THE UNIVERSITY BUSINESS OF WORK-BASED LEARNING

A context statement submitted to Middlesex University in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Professional Studies by Public Works

Institute for Work Based Learning, Middlesex University

Nicholas John Shipley

Student number: 9834337

Submission date: February 2015

Contents

CONTENTS

List of artefacts

Public Works referred to in this claim can be seen in the attached USB drive.

Artefact 1	Program in Applied Business prospectus
Artefact 2	Course accreditation documents
Artefact 3	Accreditation approval documents
Artefact 4	Guide to Effective Workplace Learning
Artefact 5	Mentoring Conference program
Artefact 6	PAB Business Plan
Artefact 7	Strategy approval documents and announcement
Artefact 8	PAB article in Australian Training Review
Artefact 9	Collection of evidence of employer organisations
Artefact 10	Initial proposal to AMP Limited
Artefact 11	Launch of AMP–UTS partnership
Artefact 12	'Farewell brown cardigan brigade' – Article from *Australian Campus Review*
Artefact 13	AMP Annual Report extract
Artefact 14	*UTS Corporate Plan 1998–2000* – WBL as a critical development theme
Artefact 15	'Implementing work-based learning for the first time' – Book chapter
Artefact 16	Assignment of intellectual property agreement for PAB/WBL to UTS
Artefact 17	Research Report – Study of Participant Progression through Work-based Learning Programs at AMP Limited
Artefact 18	References and attestations
Artefact 19	Partnership renewal announcement with AMP – The Australian Higher Education Supplement
Artefact 20	"Smart Work": Book chapter in Work-based Learning – A New Higher Education?
Artefact 21	Evidence of broader WBL partnerships at UTS

Artefact 22 DeakinPrime discussion document – Strategic repositioning of DeakinPrime

Artefact 23 Market Concept Test – Marketing research to support the re-launch of WBL

Artefact 24 Implementation Framework – Business plan for sustainable operation of WBL at Deakin

Artefact 25 Approval of WBL strategy by Deakin University

Artefact 26 Attestation to work

Artefact 27 Work-based Learning Handbook – Implementation framework for Deakin University

Key terms as I have used them in this statement

Experiential learning

Has been used in the context of the recognition of prior and experiential learning as a component of a university-level work-based learning course. It refers to learning acquired from prior university studies, practical work experience, or a combination of the two, and recognised within an accredited course.

Social good

Work or service that benefits a large number of people in the largest way, as opposed to that which is more narrowly concerned with the maximisation of returns to shareholders.

Work-integrated learning

Accredited courses that combine prescribed university learning outcomes and 'content' with learning methodologies that facilitate the application and demonstration of that learning to the achievement of workplace outcomes.

The Program in Applied Business, described in this statement, combined prescribed course contents and intended learning outcomes with a variety of learning methodologies, including learning contracts, workplace mentoring and employer engagement, to contextualise and transfer learning to achieve workplace outcomes.

Work-based learning

Accredited courses of higher education that enable negotiation of the course focus, learning modalities and learning outcomes. The focus is upon learning generated through and at work rather than knowledge delivered by the university. This learning can be either a mode of study aligned to the university's existing teaching disciplines or a transdisciplinary field of study.

(a) Mode of study: In Chapter 4, work-based learning at UTS is referred to as a mode of study. Qualifications at UTS were offered by faculties in accordance with their disciplinary areas, with some degree of freedom to include interdisciplinary learning from other teaching schools.

(b) Field of study: In Chapter 5, the term work-based learning is extended to include transdisciplinary learning in which all disciplines contribute to the solution.

Work-relevant learning

An umbrella term used to encapsulate a variety of educational approaches that aim to draw together theory and practice, including informal learning in the workplace, university-based work-integrated, and work-based learning.

Workplace learning

Whereas this term appears frequently within quoted text in this statement, my own use of this term is limited to describing *The Guide to Effective Workplace Learning* – one of the artefacts presented. In this context statement the term is embedded within my use of work-integrated learning as this relates to the Program in Applied Business. At the time I wrote the Guide, I often used these terms interchangeably.

Abbreviations

APEL	Accreditation of prior and experiential learning
AQF	Australian Qualifications Framework
CBT	Competency-based training
FMI	Frontline Management Initiative
HEA	Higher Education Academy (York)
HEI	Higher education institution
IIC	Insearch Institute of Commerce
IP	Intellectual property
MOOC	Massive open online course
NFROT	National Framework for the Recognition of Training
NTRA	National Training Reform Agenda
PAB	Program in Applied Business
RCC	Recognition of current capabilities
TAFE	Technical and Further Education
UWS	University of Western Sydney
UTS	University of Technology, Sydney
VECCI	Victorian Employers Chamber of Commerce and Industry
VET	Vocational education and training
VETAB	Vocational Education and Training Accreditation Board (NSW)
WBL	Work-based learning
WIL	Work-integrated learning

Acknowledgments

This account of my public work is a critique of the development of university-level work-based learning programs in Australia, told in parallel with the personal 'story' of my own professional practice and development. Like any good story, there are characters that are central to the plot. Without these people I would have not had the encouragement and support to conduct my work and consequently there would be no story, no public work, and possibly a less rich episode in the development of university-level work-based learning.

My particular debts of gratitude go to Graham Williams, who provided a springboard for my early foray into the field; Owen Eckford and Murray Laurence for their willingness to open the doors of Insearch, UTS to a new idea; Emeritus Professor Bob Robertson for opening his mind to new possibilities and helping to get them off of the ground; And Professors Peter Booth and Rob Lynch for helping to keep these ideas in the air. Thanks not least to David Wilson for his friendship and for doing some of the actual work!

At DeakinPrime, Jules Cauberg's spirit of adventure helped with the early steps to revisit WBL in a new economic and educational era, and Simon Hann continued as an enthusiastic champion and supporter.

Thanks to Emeritus Professor Derek Portwood of Middlesex University, whose early encouragement got us all going in the first place; and to Emeritus Professor Jonathan Garnett, whose continuing support, wisdom, advice and friendship I have valued over the years.

My thanks to Professor Paul Gibbs for his support in helping me to compile this context statement comes with an apology for not having once mentioned Heidegger. Dr. Kate Maguire also deserves a special note of appreciation for the energy and insight the offered to steer the completion of this context statement.

Last but by no means least, the dedication of this work and heartfelt thanks go to my family, both near and far, without whose support there would have been no story to tell.

Introduction

Over the course of the last twenty-five years, my professional life has spanned a broad range of senior roles in vocational, professional and higher education, corporate organisational development, marketing and capacity building for international development. A common theme of this work has been knowledge exchange, with a significant focus upon that occurring between professional organisations and academia. In this work I have sought to push accepted boundaries of practice in work-relevant education in order to deepen the relationship between learning and professional practice and to promote both individual and organisational performance.

I currently work with La Trobe University as Professor of Practice. This is a newly created role within the Australian higher education sector. The role has been created specifically to attract individuals who can combine practical and academic experience and enhance the university's interactions with industry and professional organisations. My professional focus at La Trobe is upon the design and development of strategies for the university to embed and support experiential work-situated learning and community support for social enterprise.

This context statement is concerned with my professional practice in the provision of university-accredited work-based learning (WBL) courses to employers in Australia. I highlight a range of internal and external factors that have been instrumental in shaping the development of work-based learning in Australia in general and at the University of Technology, Sydney (UTS) and Deakin University, Melbourne in particular.

In the tradition of the academy, reputations have been built and international acclaim has been attributed to academics who have largely been outside observers and commentators on these developments but whose critique and theorising have made an invaluable contribution to the field of work-based learning in its early development. However, it is often non-academic staff working on the 'inside' who are the agents of change and whose work creates the real-life practice and application that provides the evidence from which this theorising is made possible.

While it is often the tenacity and perseverance of individuals in non-academic roles within higher education institutions that have motivated and shaped this emerging and challenging new field of higher education, it is commonly the academic discourse that

receives the recognition. In this statement, I argue that in my own case, it is the practice itself that has pushed the boundaries from the inside out and that has resulted in an original and enduring impact on the field. This contribution and its impacts have:

1. established new and innovative approaches to university-level work-based learning that have shaped higher education institutional strategy, policy and educational practices in Australia and have evolved new and original ways of linking the learning and performance of individual learners and their work

2. led the development, introduction and adoption of models of work-integrated and work-based learning amongst employers in Australian and influenced the learning practices of over fifteen hundred individual learners in a variety of workplace settings

3. through this educational and market innovation, informed and influenced research and the broader literature in the field of work-based learning, which has formed a cornerstone of current day practices in the field.

I demonstrate this through a critique of my public works, which are summarised as follows.

Overview of the public work

This claim for the Doctor of Professional Studies by Public Works (DProf.) is based upon my own contribution to the development and establishment of university work-based learning in Australia. My professional practice in this field has led me on aspiralling path of exploration between educational innovation and marketing, in which my professional focus and public works have evolved in three distinctive phases: from the 'Business of Learning' to 'Learning for Business' to 'Learning as Business'.

It is my public work through each of these three interrelated and progressive phases that has led to the establishment of new approaches to university provision of accredited work-based learning programs in parts of Australia, and that forms the basis of my critical engagement with my public works.

The first phase, the Business of Learning (1995–2002), illustrates how my professional inquiry into the market for work-relevant learning led to the development and implementation of an innovative suite of accredited business qualifications, the Program in Applied Business (PAB). I argue that this early phase of my work resulted

in the development and provision of a new model of accredited work-integrated education in Australia and was a catalyst for a new employer engagement strategy for the University of Technology, Sydney (UTS). By incorporating a range of educational and training methodologies within a holistic 'new to market' program design, I enabled the university, leading employers and learners to combine 'learning for work' with 'learning at work' to achieve accredited learning outcomes in the workplace. This work moved UTS's program provision to employers beyond a conventional bi-partite student–university approach to developing its 'Business of Learning' with employers by focussing on how the benefits of an individual's acquisition of 'university learning' could be translated into workplace performance outcomes. It laid a critical foundation for UTS's pioneering work in the introduction of work-based learning approaches in Australia in which the focus of learning shifted from the application of a university curriculum to work, to using work as the basis of a tri-partite negotiated learning and development curriculum (Boud & Solomon 2001, p. 5).

The second phase, Learning for Business (1997–2002), concurrently built upon the Business of Learning by developing a learning partnership framework that enabled the university, employer and learner to negotiate individually tailored higher education qualifications in business and information technology. This phase represented a radical shift (Boud & Solomon 2001, p. 30) from a product-push approach in which the focus of learning is the university curriculum, to a learner–employer focus in which the needs of learners in the context of their work and professional development became the focus of learning and basis of an individually tailored curriculum. It represented an institutional shift from work-integrated learning provision and led to the market introduction of negotiated work-based learning qualifications as a pathway to discipline-specific qualifications in Australia.

The final phase, Learning as Business (2011–2013), represents a further refinement on my earlier work and was conducted at Deakin University. In revisiting the field of work-based learning nearly ten years after concluding my earlier work with UTS, I was able to synthesise the learning from this earlier experience with developments in the field internationally. I was also able to draw upon professional experience I had gained in the interim period through my work with major Australian corporations and professional bodies in the areas of organisational capability development and professional

development. This was to be important in shaping my next engagement with work-based learning.

My aim during this more recent phase of public work was to facilitate a 'renaissance' of university-level work-based learning in Australia. The approach was shaped by emerging practices in the provision of work-based learning programs in the UK (Kewin et al. 2011; Tallantyre 2010; Glass, Higgins & McGreggor 2002) that further developed and informed my earlier experiences. My work was significant in shaping institutional policy and strategy at Deakin University and in contributing new thinking to the ways in which WBL programs can advance workplace performance.

The Learning as Business phase of my work aimed to modify and improve upon earlier business and educational models of WBL provision at UTS to create a sharper value proposition to the stakeholders in a work-based learning partnership and to create a more financially and institutionally sustainable program model. It advanced Deakin's institutional imperative to innovate and differentiate its offering by extending the notion of work-based learning as a mode of disciplinary study and by embracing the emerging proposition of work-based learning as a transdisciplinary field of learning in its own right. By embracing this proposition, the Learning as Business phase sought to address the perceived boundaries and disconnect between the organisation of higher education curriculum (generally around university disciplines) and the interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary organisation of work. It sought to advance a framework for the professional development of employees through engagement in higher education, business performance improvement activity and broader organisational change and learning (Shipley 2001).

Navigation of the statement

I am using three phases of public works to demonstrate the contexts in which I have made an impact. Each phase explores the complexities of achieving greater integration of academic and professional knowledge through my role as a conduit between higher education and professional organisation cultures and practices. I am also using them to articulate what had become implicit in my practice and to extract important learning that I can see has linked the works, my actions in the sector and my recommendations for the future.

The public works have been approached chronologically in chapters 3 to 5 so as to outline the progressive relationship between each evolving phase of work. Within each of these chapters I provide an account of the drivers for the work and the research and development that underpinned it. The work itself is approached it relation to its impact in the three thematic areas of:

- higher education institution (HEI) strategy
- program innovation
- industry practice.

The public work is presented in the form of a series of artefacts, together with a description and critique of each artefact and its impact and relevance to the claim.

Chapter 1: 'Introduction to the contexts' introduces the layers of contexts in which the works have taken place. It explores key aspects of the Australian higher education environment, business and education context, and university funding and regulatory change that played a role in the development of the public work.

Chapter 2: 'Shaping my world view' provides an account of the personal and professional experiences and insights that have shaped my professional inquiry and practice.

Chapter 3: 'Public work Phase 1 – The Business of Learning' describes and critiques my work between 1995 and 2001 in developing and establishing the Program in Applied Business. It identifies the pioneering nature of this work as the first of its kind in Australia to recognise the workplace as a site of learning within an accredited course structure. It pre-empted a new frontier in work-relevant qualification programs that were to focus on the translation of an individual's learning into benefits for employer organisations. This chapter demonstrates how adoption of the program by leading employers shaped institutional strategy at the University of Technology, Sydney, and was a catalyst for the development of university work-based learning in Australia.

Chapter 4: 'Public work Phase 2 – Learning for Business' outlines my role in the development of the first significant foray into the provision of negotiated work-based learning qualifications by an Australian university between 1997 and 2002. This work impacted upon institutional strategy, policies and practices at the university and in leading employer organisations. It provided a catalyst for the publication of a seminal

publication in work-based learning (*Work-based Learning: A New Higher Education?* (Boud & Solomon 2001) that continues to inform scholarly work in the field to this day.

Chapter 5: 'Public work Phase 3 – Learning as Business' describes the work undertaken between 2011 and 2013 to establish a new and sustainable business and educational model for WBL, and how this contributed new thinking regarding the development of sustainable business and academic models for work-based learning in Australia. The work presented a new approach to developing and promoting the realisation of employer–organisation benefits from engagement with work-based learning.

Chapter 6: 'Profit, pride and politics? Reflections on the university business of work-based learning in Australia' offers reflection and provides a critique of the public work and some of the barriers that have so far impeded the sustained provision of these programs within the universities concerned.

Chapter 7: 'Looking back to the future' reflects on the learning and recommendations that emerged out of this critical engagement and events since submitting it to Middlesex University.

Chapter 1

Introduction to the contexts

1. Australian higher education

The world of higher education in Australia and internationally has been characterised in recent years by funding cuts and intensifying competition. In this changing environment there has been increasing pressure on universities to redefine their role in the markets they serve in a bid to secure new revenue sources and establish differentiation and distinctive market positioning (Barnett 2013, n.p.; Maringe & Gibbs 2009, p. 32; Barber, Donnelly & Rizvi 2013, p. 50; Ernst & Young, Australia 2012). The corresponding emergence of the 'knowledge worker' (Symes & MacIntyre 2000, p. 3) and conceptions of working knowledge (Hagar 2000, pp. 45–65) have placed additional demands on higher education providers to become more industry focussed. Increasingly, universities need to ensure that they are responsive to the personal learning needs of individuals in the workplace, and to the demands of their employers as sponsors of their professional development and who increasingly expect demonstrable improvements in performativity from their investments in staff learning and development (Raelin 2008, p. 254; Garrick 1998, p. 101). These forces have combined to drive new approaches to the provision of accredited learning as a tool for professional and workforce development (Lester & Costley 2010).

One important and 'radical' response from the higher education sector has been through the evolution of work-based learning qualifications that provide for the negotiation and customisation of the learning curriculum to align the professional development needs of learners and performativity requirements of employers. In these programs, learning occurs primarily in the workplace, with work forming the basis of the curriculum (Boud & Symes 2000, p. 14). Work-based learning has been defined by Boud and Solomon (2001, p. 4) as:

> *A class of university programmes that brings together universities and work organisations to create new learning opportunities in the workplace.*

This definition has been expanded by Garnett and Workman (2009, p. 4) to:

A learning process which focusses university level critical thinking upon work (paid or unpaid) in order to facilitate the recognition, acquisition, and application of individual and collective knowledge, skills and abilities, to achieve specific outcomes of significance to the learner, their work and the university.

Work-based learning has been described as 'one of the very few innovations relating to the teaching and learning aspects of post-secondary education that is attempting to engage seriously with the economic, social and educational demands of our era' (Boud, Solomon & Symes 2001, p. 3).

2. Business and educational environment

The public works presented have been conducted over a period of nearly eighteen years between 1995 and 2013. During this time in Australia, the shifting economic, social and educational demands of the era described by Boud, Solomon and Symes (2001) have been important in shaping and creating the context that has enabled these developments to occur. They have influenced both higher educational institutions and businesses to embrace new and innovative forms of employer-focussed education provision.

The 'story' and critique of how work-based learning unfolded at an institutional level in response to key business and environmental influences is provided in chapters 3 to 5. These chapters provide case material that sets out the business context, events, institutional drivers and rationale that led two universities to embark upon their journeys into work-based learning provision. These influences are discussed throughout this context statement and are further critiqued in chapter 6, which explores some of the 'carriers and barriers' impacting upon the development of work-based learning at two Australian universities. It is therefore of value to foreground an exploration of the public work itself with a brief overview of some important macro-environmental factors that had a bearing upon evolution of this public work. These include changes to university funding, the 'trickle-up' impacts of regulatory changes in vocational education and training on higher education program design, and the changing competitive landscape for employer-centred education provision.

3. University funding

Changes to higher education funding in Australia since the late 1980s have been dramatic. They have seen a significant reduction in public investment in universities and an increased imperative for universities to identify new sources of income.

In the late 1980s, the Unified National System resulting from the Dawkins Reforms under Australia's Labor government (DEET, 1988) resulted in a dramatic transformation of the sector, with the distinction between colleges of advanced education and universities being abolished and the number of higher education institutions reduced by almost half to 36. Accompanying these reforms was the introduction of the Higher Education Contribution Scheme (HECS), which by the early 2000s saw the proportional contribution to tuition fees by students rise to a level greater than at any time since the early 1970s when direct funding of student fees was introduced (Universities Australia 2014, p. 6). Over this period, while Australian total investment in tertiary education has remained in the mid-range of OECD countries, it has become increasingly dependent upon private investment, with public sector investment being among the lowest. Over the period 1994 to 2012, which corresponds with the period during which this public work was conducted, government funding per student fell in real terms by 16.7 per cent (OECD 2014, p. 232).

One of the consequences of these shifts in funding has been the increasing dependence by Australian universities on income generated by international students. Between 1995 and 2012, when total university enrolments increased by 7 per cent per annum, domestic enrolment enrolments increased by 3.6 per cent per annum compared to international enrolments growth of 12.3 per cent per annum. While providing significant and readily accessible sources of new funding, these 'soft' international markets represent a risk exposure to Australian universities since they are volatile and subject to a range of competitive, exchange rate and government policy changes.

The decreased public investment in higher education, combined with emerging competition from private investment and dependence on volatile international markets, led to a broad awareness among the University of Technology, Sydney (UTS) executive of the need to actively pursue new growth opportunities. This was required in order to balance the university's business portfolio and mitigate some of the risks presented by these funding changes.

While these macro-level changes in the funding environment were not instrumental in initiating my work (as described in Chapter 3), they were key drivers for UTS's increasing appetite to explore new revenue streams and identify innovative and defensible market propositions. The drive for new revenues with flexible learning provision and work-based learning as programmatic responses to this need is highlighted in the UTS strategic plan for 1998 to 2000, and is outlined further in Chapter 4.

4. Regulatory change: Impacts on competition and employer provision

The regulatory environment for education in Australia also changed significantly during the period leading up to 1995, and continued to change during the period corresponding with the development of this public work. These changes were most dramatic in the vocational educational and training (VET) sector but have had important 'trickle-up' consequences for employer-centred higher education provision.

During the late 1980s and early 1990s, the advent of the National Training Reform Agenda (NTRA) saw the introduction of a range of reforms including competency-based training, competency standards, the recognition of training, qualification frameworks and nomenclature, a broadening of conditions for the flexible delivery and assessment of learning, and a focus on improving access and equity. At the same time, protocols for the accreditation and recognition of training between State jurisdictions were agreed upon, leading to the early unified national accreditation scheme for VET in Australia.

There was no mandatory requirement of the NTRA that VET providers align their offerings with the emerging national accreditation framework. However, access to State government funding, which was opened up to private providers of education, was dependent upon obtaining this accreditation. Similarly, access to the burgeoning market for international students became conditional upon achieving accreditation. In this way, regulatory changes aimed primarily at assuring the quality of education and training provision played a significant role in shaping the business environment for VET and in driving the increased level of privately funded investment and competition.

Accreditation was also rapidly adopted by providers as a marketing vehicle attesting to the bona fides and credibility of a provider's offering. The endorsement of 'government accreditation', previously the preserve of government providers, became a more common branding device of compliant private VET providers adopting the new national education standards during the early to mid-1990s. At the time, accredited non-government VET provision was dominated by vocational training colleges offering certificate- and diploma-level qualifications to school leavers and international students, rather than institutions concerned with the provision of training to industry.

However, the emergence of national vocational educational frameworks, and of regulatory and funding changes, heralded a wholesale increase in the number, type and focus of VET providers competing for business with employers. Whereas in the mid-1990s accredited non-government VET institutions were relatively few in number (in New South Wales, for example, the number is estimated to have been less than 100), they now exceed 5000 nationally and offer training in a comprehensive array of occupational areas and employment sectors (ASQA 2015). Many of these now focus solely on employer provision.

In addition to the increasing numbers of 'accredited' education providers vying for business and entering the market for the provision of nationally recognised qualifications, another important impact of these regulatory reforms, which were later to 'trickle up' to the higher education sector, was related to arrangements for the recognition of training (otherwise referred to as the recognition of prior learning, or RPL) and for the flexible delivery and assessment of training.

According to Rumsey (1993), the National Framework for the Recognition of Training (NFROT), signed in 1992, set out:

> (a)   to provide for national consistency in the recognition of accredited courses, training programs, training providers and competencies held by individuals,

> (b)   to provide nationally consistent outcomes for vocational education and training courses and training programs,

> (c)   to involve the industrial bodies in the accreditation process,

> (d)   *to provide mechanisms by which government, commercial, industry and community-based providers of vocational education and training may be recognised,*
>
> (e)   *to provide for the establishment of mechanisms for the objective assessment of competencies held by individuals, and*
>
> (f)   *to provide for the recognition of prior learning in a manner which is consistent and fair.*

These wide-ranging aims not only opened the door to new players in the market, but began to open up new opportunities for the re-packaging of accredited educational programs. With new freedom to offer flexible non-classroom 'delivery', a wider variety of assessment approaches including the recognition of prior learning, the playing field was opened beyond the government providers of education that had previously dominated the field.

Changes to supply arrangements and the increasing number of providers offering accredited programs such as frontline manager qualifications began to shift employers' expectations. Increasingly, there was a demand from employers for more relevant, tailored, situated and workplace-focussed learning. By the early 2000s, flexible and employer-responsive provision in the VET sector was becoming more common. The Program in Applied Business, described in Chapter 3, was one of the early innovations responding to these new conditions and providing alternative models of accredited education in the workplace.

Despite these changes in the VET sector, at this time there was no regulatory imperative for universities to revise their course offerings or to offer more flexible pathways to higher education qualifications. Nor was there any apparent competitive driver since the university sector maintained a monopoly on higher education provision and regulatory constraints were uncontested by private entrants. Indeed, up until the early 2000s, the number of non-university providers of higher education was very small (approximately eight in New South Wales), and today this competitive space remains relatively uncontested with few non-university entrants.

UTS's early moves to engage in the development of higher-level WBL qualification programs therefore suggested a blurring of the boundaries between VET and higher education, and was seen by some as maverick. While some more progressive

educators and employers were highly supportive of the development, many saw it as either an unwelcome disruption to the status quo– a vocationalising or 'dumbing down' of higher education – or were simply unsupportive of the proposition of the emerging 'recognition of learning' agenda, seeing legitimate learning as only that dispensed by the university.

By contrast, in 2012, while researching opportunities for the reintroduction of WBL by Deakin University (explored in Chapter 5), it became evident to me that some employers had developed a more advanced understanding of the elements and modalities of negotiated WBL qualifications such as a curriculum derived from work, recognising learning from experience, introducing credit-bearing work-based projects and accrediting continuing professional development. Since many of these educational concepts had been made familiar as a result of regulatory changes in the VET sector, by 2012 there was far greater awareness and acceptance of these as valid approaches to higher level learning than during the early 1990s.

By 2012 it had become clear that the readiness of the market and its propensity to embrace WBL had shifted, and both employers and educators were able to align WBL with their business and organisational development models. It is this business and educational context that set the scene for my renewed engagement with WBL and the latter phase of my public work outlined in Chapter 5.

Chapter 2

Shaping my world view

Before critically engaging with the public works I have been absorbed in researching, planning and implementing for the last 20 years and which I believe are characterised by negotiation and persuasion, I believe it is important to view the works and my practice through my own lens. My views and approach to the work have been influenced by a number of factors that have undergone adjustment as I shape, and have been shaped by, the shifting micro and macro features of the landscape in which I operate.

Rather than as an academic or educator, I initially approached the world of learning and work as a practitioner in education marketing and management. My early practice through the 'Business of Learning' phase was influenced principally by my work as a marketing practitioner seeking to develop commercial opportunities in the provision of educational services and using the conventional tools and frameworks of marketing practice to develop new opportunities. During successive phases of the public works, my inquiry was increasingly shaped by the need to acquire a deeper understanding of the 'product' aspects of the education marketing program as a means of driving innovation and delivering differentiated, new-to-market services and value to stakeholders – the university, learner and employer. As outlined in the Introduction, this inquiry led to public works that advanced the HEI strategy, program innovation and industry practice.

In this chapter I consider some of the key personal and professional experiences that were instrumental in shaping my world view and approach to inquiry into the university business of work-based learning.

Insights from practical experience

Personal epistemologies comprise the ways that individuals engage in activities and interactions, and construe, construct and learn from those experiences. Such epistemologies have dimensions of personal intention, intensity of engagement, and existing capacities that shape individuals' participation in activities and interactions and their learning from them. The utility of learning through practice depends to a large

extent on the degree to which the students actively engage in the process of learning through practice-based activities and interactions. How they engage with what they are offered in terms of a pathway of experiences and pedagogical practices depends on each individual's personal epistemology (Billett 2006).

The personal 'pathway of experiences' to which Billett refers has been influential in shaping my own world view and subsequent inquiry and practice, and has underpinned my public work. Appendix 1: 'A short biography of formative experiences', has been included to provide a background context and 'story' behind how I have construed insights and meaning from a combination of key career experiences and formal study. These insights and reflections about customers, personal learning preferences and professional identity have been significant in shaping my own beliefs, values and intentions and as well as my personal epistemology.

Insight #1: Know your customer

Developing a deep understanding of customer needs and delivering on them has primacy in business and in delivering value. Developing a sound knowledge of what makes the customer 'tick' and backing this with a differentiated value proposition is also critical to the process of business development in education.

In Chapter 3 I suggest that during the 'Business of Learning' phase of my practice, the marketing orientation of many educational providers reflected a 'production era' mindset (Quester et al. 2001, p. 31) in which the tertiary institution would define and dictate the development needs of its organisational clients by determining both the learning curriculum and the methods by which learning will be assessed and validated. The market power of universities at this time was based largely upon the uncontested competitive advantage achieved by virtue of their monopoly over the authority to validate and accredit higher-level learning (Porter 1987). The competitive pressure to offer flexible learning opportunities and student-centred curriculum were limited and, as a result, there were fewer opportunities for students or employers, as consumers, to tailor and personalise the learning program and thereby enhance its situational utility and relevance.

These factors were at odds with my personal experiences and beliefs about developing business by meeting the needs of customers gained from the frontline experience in sales and marketing. While acknowledging that in education, unlike other types of service provision, the consumer's needs cannot be the sole dictate of institutional practice, this

belief shaped and reinforced my view of the need to establish 'customer advantage' as a market-based philosophy through the delivery of enhanced value to stakeholders (Gibbs & Knapp 2002, p. 41). This belief became a cornerstone of my personal intent to optimise the value delivered by certified learning to learners, employers and the university, and underpinned each of the evolving phases of my practice.

Insight #2: Personal learning preferences

I learn more effectively from my own practical experience and experimentation, which has been an important ingredient in shaping, and providing context for, my formal higher-level learning.

In Appendix 1 I outline how my early experiences of formal tertiary learning proved to be personally unsatisfactory and how, in contrast, subsequent practical workplace learning became the 'edifying practical experience' (Gibbs 2013, n.p.) that stimulated my appetite for undergraduate-level study. Throughout my undergraduate and subsequent postgraduate education I sought opportunities that would enable me to translate theoretical learning to practical 'real-world' learning (Boud & Symes 2000, p. 14). I learned to value the benefits of combining theoretical learning with authentic practical experience as a means of increasing its utility and relevance. This was particularly true of my postgraduate education, which was undertaken concurrently with my work as a General Manager for a private provider of tertiary education.

At the completion of a Master of Business in Marketing in 1995 I reflected that much of the program content would have limited direct relevance to my current or future work. While credentialism had played a part in my motivation to pursue the award, this alone seemed insufficient as a reward for the effort and cost involved in attaining it. The final 'capstone' project, however, provided an opportunity to negotiate the focus and direction of my academic study and resulted in the development of a blueprint for the Program in Applied Business. I used the opportunity to develop my inquiry into the market for work-relevant learning qualifications and to finesse my ideas for entering this emerging field. More importantly, it provided me with my first meaningful postgraduate work-integrated learning experience, which benefitted both my academic study and professional practice. It led me to a strong belief in the power and utility of experience, to which Billet (2006) refers, and reinforced it as my preferred learning style and as a powerful means of augmenting the benefit derived from formal study. In this sense,

'knowing thy customer' combined with the development of a strong personal belief and preference for combining theoretical and practical learning.

Insight #3: Know yourself in the world

A variety of personal and professional experiences have shaped how I have sought to derive 'meaning' from work. Appendix 1 describes how a combination of family influences and personal experiences led me to pursue career opportunities in education, in part to satisfy the need for 'social good' from my work. My public work in education has supported this pursuit of meaning and contributed to the social good, but has at the same time created tensions for my professional identity as a non-academic within the university workplace.

As my professional inquiry and practice in the world of learning work has deepened, so too have I 'strayed' from my initial entry point as a marketeer of education. As described above, the initial point from which I embarked on an exploration of the world of learning and work was the search for 'customer advantage' and developing the Business of Learning. As my practice in the field has developed, the common boundaries between the roles of the educational marketeer and educator have become blurred. An increasing involvement in educational program and partnership framework design has led, in my view, to a more holistic work role in which management of the 'product' (academic program) and 'promotion' (business development) elements of the marketing mix have become more inclusive than commonly practiced in higher education. I contend that just as WBL challenges academic practices (Boud & Solomon 2001, p. 28), so too does it challenge the conventions that often separate 'product' and 'promotion' in the provision of higher education services to industry.

This tension and perceived distinction between the roles of business development and educator has created a persistent ambiguity in my own professional positioning within the university. I first explored the tensions of working as a non-academic in an academic environment in a reflective essay concluding work towards a Master of Arts in Work Based Studies in 2001 (see Appendix 2). In this essay, I asserted that despite my endeavour to better establish professional legitimacy as a WBL practitioner (by completing my own postgraduate WBL program), this did not necessarily result in acceptance of my role as anything other than a business development practitioner. This was reflected by Onyx (2001) in her critique of the establishment of WBL at UTS and in her pointing out the role ambiguity and tensions emanating from that process. Nor at times did I feel that due

recognition was given by the academic community to my contribution to the development of WBL. As a member of the commercial divisions at both UTS and Deakin I continuously fought to establish my 'credentials' in order that I could influence corporate strategy and program direction. In part, it is the ongoing need to 'know myself' and establish my professional identity in the context of my work as a 'non-academic that has provided the motivation to complete a Master of Arts in Work Based Learning Studies and this current engagement in the Doctor of Professional Studies.

Between Business and Academia: Emergence of a new professional identity?

This ambiguous professional 'positionality' between the business and academic operation of the university, as initially identified in a reflective essay (see Appendix 2) which I wrote in 2001, has continued to feature in my work and question my professional identity within the university throughout the phases of my involvement in work-based learning. On the one hand, my appointments as a professional staff member at both UTS and Deakin provided me with a degree of freedom to work creatively and at the edges of the mainstream activities of the university. On the other hand, this employment classification has acted as a constraint that has placed limitations on the role that I have been able to play.

A Blurring of professional Boundaries

Work-based learning partnerships necessarily traverse both the academic and business landscapes of universities since they bring these two dimensions together in ways that are not typical of many other university programs. In traditional university offerings, the management of the academic program is clearly partitioned from the university's supporting business and administrative operations. Marketing, student relations and 'client management' are generally the preserve of professional staff whose responsibility it is to provide support services for academics who determine the dimensions of quality and delivery the university's course offering.

With work-based learning programs this separation is not always as clear-cut. Because of the employer-centeredness of such programs and the focus on customisation, it becomes necessary for those involved with driving the Business of Learning (be they professional or academic staff), and who are responsible for identifying, securing and maintaining client relationships, to be knowledgeable and literate in educational and

operational dimensions of the program. This is critical so as to facilitate the establishment of fit-for-purpose programs and to assure an effective bridge between the initial sales and value proposition, program implementation and the benefits sought by clients. The 'business developer' therefore has a greater interest in, and obligation to, participate and follow though in the end-to-end delivery of the program so as to ensure that the program delivers upon its initial promises. This person may therefore often be reluctant to 'hand off' this responsibility to others. In my own experiences with UTS and Deakin, the lack of institutional capability and maturity in the provision of such programs led me to believe that there was a need to closely align control of the business and academic operation.

As my professional focus has evolved through different stages from the Business of Learning to Learning as Business, the need to limit the separation between client relations and management on the one hand and the academic program on the other has become more pronounced. This has been due in part to the role that I have played not only in developing business but also in shaping and developing the educational and academic aspects of work-based learning programs. At UTS in 2001, this duality was incongruous with the accepted partitioning between administrative and academic roles. It similarly blurred the boundaries of my position between the worlds of business and academia at Deakin, and this continues to the present day.

Playing the role of a one-stop shop

Two factors merit exploration and reflection in considering how my professional position and identity has evolved within the university. The first is the need among employers for a one-stop shop to help navigate the complexities of university structures, culture and practices. The second relates to the implications of this need in demarcating professional and administrative roles in the university.

My early experiences of business development in a university environment taught me that a commonly perceived barrier among employers to working with universities was their perceived inaccessibility. During the early marketing of the Program in Applied Business and the work-based learning program at UTS, employers often lamented the difficulties they experienced in approaching and working with universities whose structure and operations and work culture did not lend themselves readily to working with organisational clients. In their interactions, they felt that they were often pushed 'from pillar to post' when trying to identify relevant areas of the university to channel

their enquiries or advance discussions of collaboration. In many cases, the need to deal with a number of disconnected administrative and academic departments and individuals frustrated their ambitions and overtures.

During the Learning for Business stage of my work described in Chapter 4, it was made a condition of engagement by a major client that UTS was able to offer a 'one-stop shop'. This required UTS to demonstrate the capacity to provide a single point of client contact with the ability, authority and understanding to manage both academic and business relations between the two organisations. Because of my background, I was uniquely positioned at UTS to be able to traverse these two areas and lead the establishment and development of this seminal partnership. I became the face of that 'one-stop shop' with a permanent desk at the client's premises, and my professional role began to shift, at least externally, to accommodate this emerging role.

However, while wholly acceptable on the side of the client, this dual business representative cum educational role did not always comfortably translate into the world of the academy. In this context roles are often either academic *or* professional. Rarely in my experience are they interchangeable, irrespective of the formal qualifications or the relevance of practice and experience of individual players. Hence at UTS, where my employment contract vested with In search and I was seconded to the position of Director of an educational unit within the university, the nature and authority of my role was sometimes unclear. Ambiguities and tensions arose in relation to control of the program, and the contested nature of work-based learning within the academy was heightened. Notwithstanding these difficulties, at UTS my position was cemented and the incremental successes of the program earned me the opportunity to occupy this unusual professional niche. This is explored further in Chapter 4.

Ten years later, at DeakinPrime, I found myself in similar circumstances, employed as I was as a member of the professional staff within the university (Chapter 5 describes the business drivers and my role as an education business practitioner in evolving work-based learning at Deakin University). By this time, I had acquired a comprehensive understanding of both the educational and business requirements for operating WBL programs. I was able to play the role of bridging the worlds of business and academia and occupy a rare ecological niche in the university that enabled such a bridge between these worlds.

The recurring tension, however, was that as an appointee to a professional role, I was seen by some to lack the positional authority and credibility to be accepted as a front-runner in the program's establishment. Perhaps my unique experiences and resulting ability to practice in both the business and educational domain is borne out of an unusual set of personal and professional circumstances more relevant to the start-up work-based learning programs. Perhaps the skill sets that I have developed and the way in which I have previously been able to harness these in non-academic roles would be difficult to position and sustain in any future role. Regardless, they have been seminal experiences in establishing my own professional identity, in being able to bridge these two worlds and in shaping what I hold to be true.

What I hold to be true

A combination of consumer-centricity, a belief in how I learn best from experience and the need to add value, and be valued, through my work have been critical in shaping my beliefs, inquiry and practice.

How I have come to understand what I believe to be 'true' has become important in informing my work-based enquiry and has been influential in forming my understanding and professional practice in the area of work-based learning. It is, significantly, through my experiences and related professional enquiry, as outlined in chapters 3 to 5, that I have been able to work towards an understanding of this field and through which I have progressively reshaped my understanding and beliefs. Experience has been paramount in framing my professional inquiry and work methodologies, which have evolved progressively through each of the three phases of work to be critiqued in this context statement.

In proposing that experience is a valid 'window' for my professional enquiry, I am moving away from a positivist approach in which authoritative knowledge is derived exclusively from scientific inquiry founded upon logic and empiricism. While knowledge derived from logical and scientific treatments has been important in shaping my own world view, I have increasingly found the 'truth' to be a slippery and amorphous concept shaped significantly by context of my practical experience. I have found that what is true in one professional or organisational context has not necessarily been so in another. Personal and organisational values that have prevailed at each phase of my exploration have been highly influential in shaping my beliefs, as has the structural and

social organisation of work and the varied organisational contexts in which this work has been conducted.

Therefore, while my professional enquiry, practice and beliefs have often been initially informed and shaped by external truths supported by research and the practice of others, it is enquiry through my subsequent evidence-based practice and exploration of these external truths that have had the greatest influence on my professional practice in successive phases of my public work.

At the commencement of each phase I have embarked upon an exploration to test the case for a particular approach to accredited work-based education. Throughout each phase of practice and exploration I have encountered fresh perspectives and challenges from both organisational clients and from within the academy. Based upon these I have been able to revise my understanding and modify my approach in response to new insights. My exploration of the business of work-based learning in which my own evolving understanding of the needs of clients, learners and the university has driven renewed actions based upon a better knowledge of the 'place' of WBL each time. In this I have gravitated towards a constructivist paradigm and harnessed survey-based research, grounded theory and action research in my methodological approach and in building new layers of understanding (Costley, Elliott & Gibbs 2010, p. 84). These approaches to professional inquiry are further outlined in Chapters 3, 4 and 5.

In this spiraling exploration of my own practice, I have often set out with an imprecise notion of the direction I am taking, what resources, knowledge and capabilities I might need to reach a particular destination, or whether, if I finally reach this 'place', it will accord with the beliefs I held at the outset. Consistent with the claim that my work in the field of WBL has been at the forefront of practice in Australia, I have also embarked on my exploration into unchartered territory without the benefit of a 'roadmap' or clear precedents offered by prior third-party experience or research.

Perhaps naively at times, my practice has been driven by anecdotal understanding gained from experiences that have shaped my practice. Such truth has its origins in 'pragmatic edifying experience' (Gibbs 2013) stemming from my own early 'workplace schooling', from my own experiences as a work-based learner, and those gained as a practitioner in the education business (see Appendix 2). As these experiences have broadened and deepened, so too have I accumulated a richer sense of what I

understand to be true and have modified and adjusted my practice to reflect this evolving understanding.

I therefore contend that my truths have been formed from a largely constructivist inquiry paradigm. I have formed meaning and shaped my beliefs in relation to reflections on my own experience, the historical and social value of these and their practical value and application to the business of work-based learning (Brinkmann & Tanggaard 2013, n.p.). Appendix 1 provides further insights into the practical experiences that have shaped my practice and my understanding of how I learn and identify truths, and how these have shaped my professional identity and values.

In the world of practice in which I have found myself, my ideas have occupied a space between the two contrasting spheres of academia and 'real world' practice. The ideas or tools that have developed and shaped my exploration in this 'in-between' space have evolved from a particular set of life experiences and personal insights.

Chapter 3

Public work Phase 1: The Business of Learning

This claim for the Doctor of Professional Studies is based upon my public works in the 'university business of work-based learning' and the impact that this has had in three thematic areas:

HEI strategy: Influencing the strategy, policy and practices of two higher education institutions, which in turn has influenced the direction of work-based learning in Australia.

Program innovation: The development of innovative approaches to WBL program design and provision in Australia with an emphasis on the realisation of performance improvement outcomes for sponsoring employers.

Industry practices: The formation and management of university–employer partnerships that have established new models of university partnerships in Australia The claim is substantiated and evidenced by the products of three bodies of work conducted primarily at the University of Technology, Sydney (UTS) and at Deakin University.

The work is presented in three interlocking and progressive phases that align these thematic areas of impact with the chronological development of my professional practice in work-based learning. These phases outline my public work between 1995 and 2012 and include:

- The Business of Learning: Program in Applied Business at Insearch, UTS (1995–2002)
- Learning for Business: Work-based learning partnerships at UTS (1997–2002)
- Learning as Business: Work-based learning at Deakin University (2011–2013)

1. The Business of Learning: Program in Applied Business at Insearch, UTS (1995–2002)

The first public work I explore is the Business of Learning because I see it as seminal to the ones which follow and the source of much of my thinking about the role of professionals at the interface of academic and professional knowledge. This chapter outlines and critiques this significant phase of my practice in the field of learning and work in which I designed, developed and implemented an innovative suite of work-integrated learning qualifications that were delivered under license by Insearch Ltd, the commercial education provider of the University of Technology, Sydney.

This phase established a new model of university–employer partnership that in turn became the principal catalyst for the development of the UTS work-based learning initiative, discussed in Chapter 4.

Up to this point my professional paradigm was primarily that of a marketing practitioner pursuing opportunities for business growth. The initiative was instigated to create a differentiated model of tertiary qualification that responded to emerging needs identified in a government White Paper on the future of leadership development in Australia titled Enterprising Nation (ITFLMS 1995).

I independently designed, developed and implemented an innovative and 'new-to-market' suite of work-integrated learning qualifications through a business partnership with the commercial arm of UTS, Insearch Ltd. This initiative established a new program framework for accredited tripartite business education in Australia. The program was completed by approximately 500 employees of Insearch, UTS's partner organisations.

The program was developed and evolved to inform an unmet market need for work-relevant tertiary education; how the program influenced a significant shift in institutional policy at UTS and practices in employer collaboration; and how it acted as a catalyst for the institution's broader foray into the provision of negotiated postgraduate work-based learning qualifications. This will be substantiated through a critique of the following.

This chapter:

- presents the context for development of the Program in Applied Business
- outlines the research that underpinned the initiative

- describes the resulting public work and supporting evidence of how it impacted on the thematic areas of HEI strategy, program innovation and industry practice
- critiques the limitations of the work and how these created a catalyst for the next phase of public work, Learning for Business.

Summary of public work

Public work	Description and area of impact	Supporting evidence **Major evidence highlighted**
Development of the Program in Applied Business – Certificate III, IV and Diploma in Applied Business	**Program innovation:** A nested suite of accredited courses to Australian Qualifications Framework level 5, which was the first approved by the New South Wales Vocational Education and Training Accreditation Board to accredit workplace situated learning within the nominal structure of an accredited course.	• Artefact 1: Program in Applied Business prospectus • **Artefact 2: Course accreditation documents** • Artefact 3: Accreditation approval documents • **Artefact 4: Guide to Effective Workplace Learning** • Artefact 5: Mentoring Conference program
Developing and authoring a framework for negotiating and supporting effective work relevant learning	**Program innovation:** *The Guide to Effective Workplace Learning for Course Participants and Mentors* formed a critical supporting framework for linking employers, learners and the university. It enabled the negotiation and alignment of individual and employer work priorities in relation to the accredited curriculum. It formed the 'cornerstone' to the innovation and link between the learning of individuals and objectives of employer organisations. This work represented a programmatic response to key themes of the 'Karpin Report' (ITFLMS 1995), calling for a closer alignment between learning and work.	

Public work	Description and area of impact	Supporting evidence **Major evidence highlighted**
Establishing new approaches to university-led workplace education in the 'corporate' market	**HEI strategy and industry practice:** Establishment of the program with leading employers as a new approach to accredited workplace education.	• **Artefact 6: PAB Business Plan** • Artefact 7: Strategy approval documents and announcement • Artefact 8: PAB article in the *Australian Training Review* • Artefact 9: Collection of evidence of employer organisations

Context for the development of the Program in Applied Business

The antecedents for the development of the Program in Applied Business stemmed from my work as General Manager of Williams Business College, a leading private provider of vocational qualifications to school leavers. My role was to develop and lead strategic direction and business growth and to maintain the college's competitive position in the market place. It was through the exploration of business growth opportunities in the provision of accredited learning services that I came to develop this earlier model of a work-based learning program, which was later launched and operated under license to Insearch Institute of Commerce (IIC), the commercial division of the University of Technology, Sydney.

In 1994, Williams Business College was an organisation that operated over five campuses in Sydney, with a full-time equivalent student enrolment of around nine hundred. The college occupied a premium position in the marketplace on account of its longevity (100 years in business), reputation for high-quality courses and graduate employability, and the predominance of domestic students amongst its cohort[1].

Over a two-year period I had focussed on three key strategies to drive growth in the Business of Learning. These were important in setting the scene for my later inquiry into the provision of programs for adult workplace learners and are described Appendix 3. One opportunity for growth, which became apparent through a process of opportunity identification, was to focus on harnessing the five campus locations during the evenings and weekends, during which time they remained unused.

This in turn led me to seek out opportunities for product and market diversification to enable the college to attract business from a new user segment: adult learners seeking part-time 'after-hours' study opportunities.

Research and development of the Program in Applied Business

While undertaking background inquiry into the needs of adult learners seeking part-time study opportunities during 1994, my attention was drawn to preliminary reports from the working committees from the Industry Task Force on Leadership and Management Skills. These preliminary reports provided important research and insights from the working committees as to the perceived shortfalls in leadership and management development in Australia. These early publications would later be embodied in the government White Paper *Enterprising Nation – Renewing Australia's Managers to Meet the Challenges of the Asia Pacific Century*; otherwise referred to as the Karpin Report (ITFLMS 1995).

As discussed in Chapter 2, my research into these opportunities was conducted from the perspective of a marketing practitioner exploring business growth opportunities. My belief in the need to provide consumer choice, adoption of a 'customer advantage'

---

[1] It is worth noting that at this time, the operating environment for private vocational provision was going through significant reform and regulatory change (Cawley, 2000). The private sector had been stigmatised by bad publicity surrounding a growth in the number of new private colleges that were perceived to be offering low-quality courses to overseas students. It was in this environment that I was looking to consolidate the college's Business of Learning and find new growth opportunities.

mindset and exposure to marketing research methods through formal study, naturally lent itself to the use of marketing research methods that would enable me to identify unmet benefit segments.

The goals of my research were threefold:

- first, to identify the dimensions of a differentiated and accredited business management course for middle managers and/or small business operators
- second, to maximise use of the college's premises during weekday evenings and weekends
- third, to gain 'first-mover advantage' in the market by going to market with a course scheme that would pre-empt competitive responses to the forthcoming Karpin Report.

The research and inquiry I undertook to inform the development and implementation of the Program in Applied Business (PAB) comprised a number of interconnected projects that were conducted in sequence and included:

1. desk research to identify current trends and the dimensions of customer needs
2. exploratory qualitative research to 'concept test' the scope and dimensions of a proposed course schema that would respond to the customer benefits sought
3. commercialisation and business planning research – research commissioned by Insearch Ltd, UTS to prepare a business plan for implementation of the PAB
4. post-accreditation research and development into methodologies that would quality assure the 'work-based learning' aspects of the program.

A more detailed description of these interrelated research projects is included in Appendix 4, and their findings and relevance to the public work is outlined below.

Discussion of the public work and its impact

Key messages emerging from the Karpin Report during 1994 addressed shortfalls in the market provision of leadership and management development programs in Australia. Research, development, commercialisation and delivery of the Program in Applied Business, which responded to findings of the Karpin committee, resulted in three related sets of public work:

1. development of a new-to-market suite of work-integrated learning qualifications

2. development of a framework and educational materials to support the integration of classroom learning and workplace practice

3. establishment of new approaches to university-led workplace education in Australia.

This section discusses the work, its impact on program innovation, HEI strategy and industry practice.

Program innovation

The design of the Program in Applied Business was the first of its kind in Australia to formally integrate class-based knowledge acquisition with the development and practice of mentor-supervised learning in the workplace within an accredited and qualification-bearing course. The key aim of the program design was to foster learner-centeredness through the application of a university-accredited curriculum to specific workplace issues identified by the learner. In achieving this, the program design fulfilled a second important need, which was to focus learning on issues that would drive organisational improvement and benefit.

This claim is supported by the following artefacts:

Artefact 1: The course prospectus provides a high-level overview of the program design and outlines how it integrated newly endorsed national competency standards in business with instructor-facilitated classroom learning, workplace mentor supervision, negotiated projects via learning contracts and flexible assessment methods. As outlined in Appendix 4, a distinctive aspect of the course design was that the nominal course hours included those allocated to mentor supervision and 'workplace application' of learning.

Artefact 2: The Program in Applied Business accreditation submission. This document provides a detailed outline of the proposed course model. Attachment 1 of this submission 'Industry and Market Need' outlines the key benefits sought by learners that were reported by the Karpin committee and which were identified as gaps in existing service provision.

Artefact 3: The accreditation approval documents provide evidence of validation of the PAB by the New South Wales Vocational Education & Training Accreditation Board (VETAB). Attention is drawn to page 2, which confirms the 'innovative business program with a workplace delivery focus'. Attention is also drawn to the conditions of accreditation and the need to respond to a request for details of how the quality of workplace learning will be managed. This condition of accreditation was responded to with a supplementary plan contained in Artefact 2 and was the driver for development of *The Guide to Effective Workplace* Learning (Artefact 4).

Artefact 4: *The Guide to Effective Workplace Learning.* This 'Guide' was developed in response to recommendations of the VETAB accreditation committee as a means of quality assuring the interactions in the proposed tripartite learning program. The Guide was based upon my own research and inquiry related to the emergence of mentored approaches to learning in the workplace (see Artefact 6), which in turn contributed to the development of my own public profile in this area as evidenced by Artefact 5.

The Guide was designed to clarify the roles and responsibilities of the parties to the learning program by reinforcing the overarching program goals and approach, preparing learners and mentors for their collaboration, and outlining the processes for negotiated learning and the use of learning contracts. It was through these mechanisms that the program aimed to promote the workplace performativity of learners and add value to the employer organisation goals. Use of the Guide was supported by workshops attended by both the learner and mentor. It represented an important work in guiding and aligning the involvement of the learner, workplace mentor and university instructor in the work-integrated learning process.

Artefact 5: Mentoring Conference program. My role as chair of this conference as well as involvement in a number of other public events and training programs evidences my growing professional reputation and influence as interest and engagement in employer-based mentoring grew.

HEI strategy

The market positioning of the PAB was an important consideration for the launch of the program, which led to my a search for alternative entry strategies. Through my inquiry and discussion with potential organisational adopters of the PAB, it became evident that Williams Business College may not provide the optimal brand imputation under which to launch this innovation. I therefore embarked upon a process of partnership/licensee identification and screening that would lead to the formation of a contractual arrangement with Insearch Ltd, the commercial education provider of the University of Technology, Sydney.

Insearch Institute of Commerce is a provider of pathway programs to undergraduate studies at UTS. As a commercially focussed education provider with university backing, it presented a branding umbrella under which the PAB could be launched to employer markets. However, the institute's core business was provision of pathway courses to international students. In order to gain approval to offer the PAB, it was necessary to build, and win support for, a case for Insearch, UTS to license and deliver the courses.

Artefact 6: PAB Business Plan, is a culmination of further primary and secondary research I conducted (commissioned by Insearch and summarised in Attachments 1 and 4 of the business plan)This business plan was presented to the Board of Directors at Insearch Ltd in August 1995. It outlined the leading edge nature of the program, its strategic alignment with Insearch, UTS business, and the financial and partnership arrangements for the proposed venture. The plan was endorsed by the Insearch Ltd Board, which was chaired by the Vice-Chancellor of UTS, Professor R.W. Guthrie.

Artefact 7: Approval of the strategy direction and business plan, is evidenced via:

1. documents confirming a licensing agreement between my company, Trent Management Services, and Insearch, UTS
2. authority from the NSW VETAB for Insearch to offer the program
3. an Insearch, UTS announcement relating to the launch of the program.

This work was instrumental in establishing a new direction for Insearch, UTS and in creating the cornerstone from which the university's later entry into the provision of WBL programs was launched.

Industry practice

The launch of the Program in Applied Business in the latter part of 1995 and early 1996 attracted significant interest from trade and industry press. The innovative program design and publicity surrounding this generated interest from employers and resulted in its adoption as a middle-management development program by a number of leading Australian employers over the ensuing years of its operation.

Artefact 8: Article published in *Australian Training Review*, is an example of a number of media articles published in response to the program launch. It evidences the innovative features of the program and its exploratory and pioneering nature.

Artefact 9: The Program in Applied Business was completed by over five hundred learners from a number of high-profile employers including the NSW Roads and Motoring Association (NRMA), NSW State Rail Authority, Bayer, AMP and Commonwealth Bank. This collection of artefacts present evidence of the establishment of partnerships with organisations adopting this new approach to certified work-integrated learning and includes:

- revised course prospectuses illustrating tailoring of the program to company needs
- graduation ceremonies conducted in-house for client organisations.

Critique of the work

As evidenced above (see Artefact 3), the Program in Applied Business, through its innovative design, set a new direction in the provision of accredited learning programs to support employer-based qualification programs in Australia. While pioneering in its day, the dimensions of the program that recognise work-based pathways and flexible modes of assessment are common features of today's vocational education and training (VET) in Australia and overseas.

During the course of the PAB's operation, between 1996 and 2002, VET provision of business and management programs underwent significant change. These changes started with the endorsement of national competency standards for frontline management in the Frontline Management Initiative (FMI), which became an industry standard through to the creation of today's training package arrangements that provide considerable scope for the tailoring of learning programs to meet employer- and learner-specific needs. As a result of this ongoing change, it was important to ensure

that the PAB continued to offer 'customer advantage' and keep in step with national initiatives and trends.

One way in which this was accomplished was by mapping the frontline manager competency standards against learning outcomes accredited to the PAB. In this way, the program could be promoted as a frontline management program (FMI) (see Artefact 9). However, the widespread adoption of these FMI standards led to intensifying product and price competition in the marketplace and the emergence of numerous new providers of FMI programs. The market was slowly becoming commoditised, and maintaining the PAB's positioning advantage became progressively difficult. New approaches were required.

During the course of the business development work I undertook for the PAB, negotiations for the provision of the program to AMP Limited were initiated. During the course of these negotiations, a number of questions relating to the broader scope and relevance of the PAB curriculum to the organisational capability development agenda were raised. While the general principles of applying formal learning to work and delivering organisational value though learning were seen as desirable by AMP, detailed discussions identified a number of challenges. These related to Insearch, UTS's capacity to deliver a broader range of qualification programs, including postgraduate level programs; capacity to 'accredit' higher-level experience within an qualification program; the scope for customising learning programs that recognised prior learning and future development goals at an individual level – 'The Market of One'; and the capacity for learning to be designed with the dual intention of certifying learning and driving organisational performance (Shipley 2001).

Compared to many qualification programs available at that time, the PAB offered significant flexibility for negotiation of learning pathways. However, there was no provision for negotiation of the course content and learning outcomes themselves, which limited the degree to which the 'core' curriculum was relevant to a broader audience. This challenge underscored an inherent problem with models of tertiary education for adult learners in the workplace. Namely, that attempts to provide work-relevant learning to employees with varied prior and experiential learning and different career trajectories, with a standardised 'one size fits all' curriculum, creates a mismatch between university provision, employee development and organisational performance drivers (Shipley 2001). Provision of tertiary programs with predetermined learning

outcomes represented a 'production-era' orientation to marketing amongst many tertiary providers.

Nonetheless, negotiations proceeded with AMP and led to an initial period of collaboration in which Insearch and AMP co-branded an in-house training provision under the banner of the AMP Applied Business Program. This in turn provided a catalyst for further research and inquiry that would have far broader implications for the development of work-based learning in Australia. This development is discussed in Chapter 4.

In terms of my own professional development, the formation of this exploratory partnership to build upon the principles of the PAB marked a turning point in my practice. During this early phase of my exploration of work-based learning, the focus on the Business of Learning was predicated on my intent to create a distinctive education business by exploiting opportunities through which the appeal of an accredited curriculum could be extended to employers through its application to workplace issues and the delivery of value to employers beyond the credentialing of its employees. More conventional university-based curriculum approaches prevalent in the market at that time, and which have I described as the 'curriculum tail wagging the organisational dog (Shipley 2001), suggested the need for alternative employer–university partnership approaches. Together with colleagues at AMP and UTS, I was able to play an important role in shifting the focus to Learning for Business by managing the pivotal relationship between these two organisations and by playing a central role in developing and managing the UTS WBL framework. My role in this work is expanded upon further in Chapter 4. In this next phase, the focus shifted from learning aligned to the university's curriculum to that of meeting the needs of individual learners in the context of their work role and meeting employer's requirements for performance enhancement though learning.

Delivery of the PAB continued concurrently with the development of work-based learning at UTS until both programs were discontinued in 2004 (see Chapter 5). For some major organisations, such as the NSW State Rail Authority, an appetite remained for the PAB as a preferred development program methodology, privileging the transfer of 'university' knowledge over that produced by the employee. In this way the program's benefits endured over a longer time period than the ensuing WBL intervention at UTS. Perhaps the most enduring impact of the PAB, however, was the role it played as a catalyst in the development of WBL, which in turn heralded a

strategic shift by UTS towards 'instrumental progressivism' (Boud & Symes 2000, p. 16) in its partnerships with industry. This shift, and the influence the PAB yielded, is explored in Chapter 4.

Chapter 4

Public work Phase 2 – Learning for Business: Work-based learning at UTS (1997–2002)

Learning for Business

This chapter outlines public work conducted at Insearch, UTS and with the University of Technology, Sydney in the development of leading edge work-based learning qualifications in Australia.

As described above, WBL programs were initiated at UTS in response to the specific requirements of one major Australian corporation, AMP Limited, and following an initial engagement with the Insearch, UTS PAB. A period of exploratory collaboration and cooperative research commenced between AMP and UTS with a view to identifying opportunities to broaden the scope, relevance and contribution of accredited learning to individual and organisational development. A model of work-based learning being offered by Middlesex University in the UK was identified as an appropriate one from which to model a new approach at UTS.

A characteristic of this phase of my inquiry and practice was the changing organisational context in which it was conducted. During the Business of Learning phase, my research and professional practice was conducted in the context of a relatively small and self-contained initiative within the commercial arm of a large public university. In this context, I was able to conduct my work mostly unimpeded by the regulation, culture, competing priorities and internal politics that are a feature of university working life. Consequently I was able to achieve relatively swift progress in establishing the PAB both commercially and educationally.

By contrast, the initiation of a partnership with AMP brought a 'spotlight' to this work and led to the involvement of the broader university. Thus, the operating context became considerably more complex and I became more deeply involved with 'mainstream' operation of the university and faculties. It is the initiation of this partnership and its subsequent impact upon program innovation, HEI strategy and

industry practice that forms the basis of my claim for this phase of my professional practice.

This chapter:

- reframes key aspects in the public record relating to the context for development of WBL at UTS and positions my role in this work
- outlines the professional inquiry that underpinned the program's development
- describes the resulting public work and supporting evidence of how it impacted on the thematic areas of HEI strategy, program innovation and industry practice
- critiques the limitations of the work and how these created a catalyst for the third phase of public work, Learning as Business, discussed in Chapter 5.

Summary of the public work

Public work	Description and area of impact	Supporting evidence **Major evidence highlighted**
Establishing innovative models of university–corporate education collaboration	**HEI strategy:** Work-based learning programs at UTS were the first of their kind in Australia and stemmed from my work with AMP between 1996 and 2002. I initiated an exploratory relationship with this major national employer that led to the most significant engagement in university-level WBL in Australia. This work redefined employer–university partnerships in Australia and created the impetus for a number of groundbreaking work-based learning partnerships with other organisations.	**Artefact 10: Initial proposal to AMP Limited** - Artefact 11: Launch of AMP–UTS partnership - Artefact 12: 'Farewell brown cardigan brigade' – Article from *Australian Campus Review* - Artefact 13: AMP Annual Report extract **Artefact 14: UTS Corporate Plan 1998–2000 – WBL as a critical development theme**

Public work	Description and area of impact	Supporting evidence **Major evidence highlighted**
Influencing national and international understanding of the WBL	**Program innovation:** The groundbreaking nature of the UTS WBL initiative in Australia triggered numerous academic publications. Publications of my own and others that relate directly to the programs I managed at UTS illustrate the reach and impact of this work and contributed to a broader understanding of WBL programs.	• Artefact 15: 'Implementing work-based learning for the first time' – Book chapter • **Artefact 16: Assignment of intellectual property agreement for PAB/WBL to UTS** • **Artefact 17: Research Report – Study of Student Progression through Work-based Learning Programs at AMP Limited** • Artefact 18: References and attestations
Broadening the adoption of WBL in the Australian marketplace	**Industry practice:** An important contribution to the field was broader communication and adoption of the UTS WBL program by corporate and government employer organisations.	• Artefact 19: Partnership renewal announcement with AMP – *The Australian* Higher Education Supplement • **Artefact 20: Book chapter in *Work-based Learning: A New Higher Education?*** • Artefact 21: Evidence of broader WBL partnerships at UTS

The context for the development of the UTS work-based learning program

I initiated negotiations with AMP Limited in early 1996 during the early stages of commercialisation of the PAB. At this time, AMP was embarking on a process of 'demutualisation' and incorporation that would transform the organisation into one of Australia's most highly capitalised publicly listed organisations. An organisational development unit had been established to reform the organisation's learning and development agenda and performance management processes and to strengthen their focus on developing a performance-focussed culture (see Artefact 13, AMP *Annual Report*, 1996).

An account of the development and evolution of the AMP–UTS partnership has been comprehensively documented by Onyx in her chapter 'Implementing work-based learning for the first time' (Onyx 2001). This work provides a valuable and important 'backdrop' to early development of WBL at UTS, highlighting how UTS organised itself institutionally to foster this innovation. While this chapter provides an insightful 'insider' view of the development, it is purposefully university-centric and consequently excludes important details regarding the complexities and importance of establishing and maintaining a high-profile university–corporate commercial relationship and balancing these with the sometimes underdeveloped commercial structures, capabilities and mindset within the university itself.

In my view, the chapter also underplays the importance and contribution made to the development by the PAB. Without this work and my role in initiating and maintaining the AMP partnership, which below I identify was the catalyst for WBL at UTS, I contend that there would have been no imperative or institutional momentum for the development of a WBL framework at UTS. The university would have consequently been unlikely to elevate the WBL initiative to one of its six critical development themes for the planning triennium between 1998 and 2000, and WBL would not have emerged in Australia in the way it did. As such, this chapter aims to reposition rather than rewrite the public record accounting for the emergence of WBL at UTS and in Australia.

Below I refer to Onyx's chapter (see Artefact 15) as a means of filling some important gaps and expanding upon the account by drawing upon my own experience and understanding and presenting evidence from my practice. I also use it to provide a context for my own contribution to this university-wide initiative. Given the broader

stakeholder groups and number of players, the contribution that individuals make is often less easy to pinpoint in comparison to a development such as the PAB at Insearch, UTS.

Key events in the implementation of work-based learning

Onyx asserts that the development of WBL at UTS was led by faculties in response to approaches made by AMP (referred to as company Z) 'first to IIC (Insearch, UTS) and later to the Dean of the Faculty of Business'. In fact, it was Insearch's approach to AMP and my later approach to the Dean of the Faculty of Business that initiated this partnership collaboration. This claim is developed and substantiated below (see Artefact 10).

While a seemingly innocuous error in the presentation of events underpinning UTS's WBL program development, Onyx's assertion highlights a 'build and they will come' culture that sometimes prevails in universities and that can undermine university–employer partnerships, which require engagement between the parties on equal terms. The presentation of events suggests that AMP came 'cap in hand' to UTS asking for assistance and that the university's involvement was motivated by the loftier motives of academic excellence rather than by the commercial imperatives at UTS. The reality is that UTS, led by Insearch (referred to as 'IIC' in Onyx's chapter), won the bid to form a strategic business alliance with AMP as a result of my proactive role in this highly competitive selection process. At one stage this bid was nearly lost to UTS's closest rival (DeakinPrime, the corporate education division of Deakin University that features in Chapter 5) as a result of the Dean's insistence that a faculty academic be involved in negotiation with the AMP and the poor understanding that this faculty member had of the client's commercial motivation for such an alliance. This individual's desire to place his own academic and research interests ahead the client's organisational development interests was the first of many instances in which the tension between 'academic' and 'commercial' motivations were to arise. It points to the gulf that sometimes exists between the corporate intent of the university to drive commercial relationships and the capacity and willingness of its staff to engage.

Contested ownership and control

In her chapter, Onyx refers to the issues of contested control of WBL within UTS. The tension between Insearch and the Faculty of Business to which Onyx refers

(Onyx 2001, p. 133), in which Insearch was driven more than the faculty by the need to generate quick profit, and her confidence that WBL would continue as an 'ongoing arm of the Faculty's academic offering', both ultimately proved to be misplaced. The profit and growth driver for the PAB outlined in Chapter 3, the Business of Learning, was a critical factor behind my initiation of the relationship with AMP. While it is true that during the implementation phase for WBL at UTS the prevailing 'Learning for Business' discourse was more concerned with issues of pedagogy than profit, it was ultimately the absence, or distribution of profit, that contributed to closure of the program in 2004 (Gustavs & Clegg 2005).

Onyx's account of the implementation also clearly articulates key areas in which the relationship between AMP and UTS was contested. It highlights the difficulties of trying to balance the commercial imperatives of contractual obligations to external clients with slow university approvals processes. What remains understated is that contested issues of 'ownership' within areas the university ran far deeper than disciplinary demarcation and expertise, the academic legitimacy of players in the process and the philosophical differences which separated them. They extended to the ownership of the intellectual property rights for the program.

Onyx refers to an initial working party established to oversee 'detailed negotiation with the client whilst developing a set of procedural protocols'. She also states that the Faculty of Business saw itself as the 'prime mover' in the WBL initiative and assigns credit for much of the academic program development to faculties, suggesting that the Insearch contribution was commercial and therefore less significant. As the representative of Insearch and a member of that working party, I was a major contributor to the development of the academic framework and to the operational protocols that were adopted by the university. Much of the experience I had gleaned from designing and operating the PAB contributed to this work.

The issue of ownership and contested control arose from the initial roll-out of the AMP Applied Business Program and is an important yet unstated subtext in Onyx's account. The AMP Applied Business Program involved the delivery of AMP's in-house 'core' and 'business leadership' programs under the joint AMP–Insearch, UTS Program in Applied Business brand (Onyx 2001, p. 129) (see Artefact 11 – AMP directions), for which I retained intellectual property rights. Because of my work on the development of the UTS WBL program, the implication was that at law, my company owned shared intellectual property rights for the UTS WBL program. This was not initially understood

by key stakeholders in the university (including the Dean of the Faculty of Business, who was also at that time a member of the Board of Directors of Insearch Ltd). Once this became apparent, following major press announcements about the AMP–UTS partnership (see Artefact 17), UTS lobbied heavily for me to assign intellectual property for the PAB to Insearch.

It was my assignment of the intellectual property rights to the Program in Applied Business, and the WBL development work for AMP, that repositioned the faculty and academic community at UTS as the principal 'owners' and developers of the UTS WBL program. I contend that the detailed development of the program was completed as a part of an ongoing R&D program and by a small team of dedicated staff under my supervision.

Research and development

Research and development supporting the development of the WBL program at UTS was, as Onyx correctly described, carried out in stages. This section briefly outlines the research and development, including and beyond that referred to by Onyx, and identifies my role as well as that of others involved in the program development.

Stages in the development of program resources

Stage 1 (1997–98): Development of initial pilot course materials based upon the adaptation and development of Middlesex University student manuals. This work was conducted entirely by the Working Group described by Onyx comprising David Wilson (Faculty of Information Technology), Guy Callander (Faculty of Business) and myself, at which time my role was with Insearch, UTS. These early student resources formed the tangible elements of the program and were used for the initial AMP pilot. They were developed following consultation with Derek Portwood and Jonathan Garnett of the National Centre for Work Based Learning Partnerships at Middlesex University.

Stage 2 (1999): Further development of program materials was commissioned by me in my new role as Manager of WBL Programs for the Faculty of Business and Insearch. This iteration of the materials was used with limited cohorts by the Faculty of Business, Information Technology and Insearch.

Stage 3 (2001): Ongoing development of student materials together with operating protocols and guides for the university, partner organisations and students were

developed by the Faculty of Business Work Based Learning team as a direct result or recommendations from my *Research Report – The Study of Participant Progression Through WBL Programs at AMP Limited*. This is further outlined below.

These stages are outlined so as to demonstrate that the course was developed as a result of collaborative work between a variety of stakeholders within UTS. This work was critiqued by academics, students and client organisations in an ongoing action-research approach, with the aim of continuously improving program outcomes for learners and employer organisations. I contributed to this work directly as program manager and the resources that were developed were used by four faculties at UTS: Business, Information Technology, Engineering, and Education.

Research into participant progression

During the early pilot stages of the WBL program there were significant problems with student progression, with up to 69 per cent of students not completing their program. This presented a significant challenge to the university and was the focus of a research study that I completed (refer to Artefact 17), which was the basis of a WBL project forming part of a masters degree in work-based learning at Middlesex University. This research report and its recommendations framed the development of a range of student resources, employer guides, academic training and development and university systems that were to result in a significant reduction in student attrition. The recommendations and impacts of this research are included in the report and postscripts to the report.

These phases of research and development mark a shift in the focus of my professional inquiry from a marketing research orientation to an education orientation. While the goals of this professional inquiry are inseparable in so far as they were all ultimately concerned with understanding how to better serve the needs of stakeholders, the shift in the focus of this research is important in underlining the broadening focus of my practice. During the Business of Learning phase it was appropriate that this inquiry had a market focus and orientation. In moving to the Learning for Business phase, a sharper focus on the educational and business processes that underpinned the process was required and illustrates this shift in my practice.

Discussion of the public work and its impact

Work-based learning was described as a radical shift in higher education practice (Boud & Solomon 2001) both internationally and in Australia. I argue above that its advent at UTS and therefore in Australia was triggered by my earlier work at Insearch, UTS, and that my role in this development was a critical one without which this 'radical development' would have taken a different path in Australia.

I therefore claim that my public work:

1. established an innovative model of university–corporate education collaboration

2. led to the adoption of WBL in the Australian marketplace

3. influenced national and international understanding of the WBL.

This section discusses and evidences the work, its impact upon program innovation, HEI strategy and industry practice.

HEI strategy

As discussed, work-based learning was one of the critical development priorities in the UTS triennial plan for the years 1998 to 2000. The antecedents of this are to be found in my work in the development of the PAB and formulation of the partnership with AMP.

Artefact 10: Initial proposal to AMP – as described above, the partnership with AMP followed extensive stakeholder consultation both with the client and within the university. It culminated in Insearch and UTS winning a competitive bid to become AMP's strategic learning and development partner. This proposal, written by me in October 1996 and signed jointly by myself and Professor Bob Robertson, Dean of the Faculty of Business at UTS, evidences my role in initiating this partnership that was to become a catalyst for the development of WBL at UTS.

Artefact 11: The internal 'soft launch' of the AMP–UTS partnership occurred approximately six months later and was announced in Directions, AMP's internal staff communication magazine. This article focusses on the AMP–UTS Program in Applied Business rather than work-based learning and illustrates the transitional role the PAB played in the development of the UTS WBL program.

Artefact 12: 'Farewell brown cardigan brigade', an article published in *Australian Campus Review*, published at the time of the 'soft launch', describes the nature and

dimension of the early partnership and exploratory work. It establishes the UTS partnership approach, spearheaded by the PAB, as distinctive and differentiated amongst tertiary providers in Australia at that time. Of importance is the reference to the '18 other private providers' in the learning and development framework and UTS providing the academic framework. At this time, no appropriate academic recognition framework for external education and training existed at UTS other than the possible recognition of prior learning provisions of the PAB. This impetus for the development of such a mechanism (ultimately via the Recognition of Current Capability/Accreditation of Prior and Experiential Learning) was to evolve though subsequent development of the UTS WBL program.

Artefact 13: This extract from AMP's Annual Report 1996 confirms the UTS partnership at this pre-WBL stage and highlights the importance of this work at the inception of WBL at UTS and in shaping strategy at AMP and UTS.

Artefact 14: University of Technology Sydney (1998) *Working for our Future: UTS Corporate Plan 1998–2000* (University of Technology, Sydney): The culmination of the early work with AMP though the PAB and subsequent development work described by Onyx resulted in the identification of WBL as one of six critical development priorities in the university's triennial plan. This demonstrates the impact of my work on strategy at UTS and specifically refers to a UTS target of 'approving the introduction of a major WBLP program'. AMP was the only work-based learning partnership of UTS at this stage.

Program innovation

In Onyx's account of the development of WBL at UTS, she describes how the program evolved in stages and the detailed work for this was undertaken by a working party of three. As a member of that working party and later as Director of WBL Programs for the Faculty of Business and Insearch, I claim that my contribution to the conceptual development, detailed planning and the establishment of the academic program and partnership framework was significant.

As described earlier, because a community of academic and industry practitioners was formed to support development of the program, it would be misleading for any one person to claim the credit for this development. However, I present a number of artefacts that attest to the role I played in the creation of the program and the

innovation this represents. These include documents relating to my assignment of the intellectual property for the PAB to UTS.

Artefact 15: 'Implementing work-based learning for the first time', a chapter in the seminal publication *Work-based Learning: A New Higher Education?* (Boud & Solomon 2001), is discussed above and provides an independent account of the early stages of program development at UTS. It links the role that I played, initially as the representative of Insearch, UTS, with the role of the 'Working Group' to which I belonged, the role that Middlesex University played in sharing its experience in developing WBL in the UK, and the policy roles played by a variety of faculty and university-level governance groups. The chapter acknowledges the advice and comments I provided.

Artefact 16: Assignment agreement, May 1998 – apart from the 'contested control' issues to which Onyx (2001) refers, there was contested ownership of the intellectual property for the development. As discussed above, as a result of the transition between the PAB and WBL program, I agreed to assign my intellectual property (IP) for the PAB together with the implied shared IP in the WBL program to Insearch, UTS. This agreement, in the context of the broader development, indirectly confirms my IP and thus my contribution to the program's research and development described above.

Artefact 17: *Research Report – Study of Participant Progression through Work-based Learning Programs at AMP Limited* – this report, as described above, was the culmination of research that I conducted into issues that impacted upon student progression in WBL programs and was highly influential in shaping the direction and development of resources to support stakeholders in the WBL process at UTS. This is discussed below in 'Critique of the work'.

Artefact 18: References and attestations, attests to my work role as Director of WBL Programs. Two references are provided from senior UTS personnel with whom I worked closely during this phase of my career. These references attest to my role in the development and implementation of WBL at UTS.

Industry practice

Influencing industry practice to adopt the WBL was a critical and complex element of the initiative. The development of WBL by UTS heralded the launch of a new category of higher education in Australia that involved advancing understanding and awareness

of the initiative amongst academics and industry practitioners. It was also important that the program's value proposition could be established in order to grow the initiative beyond the initial partnership with AMP. The following are presented as evidence of my contribution to influencing this understanding and to establishing further industry practice in work-based learning.

Artefact 19: Sustaining commitment to the UTS WBL program – following a lengthy development process between October 1996 and May 1998, the exploratory AMP Applied Business Program phase of the partnership came to an end and the public launch of the UTS WBL program took place. Artefact 19 includes announcements in The Australian Higher Education Supplement and internal employee communications at both AMP and UTS. This evidences the first major presence of WBL in the marketplace (I am pictured with the AMP CEO, Paul Bachelor, and other senior executives of the organisation).

Artefact 20: 'Smart Work': UTS academics were responsible for compiling and editing a seminal publication about work-based learning, *Work-based Learning: A New Higher Education?* Above I have claimed a clear relationship between my work and the establishment of WBL as a critical development theme at UTS. I propose that it was this development and the elevation of WBL in UTS's strategic planning that generated the groundswell of interest within the academic community. This in turn was a catalyst for the publication. Without the influences of my preceding public work it is unlikely that UTS academics would have collaborated to produce this publication, which has been cited widely in subsequent literature on work-based learning and which has informed university and industry practices internationally.

However, it is my chapter, 'Smart work', in this book that demonstrates my direct contribution to an understanding the 'industry perspective' for engaging in WBL. Together with the short case study published in *Basic Marketing* (Quester et al. 2001), this evidences a clear contribution to advancing understanding of the WBL initiative from an industry and market perspective.

Artefact 21: UTS went on to establish a wide range of WBL partnerships with corporate and government employers, management consultancies and education providers between 1998 and 2002. In this time significant marketing and communication work was undertaken to establish this new category of higher education amongst academics and employer organisations, creating broader awareness in the

market and a positive attitude amongst buyers that would lead to program adoption. These artefacts include promotional materials I created or commissioned to advance these goals and which evidence the influence my management of the program had on the uptake and adoption of WBL by major Australian organisations.

Critique of the work

This chapter provides some additional context to a published account of the development of WBL at UTS and positions key aspects of my contribution to this work and the broader impact it had on academic and industry practices. In regard to my professional inquiry and practice, this phase of work represents a shift from the Business of Learning in which my focus was on the advancement of the institution's commercial agenda. In the Learning for Business phase, my practice and inquiry paradigm emphasised how an individual's learning could be designed and supported to more effectively deliver on an employer's need to link individual development to organisational performance. It illustrates a progression from privileging the commercial interests of the academy to one that achieves this goal by delivering customer advantage via improved individual and organisational learning and performativity.

A core value proposition of WBL partnerships is that they contribute to both individual and organisational development and performance. Certainly, it was the organisational development proposition of WBL that attracted AMP and subsequent WBL partner organisations to engage with UTS. As a result of an iterative process of research and development and the creation of improved learner resources, business and administrative processes, UTS was able to improve upon a very 'messy' development phase (Onyx 2001, p. 132) in which student attrition was unacceptably high and client satisfaction unacceptable low. Through an ongoing focus on continuous improvement and my own research and development, UTS was able to propagate WBL in the marketplace and UTS academics were able to contribute to the broader development and understanding of WBL as 'a new higher education'.

Perhaps one key proposition of the WBL approach that lost prominence in this development was the client organisation's benefit realisation from the learning of individual employees. AMP and its corporate performance driver became the 'silent partner' in the development while the learning needs of the participant and university's focus on quality assurance and academic equivalence (Boud & Solomon 2001, p. 27) took centre stage. Iterative versions of the program's student resources and the

development of guidelines and support mechanisms for employers resulted in improvements in the delivery and operation of the program and subsequent improvements in overall student satisfaction. Latterly, development of an optional Organisational Learning Portfolio provided an opportunity for course participants to reflect upon their contribution to knowledge creation, performance improvement and knowledge dissemination within the organisation arising from their work-based learning course. This provided a systematised opportunity for participants and employers to evidence organisational improvement from individual learning and to communicate the performative value of the program. It helped to shift both academic and institutional practice closer towards achieving performativity and organisational intellectual capital outcomes anticipated from the program (Garnett 2009, p. 228). However, I observed that evidence of this performativity 'holy grail' was rarely demonstrated more than anecdotally and client organisations were, more often than not, left to their own initiative to identify the organisational value derived. Discussions with clients highlighted the need to foreground this aspect of the individuals' learning and create more robust mechanisms for identifying and evaluating the link between the organisation's sponsorship of employees though the program and the performance improvements ultimately delivered.

Following my research into learner progression (Artefact 17), I made a number of specific recommendations that would lead to the development and improvement of student support and to an improvement in the levels of student attrition and satisfaction. These recommendations were framed against the need to on the one hand manage stakeholder expectations, and on the other to develop a systematic monitoring and evaluation framework against which stakeholder satisfaction could be measured for continuous service quality improvement (Zeithaml, Parasuraman & Berry 1990). On reflection, it was the recommendation to incorporate opportunities to capture performance and productivity improvements flowing from the program that could have evidenced more effectively the extent to which WBL was meeting its performativity promise. The missing part of the jigsaw was organisational performance and learning. This will be explored further in Chapter 5, Learning as Business.

This chapter commenced with a claim that:

> without this work and my role in initiating and maintaining the AMP partnership … I contend that there would have been no imperative or institutional momentum for the development of a WBL framework at UTS.

> The university would have consequently been unlikely to elevate the WBL
> initiative to one of its six critical development themes for the planning
> triennium between 1998 and 2000, and WBL would not have emerged in
> Australia in the way it did.

This chapter substantiates how my iterative contribution was pivotal to the development and how:

- The Program in Applied Business presented a unique point of differentiation for UTS, demonstrating an institutional commitment to developing educational programs designed to serve the needs of learners *and* their employers. Without this program and my pro-active engagement with employers to promote the concept, UTS would not have been a contender in the bid to partner with AMP, which ultimately led to its development of the WBL program.

- It was my initial approach to the Faculty of Business with a 'lead' for the AMP partnership opportunity that led to exploring the potential for a broader institutional engagement beyond Insearch. This in turn led to securing and developing the relationship between UTS and AMP, which finally resulted in the university forming what was to become its seminal WBL partnership.

- My creation and assignment of intellectual property for the program to UTS removed ownership constrains that might otherwise have inhibited the university's capacity and willingness to deepen its involvement in the development of WBL and pursue the partnership with AMP and other employers.

- The combination of the above led to UTS's elevation of WBL to that of a critical development theme for the university and the subsequent roll-out of programs in other faculties, including the faculties of Information Technology, Engineering, and Education.

- My contribution to the initial development and continuous improvement of the educational and operational management of the program led to the renewal of the foundational relationship with AMP. It also facilitated my work in re-focussing the program on delivering its promise of organisational performance improvement and developing a range of partnerships with other prominent Australian employers.

- The broader engagement of the university as a whole, and as a consequence of this sequence of initiatives, was a trigger for the publication of an important academic publication that has shaped and informed the development of WBL internationally: *Work-based Learning: A New Higher Education?* (Boud & Solomon 2001).

UTS demonstrated significant institutional insight, courage and commitment to driving a highly contested new higher education program in Australia. Ultimately, however, the WBL experiment was abandoned, and the program was closed in 2004 two years after my resignation as Program Director. A number of reasons have been proposed for the failure to sustain the initiative, including the program's 'foundering on the usual reef of profit, pride and politics' (Clegg & Gustavs 2005, p. 28). Chapter 5 explores how I sought to redress some of the institutional barriers to WBL experiences at UTS, while Chapter 6 reflects in more detail upon some of the 'carriers and barriers' that contributed the downfall of WBL at UTS at a time when, in the UK, work-based learning was beginning to gather greater momentum.

Reflection on and critique of the institutional factors for the program's ultimate demise at UTS, however valuable, does not alone address questions arising in relation to my own practice and contribution. Nor does it address what I might, with the benefit of hindsight, have done differently to help UTS to capitalise on the advances it made in evolving university-level WBL. It is often easier and more convenient to present extraneous institutional factors, beyond the control of the individual, as the primary culprits for failed innovation.

As Onyx contends, the development of WBL at UTS was often 'messy'. This was in part because of the limited opportunity to learn and model the UTS approach based upon the experiences of other institutions. This 'messiness' also meant that as a practitioner, I often necessarily responded to emerging commercial, educational and institutional challenges of the WBL program 'on the run' and as they presented themselves. This was often not in a neat and coherent manner or one that enabled broad institutional engagement or participation in owning and collaborating in the development of solutions. As the momentum for WBL built within UTS faculties, the initiative often lacked institutional coherence and collaboration and in the worst cases resulted in competitive and 'siloed' activity. This led to evolving mythologies about the feasibility of WBL and a gradual disengagement of support as discussed in Chapter 6.

Because of the exploratory context of the development at UTS, the messiness of its introduction was arguably inevitable. While ten years later I had the privilege of rethinking my approach and starting with a blank canvas, the opportunity and institutional appetite was ultimately lost for UTS to reconceptualise and redefine its approach. As a practitioner I perhaps took too much personal ownership for providing all of the solutions and failed to take advantage of the institutional mechanisms that

might have enabled UTS to re-set its vision and overcome the institutional barriers to its involvement. The role of the 'university review' at that time was unfamiliar to me and one that I perhaps saw as threatening or even potentially punitive. With the benefit of hindsight, I believe that this mechanism might have provided the opportunity and objectivity for the institution, the champions of WBL at UTS and practitioners, to reflect upon the carriers and barriers to involvement and to continue the momentum created.

Certainly the reasons for the program's demise were complex and multifaceted. I would contend, however, that the importance of the Business of Learning profit and growth paradigm at UTS became subordinated, for a time, to educational interests, 'pride and politics'. Program quality was significantly advanced at UTS during this phase but at the expense of a continuing focus on growth and profit and the perception of its equitable distribution within the university. Clearly these twin imperatives are equally important. Like Russian dolls they fit one inside the other and combine the layers of value required to sustain and satisfy the contrasting and competing demands of the university–learner–employer triumvirate.

Chapter 5:

Public work Phase 3 – Learning as Business: Work-based learning at Deakin University (2011 to 2013)

This third phase of public work to be examined is that conducted while working as Head of Strategic Initiatives and Innovation at DeakinPrime, the corporate education division of Deakin University.

My resignation from UTS in 2002 was motivated by a number of factors, including the institutional politics and inertia to which Clegg and Gustavs (2005, p. 28) referred, and which ultimately contributed to the demise of WBL at UTS. A further factor in my resignation was the professional marginalisation of my role and contribution to WBL at UTS as a 'non-academic' employee. I will address this further in Chapter 6.

Following my resignation from UTS, my career took a different course. Between 2002 and 2010 I held a range of roles including corporate positions in the banking and telecommunications sectors, consultancy in the professional education field, and capacity building for international development in South-East Asia. A common thread to these diverse roles was the development of learning programs that would support the attainment of broader organisational and sectoral goals. At Commonwealth Bank Australia I developed new frameworks for learning and development that were designed to assure the 'talent pipeline'. At Telstra, I was responsible for the design and implementation of a framework for customer education as a part of the relationship marketing program to over seven million consumers. For the Migration Agent's Registration Authority I designed and implemented a postgraduate program prescribed in the *Migration Act 1958* (Cwlth) as a means of advancing professional practice in the migration advice profession. As a capacity development consultant in Cambodia I created learning and development programs to advance the social marketing, sustainability and community development agendas of AusAID and a number of international non-government organisations.

My combined experiences with 'learning and work' influenced and informed my ongoing professional practice and professional development at the conjunction of learning and organisational strategy. During this phase I reflected upon my professional practice and the dissemination of lessons learned through private writing and by contributing case studies from this experience to publications in *Consumer Behaviour* (Blackwell et al. 2006) and *Sustainable Marketing* (D'Souza,Taghian & Polonsky 2011).

Throughout this period, I felt that I had unfinished business with work-based learning. My experiences outside of the tertiary environment had served only to reinforce the potential value of WBL as a new paradigm of higher education. Discussions with colleagues in a range of occupational and industry sectors highlighted both the importance and difficulties organisations experienced in creating development opportunities that were meaningful to employees and productive for employers. Also, while I had resigned from my position at UTS in order to broaden my 'client-side' experience, it was a personal disappointment that UTS had discontinued the WBL program and not built upon its earlier success. Under the direction of my successor, the program's commercial development foundered and the organisational advances were lost with the program's closure in 2004.

This chapter discusses the context in which, almost ten years later, I re-engaged with work-based learning at Deakin University and worked to build upon the advances made in the two earlier phases described above. The chapter:

- defines the organisational and market drivers for the initiative
- describes the research and inquiry that I undertook to help reconfigure WBL in Australia
- demonstrates how the public work in this phase built upon and impacted HEI strategy at Deakin, program development and industry practice
- provides a critique the work.

Summary of public work

Public work	Description and area of impact	Supporting evidence **Major evidence highlighted**
Implementation framework for WBL at Deakin University	**HEI strategy:** A proposed business model and business case that responded to research findings and advances in the understanding of effective educational–institutional models for WBL. This document influenced policy decisions at Deakin and won acceptance for changes in strategic direction, institutional regulations and market offerings in workforce development programs at Deakin.	• **Artefact 22: DeakinPrime discussion document – Strategic repositioning of DeakinPrime** • **Artefact 23: Market Concept Test – Marketing research to support the re-launch of WBL** • **Artefact 24: Implementation Framework – Business plan for sustainable operation of WBL at Deakin** • Artefact 25: Approval of WBL strategy by Deakin University • Artefact 26: Attestation to work
WBL Handbook – Course Implementation Framework	**Program innovation and industry practice:** An adaptation of the Middlesex University WBL framework that explicitly links individual and organisational learning to define the program contribution to the performance and learning of the client organisations.	• Artefact 27: Deakin WBL Handbook – Adaptation of WBL framework to Deakin University and Australian context and emphasising the organisational development aspects of WBL

The development of WBL in Australia and internationally

An account of university-level work-based learning in Australia would be incomplete and inaccurate if it were limited only to the UTS initiatives. Indeed, concurrently with, and subsequent to, the work at UTS (though perhaps less well documented), other Australian universities made advances in the field. A distinction needs to be made, however, between the predominance of Australian university practices in work-integrated learning (WIL) and the meaning attached to work-based learning in this claim.

Increasing recognition and a burgeoning interest in the workplace as a legitimate and valuable site of higher-learning has been evidenced with the proliferation of providers emphasising workplace practice in their program models (McLennan 2008). Amongst Australian universities, the dominant approach to combining learning and work has been the development of models of work-integrated learning. A major national scoping study, The WIL Report (Patrick, Peach & Pocknee 2009), identifies 'WIL as a mechanism to integrate discipline knowledge with the place and/or practice of work as a response to employers' expressed need for work-ready graduates'. This emphasis on 'discipline knowledge' privileges the curriculum of the university, learning for work and qualifications *by* work-based learning, over learning *through* work and qualifications in work-based learning as a discipline in its own right (Portwood 2001). The prevalence of WIL in Australia reflects the relatively slow advances made in the legitimisation of 'learning through work' in award programs and slow pace at which the university sector has moved to embrace this paradigm of higher education (Kennedy 2011). WIL has become the dominant approach and direction through which university learning and work are integrated, to the extent that Australian publications in higher education use this term interchangeably with WBL(Garnett 2012).

Instances of 'whole of award' models of WBL, which offer the opportunity to negotiate an entire qualification program based on the learning acquired through work, have been few and far between. In addition to UTS, in the late 1990s the University of Western Sydney (UWS) offered negotiated work-based postgraduate qualifications in the area of social sciences (Houlbrook 2009). At both UTS and UWS, work-based learning was used as a pathway to disciplinary qualifications as opposed to a field of transdisciplinary study in its own right (Gibbs & Costley 2006). The exceptions to this are the masters and doctoral programs in Professional Studies] currently offered by the University of Southern Queensland.

Between 2002 and 2012, the provision of models of work-based learning grew internationally. In the UK a range of university proponents and offerings in work-based learning grew in response to the Leitch Report (Leitch 2006) and the subsequent HEFCE Employer Engagement Strategy (McCracken 2010), which provided substantial funding to stimulate university engagement in work-based learning. In the USA, Raelin has written on the advances in WBL (Raelin 2000; Raelin 2008), and more recent developments have seen the emergence of WBL as a field of study in New Zealand (Otago Polytechnic 2014).

While this chapter does not aim to provide a comprehensive outline of international developments in work-based learning, these developments are important in foregrounding the broader context in which I revisited practice in the field at DeakinPrime.

Strategic change at Deakin University

I commenced work with DeakinPrime at a time when the university was undergoing an initiative to review and reframe its organisational strategy. A major university-wide review led to the announcement of a renewed strategy titled 'Live the Future: Agenda 2020' (Deakin University 2013) This declared the university's promise to advance learning, ideas, value and experience through a number of foci including:

- empowering learners for the jobs and skills of the future
- making innovation and collaboration core business
- creating innovative learning environments both campus located and cloud
- progressing a sustainable and competitive enterprise.

At the same time, a research study and university review of DeakinPrime identified the need to reposition the enterprise and its services in relation to both the changing needs of employers and a refreshed university strategy (JWT Education Australia 2011). This re-strategising at DeakinPrime involved a period of review and planning that culminated in the development of a new strategy, The Best of Both Worlds, to which I was a primary contributor.

The Best of Both Worlds strategy emphasised DeakinPrime's identity as a 'commercially focussed and university backed' provider of corporate education. It is built upon five pillars that I proposed serve as building blocks from which to reconceptualise and reposition the scope of services offered (DeakinPrime 2014):

- alignment
- design
- delivery
- measurement
- recognition.

My work at DeakinPrime aimed to relaunch university-level work-based learning provision in Australia and develop the organisation's service offering in line with these five pillars. It placed an emphasis on incorporating the profit and growth paradigm of the Business of Learning phase, with knowledge and experience of WBL pedagogies and practice developed in the Learning for Business phase. In this Learning as Business phase, I placed an emphasis on 'measurement' as a means of assuring and evidencing the employer organisation's benefit realisation from an investment in WBL. This aspect of program provision had attracted greater attention amongst some providers in the UK that were increasingly focussed upon the better achievement of the performativity and organisational learning and development goals of WBL (Bravenboar 2011). The results of the Market Concept Test that I conducted for DeakinPrime correlated strongly with this trend and illustrated that employers were increasingly challenged to justify their investment in staff development in terms of a measurable return and benefit to the organisation. A common theme of discussions with employers centred upon the need for a significant investment such as that required to support an in-company WBL program, which would only be defensible in the longer term if it could be illustrated that the program delivered a dividend, preferably measured in terms of financial benefit both in the short term and long term. Employers indicated that a program that could support such measures would be both more likely to win sponsorship support and more likely to ride the waves of future budget cuts.

I aimed to adapt the program approach to make the employer benefit from participation in WBL programs a more explicit and purposeful element of the learning program. In doing this DeakinPrime could ensure that the employer's performativity needs did not become the 'silent partner' in WBL partnerships as they had at UTS, and that the program investment could be defended in times of economic difficulty and strategic change among sponsoring organisations.

Supporting research and development

Four phases of inquiry were conducted in support of the development of WBL at DeakinPrime:

1. Initial review of the internal operating environment to understand the potential strategic alignment between WBL and Deakin/DeakinPrime. This culminated in the development of a discussion document that I presented to the Vice-Chancellor in March 2012 (see Artefact 22).

2. Following the Vice-Chancellor's approval of my proposal to investigate opportunities for implementing WBL, I commenced a more comprehensive inquiry that included:

    a. a short 'study tour' of university providers of university-level WBL in England, including the University of Derby Corporate (UDC), Middlesex University and Portsmouth University

    b. a review of selected publications in the field created since my earlier work with UTS

    c. a Market Concept Test (see Artefact 23) conducted via in-depth interviews with a range of potential organisational buyers of WBL services in Australia.

3. The development of an Implementation Framework (see Artefact 24) for WBL at Deakin, written in consultation with Middlesex University and University of Derby Corporate.

4. Extensive work during the design and development stage with internal stakeholders at Deakin University, including members of the university executive, strategy, finance, project, policy, quality, student administration and learning development units as well as Pro-Vice-Chancellors and faculty management groups. During this stage, my inquiry was supported by regular discussion with Jonathan Garnett at Middlesex University as part of an agreement to license and adapt program validation documents and course materials for use by Deakin and for course validation under the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) (see Artefact 27).

My professional inquiry during this phase combined a marketing research orientation with grounded theory in which my ideas and approach grew from data and incidents as they occurred (Costley, Elliott & Gibbs 2010, p. 88). In this manner I was able to integrate learning from my own practice and experience in earlier phases of work, and

with international perspectives on work-based learning, localised and context-specific influences at Deakin University and with Australian regulatory requirements.

Discussion of the public work and its impact

The development of a WBL framework for Deakin University was a significant phase in the development of my professional practice in work-based learning and resulted in the creation of the following work:

1. An Implementation Framework and business model for WBL at Deakin University.

2. Research to revisit and test the concept of university provision of WBL in Australia and the likely market response and propensity to buy WBL services.

3. A course framework for Deakin that modified the work of Middlesex University's Institute for Work Based Learning and adapted this to meet requirements of Deakin's academic framework and the Australian Qualifications Framework. This framework also developed an approach that emphasised the employer organisation's benefit realisation from WBL programs though the inclusion of an Organisational Learning and Development unit. This was a 'lynchpin' to the development, building upon my prior experience and research and distinguishing the framework in a way that placed an emphasis on the employers' needs to justify their investment in accredited learning.

This section discussed the work and its impact upon the three thematic areas of this claim: HEI strategy, program innovation and industry practice.

HEI strategy

As discussed above, a number of factors coincided to create the strategy impetus for the WBL initiative. The following public work and artefacts illustrate how my work influenced strategy and direction at both DeakinPrime and the broader university.

Artefact 22: Strategy discussion document: I produced a discussion document with proposed actions, presented to the Vice-Chancellor, in order to provide a short overview for the proposed initiative and highlight how the development of WBL at Deakin would advance the stated agendas of both DeakinPrime and the broader university. It sought approval to proceed with research and development of the initiative, which would reposition DeakinPrime as an award-conferring division of the

university working in cooperation with faculties. This proposal flagged possibilities for a radical repositioning of DeakinPrime and would involve significant changes to the university's regulations and policies.

Artefact 23: The Market Concept Test was a research report produced as part of qualitative and exploratory marketing research with the following objectives and themes:

Research Objective 1.

To understand the general perceptions of the work-based learning program, its overall value proposition and particular value to employers and employees.

Key themes:

1. *General impressions*

2. *WBL value proposition*

3. *Value of WBL to employers*

4. *Value of WBL to employees*

Research Objective 2.

To understand the perceived use of work-based learning in organisations and the possible role of accredited university-level work-based learning in measuring the contribution of learning to workplace performance.

Key themes:

5. *Current use of WBL*

6. *The university role in workforce development*

7. *Accreditation of work-based learning*

8. *The impact and measurement of learning on organisations*

Research Objective 3.

To test the reaction to the proposed model of work-based learning and how it may be located in the organisation's learning and capability development programs.

Key themes:

9. *Work-based learning as a field of study*

10. *Benefit of WBL program elements:*

    a. *accreditation of prior and work-based learning (APEL)/recognition of current capabilities (RCC)*

    b. *work-based projects*

    c. *formal subjects*

11. *Cloud learning*

12. *Quality issues*

13. *The work-based learning faculty*

Research Objective 4.

To identify key areas in which stakeholders would require support and the overall propensity to pursue collaboration in work-based learning with DeakinPrime.

Key themes:

14. *Pricing and value of work-based learning*

15. *Organisational support requirements*

16. *Learner support requirements*

17. *Propensity to engage*

Ten key recommendations were developed following this research. These were important in shaping the development of a WBL Implementation Framework and business plan for DeakinPrime. The recommendations were:

Recommendation 1.

DeakinPrime should determine the feasibility of establishing a suite of Professional Practice awards that would establish it as the leader in the provision of university-level work-based learning qualifications and allied services in the Australian marketplace.

Preparing clients for WBL

Recommendation 2.

Develop processes, tools and techniques to support target organisations and program participants in understanding the success factors and requirements for engaging in work-based learning partnerships. This should include appropriate self-assessment tools that link to the contracting of organisations and admission of students.

Benefit realisation

Recommendation 3.

A model for measuring organisational learning and benefit realisation from WBL partnerships should be developed. Ideally, this will be an integrated feature of the program design and/or partnership process and include methodologies for establishing, facilitating, demonstrating and evaluating both individual and organisational learning.

Validation frameworks

Recommendation 4.

Program development should include establishing methodologies to validate external learning for the purpose of accumulating general academic credit.

Program design

Recommendation 5.

That a steering committee be established to guide program development and accreditation, and that this comprise representatives of the academic community and target employer groups. The steering committee should be appointed for the duration of the development and piloting phase.

Marketing communications

Recommendation 6.

That DeakinPrime commission a comprehensive positioning and marketing communications campaign for WBL programs and allied services that will align with the Deakin University brand.

Delivery

Recommendation 7.

That a cross-functional technical group be established to define, develop and implement distributed learning strategies to support the WBL program and provide appropriate access to target learners.

Pricing

Recommendation 8.

That further investigation of the price positioning and fee structure for WBL programs be considered with particular emphasis on the effects of developing a benefit realisation model and broader value position.

Program support

Recommendation 9.

That detailed 'guides' be established for participating organisations and learners that support their effective engagement in the program.

Capacity and capability

Recommendation 10.

That a comprehensive capability development plan be established to support Deakin academic, business development, project management and administrative staff involved with the program.

The recommendation in this report relating to benefit realisation from the proposed program is important to the critique of the final course proposal and the overall direction of this Learning as Business phase, and is developed below.

Artefact 24: The Implementation Framework presented a comprehensive business case and implementation model for work-based learning at Deakin. It addressed the key recommendations from the supporting work and presented a new business and institutional model for WBL in Australia. It would combine business development, project management and delivery capabilities at DeakinPrime with the academic resources and capabilities of the faculties in support of the Best of Both Worlds strategy. It marked an important development from the UTS approach, which was

embedded in faculties, to one that operated and managed centrally and was pan-university and transdisciplinary in its orientation.

The report was concluded by making the recommendations that the Deakin University Executive Committee:

- Endorse the implementation of a framework for work-based learning partnerships and a suite of postgraduate Professional Practice qualifications in accordance with this report.
- Approve and support a review of University regulations, policies and procedures to enable DeakinPrime to provide these qualifications.
- Approve the development and presentation of an Academic Course Proposal to Academic Board.
- Adopt the proposed budget and endorse the provision of $875,000 of funding to support introduction of the framework in 2013.

Artefact 25: The business case approval document evidences the approval of the Implementation Plan and funding for DeakinPrime to progress the development of the WBL program on behalf of the university. The plan was approved by the university's Portfolio Board, which comprises key members of the Executive including the Vice-Chancellor.

Artefact 26: This reference from DeakinPrime's CEO attests to my role in the development of this public work.

Program innovation

Unlike the work at UTS, which involved a lengthy period of creating and negotiating a course framework between Insearch and the Business and IT faculties, the development at Deakin was more directly related to the adaptation of the Middlesex University WBL Framework Handbook. Given the advances made by Middlesex University and other university WBL providers, my belief was that Deakin's best entry strategy would be to leverage this leading-edge work rather than attempt to recreate it or 'reinvent the wheel'. The opportunities for program innovation lay in reframing it to the requirements of Deakin University and the Australian regulatory and quality framework (AQF) and in making smaller course enhancements that would emphasise organisational benefit realisation via organisational learning to promote Learning as Business.

Artefact 27: Deakin WBL Handbook – one aspect of the program adaptation phase was the creation of a set of learning outcomes for Deakin WBL courses and a set of minimum standards for assessment. These were derived from, and benchmarked against, AQF criteria for the relevant postgraduate qualifications and Middlesex University's WBL learning level descriptors. As presented in section 4 of the WBL Handbook, this aspect of the course innovation work was critical to ensuring that the Deakin framework incorporated benchmark standards from both Australia and the UK. The work was completed by myself in consultation with Deakin Leaning Futures, the university division charged with overseeing Deakin's course development and enhancement processes. It was an important in 'Australianising' and 'Deakinising' the work of Middlesex University (Perera & Penlington 2012).

The wide range of course WBL modules offered by Middlesex University was reduced in order that Deakin was able to build staff delivery capabilities required to support such a comprehensive program. However, in order to foreground the focus on employer organisation benefit realisation, the Deakin adaptation of the framework was supplemented with the inclusion of an Organisational Learning and Development module. The rationale for this new module had its roots in my experiences at UTS in which, as described in Chapter 4, I felt that part of the value proposition to organisational buyers relating to organisational learning and benefit realisation had taken a backseat and lost some of its visibility.

Prompted further by the findings of the Market Concept Test (Artefact 23 – Recommendation 3) relating to the need for explicit and evidence-based benefit realisation and further review of literature on the performativity aspects of WBL (Garnett 2009), my aim was to develop an optional module that would purposefully and explicitly support and evidence the relationship between individual and organisational development from WBL programs.

The intended learning outcomes for the Organisational Learning and Development module were to:

1. systematically identify and evaluate theoretical perspectives of organisational learning and development and its measurement and evaluation as it relates to your localised work/practice, professional and ethical codes and broader professional context;

2. engage with professional networks, negotiate, interpret and analyse strategic organisational development aims and measures and reflect upon the link between these and your individual learning and professional development;

3. critically reflect upon and demonstrate how your individual learning can be exploited within the cultural and structural context of work to contribute to organisational improvement, performance and/or the improvement of competitive advantage;

4. systematically develop and critically explore approaches to capturing, disseminating and managing your individual learning, using appropriate technologies, to inform organisational learning and development; and

5. demonstrate, present and persuasively communicate how your individual learning is transmitted to inform and improve the broader work/practice of your organisation and/or area of practice.

While a relatively minor addition to the overall work during this phase, I contend that this was significant in advancing a more explicit articulation of the organisational development proposition for WBL. It built upon the initiative taken earlier at UTS to include a Corporate Learning Portfolio into the program.

The UTS Corporate Learning Portfolio was conceived around 2000–01 in response to feedback from partner organisations' informal evaluation of the WBL program. A key area of feedback was the perceived need to foreground the organisational benefit derived from the program. For example, early discussions with the Commonwealth Bank of Australia (an organisation I later worked for as Executive Manager Business Capability) focussed upon the need to set clear organisational return-on-investment targets and establishing methods for developing and demonstrating this return in the program design. The Corporate Learning Portfolio was conceived as a vehicle for students' formative reflection upon their practice, through which employers could maintain visibility of the extent to which, and approach by which, organisational performance requirements were being met. This was achieved by the maintenance of a reflective learning journal which informed the creation of a summative portfolio evidencing and showcasing the development of corporate capability.

The Corporate Learning Portfolio, however, was never a formal or assessable component of the accredited UTS WBL program. As such, participation in this by

students and monitoring of the reflective journal and portfolio were never more that voluntary learning support mechanisms.

The Organisational Learning and Development module at Deakin was an elective module (which could be included or excluded as required by sponsoring employers) that provided a more structured and academic credit-bearing approach to the assurance of organisational performance improvement. It therefore represented a formalisation of this key part of the value proposition to employers within the course structure and an evidence basis for determining the effectiveness of the program in driving performance improvement.

Industry practices

As discussed below, the WBL program at Deakin was not ultimately implemented during the period of my employment at the university and DeakinPrime's funding for the program was withdrawn before it was finally approved by the university's Academic Board. However, significant aspects of the program design I proposed were later to emerge in different guises at Deakin. Consequently, the claim I make is for the downstream impact that this work has had upon industry adoption and practice in WBL in Australia (see 'The turning tides of profit, power and politics' in Chapter 7)[2].

Notwithstanding this 'delayed impact', the findings of the Market Concept Test, Implementation Framework and subsequent program development work advance an understanding of the marketplace 'carriers and barriers' for WBL and offer an institutional model for capturing and disseminating employer benefit realisation through WBL that may be leveraged in the future. A clearer understanding of the market drivers and benefits sought from WBL in the Australian market and a more explicit and systematic response to the need for benefit realisation further advances the potential market appeal for WBL in the future.

---

[2] An update to this section has been added in Chapter 7 identifying further developments at Deakin University following the initial submission of this context statement. These developments include the implementation of a major WBL program by DeakinPrime and the Faculty of Business and Law, as well as the launch of Deakin Digital. Each of these subsequent initiatives evidence that this phase of my public work played a significant role in influencing Deakin's future strategic initiatives.

Critique of the work

This chapter demonstrates how developments at DeakinPrime created a detailed, research-based model for WBL that built upon advances made in previous phases of my work and international developments in the field. The approach aimed to advance the realisation of performativity outcomes from higher education by emphasising and foregrounding employer organisation benefit realisation in the program design and providing an explicit approach to delivering and measuring this aspect of the broader value proposition.

It is the approach towards harmonising the profit and growth drivers of the Business of Learning phase of my work with the pedagogical focus of the Learning for Business phase – with a focus on the employer's need to derive and evidence a 'return on expectation' (Kirkpatrick 2009) – that gives rise to the naming of this phase as Learning as Business. This emphasises work-based learning as a fully integrated business activity in which the relationship between the priorities of all three key stakeholder groups remains balanced and foregrounded.

The public work at Deakin was supported and approved at the highest levels of the university and was provided with substantial seed funding. The model proposed an approach that resolved problems with the implementation and institutionalisation of WBL that beleaguered the advances made at UTS (Onyx 2001; Clegg 2005). In particular, it proposed:

- a sustainable financial model that overcame problems relating to the allocation of operating cost and distribution of financial surpluses
- a 'hub and spoke' operating model that centralised program operations and expertise on behalf of the faculties
- a unified quality assurance and governance model with which to harmonise the university-wide approach
- a leading-edge program framework for WBL established by Middlesex University and adapted to the local context
- a solution to the issue of organisational benefit realisation
- a market-driven approach that leveraged the business development, commercial and service delivery capabilities of DeakinPrime.

While resolving a number of important issues identified through my prior experience and research, the work did not survive a swift and decisive U-turn at Deakin. As described above, the development process was undertaken between November 2011 and April 2013. During this time the organisational climate shifted from one of innovation, optimism and engagement in a broader university change program, to one of conservatism and deep cuts affecting a range of university innovation and development initiatives. One cut led to withdrawal of the DeakinPrime WBL project only weeks before it was scheduled for review and approval by the university's Academic Board and Council. The rationale offered for this by the Vice-Chancellor was that the university needed to consolidate its finances in the face of anticipated changes to funding being proposed by the Australian Federal Government. Recommendations of the 'Gonski Report' (DEEWR 2011) represented a potential reduction of funding to Deakin of around AU$30 million. The withdrawal of the $800,000 seed funding from work-based learning was said to be required in order to reduce the resulting university budgetary gap.

Notwithstanding these foreshadowed cuts, plans to pursue the development of Deakin University's first massive open online course (MOOC), a project that carried a projected total cost of more than $400,000, was to continue to receive funding. By contrast, the MOOC had no business or economic model to support it and had very little chance of making a financial return to Deakin, whereas the WBL project projected significant profit contribution. Contrary to the 'official' reason proffered for withdrawal of the WBL initiative, it would appear that WBL had once again 'foundered on the reefs of profit, pride and politics' within an Australian university. I will explore this theme further in Chapter 6.

Chapter 6

Profit, pride and politics? Reflections on
the university business of work-based learning
in Australia

This context statement commenced with a discussion of the changing business and
educational context in Australia and how this resulted in the creation of pressure on
universities to redefine themselves, generate new streams of revenue and respond to
increasing competition in dynamically changing markets Chapters 3 to 5 go on to
outline how work-based learning evolved at two Australian universities in response to
these influences and how these initiatives contributed to program innovation, the
development of HEI institutional strategy and influenced industry practices in WBL.

Despite the contribution that this work has made to the field, the strong initial support
for the initiatives at both UTS and Deakin University and the institutional rhetoric about
driving innovation, embracing change and new educational practices, establishing new
streams of revenue and working with industry, work-based learning has not endured.
Of the four universities that have embarked upon provision of this 'new higher
education' in Australia, three have failed to sustain their programs. Institutional
approaches to providing authentic learning experiences in Australian universities have
in the meantime privileged WIL methodologies in which emphasis is placed upon the
application of 'university' knowledge to work or work simulation. In the meantime the
space in which the recognition of transdisciplinary knowledge generated through work
has largely receded to the occasional elective course unit located within conventional
degree structures.

Work-integrated learning approaches perhaps accord a closer fit with the demarcations
between accepted disciplinary boundaries, conceptions of the role of the university and
academic, the nature of a university curriculum, and HEI's commercial capabilities,
infrastructure and orientation. They ensure that the university program stays within the
bounds of familiar organisational and power structures and affords greater control of
the focus and direction of study to the academy. In this way control remains vested with
those academic players who perceive their role and status to be that of custodians of

legitimate knowledge (Shipley 2001 p. 154). It satisfies some of the more cynical players who identify WBL as a deficit model that serves to make the university a handmaiden of industry, a view that only underscores the numerous challenges posed when integrating this 'new higher education' within established university structures and institutions.

Key challenges for WBL provision

Informed, to some degree by the work conducted by my team at UTS, Boud and Solomon (2001, p. 26) outlined some of the key challenges confronting universities in the design and delivery of work-based learning programs and which resulted in some seeing WBL as a deficit model of higher education. These challenges included the maintenance of academic standards and equivalence to university-based courses; the challenges to teaching practices that such approaches present to university staff; and the challenges presented to both the university and academics through the repositioning the university, reshaping the curriculum and reorganising knowledge structures.

Boud and Solomon (2001, p. 216) went on to outline five 'immediate challenges' that would require attention according to the structures and practices inherent in particular universities. These included the following.

Economic issues

Economic issues include the costing models needed to accommodate the different use of academic staff resources, university facilities and the contribution that employers themselves make to the conduct of programs. This latter point sometimes impacts upon employers' propensity to pay an equivalent or premium price for a service they perceive they are already subsidising though the heavier use of their institution's own expertise and resources.

The high degree of variance in WBL programs, both in terms of curriculum and the demands made upon academic advisers' time by students with differing academic literacies, makes cost management problematic.

A further issue, not raised by Boud and Solomon, relates to the distribution of cost and revenue within the university itself, as discussed below. Supporting individually

customised programs means that marginal costs often increase in proportion to marginal revenues, and therefore economies of scale achieved in conventional cohort-based approaches cannot easily be achieved. In addition, working across university departments often means that each party contributing to the process expects to generate a financial surplus from their effort. This justifies the opportunity cost of refocussing their effort from running more conventional and less challenging programs. It can mean that the reduced rewards for delivering WBL programs have to be divided between larger numbers of university stakeholders, thus reducing the financial incentives for engagement.

Institutional issues

Locating cross-disciplinary and transdisciplinary WBL within the university's existing structures presents particular challenges. Each solution has its relative merits and demerits. Consideration of alternative options was explored in the WBL Implementation Plan prepared for Deakin University. The range of options, however, distils to two overarching variants, including their location within existing faculty structures (as at UTS) or in a centralised unit as proposed for Deakin.

Centralised units can work independently of faculties, in collaboration with faculties and/or simply provide central support services. Whatever the approach, decisions about the institutional location of WBL have wide-ranging implications for power, identity, control and sustainability within the academy and can have a strong impact upon the perceived value of such programs within the university.

Prudential issues

The partnership conditions between the employer and university are critical to assuring a successful WBL program. This includes factors such as the employer's commitment to learning and development, their willingness to invest, provide career paths and ensure appropriate levels of support are maintained across the organisation. The additional effort and resources required of universities to manage and guide such partnerships places significant overheads on the delivery of WBL programs. This in turn has further implications, not only in terms of the higher delivery cost but also on the capacity and willingness of the university to manage complex relationships with employers.

Quality issues

It is critical to establish quality assurance frameworks relevant to work-based learning programs and the mainstream university while also ensuring their relevance to employers and work-based learners.

Educational issues

How can academics be supported to evolve and adapt their skills as they move away from being the content expert to being facilitators and assessors of learning that they do not necessarily possess in their own right? How do they balance this challenge with the need to manage relationships with both work-based learners and their employers?

In the context of the public work presented, this chapter reflects upon the comparative development of WBL in the UK and Australia over the equivalent time period. It considers how some of the challenges predicted for universities delivering WBL in 2001 were addressed by UTS and Deakin University, with a particular focus on the economic and institutional issues that arose.

The development and growth of work-based learning

Over the time period in which my public work has been conducted between 1995 and 2013, the provision of workforce development programs in the UK, including university-level work-based learning qualifications, has steadily grown. Such programs, while arguably still 'boutique', appear to have gained greater acceptance than in Australia and have become a more mainstream part of institutional program offerings and identity. Despite this, detailed data relating to the provision and uptake of WBL in the UK marketplace remains difficult to obtain. According to the Confederation of British Industry, there is a need to 'centrally collect data on take up of alternative routes and analyse trends' to understand the nature and scale of such provision (CBI 2013 p. 5). Kewin et al (2011, p 138), however, identifies 32 universities in the UK as respondents to a review of workforce development programs. Out of a total of 136 UK universities (Wikipedia 2014), this shows that compared to Australia, provision of work-based learning in the UK has grown significantly. The Market Concept Test conducted on behalf of DeakinPrime in 2012 (Artefact 23) suggests that the demand drivers for university-level work-based learning in Australia compare to those identified for UK employers (Cunningham, Dawes & Bennett 2004, 1.2). The question arising from this

is: Why, given that Australian universities are faced with broadly similar change-drivers to their UK counterparts (Kewin et.al, S1), work-based learning programs have not endured as a part of the higher education offering?

In the following pages I will draw upon my own experiences and inquiry as well as the work-based learning literature to reflect upon issues that may have contributed to this sharp contrast between the UK and Australia in the development of WBL. I do this not to suggest a comprehensive and definitive set of factors to steer future developments, or to identify a set of levers that must be applied in order to achieve future success. Numerous writers have already endeavored to provide such analysis of the 'carriers and barriers' to work-based learning provision from both the university and employer perspectives, including Lemanski, Mewis and Overton (2011), Kewin et al. (2011) and Dhillon et al. (2011). I do this as a reflective practitioner who believes 'we shall not cease from exploration' (Eliot 1943) and in the hope that despite so far 'foundering on the reefs of profit, pride and politics' (Gustavs & Clegg 2005, p. 28), provision of WBL may yet find its place in the Australian higher education sector. If this is to be so, these reflections from my own experiences and the literature on work-based learning may usefully supplement the limited public work relating to the university business of work-based learning in Australia.

Critique of key themes emerging from the work

According to a review of literature on WBL by category and reference (Costley, Abukari & Little 2008, p. 17), there has been a good deal of research and scholarly work into WBL, much of this focussed on pedagogy. The literature traverses the challenges that face higher education institutions (HEIs) as they grapple with their evolving and contested role in knowledge production as a factor of economic activity and as an instrument of both university and workplace performativity (Garnett 2009; Critten 2009). According to Blackmore and Sachs (2007), there is now a 'paradigm convergence between education and social policy in which universities are seen as the change agents responsible for developing the long-term prosperity and economic growth of the nation'.

The provision of employer-driven WBL study programs requires significant institutional change and, for HEIs, demands for more responsive and flexible curriculum and 'business-like' working relationships – demands that can trigger fears of the dilution of academic freedom (Pears 2010). Our understanding of the challenges of the university

business of WBL has been progressively advanced by the literature over the last decade as program provision matures (Dhillon et al. 2011). Kornecki (2012) suggests a range of strategic, tactical and operational level requirements for successful operation of WBL programs by universities:

- **Strategic level:** The strategic commitment of the university to WBL needs to be articulated in planning documents and clearly linked to other university activities, performance indicators and performance review. This in turn needs to be linked to an employer- and learner-centric approach to the development of learning programs in which interaction and dialogue with employers forms a central role in the prosecution of partnership strategies. These conditions are proposed as critical to the strategic success of WBL within the university and for employers.

- **Tactical level:** Successful delivery of WBL programs requires consideration of the structures, processes and procedures that optimise HEI resources use. In particular: consideration of the optimisation of monitoring activity to ensure he cost-effectiveness of programs; the flexibility for supporting the rapid development of customised curriculum; human resources practices that support the appointment and development of academic staff with the right mix of experience and educational skills to support WBL programs; and the appropriate organisation of the university's physical, information, communication and technology resources appropriate to the delivery of WBL programs.

- **Operational level:** The HEI must be 'doing the right things' to support WBL provision. These right things include ensuring that communications are fit for purpose and appropriately bridge the different worlds of the university and the workplace. They also include being responsive to employer demands in ways that enable the university to maintain its role in assuring quality. Finally, it is critical that they include maintaining a focus on the impact, cost–benefit and the realisation of work-based learning outcomes that meet the requirements of the triumvirate of program stakeholders.

In addition to these factors, 'making it work institutionally' includes establishing the academic credibility of WBL, getting the right 'tools of the trade', developing appropriate business operation models and making it pay (Portwood 2001). These factors have been central to my own experiences in developing WBL programs in Australia and have been pivotal issues in the ultimate withdrawal of WBL at both UTS and Deakin

University. In both cases the failure to sustain WBL initiatives can be attributed, at least in part, to one or more of these factors.

The following sections aim to provide additional critique of the public work and some of the institutional factors that informed its destiny. They provide an alternative map though which to navigate the reefs of 'profit, pride and politics' upon which the initiatives ultimately foundered.

Profit?

As described in Chapter 3, 'Business of Learning' drivers of profit and growth were important factors in triggering an engagement in employer provision at Insearch and latterly UTS. The pioneering nature of the PAB and WBL developments meant that, to differing degrees, the anticipated market uptake and subsequent profit and loss forecasts for the programs were, at the outset, speculative. Since the program delivery models were developed and adapted while the program was in operation, so too did the resourcing requirements and ability to analyse the true costs associated with running these programs.

Portwood (2001, p. 81) describes the issue that arose surrounding the implementation of WBL at Middlesex University and emphasised the potential cost-effectiveness (to the university) of the recognition of prior learning and the fact that program provision could beneficially harness employer resources, thereby reducing the delivery cost to the university. Onyx (2001, p.137), on the other hand, describes some of the concerns regarding the cost of operating WBL programs at UTS and raises concerns about earlier assumptions regarding the cost effectiveness of WBL. Further issues relating to the cost of supporting WBL programs have been addressed by other writers in the intervening time and illustrate that the issues of profit and cost are inseparable from pedagogy, quality assurance, location and 'ownership' of WBL programs in the university.

More recent analysis in the UK seems to support the notion that WBL provision is more complex than university-based programs from a costing perspective. Nixon et al. (2006, p. 5) suggest WBL is more resource intensive than comparable university-based qualifications and an HEA (2008) study of WBL costing describes the difficulties in arriving at a properly and fully costed model. More recently, Kewin et al. (2011) have raised other concerns about ongoing funding arrangements in the UK that have in

some institutions provided a cross-subsidisation and discounting of employer provision and may have artificially stimulated the uptake of WBL programs by employers beyond a level that would otherwise occurred had prices reflected the full cost of provision.

Certainly, at UTS, the 'experience curve' (Day & Montgomery 1983) with managing WBL courses contributed to a more informed understanding of the operation of such programs and latterly to the development of a detailed costing and pricing model. This ultimately enabled staff managing the WBL program to create a very clear set of resourcing guidelines that in turn were embedded within program guides provided to employers and students. This helped to set expectations and clearly communicate the level of support that could be expected. This detailed costing helped to address the challenges presented by the high degree of variance in demands upon the university's resources and limit the prudential challenges presented in delivering WBL programs. It was also important in informing the design and operation of business partnerships and processes defining the learner–academic adviser interactions that underpin successful partnerships.

It became clear at UTS that the program had the potential to deliver a contribution margin of approximately 40 per cent, a figure that at the time exactly matched the university's internal levy requirement by which faculties contributed to university overhead costs. These overheads included the costs associated with on-site delivery of university programs excluding academic labour. Typically, work-based students did not access campus resources or result in the university incurring any incremental overhead cost since they primarily used the resouces of their workplace.

At UTS, the contested economic challenge was not so much whether the program could return the required 40 per cent contribution margin so much as where ultimately the surplus was to reside and how this might be reinvested in WBL program development. At this level of contribution margin, the financial surplus from the WBL program (which was attached to the Dean's unit in the Faculty of Business) made an operating break-even after salary costs and other consumables. No revenues were retained by the faculty or schools. The two prime beneficiaries of revenues from WBL therefore were the university administration and individual academics who were engaged as WBL advisers and assessors. Faculties and schools understandably felt that they were being cut out of the loop and that academic resources would be more usefully deployed on 'core activities' of disciplinary teaching and research.

To address this, together with the Dean of the Faculty of Business I prepared a case for a reduction of the 40 per cent contribution margin to 20 per cent to reflect the extent to which WBL program participants actually drew on the university's centrally funded resources. The intention was to redirect this proportion of the revenues to the schools that supported the program and bore some of the opportunity cost of program delivery. The case was to have been sent to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (DVC), who would have been able to influence the change in university policy required to achieve this reduction in contribution margin as a means of supporting this university 'critical development theme'. For reasons that were never disclosed, however, the letter was never sent. Subsequently, the Dean of Business concerned was appointed to the role of Deputy Vice-Chancellor (DVC). In his new role as DVC, while possessing an intimate understanding of the issues and having been supportive of the case for a change in the contribution margin as a Dean, he did not continue to champion the proposal for change and the letter was assigned to the archives.

Ultimately, in my view, the issue of 'profit' was a major factor contributing to the gradual 'cooling off' in championing WBL and the disengagement of the schools and faculties. The devolved institutional model at UTS resulted in having too many players to coordinate and too many 'mouths to feed'. The fact that the program met the university's contribution margin policy and vested control and responsibility for quality assurance to the schools became subordinate to the profit issue. It became increasingly difficult to engage faculty members in supporting the program and the increasing dependence on adjunct 'pracademics' drawn from outside the organisation marginalised the program in the view of some academics.

These lessons were to play a significant role in shaping the approach to 'profit' at Deakin University. During the development of the supporting business plan, I was able to reflect upon the detailed understanding of the operational and resourcing requirements for WBL I had gleaned from UTS with further knowledge gained from the literature and university WBL practitioners in the UK. A recently published report that discussed different operational models (Kewin et al 2011, p. 30) outlined a variety of structural models including hub and spoke arrangements in which WBL was managed though a central agency, such as at the University of Derby Corporate. This approach is fully documented in Artefact 24 and resulted in approval of a business case and financial model that leveraged the commercial and business development capabilities of DeakinPrime, and

achieved approval of a lower contribution margin requirement that would allow for the redistribution of funds to faculties to compensate them for the resources they would be required to provide for delivery and quality assurance purposes.

In regard to 'getting it right institutionally', the structural and financial model approved at Deakin clearly addressed the shortfalls of the operation at UTS and provided a financial basis upon which to launch a viable new area of business for the university. This played directly into the university's Live the Future strategy and responded to calls for innovation and a response to dynamic shifts in the university business of learning (Ernst & Young 2012). What it failed to do was ride the waves of institutional politics and pride created by its approval.

Pride?

The contested nature of WBL provision within universities is well documented. As outlined above, Boud and Solomon (2001, p. 26) describe the challenges that WBL provisions pose in assuring their equivalence to university-based qualifications, to academic practices and the status of the academic as arbiters of legitimate knowledge. They outline the challenges to the professional identities of those involved in the 'demands of this new pedagogy'. Their account mostly concerns challenges to those in academic roles. Solomon (2001) goes on to suggest that 'for educators it may be easy to become immobilised by the experience of WBL as an oppressive or disempowering technology' and refers to the issues of a 'culture of difference' impeding their participation. Meakin and Wall (2012) further describe the alienation of some academics engaging in employer WBL provision and quote one such person expressing their reservations regarding the blurring of their role as a university academic with that of the employer: 'who am I here? Part of the University or part of the client? I don't feel comfortable here.' Clearly, professional identity and pride are among the primary challenges confronting the academic community.

Gustavs (Gustavs & Clegg 2005, p. 28), who was a member of my team at UTS, described how she felt as a non-academic appointee and how she believed her role as Manager Learning Development was marginalised. Her role was a critical one to the development of WBL at UTS, and her work made a valuable contribution in the latter stages of the program, significantly enhancing its quality and outcomes. However, she was not appointed as an academic staff member and despite being more highly

qualified than various faculty academics, felt that her contribution was not always valued or recognised. My own experiences also led me to share these sentiments and contributed ultimately to my decision to resign as Program Director and move to a corporate environment in which the 'academic snobbery' (Kennedy 2011) would no longer marginalise the contribution I made.

The need for both academic and non-academic capabilities in propagating and sustaining university WBL provision, however, seems to be clear. Kewin et al. (2011) report that the capability to respond more effectively to the market requires a change in attitudes, improving skill within the university for commercial engagement and call for staff with business-facing experience. They report the difficulties of encouraging university staff to engage in WBL provision and in attracting staff with the right skills. Unlike at UTS, at Deakin University institutional structures and skills were already in place that would have effectively balanced the role of the academic and the administration of the business of WBL. As a self-funding and customer-facing corporate education division of the university, DeakinPrime was well placed to provide a centralised location for the provision of transdisciplinary awards in work-based learning while vesting the control of academic quality with a cross-faculty governance and quality assurance process. This approach would have provided the additional benefit of playing the role of intermediary 'one-stop shop' between the employer and university through which the 'HEI must see itself as a service provider not an ivory tower' (Eardley et al., 2010). Indeed, this institutional approach formed the basis of the business plan and structural model upon which funding for the development was approved. The plan proposed strategies that would build upon my accumulated experiences in the 'Business of Learning' and combine them with those acquired in supporting 'Learning for Business'. Importantly, the approach would foreground and provide new approaches to the creation of organisational value for sponsoring employers in its design (Minton & Ions 2012) and establish work-based learning as a new transdisciplinary model of employer-centred education at Deakin.

As plans for implementation of WBL at Deakin progressed and awareness of the proposal to approve DeakinPrime as the 'provider' of these new qualifications grew, the emerging political tensions within the university became more apparent. Lengthy discussions with key stakeholders in faculties highlighted concerns amongst senior academics about DeakinPrime taking a front-row position as a provider of

transdisciplinary qualifications (a proposition which by contrast was perceived as a positive feature of the program by some prospective client organisations) and the internal 'competition' that the initiative would pose to existing programs. One senior academic commented, after a lengthy discussion of the nature and organisation of the proposed WBL program, that he could see why there would be a compelling case for employers in choosing this model over the Deakin MBA. However, he indicated that he would vote against the program's approval at the university's academic board because he felt that it would compete with the MBA and conflict with his own professional interests. These 'territorial' concerns compounded the issues of academic territory, pride and notions of what, if any, a fit and appropriate location for such programs would be within the university. Such tensions were amplified once faculties became aware that the initiative had received what was considered by some to be preferential treatment through a reduced contribution margin and significant seed funding.

Tensions such as these were exacerbated when the university announced a realignment of portfolios among the Deakin executive. These resulted in the creation of a new senior executive role that assumed overall responsibility for DeakinPrime. The incumbent of this role had been responsible for leading a course enhancement process at Deakin that was at that time being openly criticised by some within faculties as being resource intensive and underperforming. For a variety of reasons, the newly appointed executive yielded to pockets of resistance within some faculties to changing regulations and allowing for DeakinPrime to become the institutional provider of transdiciplinary WBL awards. This person's focus and concern appeared to be on maintaining the political status quo with faculties, which was being challenged by the proposal, and on winning support for alternative institutional agendas (particularly the introduction of a university graduate attribute framework), which was perceived as being undermined by the WBL initiative. These factors, combined with her view that DeakinPrime had 'no academic credibility' (notwithstanding the fact that the model did not propose DeakinPrime as an independent academic entity), resulted in a swift and unilateral withdrawal of the senior level championship that White (2012) and Kornecki (2012) identify as being critical in sustaining this type of higher education development. Funding previously approved for the program, as described in Chapter 5, was withdrawn and the initiative was closed down. In so doing, the tensions perceived by crossing disciplinary, political and territorial boundaries were removed.

As Kornecki (2012) suggests, the complexities and issues of introducing WBL on the side of the university are considerable, and in the case of Deakin it could be claimed that pride, professional self-interest and the preservation of traditional territorial and disciplinary boundaries were instrumental factors leading to the withdrawal of the program.

The business model proposed for Deakin addressed many of the economic, institutional, prudential and educational challenges for delivering work-based education. It also located the development clearly within the university's Live the Future strategy. The fact that DeakinPrime as a non-academic division of the university was the proponent of the proposal resulted in perceived threats to educational quality and ultimately its passage through the final stages of institutional approval. While the true nature of the academic quality assurance model proposed was never explored in any detail (with many falsely believing that DeakinPrime was proposing that it would play this role without faculty involvement), DeakinPrime's perceived role and position within the university ultimately meant that it had little power or academic authority to influence faculties that acted as the 'gatekeepers' and approvers of new initiatives.

The university Academic Board is the principal gatekeeper of academic standards. It is composed of academic staff from faculties, some possessing deeply entrenched beliefs in the disciplinary structure of knowledge and whose professional pride and identity is entangled with their role as experts. Such entrenched vested interests and professional pride means that these individuals may react negatively to initiatives they feel might challenge their own territorial and disciplinary interests. If they disapprove of a proposal such as that of the WBL program, they have it within their power to block the initiative.

Given the often 'siloed' accountabilities and self-interests within universities, this power relationship is comparable in the commercial world to having to seek approval for the launch of a new product from competing organisations whose market offerings they perceive will be undermined by its launch. In this way it could be argued that while the university may have the strategic will to embrace new paradigms in education, its structural organisation around disciplines and the institutions that govern it are set up in a way that can impede the university's ability to embrace innovations and work outside of those existing structures. In this way professional pride and political power colluded to block the WBL development at Deakin.

While 'profit' as a factor of the institutional sustainability of WBL had been addressed through the creation of an institutional model for revenue and cost sharing, in the final analysis it would appear that at Deakin University, innovative responses to the dynamic changes in the market had to be contained within the existing institutions, practices and structures of the university.

Politics?

Institutional politics

Intuitional politics has played no small part in the destiny of work-based learning at both UTS and Deakin University. The politics of perception concerning the rightfulness of the profit driver at UTS prompted the use of 'crass language – terms such as "cash cow", bums on seats and "high-class escort agency" reflect a disregard for the financial underpinning of the enterprise, perhaps even a lack of respect for the hybridity of the employment status of those employed in the WBL unit' (Gustavs & Clegg 2005, p. 24). Nonetheless, at both institutions, strategic plans were approved endorsing and promoting WBL as a means of rising to the new challenges of the marketplace, the changing role of the university and the financial crises being forecast.

It has been discussed how pride, as well as the profit factor, has played a role in the internal politics of WBL by preserving and protecting the self-interest of individual academics and faculties above the corporate interests of the university and employers. What then is the interplay between institutional governance and personal politics that impacted upon WBL in these two Australian universities?

By the time the WBL initiative was finally withdrawn at UTS, I had resigned from my position as Program Director. Consequently, my understanding of events is limited to anecdotal information gained from discussions with members of the university's executive and ex-team members. The only published analysis of events are those already referred to extensively by Onyx (2001) and Gustavs and Clegg (2005). The rationale for the program's withdrawal seems to distil to two key issues: funding (embracing the lack of subsidisation for the program and the distribution of operating costs and surpluses) and loss of championship.

At Deakin, where I remained employed up until the time of the program's withdrawal, I have a clearer view of events. As at UTS, discussion of the issues of program funding and where the financial surplus was to reside within the university, where academic control would vest within the disciplinary structure of the university and how the program would be resourced academically, resulted in the program development becoming moribund. That the champions of the initiative in the university's executive were unable, or unwilling, to promote the solutions presented and protect the initiative against the vested interest and opinions of a small number of individuals could be seen as a failure of institutional governance.

University support for WBL in the form of a published strategy at UTS and the approval of the WBL Implementation Plan at Deakin had been achieved following an exhaustive and lengthy due-diligence process involving consultation with key stakeholders within the university. Its subsequent withdrawal, particularly at Deakin, was a much more unilateral process that involved no discussion or referral back to the broader stakeholders responsible for approving and supporting the development in the first instance. The official rational of fiscal prudence given for the withdrawal, as discussed previously, seemed contradictory, or at least illogical given the continued funding of a Deakin MOOC, and suggested that the decision was motivated by other unstated factors. The nature of these may remain a mystery.

Government policy

Beyond these issues of institutional politics, however, are equally important matters of government policy. It is beyond the scope of this section to compare and contrast the government policy enablers of WBL between different nations. However, it is important to draw attention to the role of government policy in stimulating university–employer WBL partnerships as it plays an important part in the creation of an environment in which such partnerships can prosper. Government policy is, arguably, of far greater importance in influencing HEI strategy and employer uptake than the role any individual practitioner, such as myself, or indeed any single university can play.

Within the WBL Implementation Plan I wrote that:

> *In recent years, WBL has gained its greatest momentum in the United Kingdom where over the past decade there has been a growing expectation that higher education should play a greater role in increasing workforce skills (HEFCE 2011). Policy momentum began to build following the publication of the Leitch Review in late 2006, which argued that the UK's competitive advantage depended on increasing the percentage of the workforce with level 4 or above qualifications (equivalent to a diploma qualification in the UK National Qualification Framework). A target was established to raise the proportion of the workforce having such qualifications to 40 per cent by 2020. In order to achieve this, it was acknowledged that attention would need to be switched to up-skilling the current workforce rather than increasing new entrants.*
>
> *Similarly, in Australia, the Australian Government Review of Australian Higher Education (or 'Bradley Review', DEEWR 2008), released in December 2008, highlighted the strong links between the nation's productivity and the proportion of the population with higher-level qualifications. The review proposed a target that '40 per cent of 25- to 34-year-olds will have attained at least a bachelor-level qualification by 2020' (DEEWR 2008, p. xiv), and noted that the target would 'be quite testing for Australia as current attainment is 29 per cent'. As in the UK, the achievement of this target will require engaging the existing workforce.*

In the UK, the Leitch report led to the launch of the HEFCE Employer Engagement Strategy as discussed by McCracken (2010, p. 33) and the release of substantial funding aimed at stimulating the formation and exploration of partnerships between employers and universities. In Australia by contrast, the voice of the Federal Government, which is responsible for the provision of funding to Australia's 37 public universities, has been more or less silent on the role of universities and higher-level skills in workforce development. Instead, State governments through their funding of the Technical and Further Education (TAFE) sector have developed localised policies to stimulate the uptake of accredited vocational education and training (VET) courses and increase access to certified work-integrated learning. As reflected by Mills and Whittaker (2001), the often contradictory nature or lack of government policy support

for WBL will likely mean that it is likely to be pursued in Australia, if at all, as a result of institutional policy rather than in response to government policy.

Where to from here, Australia? Responding to market forces

A recent report by Ernst & Young (2012) predicts that 'Over the next 10–15 years, the current public university model in Australia will prove unviable in all but a few cases'. This report stresses 'integration with industry' as one of five 'mega-trends' that are driving change and which will transform the higher education sector.

In Australia and internationally, key challenges for the higher education sector have been variously attributed to shifting government policy and funding; the rhetoric of the knowledge economy and the democratisation of knowledge; the transition to a mass education system; changes in disciplinary knowledge, the ubiquitousness of 'content'; the changing global economy; and the increasing cost and decreasing value of university education (Slaughter & Leslie 1997; Barber, Donnelly & Rizvi 2013).

> *Businesses and universities suggested that some of the most innovative delivery partnerships arise where universities have the sustainable infrastructure to broker relationships with local businesses. There are already successful examples of universities, such as Anglia Ruskin and Middlesex, that have developed sustainable business units specifically to liaise with employers and promote work-based learning provision (Confederation of British Industry 2013).*

Given these challenges, how are universities advancing their engagement with this new 'higher education' and developing their structures and practices to ensure its sustainability? Helyer and Hooker (2007, p. 75) write that 'for too long, HEI's have been able to make off-the shelf offers. To genuinely answer the needs of employed learners, learning providers must ask questions, and be prepared to negotiate and shift position. They must be willing to hone and alter what they deliver and continually develop and evolve'. According to the CBI (2013), advances amongst UK universities have been made that suggest considerable progress can, and has, been made toward acceptance of the universities' changing role and preparedness to hone and shift their position. However, in contrast with the views expressed by the CBI, there would appear to be an important subtext regarding the extent to which the assertion that university WBL provision is sustainable.

During the course of writing this context statement, I had the opportunity to talk with senior staff members responsible for WBL programs in a number of universities in England. The messages seemed to be mixed with regard to the universities' views of the ongoing commercial viability of WBL. Within these institutions, it was inferred that the 'jury was out' following recent changes to government funding. Indeed, at the University of Derby Corporate and Middlesex University, work-based learning provision has been subsumed or 'aligned' to the respective business faculties as a result of the financial pressures and shifting political support for maintaining separate centralised structures for WBL. At Anglia Ruskin University, referred to by the CBI report as an example of a sustainable model, the stated position purpose for its Head of Learning at Work initiative suggested that financial viability remained a critical issue:

> *To secure Anglia Ruskin University's position as a leader in employer engagement through degrees and accredited workplace learning. Changes in funding mean that the Degrees at Work Unit must become financially self-sustaining. To do this we need to continue to lead and innovate in our field.*

Despite the significant government support for university-level WBL in the UK and the significant progress in the field made by UK universities, its future seems in no way assured.

In Australia, the future of WBL seems even less certain. Despite my own research confirming that employers remain receptive to the concept, Australian universities have failed to achieve a sustained or scalable institutional engagement. It would appear that while the predictions of dynamic changes and shifting market forces seem to have stimulated wide-ranging discourse and debate about the future of universities in Australia, this in itself has so far been insufficient to sustain institutional focus on 'one of the very few innovations related to the teaching and learning aspects of post-secondary education that is attempting to engage seriously with the economic, social and educational demands of our era' (Boud, Solomon & Symes 2001). It seems highly likely that the approach to work-based learning in Australia may need further re-examination and repositioning.

Chapter 7

Looking back to the future

As this context statement has unfolded, I have had the opportunity to explore more deeply how the successive phases of my professional practice have demonstrated an accumulative drawing together of ideas, a reframing and repositioning of them to create new approaches and to push the frontiers of work-based learning in Australia. It has provided me with evidence that my work has not been at the periphery of developments or as a 'follower' of the work of others in Australia. I have played a central role as a strategist and modeller in leading new practices that have influenced the evolution of practice and understanding in the field. Each iteration of my practice has provided a platform for my own and others' critical review of the field and has provided the basis for theorising, conceptualising and implementing new institutional and academic approaches. These have influenced and changed HEI strategy through program innovation and, ultimately, changes in industry practices.

Looking back on the contribution that this public work has made, I have extracted some key messages for future approaches for managing WBL in Australia.

In my work at Deakin University, the approach I had fashioned was informed by the developing knowledge and emergent good practice in WBL from the UK, which I synthesised with my own prior learning and experience at UTS. On paper, the business and educational model that was supported by the university was the most sophisticated and contemporary approach to the implementation of WBL in Australia to date. However, as in other organisations, the implementation of new ideas or models at Deakin required 'buy in' from a range of players who needed to collaborate and support such initiatives. Previously hidden dynamics surfaced and came into play, preventing or stalling implementation. I left Deakin after finding no way to resolve such issues because they were beyond my control.

The turning tides of profit, power and politics

Two significant developments that have taken place at Deakin University have antecedents in the public work described in chapters 5 and 6.

Firstly, a year after my departure from Deakin, I was informed by DeakinPrime's CEO that my negotiations with a major financial services provider during the preparation of the Deakin Market Concept Test and Implementation Plan had continued beyond my engagement and progressed. As a consequence I was informed in an email that:

> *Whilst still commercially sensitive information, I am pleased to advise that Deakin is working in partnership with a major financial services organisation for a program based on the WBL structure you developed at Deakin (not specifically referred to as WBL but very similar in structure and delivery) for approximately 600 students.*
>
> *The program comprises four units including 1 unit RPL, 1 unit experience (portfolio evidence), 2 units on work based projects.*

Further discussion uncovered that the course was to be offered by the Faculty of Business and Law and supported operationally, rather than delivered, by DeakinPrime. A few changes to the approach I had proposed were to be made:

- The distribution of income was to be substantially in the faculty's favour rather than DeakinPrime's.

- The faculty adopted the core program elements proposed by the DeakinPrime Professional Practice qualification proposal; in particular, this included the '1 unit experience (portfolio evidence)', which represented new practice at Deakin University.

- The new qualification would adopt existing qualification nomenclature – a Graduate Certificate in Management.

- DeakinPrime was to support the Faculty of Business and Law by providing project and client relationship management services.

- Both the faculty and DeakinPrime are working together to further develop this model for future collaboration and growth in the development of employer provision.

As it stands, this recent development at Deakin will result in the single largest higher-level WBL program offered by any Australian university to date and will accelerate the fulfilment of the financial goals set out in the WBL Implementation Plan that I developed for DeakinPrime by several years.

Secondly, 2015 has seen the launch of another wholly owned commercial venture, DeakinDigital (Deakin Digital 2015). DeakinDigital offers 'evidence-based

employment credentials for your continuous career development'. Key features of the proposition include:

- Credentialing: The recognition of knowledge, skills and abilities acquired in the workplace though professional practice. This parallels and renames the Accreditation of Prior and Experiential Learning proposed as a component of the DeakinPrime program.

- Pathways to Professional Practice Qualifications (currently limited to a Master of Professional Practice (IT) degree): Similarly, this adopts the qualification nomenclature proposed in the DeakinPrime proposal that does not exist elsewhere within the Deakin offering.

- Career management, emphasising the use of portfolios evidencing the attainment of Deakin's eight defined graduate employability attributes: This was also a key outcome intended by the model proposed for DeakinPrime.

- Innovative use of learning technology to support flexibility and enablement of 'credentialing': Again, the proposition to develop the WBL offering into a fully online program had been discussed extensively during the program's development.

While the term 'work-based learning' is not used in the DeakinDigital website, the approach models key features of the WBL implementation and academic framework developed for DeakinPrime. The service is to be delivered by a wholly owned commercial entity parallel to DeakinPrime, with an advisory board that includes David Boud, who was closely aligned with the WBL program at UTS as well as advancing the literature in the field.

Interestingly, the published position description for DeakinDigital's Business Development Manager states that 'the principle purpose of this role is to develop the DeakinDigital business with employers'. At this stage, there is no mention of the employer's role in the management of Deakin's proposed Professional Practice qualifications or the benefits that they might expect to derive from this online credentialing model.

While this posits a more positive conclusion to the industry impact of this phase of my public work and demonstrates an ongoing impact, there are lessons and conclusions to be drawn that challenge some of the core assumptions about practice in the field and

the way in which WBL is conceptualised, positioned, implemented and staffed within Australian universities.

New university work roles? Positionality and change agency

Throughout this statement I have emphasised the ambiguity of my atypical university roles and their position between the 'professional' and 'academic' domains. In these roles I have been able to traverse between the higher education and business sectors and communicate with both in their respective 'languages'. This skill has been developed and refined from working in a wide variety of workplaces outside the university as well as in the university, and has exposed me to what it is like to be 'in the client's shoes'. Many of my peers within the university have not had the advantage of that breadth and diversity of workplace experience. I have also had the advantage of being in sections of the university sector motivated to engage with external organisations to support students in their employment contexts. I believe I have successfully developed the capacity to understand and translate the contrasting worlds and language of academia and non-university workplaces. I have, in a sense, taken up residence in that space between an academic role typically associated with theorising in disciplines, and professional practice typically concerned with the practical applications of knowledge in complex fields to achieve a competitive edge in the marketplace.

Reflecting on the impact of this critical engagement on my professional identity and practice, I can see that I have used my abilities to bridge a gap between academic and professional knowledge and promote knowledge exchange rather than knowledge transfer. For me there is a sense of occupying a tenuous space that sits between the academy and the professional organisation, yet not belonging to either. At times this made me feel I was not carrying the right 'passport' to allow me to reside in either. However, this space between is real and necessary as much as it is challenging and rewarding. It is where there is the opportunity to create something new

I have used my position to influence key academic and professional stakeholders and decision makers, to draw together capabilities and resources and to generate the interest and enthusiasm required to mobilise the academy into engagement with professional organisations. I have participated in the academic practices of the university by directly supporting learners, by participating in university-level Boards of Studies and approvals committees and several other aspects of the academic process, without ever having

firmly established myself in that camp. This 'bridging position' has enabled me to achieve a great deal yet has placed distinctive limitations on how far I have personally been able to 'carry' the embedding of programs into the mainstream of the university. Looking at the Deakin situation, I have reframed my role from an agent of change to an agent who can create the conditions for change to happen. It takes time to prepare for change, to help people and cultures adapt incrementally. I would propose that universities who wish to engage fully with professional practice and organisations do not impose 'glass ceilings' upon the practice, position and legitimacy of such agents because they are perceived as outsiders, but to accept that such agents are a necessary part of the university of the future as much as any academic. The thinking that has emerged from this context statement highlights this as a key human resources issue that must be addressed for the future development of WBL in Australia.

The human resources of universities are clearly divided between professional and academic roles. These distinctions are deeply rooted in the industrial relations, structural and cultural organisation of universities and do not readily lend themselves to enabling or even encouraging the border crossings that I have so far been able to make and that are so critical for translating the needs of universities to employers and the implementation of WBL. Some universities internationally have endeavoured to quarantine WBL innovation by creating new structural 'containers' and new roles to enable initiatives to develop and role identities to evolve. So far, this more liberal approach to role design has not been evident among public universities in Australia.

The new phase of practice at DeakinPrime may provide some insight as to how the division of professional and academic practice in WBL may be managed in Australia in the future. However, in my view, having determined that 'control' of the WBL program remains within the faculty, Deakin runs the risk of recreating the limitations of the UTS approach by expecting faculty members with little background or experience in the field to lead the program. This approach fails to recognise the need for new roles within the academy that emphasise the combination of academic and professional practice and the need for work-based learning programs to traverse disciplinary boundaries. In such roles, the relationship between practice and theorising needs to be embedded in the DNA and purpose of the role. Incumbents should be appropriately supported, incentivised with proper recognition and career development opportunities.

For initiatives such as WBL to succeed within the mainstream of public universities in Australia, a greater need for academics with the ability and incentive to traverse industry practice and academic work will be required. It is critical that in the future such roles, recognising the need for hybridity of practice and academic work, are created and embedded within the academy. In this type of role, the ability to act in this 'in-between' space that I and many others have developed will create a legitimate and effective platform from which to operate and to which the academy will look for guidance and leadership as change agents and a means of translating the language and practices of the two worlds. If mainstream universities in Australia fail to recognise and accommodate these needs in the design of the work roles, then WBL may remain a niche activity and the preserve of a small number of more nimble and responsive private providers of higher education. Ultimately this will result in work-based higher education remaining at the outermost fringes of the sector.

I have recently commenced work in such a role at La Trobe University. In this newly created role classification at La Trobe Business School, Professors of Practice will support industry engagement and practice and add to the university's scholarly work by building collaborations in capability development and practice with industry. The new role classification is so far unique in Australia, but is an example of how universities may recognise the need to foreground practice and professional capability in the development and positioning of their work and institutions. The *expectation* of the role is that I will be able to act as an agent of change in the academic life of the university, a function to which I have had a tenuous claim and tenure in my previous capacity in professional roles.

New structures and positioning?

For many universities, the possibility of creating such hybrid professional/academic roles remains a distant prospect. To some, this possibly may even be an undesirable one. In this case WBL provision by public universities is likely to be constrained by the competing demands placed on academics and the limitations of existing disciplinary and institutional structures. By default, this will limit the extent to which the academic community is likely to re-engage in WBL practice, regain lost ground in Australia and build university provision to a level of any significance. My critical engagement has raised several questions for me, including: What can be learned from my own artefacts and practice that can be of use now and in the future? How can this assist thinking

about future structural alternatives for WBL, given that its success depends on a sometimes uneasy coexistence of professional and academic staff capabilities?

Asnalysis of developments at Deakin reinforces the predictions made in 2001 (Boud & Solomon) that the organisation of universities around disciplinary structures will be a challenge to implementation given that the 'curriculum of work' is derived from across traditional disciplinary areas. While Deakin's Faculty of Business and Law has adopted key elements of the WBL program I proposed, they have not shifted from the use of traditional nomenclature or embraced the notion of Professional Practice qualifications or transdisciplinary work-based learning. In a sense, this evolutionary development may not be embraced until such time as academic structures and administrative boundaries are shifted to enable the navigation and support of such programs beyond existing financial and disciplinary practices of the institution.

Looking beyond mainstream Australian universities, new initiatives in the provision of higher-level WBL are emerging among niche providers in the private sector. For example:

- In South Australia, the Australian Institute of Business is providing 'work-applied business' programs at a postgraduate level. These programs share features of work-integrated and work-based learning programs.

- A not-for-profit organisation called Ducere is providing an innovative model of undergraduate and postgraduate qualification that is 'practitioner-led' but delivered under the authority of the University of Canberra. Composed solely of work-based project units, the destination qualification at postgraduate level is a Master of Business Administration, locating the qualification clearly within business disciplines.

- The newly formed Australian Institute for Work Based Learning has been established by a group of interested practitioners with highly relevant academic backgrounds, to broaden awareness of opportunities for work-based learning and to 'provide learning opportunities at work for all levels of the Australian Qualifications Framework [i.e. Levels 1–10]'.

In each case, programs are being supported by 'pracademics' (Volpe & Chandler 2001) who are engaged as 'teaching focused' staff, and whose roles and career prospects are not dependent upon their performance in other domains such as research and

community engagement. This development lends support to my proposal for the creation of new roles in higher education as well as new institutional structures designed to support the needs of work-based learners, employers and emerging pedagogies rather than mainstream university programs. It points to the need for universities to address how they will structure their resources to better support more personalised approaches to learning beyond a small proportion of higher degree by research students. It also draws into question the positioning and labeling of WBL.

In each recent instance of WBL-type qualification identified above, while methodologically embracing WBL pedagogies, the target qualifications have reflected recognised qualification nomenclature and disciplinary areas. Neither WBL nor Professional Practice labels appear in the qualification title. This would appear to challenge the findings of my research while producing the Deakin Market Concept Test. In this research, I concluded that employers and prospective WBL students were willing to accept and enrol in professional practice courses *in* work-based learning. Although this may yet prove to be true, the fact is that private providers of niche WBL-type programs have elected to adopt more commonly recognised nomenclature. Given Deakin University's recent decision to adopt the Professional Practice nomenclature, and in the absence of any evidence of the relative uptake of this qualification model compared to those using more convention nomenclature, the question of whether WBL will be widely adopted as a field is yet to be resolved.

While these reflections on my public work assist with an understanding of how existing conceptions and models of work-based learning might be more successfully played out in Australia, there are perhaps even more important evolutionary considerations to be derived from this critical reflection. These go beyond issues of presentation, positioning and organisational management of such programs, and question more fundamentally whether WBL continues to address the pressing economic and educational issues of our times (Boud & Solomon, 2001). Are current approaches to WBL still *current*?

Disrupting the disruption?

This context statement draws attention to the ever-changing world of higher education provision. It outlines some of the key external changes that are disrupting the sector and to which new solutions are being sought. Work-based learning framework models have been positioned as a disruptive new model of higher education that provide

significant flexibility by tailoring and customising learning programs to meet the contextual needs of learners in employment. The origin of these approaches lies in the social movement for increased participation and access in higher education during the 1990s. Since then, changes to the technological, business and economic environment have heralded shifts in the ways in which learning is accessed and mediated in work places. An increasingly competitive labour market and the democratisation of knowledge emphases the need to respond to new dynamics, such as promoting increased employability though higher education, the advent of 'free' MOOCs, and the increasing demands for performative learning from employers. How might WBL, as a disruptive innovation itself, be disrupted to embrace and capitalise on these changes?

Beyond what was proposed by my work for Deakin University, I believe that providers of higher-level WBL courses need to look more closely at how their programs integrate with the changing labour markets and the increasing complexities and demands of organisational life. Some ways that this might be achieved are outlined below.

Career development and employability: Job applications, career changing, and demonstrating improvements in workplace performance are all important elements of the human resources development process and organisational development practices. Commonly, accessing promotion opportunities entails reflection upon and presentation of professional achievements. Typically, employees do not engage with universities or academic practices to prepare or substantiate their performance or capability claims. The rigour and scaffolding provided by such approaches could, however, be of benefit since they support deeper reflection and critical analysis and require substantiated evidence of achievements.

For example, many job seekers in Australia will visit Seek or other employment websites to identify new career opportunities. These sites offer career development support and advice as well as access to tertiary education programs. Using appropriate educational technologies, WBL providers could form channel partnerships to develop online resources to assist with portfolio production similar to a more formal Review of Learning unit in a university course. This could be provided informally and on a self-access basis (with no cost to the university beyond initial development), providing job applicants with a free service that helps them better position themselves in the competitive labour market. Such

a module could be offered as a 'free' MOOC, and could reach a far broader market as well as lead to greater participation in formal courses.

Performance management: Similarly, many employers use performance review cycles to evaluate individual employees' work performances, career development needs and potential for promotion. A MOOC-style Review of Learning module could be developed and adapted to support staff performance reviews, which are often poorly resourced and conducted. The embedding of WBL learning reviews could result in greater rigour in the organisational HR processes as well as lead to increased participation in formal courses at a university.

Use of learning technology: During its early development, WBL was heralded as a game-changer in higher education (Boud & Solomon, 2001). Similarly, the use of technology-enhanced learning has been heralded as a game changer but is criticised for not having delivered the prophesied revolution to learning. TContemporary personal learning environments that help learners create more personalised digital 'mashups' and, in turn, customised learning using a variety of digital media and content has been proposed and trialled (Charri et.al. 2010). I believe that opportunities exist to leverage the flexibility of WBL framework models and combine them with more innovative and contemporary use of learning technology that would better facilitate the curation of digital content and possibly new models of learning mediation.

The value of recognition: The Accreditation of Prior and Experiential Learning (APEL) process is one that is sometimes valued differently by employees and work-based learners. During the conduct of the Deakin Market Concept Test, employers often indicated that they considered the APEL process a gratuitous element of the program, useful only to the extent that it accumulated academic credit for employees. The critical value proposition was perceived to be in the conduct of work-based projects. Indeed, the more recent Ducere MBA model mentioned above focusses solely on work-based projects, while the DeakinDigital promotional position makes no mention of the value of 'credentialing' to employers.

How could providers conceive of ways to enhance the perception of the value of APEL to employers? Could the APEL process be engineered or positioned more effectively to foreground and evidence how prior learning can be used in the

present to enhance and extend organisational learning and improve future performance? Could such developments be used to more effectively position work-based learning in the capability, performance planning and knowledge management initiatives of employers and extend the perception of organisational benefit from prior and experiential learning?

Employer evaluation of performance improvement: Evidencing the value of WBL programs to employers is a critical part of the value proposition. This can be a complex, contested and costly process to employers, and approaches to measuring and evaluating performance improvement from WBL vary widely. Reliance for evidence of the organisational contribution often depends on the outputs from the work-based projects, which are only one component of many WBL courses. Other means of making more explicit connections between individual and organisational learning could be explored within the course structure to enable organisations to evaluate and justify their investment in WBL. This was the intention of the Organisational Learning unit that I developed for Deakin but which remains untested. There is an opportunity to explore this aspect of WBL programs as a means of attesting to the value of such programs.

Looking forward to the future

We shall not cease from exploration
And the end of all our exploring
Will be to arrive where we started
And know the place for the first time.

T.S. Eliot (1943)

In 2001, when I was coming to the end of my earlier phase of practice, I grappled with issues such as my professional identity within the academy, and learning not just 'to do' work-based learning according to a set of prescriptions but for it to become the core of my professional identity. I wanted to share with others the lens through which I was now looking at knowledge, work and development and the synergy between professional and academic knowledge that was possible. My challenge was then, and still is to a certain extent, how to translate myself into the worlds of academia and the

professional world in a way that contributed to that synergy. Through this context statement I am coming to see my professional identity as not situated in either one or the other, but at the interface in my role as negotiator and translator.

Perhaps I believed that I should be accepted as a member of both 'cultures' when in fact my professional identity, the one that has emerged, requires me not to be embedded in one or the other but as a conduit of knowledge exchange. Perhaps, in positions such as the newly created role of Professor of Practice that I currently occupy, I will have the opportunity to continue to contribute to this important and emerging space.

References

Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA), *What is a Registered Training Organisation (RTO)?,* viewed January 2015, http://www.asqa.gov.au/about-vet/about-rtos/about-rtos.html.

Barber, M., Donnelly, K. & Rizvi, S. (2013), *An Avalanche is Coming: Higher Education and the Revolution Ahead,* Institute for Public Policy Research, London.

Barnett, R. (2013), Imagining the University: New Studies in Critical Realism and Education, Kobo Edition, Routlege, New York.

Billett, S.R. (2006),' Constituting the workplace curriculum', *Journal of Curriculum Studies,* vol. 38, no. 1, pp. 31–48.

Blackwell, R., D'Souza, C., Taghian, M., Miniard, P. & Engel, J. (2006), *Consumer Behaviour – An Asia Pacific Approach*, Thompson, Melbourne.

Blackmore, J., & Sachs, J. (2007), Performing and Reforming Leaders: Gender, Educational Restructuring, and Organisational Change, State University of New York Press, Albany, New York.

Boud, D. & Solomon, N. (eds) (2001), *Work-based Learning: A New Higher Education?*, Open University Press, Buckinghamshire.

Boud, D., Solomon, N. & Symes, C. (2001), 'New practices for new times', in Boud, D. & Solomon, N. (eds), *Work-based Learning: A New Higher Education?*, Open University Press, Buckinghamshire.

Boud, D. & Symes, C. (2000), 'Learning for real: Work-based education in universities', in Symes, C & McIntyre (eds), *Working Knowledge – The New Vocationalism and Higher Education*, Open University Press, Buckinghamshire.

Bravenboer, D. (2011), 'Maximising employer-responsive progression through organisational development, in Tallantyre, F. & Kettle, J. (eds), *Learning from Experience in Employer Engagement,* The Higher Education Academy, pp. 34–44.

Brinkmann, S. & Tanggaard, L. (2013), 'An epistemology of the hand: Putting pragmatism to work', in Gibbs, P. (ed.), *Learning, Work and Practice: New Understandings,* Springer, Dordrecht.

Cawley, C. (2000), *Innovating Vocational Education and Training*, The Tertiary Education Research Database, NCVER, viewed September 2013, http://www.voced.edu.au/content/ngv%3A23960.

Chatti, M. Agustiawan, M. & Jarke, M. Specht, M. (2010), 'Towards a personal learning environment framework', *International Journal of Virtual and Personal Learning Environments*, vol. 1, no. 4, pp. 66–85.

Confederation of British Industry (CBI) (2013), *New Routes to Higher Skills*, viewed September 2013, http://www.cbi.org.uk/media/2178879/tomorrows_growth.pdf.

Costley, C., Abukari, A. & Little, B. (2008), *Literature Review of Work Based Learning*, The Institute for Work Based Learning, Middlesex University, London.

Costley, C., Elliott, G. & Gibbs, P. (2010), Doing Work Based Research – Approaches to Enquiry for Insider-Researchers, Sage, London.

Cunningham, I., Dawes, G. & Bennett, B. (2004), *The Handbook of Work Based Learning*, Gower, Farnham, Surrey.

Critten, P. (2009), 'Creating a parallel learning organisation: A model for work-based organisational learning', *Proceedings for the Work-based Learning Futures Conference*, Derby, April 2009.

Day, G.S. & Montgomery, D.B. (1983), 'Diagnosing the experience curve', *Journal of Marketing*, vol. 47, Spring, pp. 44–58.

DeakinDigital (2015), viewed June 2015, https://www.deakindigital.com/

DeakinPrime (2014), 'Services', viewed January 2014, http://deakinprime.com/services.

Deakin University (2013), *Live the Future: Agenda 2020*, viewed January 2014, http://www.deakin.edu.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0004/6961/strategic-plan-booklet-print.pdf.

Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR) (2008), *Review of Australian Higher Education*, DEEWR, Canberra.

Department of Employment, Education and Training (DEET) (1988), 'Higher Education: a policy statement, DEET, Canberra.

Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR) (2011), *Review of Funding for Schooling—Final Report*, viewed January 2014, http://www.appa.asn.au/content/gonski-report/Review-of-Funding-for-Schooling-Final-Report-Dec-2011.pdf.

Dhillon, B., Edmonds, T., Felce, A., Minton, A. & Wall, T. (2011), *Making Employer and University Partnerships Work – Accrediting Employer Led Learning*, Libri, Oxfordshire.

D'Souza, C., Taghian, M. & Polonsky, M. (2011), Readings and Cases in Sustainable Marketing – A Strategic Approach to Sustainable Marketing, Tilde University Press, Melbourne.

Eardley, A., Chibelushi, C., Trigg, D., & Borup, R. (2010), 'Work-based learning for enhancing employee skills: Lessons from the literature and practice in a UK HEI', viewed January 2014, http://cesie.org/media/ICERI-2012-WORK-BASED-LEARNING-FOR-ENHANCING-EMPLOYEE-SKILLS_-LESSONS-FROM-THE-LITERATURE-AND-PRACTICE-IN-A-UK-HEI.pdf.

Eliot, T.S. (1943), *Four Quartets*, Harcourt, New York.

Ernst & Young, Australia (Australia) (2012), *The University of the Future: A Thousand Year Old Industry on the Cusp of Profound Change*, viewed September 2013, http://www.ey.com/Publication/vwLUAssets/University_of_the_future/$FILE/University_of_the_future_2012.pdf.

Garnett, J. (2001), 'Work based learning and the intellectual capital of universities and employers', *The Learning Organisation*, vol. 8, no. 2, pp. 78–82.

Garnett, J. (2009), 'Contributing to the intellectual capital of organisations', in Garnett, J., Costley, C. & Workman, B. (eds), *Work Based Learning: Journeys to the Core of Higher Education*, Middlesex University Press, London.

Garnett, J. (2012), 'Authentic work integrated learning', in Hunt, L. & Chalmers, D. (eds), *University Teaching in Focus – A Learning Centred Approach*, ACER Press, Australia.

Garnett J (2014), position paper on transdisciplinarity produced for Middlesex University Work Based Learning Research Centre, Middlesex University, London.

Garnett, J. & Workman, B. (2009), 'The development and implementation of work based learning at Middlesex University', in Garnett, J., Costley, C. & Workman, B.

(eds), *Work Based Learning: Journeys to the Core of Higher Education*, Middlesex University Press, London.

Garrick, J. (1998), Informal Learning in the Workplace – Unmasking Human Resources Development, Routledge, London.

Gibbs, P. (2013), 'Pragmatism, meaning and learning in the workplace', in Gibbs, P. (ed.), *Learning, Work and Practice: New Understandings*, Spring Dordrecht Heidleberg, London.

Gibbs, P. & Costley, C. (2006), 'Work-based learning: Discipline, field or discursive space or what?', *Research in Post-compulsory Education*, vol. 11, no. 3, pp. 341–50.

Gibbs, P. & Garnett, J. (2010), 'Work-based Learning as a field of study', *Research in Post Compulsory Education*, vol. 12, no. 3, pp. 409–21.

Gibbs, P. & Knapp, M. (2002), Marketing Higher and Further Education: An Educator's Guide to Promoting Courses, Departments and Institutions, Kogan Page, London.

Glass, A., Higgins, K. & McGregor, A. (2002), *Delivering Work Based Learning*, Scottish Executive Central Research, Edinburgh.

Gustavs, J. & Clegg, S. (2005), 'Working the knowledge game? Universities and corporate organisations in partnership', *Management Learning*, vol. 36, no. 1, pp. 9–30.

Hagar, P. (2000)*, '*Knowledge that works: Judgement in the university curriculum', in Symes, C. & McIntyre, J. (eds), *Working Knowledge: The New Vocationalism and Higher Education*, Open University Press, Buckinghamshire.

Helyer, R. & Hooker, E. (2007), 'Employer/employee engagement – Who pays?', *Proceedings from the Work-based Learning Conference*, Buxton, April.

Higher Education Academy (HEA) (2008), *Work Based Learning Costing Study*, Higher Education Academy, York.

Houlbrook, M. (2009), The Politics of Work-based Learning: Experiences in the Australian Community Sector, Lambert Academic Press, Koln.

Industry Taskforce on Leadership and Management Skills (ITFLMS) (1995), *Enterprising Nation – Renewing Australia's Managers to meet the Challenges of the Asia-Pacific Century* (Karpin Report), Australian Government Publishing Services, Canberra.

JWT Education (2011), 'Report on the corporate education and training sector in Australia', Report for DeakinPrime, Melbourne.

Kennedy, P. (2011), 'Australians with great knowledge and experience are thwarted when it comes to getting the "right piece of paper" by Australian universities', *The Australian*, 16 November, p. 40.

Kewin, J., Nixon, I., Diamond, A., Haywood, M., Connor, H. & Michael, A. (2011), *Evaluation of the Higher Education Transforming Workforce Development Programme*, Report to HEFCE by CFE Research and Consulting Ltd and the KSA Partnership, Leicester.

Kirkpatrick, J. (2009), *The Kirkpatrick Four Levels: A Fresh Look after 50 Years*, Kirkpatrick Partners, viewed January 2014, http://www.kirkpatrickpartners.com/Portals/0/Resources/Kirkpatrick%20Four%20Levels%20white%20paper.pdf.

Kornecki, J. (2012), 'Strategic, tactical and operational considerations for academia involvement into work based learning – Results from WBLQUAL, an EU Funded Project, *Proceedings of 5th International Conference of Education, Research and Innovations*, Madrid, Spain, 19–21 November, 2012.

Lemanski, T., Mewis, R. & Overton, T. (2011), *An Introduction to Work Based Learning: A Physical Sciences Practice Guide*, The Higher Education Academy, Hull.

Leitch, S. (2006), Leitch Review of Skills: *Prosperity for All in the Global Economy – World Class Skills*, Final Report, viewed August 2013, http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/+/http://www.ukces.org.uk/upload/pdf/2006-12%20LeitchReview1_2.pdf.

Lester, S. & Costley, C. (2010), 'Work-based learning at higher education level: Value, practice and critique', *Studies in Higher Education*, vol. 35, no. 5, pp. 561–75.

Maringe, F. & Giibs, P. (2009), *Marketing Higher Education – Theory and Practice*, Open University Press, Berkshire.

McCracken, P. (2010), 'Legitimising work based learning programmes of study', in Mumford, J. & Roodhouse, S. (eds), *Understanding Work Based Learning*, Gower, Farnham, Surrey.

McLennan, B. (2008), 'Work-integrated learning (WIL) in Australian universities: The challenges of mainstreaming WIL', Paper presented at the Career Development Learning – Maximising the Contribution of Work Integrated Learning to the Student Experience NAGCAS Symposium, Melbourne, viewed March, 2013 http://www.usq.edu.au/resources/nagcasaltcsymposiumprereading120608.pdf.

Meakin, D. & Wall, T. (2012), 'Co-delivered work based learning: Contested ownership and responsibility', *Higher Education Skills and Work Based Learning*, vol. 3, no. 1.

Mills, V. & Whittaker, S. (2001), 'Work based learning in Scottish higher education: Policy and practice', *The Learning Organisation*, vol. 8 no. 2, pp. 64–9.

Minton, A. & Ions, K. (2012), 'Can work-based learning programmes contribute help companies to become learning organisations?', *Higher Education, Skills and Work-based Learning*, vol. 2, no. 1, pp. 22–3.

Mumford, J. & Roodhouse, S. (eds) (2010), *Understanding Work Based Learning*, Gower, Farnham, Surrey.

Nixon, I. (2008), 'Work based learning impact study', The Higher Education Academy, viewed January 2014, http://www.heacademy.ac.uk/assets/was%20York%20-%20delete%20this%20soon/documents/impact_work_based_learning.pdf.

Nixon, I., Smith, K., Stafford, R. & Camm, S. (2006), 'Work-based learning – Illuminating the higher education landscape', The Higher Education Academy, viewed January 2014, http://www.heacademy.ac.uk/assets/was%20York%20-%20delete%20this%20soon/Documents/ourwork/research/wbl_illuminating.pdf.

OECD (Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development) (2014), *Education at a Glance 2014: OECD Indicators*, OECD Publishing, viewed January 2015, http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/eag-2014-en.

Onyx, J. (2001), 'Implementing work based learning for the first time', in Boud, D. – Solomon, N. (eds), *Work-based Learning: A New Higher Education?*, Open University Press, Buckinghamshire.

Otago Polytechnic (2014), viewed January 2014, http://www.op.ac.nz/study/business-tourism-and-it/business/master-of-professional-practice-or-graduate-diploma-in-professional-practice.

Patrick, C. Peach, D & Pocknee, C. (2009), *The WIL Report – A National Scoping Study*, Final Report to the Australian Learning and Teaching Council, retrieved August 2013, http://www.olt.gov.au/resource-wil-work-integrated-learning-griffith-2009.

Pears, I. (2010), 'Universities are not businesses', *Times* Higher Education Supplement, viewed January 2014, http://www.timeshighereducation.co.uk/411032.article.

Perera, N. & Penlington, R. (2012), 'Supporting the attainment of professional attributes in a work-based programme', in *Proceedings of the EE2012: Innovation, Practice and Research in Engineering Education*, Loughborough University, Loughborough, UK.

Porter, M. (1987), 'From competitive advantage to corporate strategy', *Harvard Business Review*, vol. 65, no. 17, p. 43.

Portwood, D. (2001), 'Making it Work Institutionally', in Boud, D. & Solomon, N. (eds), *Work-based Learning: A New Higher Education?*, Open University Press, Buckinghamshire.

Quester, P., McGuiggan, R., McCarthy, E. & Perrault, W. (2001), *Basic Marketing – A Managerial Approach*, 3rd edn, McGraw-Hill, Sydney.

Raelin, J. (2000), Work-based Learning – The New Frontier of Management Development, Prentice Hall, Upper Saddle River, NJ.

Raelin, J. (2008), Work Based Learning: Bridging Knowledge and Action in the Workplace, Wiley, San Francisco.

Raelin, J.A. (2011), 'Work-based learning: How it changes leadership', *Development and Learning Organisations*, vol. 25, pp. 17–20.

Rumsey, D (1996), *First Review of the National Framework for the Recognition of Traaining (NFROT): Final Report, Volume 1*, David Rumsey & Associates Pty Ltd, viewed January 2015, http://www.voced.edu.au/print/content/ngv33266.

Senge, P.M. (1990), The Fifth Discipline: The Art and Practice of The Learning Organization, Doubleday, New York.

Shipley, N. (2001), 'Smart work: What industry needs from partnerships', in Boud, D. & Solomon, N. (eds), *Work-based Learning: A New Higher Education?*, Open University Press, Buckinghamshire.

Slaughter, S. & Leslie, L.L. (1997), *Academic Capitals: Politics, Policy and the Entrepreneurial University,* Johns Hopkins University Press, Baltimore.

Solomon, N. (2001), 'Workplace learning as a cultural technology', *New Directions for Adult and Continuing Education*, no. 92, Winter, pp. 41–51.

Symes, C. & McIntyre, J. (eds) (2000), *Working Knowledge, The New Vocationalism and Higher Education*, Open University Press, Berkshire.

Tallantyre, T. (2010), *University Management of Work Based Learning*, The Higher Education Academy, Heslington, York.

Universities Australia (2014), 'Submission to Senate Committee Inquiry into Higher Education and Research Reform Amendment Bill 2014', Canberra.

Volpe. M, & Chandler. D. (2001), 'Resolving and managing conflicts in academic communities: The emerging role of the "pracademic"', *Negotiation Journal*, vol. 17, no. 3, pp. 245–55,.

Wall, S. & Shankar, I. (2008), 'Adventures in transdisciplinary learning', *Studies in Higher Education*, vol. 33, no. 5, 551–65.

Wikipedia (2014), List of UK Universities updated 12 April 2014, viewed April 2014, http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_universities_in_the_United_Kingdom.

White, T. (2012), 'Employer responsive provision: Workforce development through work based learning', *Higher Education, Skills and Work-based Learning*, vol. 2, no. 1, pp. 6–21.

Wilde, O. (1990 [1890]) 'The Picture of Dorian Gray', in *The Complete Works of Oscar Wilde*, Blitz Editions, Leicester.

Zeithaml, V., Parasuraman, P. & Berry, L. (1990), Delivering Quality Service; Balancing Customer Perceptions and Expectations, Free Press, New York.

Appendix 1

A short biography of formative experiences: Reflections and insights from practical experience

The sections below provide a personal context for the shaping of my beliefs and understanding and how they have played out in my professional inquiry and practice.

Personal insights about the customer

An early career in retail management between the ages of seventeen and twenty-one provided me with practical experience of running a business that honed my commercial orientation towards work. Business development became a part of my 'being' at work. This commercial orientation was further reinforced in successive roles in the UK, including sales representative internships and sales management experience in my mid-twenties. This frontline business development work involved close grassroots interactions with customers. It embedded and reinforced the importance of the cut-through and differentiated value proposition in gaining customers' attention and developing business. This was later to shape my pursuit of improved benefit realisation in the conduct of work-based learning programs.

The way in which I have tested and 'proven' my understanding of consumer needs has been shaped through the acquisition of theoretical knowledge of marketing research techniques and through the practical experiences of applying these in developing education business. This combination of experience and formal learning has been important in shaping what I have come to see as something of a 'litmus test' in the form of three critical questions for interrogating the efficacy of a marketing proposition:

What do you stand for (the supplier)?

What's in it for me (the buyer)?

Why should I get it from you (the competition)?

I have used these seemingly commonsense questions to focus my attention on a range of potentially more complex strategy issues. They have played an important role in directing my own practices in the business of work-based learning and refining the value proposition of meeting the needs of a 'market segment of one'.

Insights about my learning preferences

My earlier academic experience as a student participating in an Ordinary National Diploma in Business was a disengaging and dissatisfying one. At the age of sixteen, the study of statistical methods, double entry accounting, micro-economics and tort, without a practical or contextual backdrop, served to act only as a barrier to my ability to engage and learn. This lack of contextual relevance combined with highly didactic pedagogical practices did little to stimulate my enthusiasm for learning.

By contrast, my early working life delivered some unexpected and positive experiences. Following the award and completion of a management traineeship with A. Preedy & Sons Ltd (now W.H. Smith), a leading retail organisation, I became the youngest appointee to the position of Senior Retail Branch Manager at the age of twenty. This experience was highly motivating and resulted in an enthusiastic engagement with practical workplace and experiential learning. Following a disappointing early engagement in 'academic' learning, the success with which I adapted to a pragmatic and applied learning environment was a catalyst for my later entry into university-level education.

It was this early informal learning in the workplace that inspired me to re-enter formal higher education at the age of twenty-one. My accumulated practical work experience enabled me to relate to formal business studies while at Trent Polytechnic and excel in my studies, winning a scholarship to study at the State University of New York in the USA. This combination of formal study, prior experience and industry placement helped to broaden my outlook and enquiry. It provided theoretical frameworks and constructs that enabled me to build upon earlier work experiences and the confidence to construct better professional understanding and experiment in my work practice.

Insights about values and identity

I come from a family of business people and volunteers. My father was the owner of a successful jewellery business, my mother a British Red Cross volunteer with fifty years of service. My brother and two of my cousins have served as long-term volunteers in Africa and the South Pacific. From an early age I was exposed to the dual influences of commerce and performing 'social good', which impacted and shaped my personal and professional values and career choices I have made.

Despite some early successes up to my mid-twenties, the rewards of the career ladder began to diminish in appeal and importance. The need for personal development and experience led me to postpone my career development in favour of a three-year adventure though Asia, the South Pacific and Australia. It was during this time that chance played a role in my occupational destiny thorough a meeting with two British expatriate English language teachers living in Japan.

One year on I found myself back in Sydney working as a recently qualified English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teacher, fast developing an interest in the international marketing of education. I secured my first education management role in the establishment and marketing of a private business college in local and international markets. This, I discovered, allowed me to combine my interest in marketing with an emerging interest in a fledgling market for private education in Australia. Through this and future work combining social marketing and capacity building in an international development context, I also identified the personal preference for work that delivered on the ideals of 'social good'.

While more of a gradual dawning than an epiphany, it became clear that the potential for my work to contribute meaningfully to the lives of others was to be a key value-driver and motivation for my future career. I began to discover that I could do this by combining my skills in marketing with a developing understanding of the business of education.

Appendix 2

Personal reflections upon preparing a claim for the accreditation of prior and work-based learning

> *Yet, taking in information is only distantly related to real learning. It would be nonsensical to say, 'I just read a great book about bicycle riding – I've now learned that'. Through learning we become able to do something we were never able to do … we re-perceive the world and our relationship to it (Senge 1990).*

Amongst the greatest intrigues of working as a non-academic in an academic environment, is learning how to deal with the copious 'good advice' proffered, at times by learned colleagues, and at others by the vicarious bicycle riders that Mr Senge refers to. On the subject of good advice, the words of Oscar Wilde come to mind:

> *People are often fond of giving away what they need most themselves. It's what I call the depth of generosity (Wilde 1990 [1890], p. 53).*

The value we place on advice of course depends upon the credibility of the source. The latter, arguably, upon the receivers perception of whether the adviser speaks from a position of knowledge and experience. Whilst somewhat cynically expressed, the words of Mr Wilde strike an interesting and resonant chord. My learning so far as a work-based learning student, confirms to me that it is indeed a different experience from undertaking an academic award by coursework. The experience makes me feel a little better equipped to advise others in relation to how they might engage. Unlike some of my academic colleagues at the University of Technology, Sydney (UTS), I do not feel that I would have gained the same understanding from observing at a distance, and then deeming myself able to proffer advice about how to 'do' work-based learning. This thought bears a little further development.

The introduction of work-based learning presents significant challenges to both students and academics, in so far as the underpinning principles are sometimes at odds with values and beliefs that have shaped some of our understanding about further education. These include, for example, views about the legitimacy of knowledge that doesn't clearly align with the wisdom of text books and the changing roles of tertiary institutions and academics in relation to the learner. In the UTS academic community,

there are increasing numbers of individuals who appear to accept the basic tenets of these 'new approaches to learning'. There appears however to be a significant gulf between accepting the rhetoric and platitudes that define and position WBL and the skills and knowledge required of the academic in order to make it succeed in practice.

'Good advice' is an important part of steering the implementation of such innovation at a number of levels. My engagement in this module was intended to provide me with first-hand experience of the challenges of engaging in reflective, work-based learning and apply this to my work role.

Indeed, the practical application of ideas, experiencing first-hand the trials and tribulations of 'doing' work-based learning was a significant incentive for my own engagement is this award with Middlesex University. The appeal of learning how to ride Mr Senge's metaphorical bicycle from my own experience, rather than from observing or hypothesising about the experiences of others, was my primary motivation. A very close and related second, was the initial belief that as a 'practicing bicycle rider', any advice I may feel inclined to offer regarding these programs may be more reliable, and therefore more valued and highly sought. Whilst I remain convinced of the former, I have increasing doubts about the latter since, from my experience, there is little evidence to suggest that practice is generally well regarded amongst academics as a pathway towards legitimate learning.

An intrinsic and common ingredient of different models of work-based learning is the notion that the experience and advice of others (workplace mentors anduniversity advisers.) may in sense ways be integrated with the student's learning experience to augment, contextualise and embed learning. In this context, learning can be differentiated in a number of ways. Two of these might include substantive learning (that relates to established bodies of knowledge normally associated with the traditional role of the university as a knowledge dispensary), and work-based knowledge (the creation of substantive knowledge from tacit knowledge through processes of reflection). Undertaking this module has enabled me to engage first hand in the latter, less familiar realm of learning.

The discourse of work-based learning stresses the academic institution's valuing and acknowledgment of both 'substantive' and 'work-based knowledge', and promotes its equivalent merit and worth. An important part of my personal learning from undertaking this module has been the affirming of this understanding, based in particular on the comparison

between my experiences as a traditional postgraduate student and a work-based learning student. It has also reinforced my understanding of the difficulties facing academics in disengaging from the notion of 'legitimate knowledge' we normally associate with university-based learning. In this more traditional form of knowledge transfer, the merit and worth of learning is usually evaluated in a norm-referenced fashion, as a function of defined inputs and evidence of subsequent student activity emanating from the learning engagement. This contrasts with work-based knowledge that is evaluated in a criterion-based fashion where norms may not be apparent, and effort or activity is subordinate to the value of the outcome in their own right. The following example from my own experience illustrates this point:

> *I have undertaken the role of adviser to a work-based learning student whose award focus has been closely related to the field of marketing, an area in which I have undertaken formal learning, practiced, and taught in a classroom environment. It was clear from my review of the participant's work that considerable achievement in the area had been made, and that the student was able to identify and articulate the learning acquired. The arguments accompanying this students claim for recognition did not use commonly accepted and understood marketing frameworks, but relied more on contextual explanations that I could understand and explain using "marketing language" but the learner could not. My experience is that university academics will often reject such claims for recognition if not explained using the language of the discipline. This of course is usually acquired through tutorial rather than practice. Catch 22.*

In summary, my reasons for engaging in the award and in particular this module, were broad ranging. They included amongst other things:

- The desire to better understand the nature of WBL by doing
- The belief that the value of 'doing' work-based learning would augment my ability to develop and implement new models of WBL at UTS
- The hope that my experience would be valued within the academy

To differing degrees, possibly in descending order, I believe that the process of undertaking this module has achieved these aims.

> *We cannot learn merely by use without reflection, explanation and theorising.*
>
> *– Michael Marland*

Possibly of greatest significance, the process of undertaking this module has provided me with the opportunity to compare traditional master's level education, with a reflective, Work-based model. The value of the experience extends beyond that of better understanding the pedagogical concepts, but more importantly provides me with an understanding of the sometimes less obvious obstacles facing participants.

My decision to engage in the program coincided with UTS's consultations with Middlesex University in 1998. These consultations provided the basis for a headlong dive into modelling a UTS approach to WBL partnerships. From this I subsequently felt I'd had the opportunity to gain a strong understanding of the philosophy and method behind the concept. On reflection, I fell comfortably into the trap that I associate with my vicarious bicycle riding friends at the university. I'd got the hang of it ! From this point I supposed that completing the program would be simply a matter of going through the motions. My involvement in the UTS development would be used as a notepad for my own award.

Identifying in broad terms the award focus and areas of learning was relatively straight forward. Both my recent work history and immediate responsibilities were concerned with the development of educational collaborations with external organisations. It was fairly easy to see a career development leading from a broad sales and marketing background to one focussing on the application of these abilities to education partnerships. What was less apparent at this stage were the likely problems of making a coherent case for the associated learning in a simple fashion.

I finally chose to illustrate a case for each of my areas of claim for APWBL by demonstrating the acquisition of theoretical underpinning, longitudinal practice, and the development of learning illustrated by critical capstone achievements. My approach on reflection has possibly also been simultaneously assisted and impeded by a broad understanding of education, in that it has at times cluttered and over complicated my approach. The initial desire to produce an 'exemplar' which would capture all of the essential elements of a successful claim possibly over-complicated my organising frameworks.

The assumption that my involvement in the development of the UTS approach to WBL would also provide a blueprint for my award, also presented unanticipated road blocks. At the time of my enrolment in the Middlesex award, I was engaged as an external consultant to UTS. Internal pressures required me to decide whether or not I was

willing to join the university as a full time member of staff, which I eventually chose to do. At this point, and following completion of some of the early work I had undertaken to scope my award, it became clear that the 'commercial in confidence' nature of my work would not enable me to use it as evidence of my accomplishment. I therefore had to backtrack and base my claim on learning acquired from my development of the Program in Applied Business, which was considered to be a less sensitive development.

This change of tack in itself presented some issues for me personally, in that I was basically barred from using my more recent achievements in the development of a UTS model of WBL as a basis for the award. In other ways however, it was a fortuitous turn of events as it forced me to focus on the value of learning I had acquired from developing and implementing this evolutionary model of work-based learning. The credit for this development was in any case completely 'owned' by myself.

Having established my 'angle', I was then faced with what I now understand to be the common, but nonetheless problematic, issues of developing my claim:

1. 'This stuff is already in the past' – the fact that in my mind the Program in Applied Business, whilst still operating, represented yesterday's work, did not inspire me to spend significant effort 'navel gazing' and deconstructing what I had done.

2. 'Self-managed and self-directed learning' – the words that I had used time over in relation to the Program in Applied Business and WBL program, proved to be as difficult for me to master as it must be for participant's in my own program. Albeit possibly for different reasons. In my case the problem was emersion. Others appear to struggle more with conceptual issues, my problem was simply maintaining the momentum given that I had too much of the 'same stuff' going on in my life. (This provided me with a real insight into some of the difficulties of progressing through WBL programs which forms the area of enquiry for my work-based project).

3. 'KISS' – keeping it simple and focussed. Whilst addressing the need for appropriate evidence, I struggled to identify in the early stages what learning was important/ significant and what is not. Many of the early notes I made in relation to the learning that I might claim, were deleted because it would be too repetitive and cluttered.

4. 'Going it alone' – the assumption that progressing through this stage of the program in a vacuum wouldn't present a difficulty was erroneous. I now feel that my approach to learning is much better suited to one in which the human contact is offered.

5. Deconstructing significant tasks and achievements and tying in a claim for evidence was not least of the difficulties I faced. The real task was untangling the explicit and tacit knowledge and abilities I had gained and bundling them into bite-sized chunks. How had I really learned how to develop a course? How in particular had I arrived at the point of developing a new (to Australia) framework for an accredited course? Having attempted to describe these, I feel that the areas of learning are adequate to substantiate the claim made, but fall significantly short of drawing on the richness of learning which really underpins the evidence. The problems associated with drawing out and describing learning from experience have become clearer to me.

All in all, what has the value of this exercise been to the 'non-academic' trying to learn to ride the metaphorical bicycle? Without doubt, the value in respect of the first two objectives I outlined above, learning by doing and informing the way in which I engage in developing the UTS approach, has been significant. I have been able to view the WBL process from the perspective of a participant and conceptualise the process in a way which has enabled me to be of practical value to key stakeholders. Most importantly, as Mr Senge suggests, the 'real' learning has been sufficient for me to re-perceive the world of work-based learning, and to a certain extent, my ability to provide 'good advice' about it.

The third aim, hoping that my effort would be valued by the Academy, I remain unsure about. Whilst I do not feel reliant upon this award for establishing personal credentials, I am left with an uneasy impression that the award will still viewed within the institution as 'not as good as a real degree'. This view, if I perceive it correctly, may not be limited to quarters of the UTS academic community. It is a view which disturbs me however when I consider the underlying implications. Whilst I have learned that WBL is a different type of learning experience when compared to conventional qualifications, others still view it as a deficit model of learning because it is unfamiliar, and challenges what we have been led to believe are the characteristics of a 'real degree'. I am also led to understand that in some areas of the Academy, there is a resurgence of the view that the World is really flat after all.

Appendix 3

Growth strategies at Williams Business College

Market penetration

One key element of the growth strategy at Williams Business College was, in part, defensive. Challenges to consumer confidence amidst 'private provider misconduct' and weak regulation presented an opportunity to strengthen the college's premium brand positioning. This was achieved by ensuring that the college's swift alignment with recently introduced protocols and guidelines for provider and program accreditation issued by the newly formed New South Wales Vocational Education and Accreditation Board (VETAB). These formed part of the fledgling National Training Reform Agenda.

This early move to conform to new accreditation requirements was designed to cement the college's brand position as a high-quality provider and establish leadership as an early mover in the new regulatory environment. This was significant as it was by steering the college through the new accreditation processes that I began to engage in academic course development, or 'product development', using marketing parlance. This in turn led me to steer my own professional development to acquire new understanding of the emerging competency-based training (CBT) regimen in Australia (which I acquired initially by attending a number of CBT courses at UTS), and to build a strong working relationship with key stakeholders at the new State regulatory body, VETAB. (I was later invited to join the External Advisory Panel to the NSW VETAB.)

Market development

Two key developments contributed to the doubling of the total student cohort over a three-year period. The first was a campaign to drive enrolments from regional New South Wales. The second was the establishment of a new branch of the college in western Sydney. Both strategies were supported by the use of emerging techniques in geo-demographic market analysis.

Product development

Two new disciplinary areas were added to the college's Administration and Business Studies program, including courses in both travel and tourism and hospitality at an Advanced Certificate level (now Certificate IV). I was also able to negotiate the development of a unique diploma-level extension to these programs for students wishing to complement their study with a series of 'core' business studies modules. The structure approved by the NSW VETAB represented an innovative model under the new course accreditation guidelines and my first attempt to 'push the boundaries' in new product development. It led to the college offering a unique qualification extension opportunity for students and incremental revenues for the college from its existing target cohorts. More importantly, the development was an antecedent of the product innovation that was to follow with the Program in Applied Business.

Appendix 4

Research and development underpinning the Program in Applied Business

Research and development project 1: Desk research into market needs

This research work into the Program in Applied Business centred upon key themes emerging from the Karpin Committee's interim publications, which reported widening gaps between leadership and management skills development and identified challenges for a 'new paradigm of management' in Australia. The themes included:

- developing a positive enterprise culture through education and training
- upgrading vocational education and training and business support
- capitalising on the talents of diversity
- achieving best practice in management development
- reforming management education.

Of more importance to my inquiry, the preliminary reports also provided some insights into the likely features of leadership training and education in this new paradigm. These features would be important in addressing key barriers to participation and included:

- short duration (practitioners are time-poor)
- a focus on enterprise-specific issues (increased relevance)
- incorporation into 'on-the-job' delivery (situated in the workplace)
- flexible scheduling (right time, right place to balance with competing priorities)
- practical focus (real-life application to increase relevance and utility)
- involve peer learning and mentoring (learn from a credible source)
- interactive delivery (move away from passive classroom learning)
- national recognition (portability and accreditation)
- alignment with the national qualifications framework (equivalence of learning).

Based upon this secondary data, which suggested an emerging and latent demand for work-relevant leadership and management development, I conducted further

investigation in New South Wales with a focus on the needs of small and business operators since this was a key theme of the Karpin Committee publications. I consulted with a variety of stakeholders including the NSW Office of Small Business and the Victorian Employers Chamber of Commerce and Industry (VECCI, which was responsible for developing the first set of endorsed competency standards for small business operators in Australia).

This inquiry corroborated the key message relating to the benefits sought and informed my final justification for the program schema and market demand in Attachment 1 of the accreditation submission (Artefact 2) and Attachments 1 and 4 of the Insearch, UTS business case (Artefact 6).

Research and development project 2: Exploratory qualitative study into design possibilities

The first phase of my enquiry enabled me to develop an outline prototype for the program design. In this next stage of enquiry I needed to test new course design ideas and understand what opportunities and constraints were presented for program accreditation under the recently formed NSW Vocational Education and Training Accreditation Board (VETAB) and principles of the National Vocational Training System.

Beginning with a draft diagrammatic schema for a nested suite of vocational business qualifications (see Artefact 1), I based this exploratory study on concept-testing the draft course scheme through in-depth interviews with key stakeholders including the NSW VETAB and the NSW Office of Small Business. These discussions explored the possible dimensions of a program that would expand on a short Continuing Professional Development course offered by the State Government and the capacity to leverage and recognise learning developed in a workplace context within an accredited framework.

The outcome of this exploratory study was a tentative 'green light' from the NSW VETAB for an innovative course concept that incorporated and recognised learning developed in the workplace, as opposed to the classroom, in its structure and nominal duration. At this time in New South Wales, the nominal duration of accredited courses took account only of the classroom hours required to deliver the course. Typically for a diploma for example, these were between 900 and 1200 contact hours. The scheme

for the Program in Applied Business proposed replacing fifty per cent of these class-based hours with with workplace situated learning activities including "workplace application of learning" and mentor liaison. In the case of the Certificate III in Applied Business, workplace learning modalities accounted for up to eighty per cent of the course nominal hours. The recognition of learning acquired through workplace application and practice within the nominal course structure was an important departure from accepted practice by VETAB.

The Proposal for Accreditation was submitted in February 1995, two months ahead of the official release of the Karpin Report in April 1995. The convergence of these critical events led to the approval of the program in May 1995 and the establishment of the PAB as a 'new to market product' innovation (see Artefact 3). This key objective of creating a differentiated 'first-mover' program that could be delivered to practitioner market in a part-time pattern had been met. However, two further issues arose that triggered the need for additional research:

- concerns about the viability of the Williams Business College brand in this new market segment
- quality assurance mechanisms for the proposed new course structure, in particular assuring the efficacy of the learning methodologies and workplace learning component of the course.

Two further areas of work based enquiry ensued, as follows.

Research and development project 3: Commercialisation

While the accreditation process validated the proposed course model, concerns about acceptance of the Williams Business College brand and the likelihood that it would be appropriate to launch a program of this type to the practitioner market arose. This third research project was commissioned by Insearch, UTS and focussed upon further evidence of market demand and a broad business plan for the proposed launch. The research findings are contained within the appendix of Artefact 6 outlining the primary and secondary research undertaken to address this requirement.

Research and development project 4: Supporting effective workplace learning

The recommendations of the VETAB review panel provided for a review of the program within twelve months of its implementation 'so as to ensure that its content and modes of delivery were manageable'. Of particular concern was the quality assurance and management of the workplace learning component of the courses.

The program methodology proposed the use of managed learning tools and support such as learning contracts and workplace mentors. The aim was to achieve deepened and more effective learning outcomes through the application of 'content' acquired in classroom settings.

The inquiry I undertook involved networking with key proponents of mentoring programs emerging in Sydney at that time. Bonnie McKenzie, author of a contemporary publication titled *Friends in High Places* (and whose research is acknowledged in the guide), and Maureen Shelley of the NSW Office of State Development, provided generous support and guidance from their own research and practice in the design and delivery of mentoring programs in New South Wales.