may become useful to a student as they engage in employment in the future:

> I like to sometimes think that when I'm teaching my subjects, some of the stuff will fall into place…years down the track…provision of a more holistic overview and something we set in motion in higher education they [the student] develop later on.

Participant 002 spoke at length about the lack of educator involvement and lack of thoughtful and considered assessment throughout his bachelor's degree: "There may have been a reflection, but there certainly wasn't particularly very direct application to assessments at that time". He felt this shaped his conception of assessment and the importance of student

reflection and growth as it pertains to individual self-efficacy and career development. He has used this to form his pedagogical approach as an educator:

> I've flipped (my assessment approach)…from measuring content to actually measuring skills. So, …looking at and asking myself the question, what am I measuring here? Am I measuring an outcome or am I actually measuring a skill or a learning outcome in this instance?

As previously noted, the lecturer group channelled their own educational journey to conceptualise their pedagogical development. When it came to the concept of career, there was no connection of this concept to their study, but there was connection to WIL experiences and their ties to their personal graduate career outcome. Because of this, their conception of CDL was limited and discussion of career was linked closely to skills and knowledge, driven by an expectation of industry development during WIL and the concept of career management rather than CDL. The lecturer group's extensive experience in industry made the concept of career management more comfortable. Their understanding aligned with Watts' (2006) DOTS model, as shown in Figure 6.

Figure 6

DOTS Model (Watts, 2006)

The lecturer group's lack of understanding of CDL is a clear gap within their pedagogical practice.

5.4.3. ***Sub-theme 3: the student***

As the researcher disclosed, she holds an academic leadership role within the institution. If asked for a core strength of the institution they would call out student centricity as an active component of the institution's successful graduate outcomes. This is evident in the institution's Quality Indicators for Learning and Teaching (QILT) Student Experience (SES) and Graduation Outcomes Survey (GOS) results. ICHM comparator data from 2018 to 2022 is provided in Table 24

Table 24

ICHM Quality Indicators for Learning and Teaching, Student Experience and Graduation Outcomes Survey results comparator data from 2018 to 2022

Year	NUHEI National Total (%)	ICHM (%)	LCB (%)	ICMS (%)	William Angliss Institute (%)
Skills Development					
2018-2019	82.2 CI (82.0, 82.5)	90.4 CI (86.7, 92.5)	76.8 CI (70.4, 81.8)	83.2 CI (81.5, 84.6)	82.3 CI (79.9, 84.3)
2020-2021	80.2 CI (79.9, 80.5)	89.2 CI (84.4, 92.0)	81.0 CI (74.6, 85.8)	82.4 CI (80.2, 84.3)	80.4 CI (77.4, 82.9)
2021-2022	81.6 CI (81.3, 81.9)	89.9 CI (83.3, 93.4)	81.0 CI (72.4, 86.9)	81.9 CI (79.3, 84.1)	79.0 CI (75.0, 82.3)
Learner Engagement					
2018-2019	62.6 CI (62.3, 62.9)	80.6 CI (76.3, 83.7)	62.5 CI (55.7, 68.6)	69.9 CI (68.0, 71.6)	62.0 CI (59.3, 64.7)
2020-2021	56.2 CI (55.9, 56.6)	78.8 CI (73.3, 82.9)	49.1 CI (42.3, 55.9)	68.1 CI (65.7, 70.5)	60.1 CI (56.7, 63.3)
2021-2022	59.1 CI (58.8, 59.5)	77.5 CI (70.0, 82.9)	47.7 CI (39.0, 56.6)	66.9 CI (64.0, 69.7)	59.8 CI (55.4, 64.0)
Teaching Quality					
2018-2019	82.8 CI (82.5, 83.0)	87.7 CI (83.8, 90.1)	78.1 CI (71.8, 82.9)	80.8 CI (79.1, 82.2)	79.0 CI (76.5, 81.2)
2020-2021	80.9 CI (80.6, 81.1)	89.3 CI (84.6, 92.1)	80.0 CI (73.7, 84.8)	81.5 CI (79.4, 83.4)	78.7 CI (75.7, 81.3)
2021-2022	82.2 CI (81.9, 82.5)	85.5 CI (78.5, 89.9)	82.8 CI (74.5, 88.4)	82.7 CI (80.2, 84.8)	79.7 CI (75.8, 83.0)
Student Support					
2018-2019	77.5 CI (77.2, 77.8)	88.7 CI (84.8, 91.1)	71.0 CI (64.2, 76.6)	74.8 CI (72.9, 76.5)	75.0 CI (72.1, 77.6)
2020-2021	78.3 CI (78.0, 78.6)	89.0 CI (84.1, 91.9)	67.4 CI (60.0, 73.8)	77.6 CI (75.2, 79.8)	75.5 CI (71.9, 78.6)
2021-2022	79.5 CI (79.1, 79.8)	94.0 CI (88.1, 96.6)	63.3 CI (53.8, 71.7)	79.5 CI (76.7, 81.9)	74.2 CI (69.6, 78.2)
Learning Resources					
2018-2019	76.2 CI (75.9, 76.6)	75.6 CI (70.9, 79.2)	67.4 CI (60.6, 73.2)	71.8 CI (69.9, 73.6)	72.9 CI (70.2, 75.3)
2020-2021	73.2 CI (72.8, 73.5)	84.2 CI (78.6, 88.0)	65.3 CI (56.7, 72.9)	71.3 CI (68.4, 74.1)	73.9 CI (70.1, 77.2)
2021-2022	76.0 CI (75.6, 76.3)	83.6 CI (76.2, 88.4)	62.8 CI (51.1, 73.0)	74.2 CI (71.0, 77.1)	74.5 CI (69.6, 78.7)
Quality of Entire Educational Experience					
2018-2019	79.4 CI (79.2, 79.7)	87.1 CI (83.2, 89.5)	72.9 CI (66.4, 78.2)	77.6 CI (75.9, 79.2)	78.0 CI (75.5, 80.2)
2020-2021	72.6 CI (72.3, 72.9)	79.8 CI (74.3, 83.8)	67.0 CI (60.1, 73.0)	75.0 CI (72.7, 77.1)	66.6 CI (63.3, 69.6)
2021-2022	76.1 CI (75.8, 76.4)	80.3 CI (73.0, 85.4)	64.6 CI (55.5, 72.5)	77.5 CI (74.8, 79.8)	70.1 CI (65.9, 73.9)

Participant 001 noted that it was important to provide a growth dialogue with students. He liked to do this through using reflection and working with students so that he had an opportunity to understand how reflection spoke to their progress and success. Participant 006 also spoke to the salient nature of their role in assisting students make connections to developing their character and not just acquiring theory.

A holistic approach to the student was evident throughout the interviews. Concern for how students need to balance work requirements with study and the challenges this presents

to completing assessments and their corresponding learning outcomes was noted by Participant 005. They worked to ease this pressure through assessment design and by providing student choice, and by aligning assessment to their experiences before and during their WIL. He felt this provided the optimal opportunity for success for the student. Although Participant 005 was very focused on engaging students within assessment, Participant 001 was quite vocal about students not valuing assessment due to the misunderstanding of the concept, but he was not solution-driven as to how to educate students. Participant 005 holds an education degree and has practiced as a registered teacher, whereas Participant 001 entered academia straight from industry. The researcher believes that the divergence in teaching experience is responsible for these opposing views.

There were a number of references to the student's application of theoretical learning within the workplace. This involved how the students were able to interact with industry effectively whilst also working towards their own personal growth. Participant 004 was very interested in ensuring that the student was able to transition from a reliance on their current student perspective developed on-campus to an effective industry practitioner. Participant 001 also wanted the student to be able to apply the research and theory learnt in class in a way which not only allowed them to be comfortable within a workplace setting but also to contribute positively to improving workplace outcomes. Participant 006 was connected to closing the loop on the return of students from their WIL experiences. They were passionate about students being capable of sharing their experiences within a broader setting when they returned to the classroom to allow for peer learning, rather than reflection being driven by them as the educator. This allows the student to make a deeper connection to career development and learning – being able to engage in story telling experiences enhances their own understanding of the nature of employability.

5.4.4. ***Sub-theme 4: reflection within Work Integrated Learning assessment***

A WIL curriculum needs to be developed to provide students with the ability to "direct one's life by making judgements and behaviours and self-conscious reflection about what they are thinking and doing" (Doris, 2015, p.18). Hicks (2005, p. 59) discussed the importance of the lecturer creating curriculum that can move students to the "edge of knowing – a powerful place where students are more apt to choose to act differently and then offer them option for responding to what they learn as a result of their reflection". The lecturers focused on student reflection within assessment, both within the theorical classroom and whilst on WIL placement.

Participant 001 spoke passionately about the theme of reflection within a WIL program. She believes strongly in the need to use a growth dialogue to assist students with their reflective practices. Her focus was to work with students to give them an opportunity to understand their reflection and link it directly to their progression and feelings of success. She extended on this by noting the importance of the student making a clear connection between their academic learning and the benefits of that knowledge transfer to the workplace during WIL.

Participants 002, 003 and 008 felt that reflection as part of WIL assessment aligned directly with a student's development of career readiness. Participant 008 drew on her own experience within industry, where she described integrating reflective practices with her staff as a manager and the benefit which was gained from the junior staff interacting with senior members of her team, in the development of their career aspirations. Her own experiences were the foundation for her drive to ensure that students were provided the opportunity to benefit from reflective activity whilst on WIL or during authentic assessment activities. Although Participant 008 did also express concern with the lack of understanding of employability concepts: "I think they [work-readiness and career-readiness] should underpin assessment construction by first being defined…what we mean by work-readiness and what do we mean by career-readiness, and then we have to work backwards from those intended learning outcomes". The researcher found it intriguing that this lecturer participant had such a strong connection to reflective assessment and its impact on career development and employability, yet expressed such great concern for how the terms are understood to be able to create effective assessment within a WIL program.

Participant 003 also drew on their WIL experience within their own degree, noting that the experience meant that they were able to see the impact of poorly constructed assessment and its inability to allow for reflection within WIL programs:

> reflecting on assessments that I had when I was at university that weren't tied particularly to a WIL program, I struggled to integrate knowledge that I had learned. If I had assessment that was tied within my workplace, it would allow me to connect theory and reflect on what I had done within the workplace.

He expressed some disappointment with the missed opportunities across his university studies due to poor WIL assessment construction, going on to describe how if he had been provided with WIL assessment designed to enhance reflective practices it would have allowed him to reflect on his career aspirations and connect the theory and knowledge to real

world environments for personal development. It was clear to the researcher that he was passionate about his ability to provide this to his own students.

5.5. Conclusion

The analysis of Study 2 Lecturers, produced three themes, career management, higher education and industry crossroads, and pedagogy of career management. A correlation between the themes materialized as an absence of career terminology as it relates to the construct of a WIL program and the assessment of WIL became evident. Prior to the analysis of the lecturer participant interview transcripts CDL had not been a focal point within the research however, it has emerged as a salient concept impacting lecturer's ability to understand the interrelationship between employability, work-readiness and career-readiness. The impact of CDL on the research will be further explored within Chapter 6.

CHAPTER 6: GENERAL DISCUSSION AND RESULTS

6.1. Overview

The research was underpinned by 3 questions:

RQ1 What are current academic faculty conceptions of work-readiness, career-readiness and their connection to graduate employability within a private higher education WIL program?

RQ2 How can educators reconceptualise work-readiness and career-readiness as a foundation for an evidence-based approach to authentic assessment?

RQ3 Which authentic assessment strategies will help to evaluate a student's work-readiness and career-readiness within a WIL program to ensure the optimisation of their sustainable success within the work environment?

This concluding chapter will provide a summary of the overall research findings. It will then discuss the theoretical and methodological implications derived from the findings, present the research limitations and offer recommendations for future research.

The aim of the research was to provide insight from lecturers and students into their conceptions of work-readiness, career-readiness and employability. Using the lens of a higher education institute, the ICHM, the researcher was able to embed themselves within a 30-year-old WIL program and gain insights from both lecturers and students about the effectiveness of authentic assessment to evaluate the understanding and development of employability and work-readiness and career-readiness for sustainable student outcomes.

Two qualitative studies were conducted that sought to determine individuals' perceptions and experiences of WIL. To collect valid data related to the diversity of individuals' thoughts and experiences, the research used semi-structured interviews as its method and dataset. The qualitative component of this research involved data collected via the semi-structured interviews, across 2 data groups – students (n = 12) and lecturers (n = 8). Interviewing enabled both the interviewees and interviewer to exchange thoughts on and their interpretations of the subject matter and its interconnectedness to the world around them (Cohen., 2002).

Both the student and lecturer questions were centred primarily around their understandings of employability, work-readiness, career-readiness and assessment of WIL. Existing research offers limited constructive evidence to guide educator support of student

transition to the world of work (Cabellero & Walker, 2010; Casner-Lotto & Barrington, 2006; Smith et al., 2014). Furthermore, WIL research uses a number of terms interchangeably (Cabellero & Walker, 2010; Smith et al., 2014). This lack of clarity arguably stems from the multilayered conceptions within the umbrella term of "employability", interchangeable use of conceptions and resultant confusion created by author use of employability to flag related concepts such as "work-readiness" (Clark, 2013) and "career-readiness" (Career Readiness Partnership Council, 2012) and "CDL" (Knight & Yorke, 2004b).

The second focus of the questions for both interview groups was assessment for work-readiness and career-readiness. The student focus in this area was around the importance of assessment as part of their WIL experience. Whereas for the lecturers, the researcher focused on discovering the interviewees' conceptions of assessment, based on their educational backgrounds.

The interviews lasted between 15 and 30 minutes each. Each interview was conducted online synchronously through the use of Microsoft Teams. The researcher's choice to conduct the interviews online rather than face-to-face was solely due to the COVID-19 restrictions in place at the time. Although a set of interview questions was produced for each group, the research took a semi-structured approach to ensure that the interpretation of each answer could be explored, understood and interpreted in a meaningful way. Each study participant group received a set of base interview questions (see Table 25).

Table 25

Study 1 – Student and Study 2 – Lecturer semi structured interview questions

Study 1 - Student	Study 2 - Lecturer
1. What is your understanding of employability?	1. What is your understanding of employability?
2. What is your understanding of student work-readiness and what would it mean for you as a student to be work-ready?	2. What is your understanding of student work-readiness and what does it mean for a student to be work-ready?
3. What is your understanding of career-readiness as it relates you as a student completing a higher education degree?	3. What is your understanding of career-readiness as it relates to students in higher education?
4. Thinking about the three concepts of employability, work-readiness and career-readiness, how has the WIL assessment you have completed connected with these concepts?	4. Thinking about the three concepts of employability, work-readiness and career-readiness, how would you describe their relationship to each other?
5. What is your understanding of the function of assessment within a WIL program? How do you think assessment impacts your WIL experience and learning outcomes?	5. What is your understanding of the function of assessment within a WIL program? To what extent do you think your career journey shaped your conceptions of that?
6. In your view how does industry assessment impact on your development as a student progressing within a WIL program?	6. In your view what impact does industry assessment have on the student progression within a WIL program and how do you evaluate that progression?
	7. How do you believe the concepts of work-readiness and career-readiness should underpin assessment construction?

The findings from the thematic analysis of the interview data will be discussed in the following sections.

6.1.1. Lack of terminology and definition understanding

One of the primary goals of the research was to discover educators' conceptions of employability, work-readiness and career-readiness within a higher education WIL program. The researcher asked both study participant groups the same definition-based questions:

1. What is your understanding of employability?
2. What is your understanding of student work-readiness and what does it mean for a student to be work-ready?
3. What is your understanding of career-readiness as it relates to students in higher education?

There were clear connections made by both Study 1 and Study 2 participants about the importance of each of the 3 terms being directly connected to WIL and assessment within a WIL program; however, it was extremely evident from the analysis that the definitions of each concept varied between participants. The definitions were also, on the whole, narrow in their approach, lacking clarity and not concise. When the researcher asked the question, many times she was met with a level of uncertainty and insecurity because the participant did not feel able to provide a concise and descriptively correct answer backed by research or did not feel confident about having a thorough understanding of the concept within a higher education context.

As well as the lack of ability to provide a strong and concise definition of employability, work-readiness and career-readiness, the participants struggled to articulate succinctly the connection between each of the 3 terms but rather used their experience within WIL programs to provide examples of how they believed the terms were developed as part of a student's growth and development over time. As with many studies within the literature (Artess et al., 2017; Fugate & Kinicki, 2008; Knight & Yorke, 2004b; Rothwell et al., 2008; Speight et al., 2013; Vanhercke et al., 2014; Williams et al., 2016; Wittekind et al., 2010), there is a clear lack of understanding of terminology which on many occasions is used interchangeably.

The research concluded that the term employability could not be defined by participants of either study 1 or study 2 in a way that linked to various definitions provided by its associated literature (Artess et al., 2017; Fugate & Kinicki, 2008; Knight & Yorke, 2004b; Rothwell et al., 2008; Speight et al., 2013; Vanhercke et al., 2014; Williams et al., 2016; Wittekind et al., 2010). The term employability was used

interchangeably with the term employment or with the concept of being employed. For Study 1 Student participants, employability was defined via their understanding of skills and how they linked to student career progression. They specifically noted skills and knowledge as the underlying foundations of the concept of employability. For Study 2 Lecturer participants, employability in the context of the student was about their ability to equip students with knowledge and skills so that they could obtain employment. The research highlighted the limited understanding of the role of career development within a WIL program and integration within higher education curriculum for both study groups.

The researcher concluded that Study 1 Student participants had a limited understanding of work-readiness. Their view was literal in its articulation of discipline skills and basic theoretical knowledge to obtain entry level work. The same conclusion of limited understanding of work-readiness was reached for Study 2 Lecturers. It was about the ability of a student to obtain a job role. The research also concluded that the lecturer group felt that the ability of a student to be employed was also based on them meeting the expectation of industry, in terms of what skills they required to be employed. Industry as a stakeholder in work-readiness was clearly articulated.

One clear distinction between Study 1 and 2 participants was that the student participants interlinked self-efficacy within their understanding of work-readiness. They were clear that having the confidence to obtain a job made them work-ready. They felt that authentic experiences within their higher education studies provided them with the experience required to gain confidence to be effective in an entry level role within their degree discipline.

The researcher concluded that participants did not define career-readiness in the same way as the associated literature (Campbell & Price, 2016; Career Readiness Partnership Council, 2012; Clark, 2013). The literature provides limited definitions, as did the participants of both studies. The researcher concluded that there was a clear consensus that career-readiness involves higher order skills and personal development of the student through experience within employment environments. The higher order skills were described as transferrable skills such as problem-solving, critical thinking, decision-making and the ability to analyse situations. The student group saw these skills as an extension of the basic entry level discipline task-related skills. Study 1 Students believed that career-readiness was developed through employment progression. Study 2 Lecturers had extremely varied views of career-readiness and was the most misunderstood term by the participant group. The researcher felt the uncertainty strongly throughout the

interviews. The researcher concluded that this uncertainty was due to the lecturing group having limited experience or formal education in career development as it related to higher education curriculum and assessment.

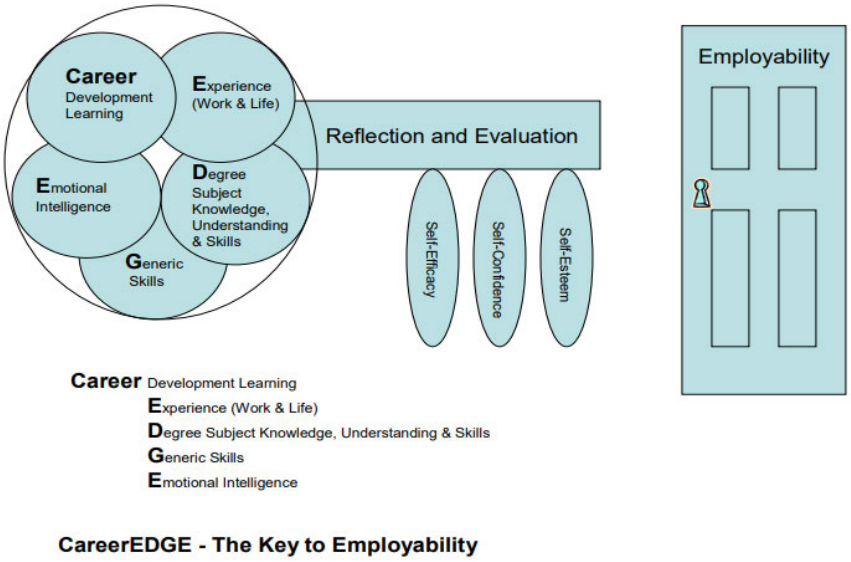
6.1.2. Employability, work-readiness and career-readiness as a development continuum

In the same vein that it was difficult for participants of both study 1 and 2 to articulate clear definitions and understanding of the three key terms within the research, they also found it confusing to try to align the terms with student progression and career development.

Each study group relied on their understanding of skills to relate to how a student progresses within their employability journey. Rather than providing a substantial definition of each term, they linked skill types to the terms work-readiness and career-readiness. Work-readiness was associated with lower order thinking, base professional skills and basic discipline skills that allow a student to be able to complete entry level tasks correlating to the requirements of entry level employment. Career-readiness was associated with experience and higher order transferrable skills. The researcher was able to extrapolate a clear continuum of development between the terms employability, work-readiness and career-readiness from the 2 study group interviews. The participants provided answers that allowed the researcher to form a view of student development throughout a WIL program based on how the Study 1 – student's articulated experiences of their time completing their WIL placement coupled with their time spent completing on campus studies post WIL. The research confirmed the importance and currency of all elements of Dacre Poole and Sewell's (2007) CareerEDGE Model of Employability. The researcher did note, however, that the model does not contain a clear view of the progression a student experiences when transitioning from work-readiness to career-readiness. The notion of a transition from one to the other was very evident within the interview responses from both study group participants. Dacre Pool et al (2007) refined their initial model (Figure 7) which showed each individual component and how they might interact.

Figure 7

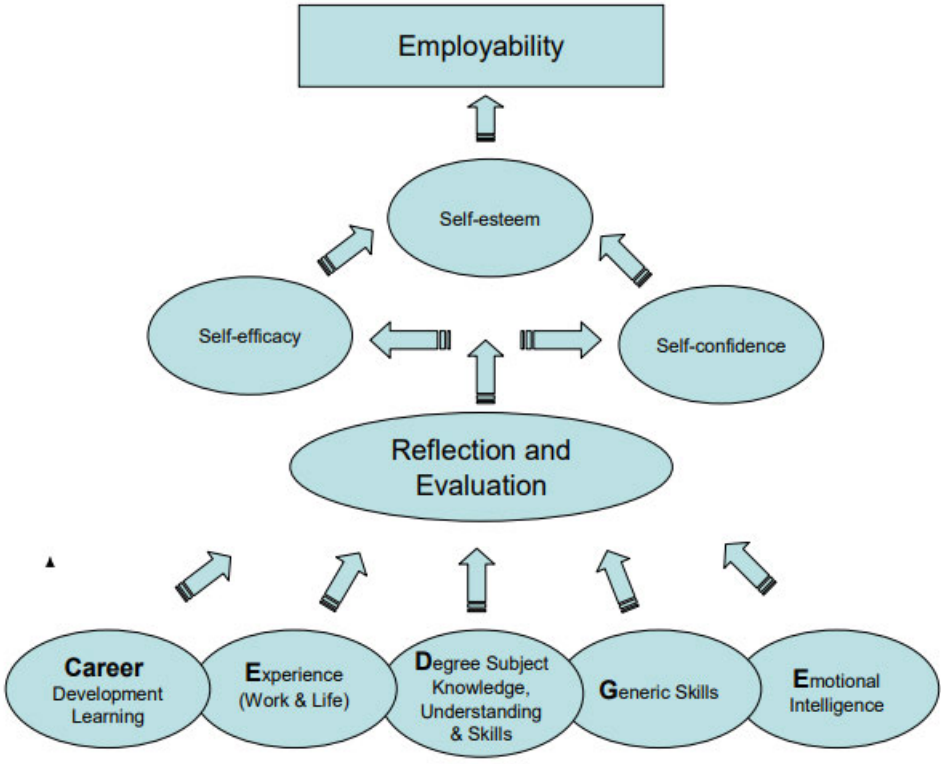
Initial Career EDGE employability model



The final model described by Dacre Poole et al. (2007) seen in Figure 8, "reflects the assertion that each component is absolutely essential and one missing element will considerably reduce a graduate's employability" (p.8).

Figure 8

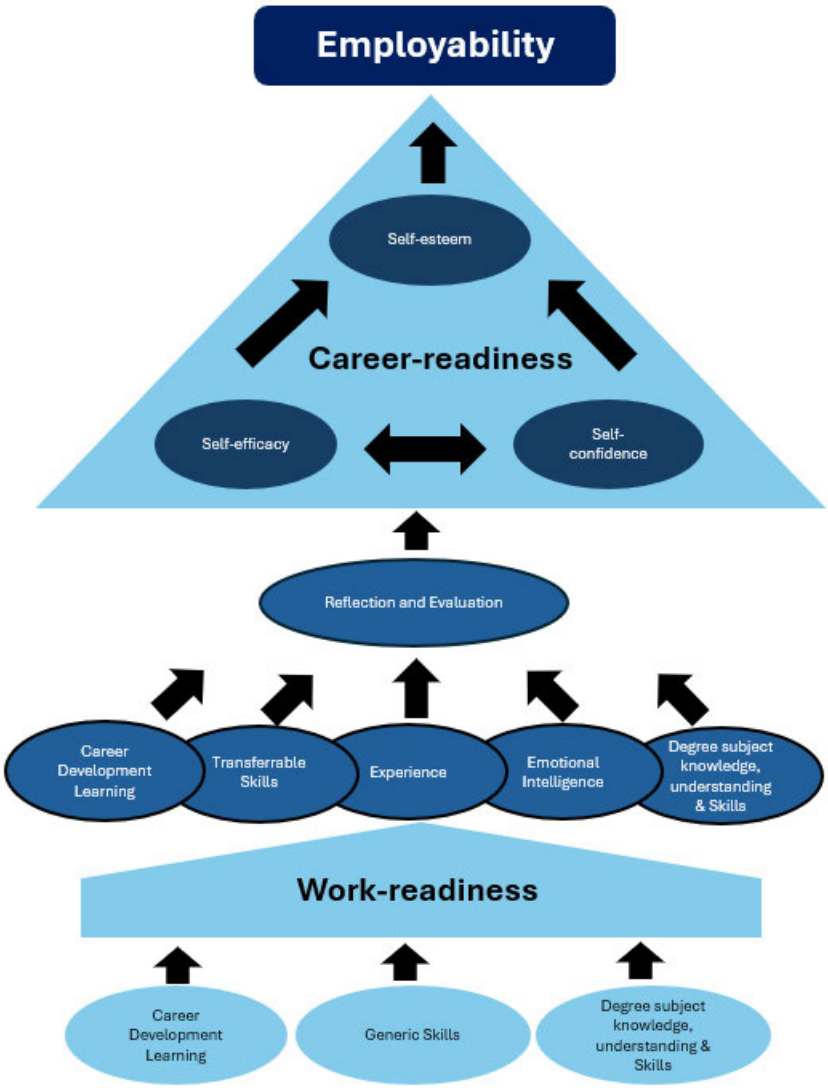
Final Career EDGE employability model



The research outcome, coupled with the Study 2 Lecturer participants' perceptions of how they integrate skill development associated with work-readiness and career-readiness into their pedagogical approach, suggested an adaptation of the Career EDGE research model (Dacre Poole et al., 2007), incorporating the continuum described across the interview participant responses. The researcher proposes another evolution of the Career EDGE (Dacre Poole et al., 2007) model, incorporating a work-readiness and career-readiness continuum (see Figure 9). This model contributes to the current literature by providing an accessible framework for developing relevant assessment of work-readiness and career-readiness within WIL programs.

Figure 9

Proposed Career EDGE model of employability including work-readiness and career-readiness



The integration of work-readiness and career-readiness terminology into the CareerEDGE model provides the clarity both the student and lecturer research participants were seeking when attempting to describe the career learning journey experienced during WIL programs. The ability of the model to link the transition from work-readiness to career-readiness can influence each WIL stakeholder's understanding of employability development, thus enabling them to scaffold assessment more effectively within curriculum. During study 2 Lecturers, the participants could speak to the continuum between work-readiness and career-readiness through experiences however could not align their thoughts with correct terminology. The model allows for a greater understanding of terminology leading to increased confidence in the development of curriculum and assessment for employability outcomes. Throughout the analysis of Study 1 Students, it became clear that their understanding of career development whilst on WIL matured as they embarked on multiple WIL experiences. Providing the proposed Career EDGE model at the commencement of a student's WIL journey could inform their understanding of their personal evolution, influencing the development of their self-efficacy.

Within the literature review the researcher proposed an alternate definition of employability as a single starting point for the research:

> Employability is the culmination of skilful practice and knowledge, developed reflectiveness and adaptive behaviour which leads to an understanding of personal value and self-efficacy to gain employment within a chosen field.

The work-readiness transition to career-readiness continuum that has emerged from both study 1 and 2 highlights the importance of the words "leads to an understanding of…" within the definition which speaks to a journey between the work-ready elements of skills and knowledge which enables reflection and evaluation to the career-ready elements of self-efficacy and value (self-esteem, self-confidence).

A finding of the research was that both Study 1 and 2 participants articulated a development of work-readiness elements associated with CDL, generic skills and discipline knowledge which they associated with work-readiness. The Study 1 Student participants then clearly articulated a progression in their self-efficacy and personal growth and development, aligned with career-readiness, which developed from an increase in discipline knowledge,

experience, transferrable skills and CDL. As students progressed through their WIL experiences, the strength of their self-awareness and self-efficacy grew.

There is a gap in the CDL literature which could be filled by a separate focus that is independent of employability scholarship, in relation to its integration into the Australian higher education curriculum (Healy, 2023, Dean et al., 2022). This research has confirmed that CDL, and its juxtaposition of learning about the world of work, incorporating learning about self, may provide a foundation upon which educators could develop learning related to elements of both work-readiness and career-readiness.

6.1.3. Lecturer philosophy

During the semi-structured interviews with Study 2 Lecturers, participants were asked how their conceptions of assessment were developed through their past experiences and personal career journey. Question 5 opened the door for the discussion:

> Question 5: What is your understanding of the function of assessment within a WIL program? To what extent do you think your career journey shaped your conceptions of that?

The lecturers showed a strong connection to their self-awareness and the impact their strong industry experience could have in the classroom environment. The lecturer group used little educational theory to discuss their understanding of pedagogy but their descriptions and examples of classroom interactions with students showed an understanding of pedagogical practice and underlying personal teaching and learning philosophy.

The demographic of the lecturer group show that 5 of the 8 participants have extensive industry experience over 10 years, with all 5 holding executive level industry experience within their discipline prior to entering academia.

The lecturers' previous industry experience is what drove their connection to WIL and the importance of embedding WIL learnings within the curriculum. Although the lecturer group were confident enough in their industry experience to share their knowledge and learning with students, there was at times during the interviews a level of frustration at not having the skills to articulate their practice through an educational theory-based lens. None of the 8 Study 2 participants had a formal education qualification. A key confirmation of the research was the importance of scholarly teaching – a concept highly informed and discussed by Boyer (1990) as part of the Boyer Model of scholarship, shown in Table 25.

Table 26

Boyer (1990) Model of scholarship

Type of Scholarship	Purpose	Measures of Performance
Discovery	Build new knowledge through traditional research.	• Publishing in peer-reviewed forums • Producing and/or performing creative work within established fi eld • Creating infrastructure for future studies
Integration	Interpret the use of knowledge across disciplines.	• Preparing a comprehensive literature review • Writing a textbook for use in multiple disciplines • Collaborating with colleagues to design and deliver a core course
Application	Aid society and professions in addressing problems.	• Serving industry or government as an external consultant • Assuming leadership roles in professional organizations • Advising student leaders, thereby fostering their professional growth
Teaching	Study teaching models and practices to achieve optimal learning.	• Advancing learning theory through classroom research • Developing and testing instructional materials • Mentoring graduate students • Designing and implementing a program level assessment system

The importance of raising the quality of teaching and learning in higher education is a theme of great discussion (Healey, 2000; Richlin, 2001; Watters & Diezmann, 2005;). The lecturer participants, with their extensive industry leadership experience, have engaged strongly in the "application" element of Boyer's model through leadership roles in professional organisations within their disciplines. Their practical contribution to the element of "teaching" via graduate mentoring and enhancing instructional materials through highly impactful collaboration with industry. However, this research shows that what lecturers were missing is what Fleming et al. (2004) described as "opportunities to engage in critical reflexive pedagogy, widely acknowledged as an important element in continuing professional development" (p. 165).

The Study 2 Lecturers group showed behaviours that conveyed that they are passionate and student-centric educators. They relied on their industry skills to direct them in educating students for exceptional graduate outcomes. Their success was evident through the

QILT and SES results, in the areas of student perception of teaching quality and practices, as shown against comparator institutions in previous Table 23.

This research discovered that the Study 2 Lecturer group lacked self-efficacy to articulate their teaching philosophy through pedagogical theory and understanding. Given the researcher's close proximity to the lecturing group, along with her formalised qualification in teaching and classroom experience, she was able to extrapolate the intent of the lecturers' answers through a more theoretical lens. The ability for educators to feel confident to make clear theoretical connections to gain greater self-efficacy was evident in the research's final results. The ongoing impact of this research and future directions for further research will be discussed later in this chapter.

6.1.4. Lecturer understanding of career development

Graduate employability has been prioritised by the higher education sector to to ensure that institutions are delivering on the expectations of government policy and labour market pressures. To meet these pressures, institutions have focused on WIL and, until recently to a lesser extent, CDL (Dean et al., 2022). The Study 2 Lecturer participants found it difficult to define career-readiness and there was a noticeable absence of any reference to CDL within the interview transcriptions. The lecturer group relied solely on their understanding of employability via the integration of the institution's WIL program and industry relationships. Due to the siloed discipline nature of the ICHM as a hotel school, delivering only hospitality qualifications, there was a notable lack of CDL embedded within its curriculum. This position has not been assisted by the fact that there is a lack of career development perspective within graduate employability scholarship (Healy, 2023).

When reference was made to career by the lecturer participants, they either used their own career journey as a guide to develop their own pedagogical approach to the concept or they felt that career development was the responsibility of the industry partner involved in the student WIL program. The lecturer group approach was simplistic, being skills- and knowledge-driven, with consistent alignment to the DOTS model (Watts, 2006). The DOTS model is constructed of four domains – decision-making, opportunity awareness, transitions and self-awareness – that articulate career management skills and knowledge content (Watts, 2006). Although some praise the DOTs model for its enduring simplicity (Dacre Pool & Sewell, 2007), it has come under scrutiny (Healy, 2023; McCash, 2006). As a framework for career management skills, it is fit for purpose; however, Healy (2023) noted that "the DOTS model does not describe a process of CDL accounting for how students develop psycho-

social qualities and resources such as professional identity, career self-concept, adaptability or proactivity" (p. 1306).

The research findings show that the lecturer participant comments had greater alignment with the DOTS model. This confirms that their understanding of CDL is narrow and requires a greater scholarship focus for future development of an institution-wide embedding of CDL into the ICHM curriculum.

Although the research found that the Study 2 Lecturer participants had a narrow conception of CDL and directed their focus almost solely on WIL as the overarching tool for developing student career-readiness, the Study 1 Student participants had strong connections to reflective practices and development of career-readiness skills and personal metacognition. The findings conclude that, through the student responses, the ICHM has a strong integration of reflective pedagogical practices within their WIL program assessment and curriculum. McIlveen et al. (2011) noted that CDL aligns with educational approaches which use application of knowledge and skills, critical thinking and reflection to assist students to make meaningful connections to work experiences and career opportunities. Although ICHM does not have an institutional pedagogical framework which involves CDL, the research shows it is, inadvertently through its WIL program, initiating the required pedagogy to obtain the relevant student employability outcomes.

Due to CDL not traditionally being integrated into academic workload calculations or role descriptions but rather sitting within higher education institution student services and support roles, there has been a lack of accountability from academics to take ownership of embedding CDL into their curriculum (Bennett et al., 2016; Dean et al., 2022). This was noticed within the research, with the lecturing group describing student career development as a role which should be carried out by industry within WIL programs. The ICHM has the role of Industry and Career Development Manager who oversees all aspects of the ICHM WIL Program. This role has enabled the lecturing team to take limited accountability for student employability outcomes and career development. The research found that although there was a strong focus on student's employability outcomes by the lecturer participants and that they used their own experience to embed components of career development within their subjects, the oversight and accountability fell within the Industry and Career Development Department of the ICHM.

6.1.5. Shifting focus: incorporating career development learning and management into the curriculum

The ICHM has a rich history, with its Bachelor of Business (Hospitality Management) developed using the Swiss hotel model of 50% of the degree as industry-based paid WIL. The ICHM deliberately hires industry-based academics or senior hospitality industry leaders and then works with them to teach them the art of teaching and learning within higher education. Although this has driven the success of ICHM through greater industry understanding and connection within the classroom and teaching and learning pedagogy, it has provided for a narrow focus not only on WIL but only on one form of WIL, placement, to the deliberate exclusion of a number of other valid and career-readiness enhancing WIL models such as entrepreneurial opportunities, industry project collaborations, community engagement and multidisciplinary WIL (Ferns, 2018).

The research findings revealed a clear understanding and appreciation of WIL but as previously noted, a narrow and limited understanding of CDL. The lecturer group, however, was willing to embrace the student employability journey and engage in scholarship to reduce their uncertainty and lack of pedagogical theoretical understanding. Their industry experiences are a strength in expediting their understanding of CDL. The research highlights some key considerations that ICHM will need to review if deciding to move from a WIL-only focused employability institutional focus to one which looks to broaden its employability framework and embrace purposeful and meaningful CDL integration into the curriculum:

1. The ICHM lecturers have had Industry and Career Managers manage the career development process since inception of the WIL program. The lecturers are not career advisors, nor do they have formal education in the specialised discipline of career advising. It is salient to provide aligned support services that complement a newly developed framework.
2. The ICHM will need to develop a robust scholarship model to upskill academic staff in CDL.
3. Constructive alignment mapping will need to be completed, to begin the process of realigning curriculum to embed CDL learning as a scaffolded approach across the qualification.
4. The ICHM academic team will need to adjust to potentially new curriculum components, methods and/or practices.

6.1.6. Connection to assessment

Analysis revealed that all participants from both the student and lecturer groups found assessment to be a salient factor within the WIL program. The positive approach to assessment from both participant groups lays a solid foundation for educators to reconceptualise assessment for enhanced graduate employability and CDL student outcomes. Authentic assessment has become the primary complimentary practice to WIL placements (James & Casidy, 2018). The research concludes that Study 1 Students had made a strong connection to assessment incorporating reflective practise and articulated that it was beneficial in helping them to develop employability outcomes. The reflective nature of the institution's assessment had two distinct impacts on the student participant group. Students:

1. reflected on the successful application of work-readiness skills within their WIL placement organisation.
2. reflected on their personal growth and increased self-efficacy post-WIL placement for continuing career and professional identity development.

As stated by Ajjawi et al. (2020), and consolidated by the literature "research highlights a number of critical design criteria for students to perceive assessment as authentic to future employment, including that tasks encourage: 1) cognitive, physical and social proximity to the practice landscape of the workplace; 2) student reflexivity of their positioning in the practice; 3) student capability to judge and monitor the quality of their work and 4) co-ordination among students, academics and industry partners" (p. 123) (Ashford-Rowe et al., 2014; Bosco & Ferns, 2014; Gulikers et al., 2004; Tai et al., 2018; Villarroel et al., 2018). The researcher concludes that the authentic assessment practices implemented by the ICHM, underpinned by reflective practices, met the four critical design criteria (Ajjawi et al., 2020) for rich impact of student employability outcomes.

Study 2 Lecturers spoke confidently about bringing industry experience to life within a classroom setting. The extensive industry background of the lecturers allows them to comfortably share experiences and examples relating to theoretical components of the curriculum. Kaider et al (2017) provided examples of high authenticity and low proximity learning activities which can successfully be utilised as introductory WIL curriculum enhancements such as case studies, role plays, career development learning activities and simulations (p.159). With the provision of dedicated scholarship for assessment development such as assessment rubric creation and assessment scaffolding techniques, the participant lecturers showed enough connection to assessment to enable them to transpose these

activities into summative assessment tasks capable of assessing students for work-readiness capabilities.

6.1.7. Industry stakeholder engagement in assessment for enhanced student outcomes

Co-creation of curriculum involving all WIL stakeholders ensures the development of assessment which is engaging and diverse (Ruskin & Bilous, 2022). During the interviews, the discussion of industry partnership in assessment was a divisive theme. Although the ICHM has strong relationships with its industry partners, providing for an unprecedented WIL program which involves the employment of 100% of students within industry partner organisations, there is uncertainty around industry capabilities when it comes to assessment.

Study 1 Students had an overall positive perception of industry involvement in their WIL assessment tasks. More than half the participants thought that industry feedback through assessment was more impactful than lecturer feedback, due to the perceived influence of industry on the student's ongoing career-readiness development.

The researcher concludes that the lecturer group had a salient concern about equitable assessment when it came to engaging industry in assessment delivery within a WIL program. The ICHM engaged industry partners to create the Work Integrated Learning Industry Observation Performance Assessment Rubric (Appendix G). The rubric provides a guide for industry, in terms of reviewing and providing feedback to students as they transition from work-ready to career-ready. Although the lecturing team approved the tool, they articulated a number of concerns about how industry staff were completing the rubric:

1. There was a difference in interpretation of the rubric, based on the nuances of each organisation in relation to task and behavioural expectations. For example, task and behaviour expectations with a luxury hotel differ from task and behavioural expectations of a budget or regional motel.
2. Experience of the supervisor tasked with the completion of the rubric. Varying years of experience in the leadership role, varying levels of attention to detail during the observation period.
3. Staff often lacked formal education qualifications to use the rubric through the correct pedagogical lens.
4. There is a misalignment between industry employability terminology and educational employability terminology.

The lecturers had an overriding concern that the assessment task could not be calibrated to a point which would enable it to be equitable across the student group. Utilising the proposed Career EDGE model to display the transition from work-readiness to career-readiness could allow for more targeted conversations between lecturers and industry stakeholders allowing for an increased understanding of assessment and its scaffolded nature for the development of student employability within WIL programs.

The research findings reveal that students are given a great advantage in self-efficacy and awareness development from industry-based and -delivered assessment. According to the students, the feedback they received from industry had the most impact across all the assessments. The research concludes that assessment carried out within WIL programs by industry was a critical strategy with which to evaluate student work-readiness and career-readiness for student employability outcomes.

6.2. Theoretical implications

The research findings validated the 3 underpinning theories – Bandura's (1986) Social Cognitive Theory, Lent and Brown's (2013) Social Cognitive Career Theory, and Piaget's (1932) and Vygotsky's (1980) Constructivist Learning Theory. The particular institutional focus on reflective assessment was shown to be a strategy which had great influence and impact on the development of student self-efficacy and self-awareness. The reflective assessment strategy reinforced students' ability to use previous experiences as they constructed a pathway of career development through a number of scaffolded WIL placement opportunities. The WIL program reflected Bassot's (2012) concept of inseparability between knowledge creation and the work environment.

The research validated previous studies which acknowledged the interchangeable nature of employability terminology and the lack of consistent definition in the literature (Artess et al., 2017; Rothwell et al., 2008; Speight et al., 2013; Vanhercke et al., 2014; Williams et al., 2016).

The research findings provide a valid argument for adjusting Dacre Poole et al.'s (2007) CareerEDGE Model of Graduate Employability to include a continuum from work-ready to career-ready

6.3. Limitations

The research identified several limitations related to the participant groups, analysis and context within the broader higher education sector.

6.3.1. Sole institution focus

The research was focused on one higher education institute – the ICHM. The limitation is that ICHM is a small institution with a single discipline focus. The difficulty in relating or integrating the research findings to a multidisciplinary institution would be complex.

6.3.2. Industry-based lecturer demographic

The research participants (lecturers) had either limited or no formal higher education teaching qualifications. Their lack of experience within teaching and learning and pedagogical practice was limited in comparison to larger higher education institutes or universities.

The demographics of the Study 2 participants may not align with the demographics of other institutes of higher education and university settings.

6.3.3. Absence of industry voice

A successful WIL program involves 3 key stakeholders – student, educator and industry professional. Although the research considered the impact and influence of industry as a key stakeholder, it did not involve industry representatives as one of the participant groups, which would have provided another distinct voice within the research.

6.3.4. Rise in the prevalence of artificial intelligence

During the period of time between the commencement of the research and its completion, the impact of artificial intelligence on the development of assessment has increased in saliency. The research did not factor this into its review of assessment impact on the student participant group.

6.3.5. Absence of member checking

To enhance the credibility of the study transcriptions the researcher methodically cross checked the interviewee transcriptions with the Microsoft 365 Teams recorded interview sessions. The researcher did not however engage in member checking, a process involving the presentation of finalised transcripts to participants for feedback (McKim, 2023). Completion of member checking could have been an additional validation technique to ensure trustworthiness of the study.

6.4. Future direction for research and recommendations

Through the investigation of how educators reconceptualise work-readiness and career-readiness as a foundation for an evidence-based approach to authentic assessment, the research discovered a correlation between an educator's pedagogical self-efficacy and their

comfort levels in this case, in constructing assessments which align with CDL outcomes. The educators' uncertainty in articulating the definitions employability, work-readiness and career-readiness impacted their confidence to continually develop assessment for greater student outcomes. Further investigation into the impact of educator self-efficacy as it relates to pedagogical practice and assessment construction for employability and CDL outcomes within higher education is significant for future research.

It is recommended that future action-based research be carried out to define best practice examples of whole institution integrated graduate employability and CDL frameworks. The higher education sector would benefit from an overarching framework which provides assurance of quality across the areas of pedagogical practice, student as stakeholder in learning, industry as partner in learning, and institutional engagement to provide clear and concise, critical elements for success.

6.5. Conclusion

The interviews completed for both study 1 and study 2 showed a lack of clear definition of the terms, employability, work-readiness and career-readiness. The participants were able to articulate the impact of these terms on student progression within a WIL program which was the driver for the proposed evolution of the Career EDGE (Dacre Poole et al., 2007) model, incorporating a work-readiness and career-readiness continuum.

With the recent release of the Australian University Accord Panel's recommendations (O'Kane et al., 2024), implementation and development of WIL programs within higher education curriculum will be an ongoing priority. Throughout the research interviews it was clear that CDL is a crucial component of an effective WIL program and should be included in all institutional WIL frameworks as an integrated component of graduate employability pedagogies.

Graduate employability outcomes are considered one of the most integral targets within higher education (Healy, 2023; Jackson & Bridgstock, 2021; Yorke & Knight, 2006). The researcher at the commencement of the study curated a definition of employability from the many highly regarded and cited definitions (Fugate et al., 2004; Harvey, 2005; York & Knight, 2006):

> Employability is the culmination of skilful practice and knowledge, developed reflectiveness and adaptive behaviour which leads to an understanding of personal value and self-efficacy to gain employment within a chosen field.

Higher education institutions have a responsibility to not only measure employability outcome targets but measure employability satisfaction outcomes. This measurement outcome being led by embedded curriculum opportunities for the development of every student's personal value and self-efficacy. It is not just knowledge but it is confidence to discover and take action to enter a career of choice. The ability to find passion and fulfilment within one's employment brings individual happiness and purpose.

'Choose a job you love, and you will never have to work a day in your life' - Confucius

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APPENDIX A

Study 2: Lecturer participant information sheet

University of Southern Queensland

Lecturer Participant Information for USQ Research Project Interview

Project Details

Title of Project:	Re-conceptualising assessment for graduate employability within a Work Integrated Learning program
Human Research Ethics Approval Number:	H20REA096

Research Team Contact Details

Principal Investigator Details

Mrs Kellie Lumsden

[redacted]

Principal Supervisor Details

Dr Sara Hammer

[redacted]

Description

This project is being undertaken as part of my studies to meet the requirements of a Doctor of Education under the supervision of Principal Supervisor Dr Sara Hammer and Associate Supervisor Professor Peter McIlveen.

This study looks at how assessment impacts the employability of graduates partaking in a Work Integrated Learning Program within an International Hotel School. The purpose of the study is to invite you and other participants to speak about your experiences and conceptions as an educator with assessment within a Work Integrated Learning Program.

The research team requests your assistance as you have been involved in the Work Integrated Learning (WIL) Programs at the International College of Hotel Management (ICHM) and the researcher seeks your assistance in providing insight into the assessment practices you have undertaken as a Lecturer employed with ICHM.

Participation

Your participation will involve participation in a face to face interview that will take approximately 30-40 minutes of your time.

The interview will take place at the International College of Hotel Management Regency Park Campus, Regency Park, SA 5010 at a time that is convenient to you and does not interrupt your ICHM allocated workload.

Sample questions that will be included in the interview are noted below:

- Describe the place WIL holds within your teaching philosophy?
- Describe the function of assessment within a WIL program?
- How do you evaluate a student's progression within a WIL program through the use of assessment?
- In your view what impact does industry assessment have on the student progression within a WIL program?

The interview will be audio / video recorded. If you do not wish for recording to occur, please advise the researcher via the consent form.

Your participation in this project is entirely voluntary. If you do not wish to take part, you are not obliged to. If you decide to take part and later change your mind, you are free to withdraw from the project at any stage. If you do wish to withdraw from this project, please contact the Research Team (contact details at the top of this form). Alternatively, you may contact Dr George Brown, Principal, International College of Hotel Management.

Your decision whether you take part, do not take part, or to take part and then withdraw, will in no way impact your current or future relationship with the University of Southern Queensland or with the International College of Hotel Management.

Expected Benefits

It is expected that this project could directly benefit you should you be involved in future Work Integrated Learning programs within ICHM or other educational organisations due to the increased understanding of how assessment practices impact students within Work Integrated Learning subjects. Improvements and enhancements to assessment based on the findings could be of benefit to your future understanding of assessment practices.

Risks

In participating in the interview, there are no anticipated risks beyond normal day-to-day living.

Privacy and Confidentiality

All comments and responses will be treated confidentially unless required by law.

Please note the below information regarding the recording of the interview:

- Interviews will be audio and/or video recorded for the purpose of transcription.
- You will be provided with a copy of the interview transcript for review and endorsement prior to inclusion in the project data.
- The expected time frame for your review and request of any changes to the transcript before the data is included in the project for analysis will be 14 days. At

the conclusion of time, if no contact has been made it will be assumed you are happy with the transcription in its current form.
- The research team and a third party independent educational transcription service will be the parties with access to the transcription data.
- It is possible to partake in the project without being recorded however it is highly recommended to ensure the information provided is effectively narrated.

Your data will be stored in an identifiable manner and may be made available for future research purposes in unspecified projects in an un-identifiable manner in accordance with 2.5.2 of the *"Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research"*, research data should be made available for use by other researchers unless this is prevented by ethical, privacy or confidentiality matters.

You will have the ability to access a project summary of results on completion of the project. Advice on the project summary availability will be emailed directly to you upon completion.

Any data collected as a part of this project will be stored securely as per University of Southern Queensland's Research Data Management policy.

Consent to Participate

We would like to ask you to sign a written consent form (enclosed) to confirm your agreement to participate in this project. Please return your signed consent form to a member of the Research Team prior to participating in your interview.

Questions or Further Information about the Project

Please refer to the Research Team Contact Details at the top of the form to have any questions answered or to request further information about this project.

Concerns or Complaints Regarding the Conduct of the Project

If you have any concerns or complaints about the ethical conduct of the project, you may contact the University of Southern Queensland Manager of Research Integrity and Ethics on +61 7 4631 1839 or email researchintegrity@usq.edu.au. The Manager of Research Integrity and Ethics is not connected with the research project and can facilitate a resolution to your concern in an unbiased manner.

Thank you for taking the time to help with this research project. Please keep this sheet for your information.

APPENDIX B

Study 1: Student participant information sheet

University of Southern Queensland

Student Participant Information for USQ Research Project Interview

Project Details

Title of Project:	Re-conceptualising assessment for graduate employability within a Work Integrated Learning program
Human Research Ethics Approval Number:	H20REA096

Research Team Contact Details

Principal Investigator Details

Mrs Kellie Lumsden

[redacted]

Principal Supervisor Details

Dr Sara Hammer

[redacted]

Description

This project is being undertaken as part of my studies to meet the requirements of a Doctor of Education under the supervision of Principal Supervisor Dr Sara Hammer and Associate Supervisor Professor Peter McIlveen.

This study looks at how assessment impacts the employability of graduates partaking in a Work Integrated Learning Program within an International Hotel School. The purpose of the study is to invite you and other participants to speak about your experiences with assessment within a Work Integrated Learning Program.

The research team requests your assistance because you are undertaking the International College of Hotel Management Bachelor of Business (Hospitality) and have been involved within the Work Integrated Learning Program during your study.

Participation

Your participation will involve participation in a face to face interview that will take approximately 20 minutes of your time.

The interview will take place at the International College of Hotel Management Regency Park Campus, Regency Park, SA 5010 at a time that is convenient to you and does not interrupt your ICHM allocated workload.

Sample questions that will be included in the interview are noted below:

- Describe your understanding Work Integrated Learning?
- What characteristics do you believe makes a student work-ready?
- How do you feel assessment contributes to the development of your career-readiness?
- In your view what impact does assessment have on your progression within a WIL program?

The interview will be audio / video recorded. If you do not wish for recording to occur, please advise the researcher via the consent form.

Your participation in this project is entirely voluntary. If you do not wish to take part, you are not obliged to. If you decide to take part and later change your mind, you are free to withdraw from the project at any stage. If you do wish to withdraw from this project, please contact the Research Team (contact details at the top of this form). Alternatively, you may contact Dr George Brown, Principal, International College of Hotel Management.

Your decision whether you take part, do not take part, or to take part and then withdraw, will in no way impact your current or future relationship with the University of Southern Queensland or with the International College of Hotel Management.

Expected Benefits

It is expected that this project directly benefit you should you be completing future Work Integrated Learning subjects within ICHM due to the increased understanding of how assessment practices impact students within the ICHM Work Integrated Learning subjects. Improvements and enhancements to assessment based on the findings could be of benefit to your future understanding of assessment practices.

Risks

In participating in the interview, there are no anticipated risks beyond normal day-to-day living.

Privacy and Confidentiality

All comments and responses will be treated confidentially unless required by law.

Please note the below information regarding the recording of the interview:

- Interviews will be audio and/or video recorded for the purpose of transcription.
- You will be provided with a copy of the interview transcript for review and endorsement prior to inclusion in the project data.

- The expected time frame for your review and request of any changes to the transcript before the data is included in the project for analysis will be 14 days. At the conclusion of time, if no contact has been made it will be assumed you are happy with the transcription in its current form.
- The research team and a third party independent educational transcription service will be the parties with access to the transcription data.
- It is possible to partake in the project without being recorded however it is highly recommended to ensure the information provided is effectively narrated.

Your data will be stored in an identifiable manner and may be made available for future research purposes in unspecified projects in an un-identifiable manner in accordance with 2.5.2 of the *"Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research"*, research data should be made available for use by other researchers unless this is prevented by ethical, privacy or confidentiality matters.

You will have the ability to access a project summary of results on completion of the project. Advice on the project summary availability will be emailed directly to you upon completion.

Any data collected as a part of this project will be stored securely as per University of Southern Queensland's Research Data Management policy.

Consent to Participate

We would like to ask you to sign a written consent form (enclosed) to confirm your agreement to participate in this project. Please return your signed consent form to a member of the Research Team prior to participating in your interview.

Questions or Further Information about the Project

Please refer to the Research Team Contact Details at the top of the form to have any questions answered or to request further information about this project.

Concerns or Complaints Regarding the Conduct of the Project

If you have any concerns or complaints about the ethical conduct of the project, you may contact the University of Southern Queensland Manager of Research Integrity and Ethics on +61 7 4631 1839 or email researchintegrity@usq.edu.au. The Manager of Research Integrity and Ethics is not connected with the research project and can facilitate a resolution to your concern in an unbiased manner.

Thank you for taking the time to help with this research project. Please keep this sheet for your information.

APPENDIX C

Study 1 and 2: Participant consent form

University of Southern Queensland

Consent Form for USQ Research Project Interview

Project Details	
Title of Project:	Re-conceptualising assessment for graduate employability within a Work Integrated Learning program
Human Research Ethics Approval Number:	H20REA096

Research Team Contact Details

Principal Investigator Details	Principal Supervisor Details
Mrs Kellie Lumsden	Dr Sara Hammer
[redacted]	[redacted]

Statement of Consent

By signing below, you are indicating that you:

- Have read and understood the information document regarding this project. ☐Yes/ ☐No
- Have had any questions answered to your satisfaction. ☐Yes/ ☐No
- Understand that if you have any additional questions you can contact the research team. ☐Yes/ ☐No
- Understand that the interview will be audio/ video recorded. ☐Yes/ ☐No
    - Understand that you can participate in the interview without being audio/ video recorded. ☐Yes/ ☐No
    - If you do not want to be audio/ video recorded during the interview, please initial here: _____.
- Are over 18 years of age. ☐Yes/ ☐No

- Understand that any data collected may be used in future research activities. ☐Yes/ ☐No
- Agree to participate in the project. ☐Yes/ ☐No

Participant Name	
Participant Signature	
Date	

Please return this sheet to a Research Team member prior to undertaking the interview

APPENDIX D

Overview of Pre-Placement Activities for ICHM Students

Week 1

ICD Welcome Session

- **Duration:** 1.5 hours
- **Facilitator:** ICD Manager
- **Description:** This session serves as an introductory welcome to the ICHM, familiarizing new students with the institution's ethos, expectations, and available resources.

ICD Employability Workshop #1

- **Duration:** 1.5 hours
- **Facilitator:** ICD manager/ Lecturer
- **Description:** This initial employability workshop focuses on foundational skills necessary for career development, including resume building and interview techniques.

Week 2

ICD Employability Workshop #2 & Workshop #3

- **Duration:** 3 hours
- **Facilitator:** ICD manager/ Lecturer
- **Description:** These workshops delve deeper into employability skills, covering advanced topics such as networking strategies, personal branding, and professional conduct.

Week 3

Returning Student Panel Event

- **Duration:** 1 hour
- **Facilitator:** WIL Lecturer
- **Description:** Returning students share their Work Integrated Learning (WIL) experiences with new students, offering insights and advice based on their own placement journeys.

Introduction to WIL Session & Resume Prep Session

- **Duration:** 3 hours

- **Facilitator:** ICD manager
- **Description:** This comprehensive session introduces students to the WIL program, followed by intensive resume preparation to ensure students present their best selves to potential employers.

Week 4

Resume Session

- **Duration:** 1.5 hours
- **Facilitator:** ICD manager/ Lecturer
- **Description:** Focuses on enhancing students' resume writing skills, ensuring their resumes effectively highlight their strengths and experiences.

Returning BBUS Formal WIL Reflection Session + Guest Speaker

- **Duration:** 2 hours
- **Facilitator:** WIL Lecturer - Lachy
- **Description:** This session involves reflection on past WIL experiences, featuring insights from guest speakers to provide professional perspectives.

Resume Kiosk

- **Duration:** All day available for student drop in sessions around scheduled timetable
- **Facilitators:** Lecturers/ ICD manager
- **Description:** An open session for students to receive one-on-one assistance with their resumes from lecturers and staff.

NEW BBUS Professional Photos

- **Facilitators:** ICD manager**/** Admin Staff
- **Description:** Professional photo sessions to provide students with high-quality images for their professional profiles.

Industry Visits

- **Facilitator:** ICD manager/ Lecturers
- **Description:** Organized visits to industry sites to give students firsthand experience of their prospective work environments.

Guest Speaking Sessions

- **Facilitator:** ICD manager/ Lecturers
- **Description:** Features guest speakers from the industry sharing their career journeys and offering professional advice.

Week 5

Spotlight on

- **Facilitator:** ICD Manager
- **Description:** Highlights key industry partners, providing students with networking opportunities and insights into potential employers.

Week 7

Careers Day

- **Duration:** Dependent on student numbers
- **Facilitators:** ICD manager/ Lecturers/ Admin Staff
- **Description:** A day dedicated to career development activities, including workshops, networking opportunities, and presentations from industry professionals.

Week 9

Spotlight on Industry Partners Session

- **Facilitator:** ICD Manager
- **Description:** Another opportunity to interact with industry partners, further assisting students in building their professional networks.

Ongoing items across Weeks 3 – 20 (entire semester)

Interview Practice

- **Facilitator:** ICD Manager
- **Description:** One on one Sessions dedicated to improving students' interview skills through mock interviews and feedback.

One-on-One Sessions with ICD Manager

- **Description:** Throughout the semester, students participate in multiple one-on-one sessions with the ICD manager. These sessions are crucial for discussing placement options and determining the suitability of students for various hotels or roles. The ICD manager assesses students' skills, interests, and career goals to make tailored placement recommendations, ensuring each student is positioned for success in their upcoming placements

APPENDIX E

BBHM109 Employability for Future Hoteliers Subject Statement

Subject Code	Name of subject
BBHM109	**Employability Skills for Future Hoteliers**

Subject description
This subject will enable students to gain an understanding of contemporary communication skills necessary for the hospitality business environment. Students will develop personal, social and professional skills, knowledge and techniques which can be utilised and applied within a range of hospitality and tourism business contexts.

SECTION 1 – GENERAL INFORMATION

1.1 Administrative details

Associated higher education awards	Duration	Level	Subject coordinator
Bachelor of Business (Hospitality Management) (BBHM)	One semester	AQF Level 5	

1.2 Core or elective subject

☒ core subject

☐ elective subject

☐ other (please specify below):

1.3 Subject weighting

Subject credit points	Total course credit points
4.5	BBHM: 157.5

1.4 Student workload

Total no. timetabled hours:	Total no. personal study hours:	Total workload hours:
45	90	135
No. timetabled hours per week	**No. personal study hours per week**	**Workload hours per week**
2.5	5	7.5

For those students requiring additional English language support, how many additional hours per week is it expected that they will undertake? Additional English language support: 0 hours per week

1.5 Delivery mode

☒ Face to face on site

☐ eLearning (online)/Technology-Enhanced Learning (TEL)

☒ Intensive/block mode (where the unit or a face-to-face component is delivered in a block)

☒ Mixed/blended

☐ Distance/independent learning (untimetabled)

☒ Full-time

☒ Part-time

☐ External

☐ Fast track

☐ Other (please specify)

1.6 Work-integrated learning activity

N/A

1.7 Prerequisites and co-requisites

☐ Yes ☒ No

If YES, provide details of the prerequisite or co-requisite requirements below.

1.8 Other resource requirements

☐ Yes ☒ No

If YES, provide details of specialist facilities and/or equipment below.

SECTION 2 – ACADEMIC DETAILS

Graduate Qualities
GQ1 Global inclusivity and sustainability
GQ2 Professional identity and practice
GQ3 Independent self-management and life-long learning
GQ4 Collaboration and skilled communication
GQ5 Critical thinking and creativity

Subject Learning Outcomes for the subject On successful completion of this unit, students will be able to:	
a)	Understand the role and importance of the contemporary hospitality organisation and how its collective elements have impact on the employee and guest experience.
b)	Demonstrate an understanding of the nature of effective communication and how it would apply within the contemporary hospitality business environment.
c)	Understand the complexities and difficulties which can be faced within a hospitality business environment and develop and utilise techniques and skills to deal with difficult workplace situations.
d)	Identify and connect with key characteristics of a competent and effective employee situated within a hospitality and tourism business environment.
e)	Demonstrate an ability to analyse and reflect upon personal behaviours to identify ways in which to develop and amend behaviours to be a more effective employee within a hospitality workforce environment.

Subject/unit indicative content	
a)	Understand the role and importance of the contemporary hospitality organisation and how its collective elements have impact on the employee and guest experience. The role of culture in hospitality organisations Hospitality organisation mission, vision and core values and the connection to the employee and guest experience Organisational structure brand standards Understanding the organisational environment, formal/informal

	Subject/unit indicative content
b)	Demonstrate an understanding of the nature of effective communication and how it would apply within the contemporary hospitality business environment. Theory of communication Internal and external business communications Professional communication techniques Communication for the ultimate guest experience Communicating up Correct feedback channels and techniques
c)	Understand the complexities and difficulties which can be faced within a hospitality business environment and develop and utilise techniques and skills to deal with difficult workplace situations. Conflict management Group and team dynamics Working within a diverse workforce environment Analysis of current workplace situations Dealing with disappointment and failure
d)	Identify and connect with key characteristics of a competent and effective employee situated within a hospitality and tourism business environment. Concept of employability Characteristics of a successful hospitality professional Personal brand development Professional development
e)	Demonstrate an ability to analyse and reflect upon personal behaviours to identify ways in which to develop and amend behaviours to be a more effective employee within a hospitality workforce environment. Feedback processes Reflective tools and techniques Behaviour identification Career planning

1.9 Assessment Overview

Type	When assessed	Weight	Subject Learning Outcomes
Presentation Prepare a presentation reviewing the importance of communication within the workplace to prevent or dissolve difficult situations. 1000 equivalent words	Prior to week 3	20%	a, b, c
Assignment Students will develop and analyse their personal brand articulating areas for future development and growth. 2000 equivalent words	Prior to week 7	50%	d, e
Reflective Portfolio Students are to reflect on their future placement goals and objectives inclusive of ICHM Graduate Qualities. 1500 equivalent words	Prior to conclusion of the subject	30%	a, b, c, d, e

APPENDIX F

Work Integrated Learning 1 BBHM111a Subject Statement

Subject Code	Name of subject
BBHM111a	**Work Integrated Learning 1**

Subject description
This subject will enable the student to apply and integrate theory with the practice of work so they may develop their knowledge, skills and professional networks through lived experience in a professional workplace setting. This workplace setting may include an international hotel, hotel, tourism or other hospitality-related environment approved by ICHM.

SECTION 1 – GENERAL INFORMATION

1.1 Administrative details

Associated higher education awards	Duration	Level	Subject coordinator
Bachelor of Business (Hospitality Management) (BBHM)	One semester	AQF Level 5	

1.2 Core or elective subject

☒ core subject

☐ elective subject

☐ other (please specify below):

1.3 Subject weighting

Subject credit points	Total course credit points
16.5	BBHM: 157.5

1.4 Student workload

Total no. timetabled hours:	Total no. personal study hours:	Total workload hours:
N/A	N/A	Min: 500 over 20-24 week period
No. timetabled hours per week	**No. personal study hours per week**	**Workload hours per week**
N/A	N/A	N/A

For those students requiring additional English language support, how many additional hours per week is it expected that they will undertake? Additional English language support: 0 hours per week

1.5 Delivery mode

☐ Face to face on site

☐ eLearning (online)/Technology-Enhanced Learning (TEL)

☐ Intensive/block mode (where the unit or a face-to-face component is delivered in a block)

☐ Mixed/blended

☒ Distance/independent learning (untimetabled)

☐ Full-time

☐ Part-time

☐ External

☐ Fast track

☒ Other (please specify)

Undertaken in a workplace environment

1.6 Work-integrated learning activity

Students undertake an authentic work integrated learning placement in a host organisation.

1.7 Prerequisites and co-requisites

☐ Yes ☒ No

If YES, provide details of the prerequisite or co-requisite requirements below.

Course rule: The Academic Committee may recommend to the Head of ICHM that a student not be permitted to undertake an Industry Placement if the student is not making satisfactory progress in subjects related to duties to be performed in the proposed placement and/or where a student has failed 50% or more of the subjects attempted in a study period and/or where the student has failed a subject for the second time.

1.8 Other resource requirements

☒ Yes ☐ No

If YES, provide details of specialist facilities and/or equipment below.

Access to computer/ laptop/ tablet with standard Word software and internet access.

SECTION 2 – ACADEMIC DETAILS

Graduate Qualities
GQ1 Global inclusivity and sustainability
GQ2 Professional identity and practice
GQ3 Independent self-management and life-long learning
GQ4 Collaboration and skilled communication
GQ5 Critical thinking and creativity

	Subject Learning Outcomes for the subject On successful completion of this unit, students will be able to:
a)	Demonstrate and reflect on the application of their knowledge and skills in a professional hospitality related workplace setting making connections between theoretical and practical application.
b)	Work together with a diverse range of stakeholders and demonstrate a commitment to achieving shared work outcomes.
c)	Demonstrate a range of relevant and appropriate hospitality workplace behaviours and communication strategies.
d)	Reflect on and evaluate their own professional practice, growth and readiness for employability within the hospitality profession in alignment with the ICHM Graduate Qualities.

	Subject/unit indicative content
	See Work Integrated Learning (WIL) Placement Policy

1.9 Assessment Overview

Type		When assessed	Weight	Subject Learning Outcomes
Individual assessment items for WIL1 will be calibrated to AQF level 5. Assessment tasks will be developed to incorporate a scaffolded approach as students progress through higher levels of the Bachelor degree and associated Industry Placement.				
	Assignment (Individual) Students will complete a review of their first 5 weeks within industry and focus on both their assigned property environment and the student's initial integration within a workplace setting. 1000 equivalent words	Prior to week 11	20%	a,b,d
	Assignment (Individual) Students will investigate and apply concepts and theories from the previous academic semester subjects in relation to their placement experiences. 2000 equivalent words	Prior to week 16	40%	a,c,d
	Applied Learning Review (Individual) A critical reflection based on the aspects of the student's personal professional development experienced during industry placement. 2000 equivalent words	Prior to conclusion of the subject	40%	a,d
	Completion of hours	Evidence of hours submitted by student on completion of the industry placement.	The student must provide evidence of the completion of a minimum of 500 hours of work.	b,c

2.1 Prescribed and recommended reading

Prescribed text:

There is no prescribed text for this subject.

Textbooks:

Covey, S 2016, *The 7 habits of highly effective people*, Simon & Schuster Ltd.

Deresky, H 2021, *International management: Managing across borders and cultures,* 10th edn., Pearson Education Limited.

Nielsen, D, Ballantyne, E, Murad, F & Fournier, M., 2022, *Getting Ready for Work-Integrated Learning*. BC Campus Open Ed.O'Gorman, K, & MacIntosh, R 2015*, Introducing management in a global context*, Goodfellow Publishers.

RMIT University 2017, *Work Integrated Learning,* RMIT University, https://www.rmit.edu.au/students/student-essentials/work-integrated-learning.

Robbins, S, De Cenzo, D, Coulter, M & Woods, M 2021, *Management: The essentials,* 5th edn., Pearson Education.

Sinek, S 2014, *Leaders eat last: Why some teams pull together and others don't,* Penguin Putnam Inc.

Zegwaard, K.E., & Pretti, T.J. (Eds.) 2023, *The routledge international handbook of work-integrated learning*, 3rd edn., Routledge.

Zheng, L 2022, *DEI deconstructed: your no-nonsense guide to doing the work and doing it right*, Berrett-Koehler Publishers.

Journal:

Belhassen, Y, Caton, K & Vahaba, C 2019, 'Boot camps, bugs, and dreams: Metaphor analysis of internship experiences in the hospitality industry', *Journal of Hospitality, Leisure, Sport & Tourism Education*, 27:1-11.

Farmaki, A 2018, 'Tourism and hospitality internships: A prologue to career intentions?', *Journal of Hospitality, Leisure, Sport & Tourism Education*, 23:50-58.Pretorius, L & Ford, A 2016, Reflection for Learning: Teaching Reflective Practice at the Beginning of University Study. International Journal of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education, 28(2): 241-253.

Rook, L & Sloan, T 2021, 'Competing stakeholder understandings of graduate attributes and employability in work-integrated learning', *International Journal of Work-Integrated Learning*, 22(1):41-56.

Zegwaard K, Pretti T, Rowe A, Ferns S 2023, 'Defining work-integrated learning', *The Routledge International Handbook of Work-Integrated Learning*, 3rd edn., Routledge.

Zopiatis, A, Papadopoulos, C & Theofanous, Y 2021, A systematic review of literature on hospitality internships, *Journal of Hospitality, Leisure, Sport & Tourism Education*, 28(6):100309.

Websites:

http://www.instituteofhospitality.org/info_services/online_catalogue

https://www.ahri.com.au/

http://www.instituteofhospitality.org/info_services/online_catalogue

http://www.kotterinternational.com/

http://www.belbin.com/

http://www.teamtechnology.co.uk

http://www.cipd.co.uk/subjects/perfmangmt/general/perfman.htm

https://geert-hofstede.com/

http://hbswk.hbs.edu/topics/leadership.html

https://hbr.org/

http://rbl.net/index.php/institute

https://www.ted.com/

http://www.hcamag.com/e-magazines/

Modification history

Date	Modification	Person responsible
08/06/11	Original submitted for accreditation	Dr Ian Whyte
29/11/2012	Changes to Learning Outcomes and Assessment	Approved by 29/11/12 Academic Board meeting
13/06/14	Change to Total Course Credit Points	Approved by AB 29/08/13
18/8/17	Changes to Learning Outcomes and Assessment	Approved by AB 07/09/17
21/06/19	Changes to assessment weeks	Approved by AB 11/06/19
25/11/19	Removal of Assessment – Report by Industry Update to unit title	Approved by AB 10/12/19
10/03/22	Updates to recommended readings list and template. CLOs and GQs mapped.	Approved by AB 06/06/22
20/02/2024	Updated recommended readings	Approved by AB

APPENDIX G

Work Integrated Learning Industry Observation Performance Assessment Rubric

Work Integrated Learning Performance Assessment

As a Supervisor/Manager, please complete this Work Integrated Learning Performance Assessment for the student's performance throughout their placement. It is recommended that this Performance Assessment is completed with the student in a short meeting to encourage conversation and to assist in their development. Regardless, the student will be provided with a completed copy of their Performance Assessment to complete self-reflection.

Student's Name and Position:_____ **Property/Company:**_____

Select (highlight) <u>one box in each row</u> that best describes the student's performance in the key areas.

Career-readiness level	**This column describes a student who does not display expected attitudes and behaviour of a work-ready employee.**	**This column describes a student who displays expected attitudes and behaviour of a work-ready employee.**	**This column describes a student who displays expected attitudes and behaviours of a well-prepared work-ready employee.**	**This column describes a student who displays advanced attitudes and behaviours of a career-ready employee with focus on further development.**
Employee Capabilities				
Professionalism	Student is not punctual on multiple occasions and does not communicate lateness. Student is considered unreliable the majority of the time.	Student is punctual and communicates if attendance cannot be met. Student attends rostered shifts.	Student is reliable and dependable to pick-up shifts on occasions. Student proactively communicates regarding availability. Student is responsive to communication in a timely manner.	Student is viewed as extremely reliable and dependable by all supervisors.
	Student does not adhere to company grooming policies the majority of the time.	Student is well groomed, and uniform is worn to specified standards.	Student is well groomed and wears uniform to correct standards.	Student has exemplary grooming standards and behaves in a professional manner at all times.
Connections and interactions with internal and external guests	Student is unable to communicate clearly and doesn't ask for clarification. Student responds negatively when given feedback or struggles to accept it. Student lacks confidence in communication.	Student communicates clearly, listens and follows instructions. Student accepts feedback when it's provided.	Student has proactive communication, listens and responds with confidence. Student asks questions to clarify. Student asks and welcomes feedback.	Student actively engages in conversation with all stakeholders. Student shows confidence, understanding and comprehension. Student actively works to self-improve from feedback.

	Student lacks awareness of surrounding environment and guests. Some interactions with internal and external guests could be perceived as negative. Student lacks confidence in interactions with others.	Student responds to guests when approached. Student displays courtesy and respect towards guests. Student needs support in handling difficult situations most of the time and would benefit from developing confidence. Student applies a standardised approach to customer service.	At all times, student engages with guests in a positive way. Student attempts to apply empathy in interactions but is yet to develop a full understanding of adapting to the needs of each guest. Student displays a good level of confidence and needs support some of the time in handling difficult situations.	Student anticipates guests needs on a regular basis and applies empathy in all interactions with internal and external guests. Student displays confidence and takes ownership of situations by following up with guests. Student displays a willingness to manage difficult situations.
Task Capabilities				
Engagement with organisation	Student is not engaged in a team environment. Lacks understanding of company and team values. Student is perceived as not contributing in a positive way to teamwork.	Student participates in team duties and works positively in a team environment. Student displays expected values of the brand and completes tasks as expected.	Student is an active team member who positively contributes to a team environment. Student demonstrates a high level of understanding of the values of the brand. Student has the ability to see beyond the immediate responsibilities of home team/department and seeks additional tasks/training.	Student displays a positive contribution to the team and a has a high level of involvement in activities. Student is considered a brand ambassador. Student has a holistic view of the property-wide team and seeks additional responsibilities, showing good initiative.
Position capabilities	Student has not learnt the position at the required pace. Student required additional training and support.	Student understands requirements of the position and utilises relevant tools appropriately (e.g. chemicals, Point of Sales, Property Management System).	Student has quickly developed an understanding of the job requirements and uses tools well (e.g. chemicals, Point of Sales, Property Management System).	Student has a thorough understanding of the position and advanced knowledge of tools and systems (e.g. chemicals, Point of Sales, Property Management System).
	Student is yet to show ability to manage tasks, priorities and time whilst on shift.	During their placement, the student has developed the ability to manage tasks, priorities and time whilst on shift.	At an early stage in their placement, the student has learnt the ability to manage tasks, priorities and time whilst on shift.	Student has a strong ability to manage time, tasks and priorities and seeks opportunities for further learning.

	Commitment to quality is inconsistent and student requires further development in understanding brand standards.	Student has developed a commitment to quality and standards. Overtime, the student has required less supervision.	Student displays a commitment to producing quality work and maintaining standards. Student requires minimal supervision.	Student displays strong commitment to producing quality work and maintaining standards. Student displays early development of leadership skills.

Considering the student's entire Industry Placement timeframe, how would you best describe their performance in the role?

The student did not show consistent improvements during their placement. Their performance was inconsistent the majority of times. The student's behaviours and task capabilities were not to the minimum requirements of an entry-line level employee.	The student showed good levels of commitment. Their performance was consistent more often than not and the student showed improvements throughout the duration of their placement. Their behaviours and task capabilities were to the expected levels of an employee new to the industry. The student demonstrated they were work-ready.	The student showed good levels of commitment, dedication and work ethic. Their performance was consistent the majority of times and they proved a solid team member. Their behaviours and task capabilities were to expectation. Further self-development would see this student improve to a high level.	The student showed great levels of commitment, dedication and work ethic. Their performance was consistent at all times. Their behaviours and task capabilities were of a high level and they demonstrated high levels of emotional and social intelligence. The student developed the skills of autonomy and problem solving. The student demonstrated they are career-ready.

Student's key achievements during placement:

Areas of strength:

Areas requiring improvement:

Assessor's name and title/position:
Date completed:
Signed: