WORK BASED LEARNING

WORK BASED LEARNING PEDAGOGIES AND ACADEMIC DEVELOPMENT

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Work Based Learning
at Middlesex University

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'Work Based Learning Pedagogies and Academic Development'

Carol Costley and Mehmetali Dikerdem

Biographies

Carol Costley is a Professor in Work Based Learning and Associate Dean Research at the Institute for Work Based Learning, Middlesex University. Her principal research interests and publications include examining methodologies and epistemologies in work based learning. She has looked particularly at work based learning as a field of study and how it relates to transdisciplinarity, equity, and access. She has a research interest in the ethical issues involved in practitioner-led research and development projects.

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1. Summary

The research project team examined the pedagogical practices of tutors working on Work Based Learning (WBL) programmes in HE in England and Wales and carried out a series of interviews and an in depth review of the literature on related pedagogies. The findings specify essential knowledge and abilities a tutor should have who is engaged with WBL in HE and offers a practical and informed response to enhance the successful delivery of WBL by preparing staff to act as WBL advisers. It presents a curriculum guide and its findings contribute to the current debates and issues.

Through asking and finding out what WBL pedagogies are and what the rationale underpinning work based learning strategies might be, it takes up the challenge of more traditional knowledge transmission pedagogies in HE and puts forward a reasoned argument for an approach to WBL's academically sound pedagogies, such as the epistemology of practice, and its increasingly pivotal role in the future direction of HE. This is a direction which needs to manage growing complexity through the pursuit of new knowledge, widening participation and collaborating across disciplines and across different domains of professional practice. It requires being proactively engaged with the private and public sectors, professional bodies, communities and various institutions. Most importantly it has to be able to offer purposeful and relevant pedagogies, successful delivery (often on-line) and assessment that continue to raise standards, an emphasis on learner-centred learning and a developing tendency towards transdisciplinarity. The learning strategies of WBL include accreditation of prior learning, learning agreements, practitioner-led projects, critical reflection and research and development methodologies. The approach is based on reflexivity and relevance and on ensuring the availability of advisers who have the knowledge and characteristics to be experts in the epistemology of practice and in learning conversations.

This report will support tutors and workplace advisers of WBL in the development and articulation of their practice through the shared insights, conceptual frameworks and ideas which are contained in this work.

2. Background and aims

This project, undertaken over a 12 month period, January - December 2011, was funded by the *Education Subject Centre advancing learning and teaching in education* (ESCalate), part of the Higher Education Academy (HEA) and was run by Institute for Work Based Learning Research Centre, Middlesex University.

The research was designed to examine the pedagogical practices of tutors working on Work Based Learning (WBL) programmes in HE in England and Wales. Interview data was taken from a geographical spread of Universities (see Appendix A) that have significant WBL programmes, modules or courses.

The research question guiding this study was formulated as:

What are the pedagogies and what is the rationale underpinning work based learning strategies?

The project aims were:

- to examine the pedagogical practices of tutors working on WBL programmes in HE.

- to contribute to the emerging literature on pedagogies

- to address a potential barrier to the successful delivery of programmes in HE, which is the availability of adequately prepared staff to act as advisers.

The research aimed to specify a number of essential knowledges and abilities a tutor should have through a survey of the practices of experiences of learning and advising in HEIs.

WBL has been a growing part of HE provision in the UK and internationally. With roots in adult education, vocational lifelong learning within HE, placement learning, accreditation of non-certificated learning and the prominence increasingly attached to reflection as a pedagogical tool, conceived as some combination of these elements, WBL has increasingly informed higher education practices since the 1990s. There are key surveys which trace the evolution of informed higher education pedagogies and practices which also account for their emergence and increasing currency over the past 20 years. (Brennan and Little 1996, Portwood and Costley 2000, Boud and Solomon 2001, Brennan 2005, O'Connor 2005, Chaney et al 2005, Nixon et al 2006, Brennan et al 2006). Over this period the factors influencing government higher education policies, favouring workplace

related HE pedagogies, have been varied. On the macro-economic level, successive governments have urged the university sector to engage more fully with workforce development to enhance Britain's competitiveness in the global market order. At the sectoral level, successive Labour governments supported the possibilities offered for widening participation, especially for non-traditional students and mature learners by providing part-time and other flexible routes. In the higher education institutional level, this chimed with liberal theories of learner centred pedagogies which privileged independent and situated learning modes through the application of flexible negotiated learning in `fields of study'.

In the ensuing years, this has been shown to provide benefits in terms of engaging with employers (HEFCE 2007) and widening participation particularly among adult learners who would not otherwise engage with HE and in many cases lack formal entry qualifications for study at the relevant level (Stephenson and Saxton 2005, Nixon et al 2008). Successful implementation depends on staff being able to act as facilitators, advisers and expert resources, as opposed to working in a more traditional academic role as discipline-bounded experts (Boud 2001). In many cases it requires a re-evaluation of the traditional and established `knowledge transmission role' of the academic into a combination of roles including coaching, mentoring and formative assessment which recognises the significance of learning that takes place outside the university. Universities engaging in WBL programmes, modules and/or courses therefore work closely with employers, communities, professional bodies and other stakeholders on course development, design and assessment as explained by

Respondent 1

Working with organisations:

> 'We've got modules and we have a preferred route through the programme following certain modules, but we don't have to follow that … we go into the organisation and say, "What's going on here? What's going on in the organisation? And how can we fit what we're doing into what you're trying to do or are doing?" and it's really difficult to explain how you do it, you just "do" it, you know? It's about having a really good understanding of each other's approaches and coming to an agreement about how you're actually going to meet each other's needs in order to meet the workplace targets, objectives and needs and also the academic attainment that students have to meet, and I suppose our modules are designed in such a way that they have generic outcomes, we also develop specific outcomes though for the individual and the organisation as well, so it's an iterative approach, again, it's about looking at something and drilling down and down and down and devising a product that actually meets the needs' (March 2011).

Work based programmes typically employ different structures, approaches and processes from those used in subject-based academic programmes (Helyer 2010). The shared characteristics of these programmes usually include at least one or more of the following curriculum elements:

- accreditation of certificated or experiential learning

- learning agreements including employers as well as learners

- location of learning in the workplace or `work' as the subject of learning

- workplace or professional practice related `applied' projects

The 'curriculum,' although often structured around template and project modules, is largely created by the student from their work activities and agendas, often involving three-way negotiation between student, university and employer. It will typically be grounded in and defined by a context rather than a subject-area or academic discipline. Prior learning claims are generally assessed against the student's overall learning aims, as expressed in a learning agreement or contract, rather than against a predefined field of study. Assessment draws on workplace activity and analysis and reflection upon it and often uses generic criteria in conjunction with the student's own learning objectives.

WBL can occur in variety of forms and in many contexts (Brennan and Little 2006). Higher education programmes implement different models ranging from a degree in work based studies to work placements within a subject-based degree programme. Different models of WBL are defined on the table below showing variables that relate to ownership of the content of the learning experience.

Table 1   Different models of Work Based Learning

Models	Typical attributes
Work based studies degree (for individuals)	Content negotiated by learner, P/T degree programme F/T employment
Degree in cohorts	Content designed with contribution of employer, P/T degree programme F/T employment
Foundation degree	content designed by HE in relation to employer, F/T or P/T degree programme
Sandwich year	Content designed with employer, 1 year F/T work as a part of a degree programme
In-house training (e.g. NVQ)	Short courses to contribute job roles during employment
Conventional degree programme to support work role (e.g. MBA)	Content designed by HE, P/T or evening degree programme F/T employment
Work placement within a programme of study to integrate aspects of professional life to L&T experience	Specific outcomes to be delivered for the programme of study,

This project aims to illuminate the pedagogical practices associated with WBL and contribute to an emerging literature on pedagogies (e.g. Boud and Costley 2007; Rhodes and Shiel 2007). This also responds to the call from Costley, Abukari and Little (2008) for further research on strategies to support a growing number of WBL tutors. Key outcomes of the project are recommendations to guide the induction of staff as tutors and advisers and a complete set of references of WBL pedagogical literature to date. The report extends the work of Boud and Costley (2007) which identified features of advising on projects. It aims to address a potential barrier to the successful delivery of WBL programmes in HE which is the lack of supply of adequately prepared staff to act as WBL advisers (Brennan and Little 2006).

The features of advising on WBL projects identified by Boud and Costley (2007) provided the starting point for the interviews and collection of data for the above purposes. Data has been collected from programmes which demonstrated the following characteristics: learner-managed; learner-focused; academics or work-place tutors acting as adviser rather than as supervisor; negotiation of learning expectations; acknowledgment of the importance of context, and making active judgements.

Below are some of the differences between the delivery of the more traditional `knowledge transmission' pedagogies and the most commonly deployed WBL ones.

Table 2 The advisory role in WBL projects and non – WBL projects: some frequently found differences

WBL	non- WBL
Three-way relationship: often mediated between student, adviser, work supervisor	Direct two-way relationship: student and adviser
Commonly involves parties other than the student, adviser and work supervisor	Less common to involve parties other than the student and adviser
Multi-mode contact	Typically face-to-face
Negotiation of topic and process	May be unilateral
Plan negotiated at start	Plan is more often emergent
Formalised three-way learning agreement	Formalised learning agreement not common
May be assessed by practitioner	Occasionally assessed by practitioners (depends on context of project in course)
Products highly varied, but typically include reflective component	Products conventional academic output: reports, etc, may not include reflective component
Learner is an insider and expert in subject area/context	Supervisor expert in subject area/topic
Adviser expert in frameworks/levels of achievement	Framework/level of achievement pre-defined for student
Adviser expert in epistemology of practice (including linking knowledge)	'Supervisor' expert in epistemology of discipline
Adviser and learner have distinct areas of expertise	'Supervisor' and learner often in relationship of authoritative power

From: Boud, D., and Costley, C. (2007). From project supervision to advising: new conceptions of the practice. *Innovations in Education and Teaching International, 44*(2), 119-130.

The table above, although focused on work-based projects, has wider implications for WBL practices and draws together some of the salient points.

The characteristics of WBL, shown in Table 2, clearly indicate that academic staff (and workplace tutors and mentors) supporting WBL programmes, modules or courses have a role that differs from that of most subject-based tutors in several ways. They need to act as facilitators, advisers and expert resources rather than as teachers (Boud and Costley 2007) and be familiar with using distance learning or on-line processes and technologies. These factors create significant differences in the requirements for inducting WBL tutors and those for inducting other academic staff and require a culture-change for existing staff who become involved in WBL programmes.

In fact some of the shifts in academic practice occasioned by frameworks were noted during the interviews conducted for this research:

Respondent 1

'I don't see myself as the font of all knowledge or the 'guru' of knowledge. More often than not the student has the subject expertise, so my role is to help them think about how to articulate that expertise into academic learning, and most students need the support on the academic side of their work, the writing and the presenting of an essay and how to reference correctly and how to conduct a literature search, how to review literature and critique it. That's perhaps an area that a lot of students aren't so familiar with but they are experts in the workplace' (April 2011).

Nottingham (2011) states that

' [WBL] actually changes the teacher's position, in that instead of you being the font of all knowledge and transmitter of the curriculum, you become a facilitator that enables learners to negotiate and respond to that curriculum in a way that's appropriate to them and in a way that meets the needs of the outside agency…'

Another similar approach:

Respondent 4

'So I would say that the pedagogical basis, because the approach we take is very much a kind of constructivist approach to learning and of self-direction and negotiation and reflection and all of those things, there's a big onus on the learner that the more they put into it the more they will get out of the process, I suppose. So the tutor's role is to support, guide and advise them on their journey...'. (March 2011).

 A very recent and comprehensive analysis undertaken by Paula Nottingham (2011) presents a typology of work based learning perspectives in the higher education system consequent upon pedagogical inflections and indeed differences in the delivery of these programmes. She differentiates between:

- Discipline centred

- Learner-centred

- Employer-centred

Perspectives in delivering work-based programmes in the higher education sector.

The **discipline-centred** perspective focuses on programmes delivered as part of a subject-based discipline and are usually aligned to a disciplinary area. These are to be found especially in the disciplinary areas of health, engineering and education. Curriculum design is more linked to competencies and skills in the workplace through placement and sandwich courses where professional mentors support learning which essentially remains close to the transmission of knowledge models.

In the **learner-centred** approach, the work based learning programme is not specifically located in an academic discipline but uses the workplace as the principal context for learning. The emphasis is on a transdisciplinary framework for knowledge generation, which identifies the generic properties of work and professional practice as the site of education. Central to this strand of WBL pedagogic practice is the tripartite negotiated learning agreement providing, in some cases, a customised or `flexible' curriculum. This approach will typically be grounded in and defined by a context rather than a subject-area or academic discipline. Prior learning claims are generally assessed against the student's overall learning aims, as expressed in a learning agreement or contract, rather than against a predefined field of study. Assessment draws on workplace activity and analysis and reflection upon it, and often uses generic criteria in conjunction with the students' own learning objectives Assessment and accreditation are based on generic learning outcomes which make this approach more suitable for mature learners with considerable experiential learning. Given the latter condition, learner-centred learning can be seen to support the widening participation initiatives taken by successive New Labour administrations (1997-2010).

Another form or inflection taken in higher education according to Nottingham (2011) is the **employer-centred** one underpinned, post-Leitch (2006), in workforce development priorities and closer links between universities and the private sector world of business. In this model, disciplinary knowledge is combined with more business oriented approaches with emphasis on capability based learning using past experience. This relates to the

other perspectives and `re-contextualises' (Evans et al, 2009) or re-purposes these within a workforce development agenda taking in private sector management techniques and discourses in the delivery of the programmes.

The following was suggested by respondent 3:

> 'So the way it normally works is, working with the employer to identify what they want, that's identifying their needs, putting together a bespoke programme around set principles, modules, bringing the learners together, identifying their own particular needs and then we have a module, so most students do a learning contract which sets out what they are going to do and how they're going to do it. In terms of the learning, we have a module, all students do this, it's called 'academic recognition of continuing professional development', and basically what we are saying is that most people are doing CPD but they don't draw that CPD together and reflect on it.' (March 2011).

Nottingham (2011) however notes that there are subtle and interesting differentiations in the practitioners' roles involved in the three models of delivery which she specifies. In the **discipline-centred** perspectives, the practitioner tends to be tied to a particular discipline and is positioned firmly within the university. In some disciplines, notably in health, the role of the professional mentor with strong affiliations to a professional body could also be quite prominent. In the case of the **learner-centred** approaches, the practitioners often start in disciplines but then move on to more generic versions taking on the role of an adviser who is an expert in pedagogy and epistemology of learning rather than disciplinary knowledge. The original discipline could be deployed for structuring learning rather than to develop content-based curricula. The roles of the practitioners in the **employer-centred** perspective are framed by the exigencies of the business context of the learning situation and the workforce development requirements of the organisations concerned. In most cases practitioners have private sector or management experience that equips them for a `recontextualisation' (Evans et al, 2009) of existing HE pedagogy into the workplace. The practice tends to mirror business-related activity, frequently criss-crossing the disciplinary boundaries and those of the work situation.

These developments have prompted a series of reflections on the novel and possibly changing functions of practitioners who design and deliver programmes as well as acting as advocates of this pedagogy within higher education institutions. These often involve dynamic and evolving relationships between peers, in which learners bring specialist knowledge and expertise from their professional contexts and the academics' function evolves into mainly one of knowledge of university quality assurance criteria, knowledge

of academic processes and deep understandings of WBL pedagogies, especially the learning epistemologies involved.

4.   Methodology

'What are the pedagogies and what is the rationale underpinning work based learning strategies?'

In order to answer this research question in an analytical way, an interpretive approach was adapted to guide the collection and analysis of data in the project. During the months of March and April 2011 fourteen semi-structured interviews with WBL academics in various partner institutions were conducted. The interviews were designed as semi-structured in order to open up the space for the interviewees' interpretation and conceptualisation of their experience. The questions were designed to interrogate the personal journey of the interviewee as an academic and his/her engagement with their pedagogical practice/s, through collecting descriptive accounts and exploring the effectiveness and limitations of various strategies in terms of student learning experience and completion of awards (Table 1 above). The interviewees were selected in relation to their expertise in the field and to represent a range of universities that are known to have expertise in the field; Middlesex University, University of Northumbria, Teesside University, University of Chester, University of Derby and Westminster University. The interviews were transcribed.

The interviews and programme documents were analysed in order to map the key teaching, learning and assessment strategies in use in WBL programmes and to examine similarities and differences across universities and WBL programmes. This contributes to providing a better understanding of WBL practices across a broad cross section of universities and programmes in the UK.

The methodology enabled the collection of in depth data from the relatively few experts who have engaged with large groups of work based learners since WBL became a significant approach in UK universities. The analysis of the interview data using the above themes as a starting point provided a more nuanced understanding of the significant elements of learning and teaching associated with WBL practice. The enhanced understanding of WBL pedagogies gained from the project guides the development of a WBL Adviser's module and associated resources for incorporation in Academic Development programmes in HE. (See Section 5).

Another way of collecting data was in the form of organising interactive workshops within various conferences. One of the workshops was conducted during the Research in Learning and Teaching Conference on 13 May 2011. This workshop accommodated

colleagues from both the WBL Institute and other schools including the School of Health and Social Sciences and the School of Arts and Education. Throughout the workshop an overview of the project was presented which was then followed by an exercise relating colleagues' experiences to the frame of the project. At the end, the feedback was written on a flipchart to be analysed. In addition to that, another workshop was organised within the Universities Association for Lifelong Learning WBL network conference on 28th-29th June in Cardiff. The participants of this workshop were WBL experts from various UK universities.

While collecting data in relation to documents and interviews, the open nature of sources was checked and confirmed with the participants. Because of ethical concerns, data that were not consented to by the participant institutions were neither discussed nor included in the analysis.

WBL is a field of study that cuts across subject disciplines therefore there is a wide range of generic literature on WBL as well as some subject discipline-related literature, especially in the field of health and social care. The literature published in subject discipline areas has a synergy with the generic concepts that epitomise the field of WBL e.g. experiential learning, learning contracts, work-based projects and reflective practice. In relation to that, the interviews conducted with WBL tutors also demonstrate that there are some broad themes emerging which are likely to form the key pedagogical practices that relate to WBL.

This project also draws from the literature review of Costley, Abukari and Little (2008) that provides a contextual explanation of WBL with its academic focus taken from high-level practical knowledge and learning in a work-based context. The recognition of knowledge that emanates from work as a source of learning (Eraut et al 1998; Boud and Garrick 1999) positions students in their particular situated context rather than in disciplinary knowledge (though they may also draw on disciplinary knowledge). An analysis of the literature includes conceptual perspectives and findings in relation to key underpinning pedagogic issues. The conceptual perspectives are based on analysis of the literature and researchers' understanding of the views.

Interview data was interpreted in relation to WBL strategies identified and classified drawing from the WBL literature review.

5.   Results

a.   Learning strategies

Both the literature review and the interviews conducted suggest that there are several kinds of learning strategy that are typical of WBL practices and that there are broad philosophical approaches to the role of delivery that differentiates these from the more conventional teacher-student relationships. A generally agreed common denominator suggested by various surveys (Helyer 2010, Garnett et al 2009, Boud and Lee 2009, Boud and Costley 2007, Rhodes and Shiel 2007) suggests that typical strategies involve variations of the following:

i)   Accreditation (APEL)
ii) Planning (Learning agreements/contracts)
iii) Practitioner-led projects
iv) Research methodology
v)   Reflection/reflexivity

i)   Accreditation (APEL)

Accreditation of prior experiential learning (APEL) refers to formal accreditation of learning that counts (or has potential to count) towards the programme itself (Barkatoolah 2000). APEL provides a facility for allowing accumulated experience in work and life to be recognised within higher education and thus provides a significant entry point into higher education. As a generic educational tool, accreditation of previous learning has been around in various forms since the late 1980s under the auspices of the Council for National Academic Awards which stipulated that: `appropriate learning at higher education level, wherever it occurs, provided it can be assessed, can be given credit towards and academic award' (Garnett et al 2004 cited in Helyer 2010).  The increasing acknowledgement of so-called `uncertified learning' in higher education, especially in post-1992 institutions, corresponded with the growth of WBL pathways and the former's consequent elective affinity with WBL programmes.

As Workman writes (in Garnett and Young 2008:78):

APEL is recognised quite widely for entry into higher education, and in some cases provides advanced standing against a given university level award, thus providing the opportunity to shorten formal programmes of study where prior learning is counted as

significant…[At Middlesex University for example] Accreditation of learning from outside Middlesex University is allowed up to two thirds (66%) of an academic award, depending on programme requirements or on core modules which may limit the amount of APEL that can be used.

This also marked a significant shift from a `deficit' model of education with its pre-occupation with that which needs to be known, to one which acknowledges and gives university-level credit to experiential and professional knowledge. In discipline-based taught courses, specific credit usually represents exemption or advanced standing given when there is an acceptable match between an applicant's credentialised prior learning and the requirements of the course usually specified in terms of university entry regulations and academic subject bench-marks. WBL pedagogies facilitate the implementation of more flexible programmes which may include learner-negotiated credit-based awards.   More relaxed rules can be applied to where credit can be granted, provided that this learning is relevant to the proposed award and provides a basis on which the individual learner's programme can be built. One of the key tools in achieving these aims is the use of appropriate levels of systematic reflection on practice and portfolio building which has been extensively used in the past in discipline-based programmes such as nursing and teacher training.

Where WBL is conceptualised as a field of study in its own right, for example in programmes of work based studies, professional studies or modules of WBL that have generic assessment criteria, Garnett (1998) has argued that the idea of specific credit should be replaced by one of focused credit, where prior learning becomes both the starting point and an integral part of the individual WBL programme.This approach to prior learning is more appropriate to the negotiated or transdisciplinary model of learner-centred WBL (Boud 2001).

In WBL practice, informed by transdisciplinary approaches, there is a trend to use the APEL claim as part of the development process itself (Armsby et al 2006; Walsh 2006; Lester 2006). The APEL process can enable work-based learners to become 'map-makers' rather than 'map-readers' (Lester 1999), providing them with the capacities of evaluating past learning in relation to future goals and bringing about an element of self-discovery and self-evaluation, particularly in relation to organising ideas and planning future learning.

Accrediting experiential learning is a process which can greatly enhance opportunities for work-based learners, provided that the expertise in advising and assessing that is required for APEL is present at the HEI. In that context, the internal structure and processes of the

universities could affect the way the accreditation is undertaken, i.e. some universities have separate accreditation boards and some include accreditation in their examination boards.

As Costley and Armsby put it,

> 'whichever way it is done, there has to be an understanding of accreditation processes from the key colleagues involved. APEL also requires expertise in assessment of the claims and related appropriate quality assurance processes which again should be no more exacting than conventional assessment procedures but does require knowledge of APEL processes' (2008: 9).

Similar views are expressed by a number of respondents interviewed for this report:

Respondent 1

'I think that the flexibility negotiated learning brings to the curriculum, I think the opportunities for APEL and manipulation of credits and curriculum to create a coherent whole in terms of created programme is wonderful, and I think that's one of the most positive things I've ever come across in higher education. I think the ability to gain academic credit for what you've learnt genuinely hands on in the workplace and to negotiate a curriculum towards a negotiated award title that's relevant to you is wondrous' (April 2011).

Respondent 5

'I'd like to see more use of APL, because I think we miss a trick there. We do use APL but I think we could use more of it, do it better... I think people perceive it as too complicated to do and it's easier just to put the learners through the learning...The APL is a perception of people that it's difficult and complicated as a process and maybe we need to do a bit more communication around how it works and how it could be done. Actually it could save the academics a lot of time and effort if they do it in a useful way, it means they haven't got to go through a great long process if they can APL them in here then they haven't got to deliver all of this over here' (March 2011).

Respondent 7

'...[T]he rest of the University don't particularly like APEL, don't respect it, and other institutions perhaps don't see it outside of WBL of course, but it's a very valuable things for students. So I think perhaps if we could change our APEL regulations and amend them so we don't have to assess students' written work so much but we can look at the evidence they've collected, providing it's congruent with the level they are studying, so they're not just emptying their filing cabinet with a load of pieces of paper

that don't mean anything, and we're talking about artefacts that they've written themselves' (April 2011).

The acknowledgement of APEL further bolsters learner-centred WBL to investigate further the possibilities afforded by the production of knowledge situated outside the academy. This could be used to `translate' the learning created in the workplace into comparable academic frameworks with the framing of knowledge becoming common  to both the university and the workplace. Portwood (1993) has argued that this could also lead to a more `transformative' approach where the learning outcomes from the workplace could induce organisational change as well as learner enhancement.

ii)   Planning (Learning agreements/contracts)

Learning agreements or contracts have been used in UK HE since 1970s and broadly they refer to 'a formal written agreement between a learner and a supervisor which details what is to be learnt, the resources and strategies available to assist in learning it, what will be produced as evidence of the learning having occurred and how that product will be assessed' (Anderson et al 1998:163).

In WBL contexts, learning contracts may be employed to support work towards predetermined outcomes such as the requirements of a syllabus or competence specification. Osborne et al (1998) describe this type of programme as being particularly valuable in more open curricula where the programme (or a significant part of it) is built around the experience, context and work focus or aspirations of the learner. In the learner-centred versions of WBL, learning contracts or agreements with organisations were used in the design of the curriculum and these aspects of the tuition were negotiated with the learner. Boud, Solomon and Symes (2001) have referred to the partnership where the learner/employee takes on an explicit role in the workplace and that position is supported by the manager/employer role and the academic/academy role. This `tripartite' pedagogy breaks down barriers to learning by workplace professionals by structuring a learning framework and formalising the acceptance that knowledge operates outside the university as an alternative content in HE practice. The new roles for workplace participants are characterised by negotiation and learning contracts, extending the current HE practices to encompass a wider sphere of influence outside the academy.

Respondent 8 stated in this context:

'We've got modules and we have a preferred route through the programme following certain modules, but we don't have to follow that. Those modules follow that process of reflective practice and so we work to those kind of design principles, those curriculum principles of critical reflection, but we go into the organisation and say, "What's going on here? What's going on in the organisation? And how can we fit what we're doing into what you're trying to do or are doing?" and it's really difficult to explain how you do it, you just 'do' it, you know?' (March 2011).

Respondent 4 had a more cautious view:

'[The learning contract] symbolically addresses stakeholder needs, for better and worse, at a superficial level that's what it's supposed to be doing' (April 2011).

Respondent 8 stated that:

'[T]hey have a learning agreement which is updated every year, and that was set up on the document to be a three way relationship, so ideally there'd be us, the company and the student. But more often than not they don't want to tell their employer, for whatever reason, so we could never have it as a compulsory thing, and your employer must be involved because if they were studying to move on or whatever, and it was on an evening if they were paying their own fees, you can't make them tell their employer...' (April 2011).

And further,

'I think it [curriculum design]...works best when it's a joint initiative, but if there's equal input into the curriculum because their ideas are sometimes much better than ours and they are real and cutting edge and it's what they are doing, it's really interesting stuff and it's almost, you don't want to be dragging it down by going, 'Oh but QA say this, and you must say that...' You have got to try and give it the potential to be really great and new and interesting but within a rigorous framework that makes sure that it is HE but in the best way' (April 2011).

Learner characteristics and participation in framing these agreements are also important in so far as whether higher education processes change the relationship of the employee with the organisation or affects how the academy manages interdisciplinary learning and knowledge. These could also involve changes in the role of the academic from

practitioner of a certain discipline to one of a facilitator for workplace learning within an organisation.

Respondent 2

'The main amount of work would be done through the WBL framework, which provides a kind of box of, like a shower framework if you like that Schools can work with employers to fill in whatever way the employer wants, so it might be that they want some specific taught modules as part of that and then when there's a whole raft of generic WBL modules that the curriculum design team can pull off the shelf and put into their programme, so it's kind of pre approved and then they put things in the way that meets the need of the employer, depending on whether they want just a short certificate or a full Degree or Masters Degree, depending on what level they want, and then once they've done that, that goes through an approval process through the School, but there is a panel which I would be on or one of my colleagues would be on, to check that it meets all the criteria' (March 2011).

As WBL has developed it has also changed the role of the academic to more of an 'adviser expert in the epistemology of practice (including linking knowledge) as opposed to the supervisor expert in the epistemology of a discipline' (Boud and Costley 2007).

Respondent 6

'I suppose the tutor and the learner [has the control over curriculum], oh and the employer, it's a three way thing. At different points in different ways, they have control. At the end of the day, the University controls the entire thing because they own the award, it's their award, and they say what happens in terms of times and deadlines and assessments and some of those key planks of any academic programme are determined by the University. But having said that, it would be done in conjunction with, the design will have been done with the employer to make sure that it's what they want, but the ownership rests with the University' (March 2011).

The new roles for workplace participants increasingly involve negotiation and learning contracts, extending the current HE practices to encompass professional practice and workplace activities.

Respondent 3

'It's [curriculum] a partnership. Ultimately we have control over the quality assurance and the rigour. Ultimately we are the standard people. When I develop a programme

I develop it in conjunction with the employer so they'll talk to me, I interpret their needs and they say yes that's good or let's try this and we develop a curriculum like that. From that second, right the way through ... we are continually reviewing it and developing it, continually seeking feedback from the learners, continually looking at our own practice, we're always developing it. So in that respect we've got joint ownership because we listen to everybody's views on it' (March 2011).

iii)   Practitioner-led projects

Work-based projects are a central feature of work based learning programmes at university level (Garnett 2005; Boud and Tennant 2006; Walsh 2006; Boud and Costley 2007; Rhodes and Shiel 2007). Unlike the majority of projects within taught programmes, WBL projects tend to be practitioner-led and typically emerge out of real workplace issues with which the learner is involved; they may be projects that learners are already undertaking or have decided to undertake (Armsby and Costley 2000; Graham and Smith 2002), or in some cases activities that are already complete but can be used as the basis for reflection and further learning (Lester 2007; Chisholm and Davis 2007). The scale of projects involved range from small investigations that can be accommodated in a single module, to major pieces of work that form the basis of doctorates and result in significant organisational or professional change.

In WBL programmes, projects are frequently negotiated between tutor, learner and employer using a learning agreement format (Nixon et al 2006; Stephenson and Saxton 2005). Armsby and Costley (2000) comment that there is often a need to develop learners' 'critical awareness of research issues and practical competence in applying them', which can involve both fine-tuning existing abilities learned as a practitioner (such as co-operation, critique, reflexivity, pragmatism and flexibility) as well as developing new methodologically related capability.

The ongoing relationship between learner and tutor is typically more advisory than supervisory (Boud and Costley 2007), while Moore (2007) adds that this may include providing opportunities to i) construct meaning and new knowledge from practice ii) to inspire and support learners to cope with change and ethical dilemmas and iii) to encourage them to make best use of workplace resources and networking opportunities.

WBL projects typically take the following forms or their combinations:
Research into one's own professional practice with the aim of enhancement or improvement of this through becoming a change agent

Related to the above, and often using action research methodologies, the management of change or introduction of an innovation

Research with the aim of diffusing some innovation to a particular community of practitioners, including contributions to the theoretical underpinnings of a particular professional practice.

Most WBL undergraduate or masters programmes tend to culminate in a professional practice or work-based project.

Respondent 4

'And then their project is a yearlong project and is basically they are the project. It's the write up of their kind of journey for that process, going through. Because originally we used to be able to do it in a year then we went through a period of time when they were putting more and more in terms of the teacher training side and trying to make it as natural as possible meant that they were doing it in the second year when they're out at schools but no one was finishing it off because there were too many pressures there. So now we've managed to squeeze it back into a year by making it as natural to the process as possible. And WBL here are very flexible in terms of, normally people would do programme planning, RAL, and then later would do their project. Well they're doing them all side by side so… They are flexible enough to accommodate things going simultaneously' (April 2011).

Respondent 6

'With the independent work based projects there's presentations and reports, but we're beginning to start looking at other ways of presenting those things in the traditional standard, giving an OHP presentation and typewritten report, because things like using posters instead, to report back what they are doing, so a variety of techniques, videos, as long as the student can actually meet the outcomes of the module' (March 2011).

Stan Lester (2011) has shown that the workplace has become an acknowledged site of knowledge production that can have equal validity with academic and other research-oriented contexts. Investigating practice-based doctoral work (these projects have the same resonance as the lower level WBL projects in that they are research and development projects undertaken by work-based learners) that is based on research and development in the workplace, he demonstrates that real life projects concerned with development and change rather than explicitly with research can be, given intellectual rigour and critical reflection, a powerful source of new knowledge.

The findings from [this] study suggest that there are a number of activity-types that can give rise to workplace knowledge... They can be represented as (A) practice as research...where knowledge is produced from taking a researching approach to the activities that are primarily intended to create development or change; (B) research within practice...where a distinct research activity takes place alongside and closely connected to practice; and (C) research for practice...where research is pursued outside of the immediate practice environment but with the intention of informing it. (p.10)

One of the acknowledged strengths of WBL pedagogies is precisely this focus on workplace or professional practice projects which are frequently designed for real life and real time effects, impact and transformation as well as new knowledge production. The work-based project usually involves a subject-specialist and a specialist or a tutor with both sets of expertise who works side by side with the work-based learner.

iv)   Research Methodology

WBL at university level generally includes some form of workplace or practitioner research, which may take the form of a distinct project or investigation, or be an expansion of an activity that an established practitioner is undertaking in the normal course of his or her work (Costley 2007). From the university's viewpoint this activity is normally conceptualised as 'research', whereas from the practitioner's perspective it may be regarded also as research, or principally as development, or again as practice activity wherein the research dimension is secondary (Lester 2004, Doncaster and Lester 2002).

The methodologies used in work-based or practitioner research are not specifically different to those that might be used in conventional academic research in similar contexts, although there is an understandable tendency to use action-based methods as well as multiple methodologies (Jarvis 1999). Costley and Armsby (2007) list soft systems methodology, case study, ethnography, action research, action learning, and co-operative and appreciative enquiry as widely used approaches.

The nature of the work-based project leads to an approach to research and development as an insider in a work situation which provides the opportunity for developing a real project at work using higher education expertise in research and critical thinking (Costley, Elliot and Gibbs, 2010). There are many aspects to a work-based project that differ from a more conventional project, for example, the researcher is an insider and needs to negotiate a range of ethical issues from an insider perspective such as the subjects of the research and role conflict, access to information etc, and the project will usually have

tangible outcomes that seek to make changes in a work situation so the project dissemination often includes strategies for organisational change which can directly impact on participants in the research.

Bellamy (2008) discusses the way in which undergraduate 'worker-researchers' negotiate their research approach and their research positionality, both in relation to their own place in the workplace hierarchy and in relation to their alignment with the research 'stakeholders'; so, for example, a worker-researcher may be aligned with management in achieving organisational objectives and assume a managerial positionality, or may be aligned with a disenfranchised group (pupils in a school/patients in a hospital) and assume a positionality of empowerment. Bellamy argues that it is through this negotiation of a research positionality that the worker-researcher may best achieve reflexivity.

Respondent 4

'There's a basic content, so in relation to reflective practice we have reflective handbooks and students are expected to engage with it, and so on. But we need a reader to accompany that handbook, which goes into depth, and that's not necessarily made compulsory but that does that work for the student. In terms of practitioner inquiry it's now called, very telling these names, no longer called 'research methods' it's called 'practitioner inquiry', and still more telling...' (April 2011).

As mentioned earlier, in the more **learner-centred** versions of delivery, the function of the adviser increasingly becomes that of an adviser expert in the epistemology of practice including links with knowledge. One of the main functions of the advisory role is to enable the learner to combine her or his `positionality' within an organisation or within a professional context and the learner's `ontological' stance with the epistemologies appropriate for empirically based research and development tasks required by the work-based project activity.

The specificity of work-based or workplace research is the unique position of the learner as both an `insider' worker but with sufficient critical distance of the `outsider' researcher. One of the main functions of the adviser is to enable the learner to critically engage with this dual role and reflect upon the research process itself in a way which will make the choice of methodologies, methods and data collection tools both transparent and relevant to the project activity types involved. The WBL adviser is there to ensure that reflection on practice and theorising this from a `critical stance' meet the appropriate levels of higher education bench marking and does not merely reproduce the technical requirements of the work situation. Also, again as indicated above, where specialist

knowledge is required, subject specific consultants can be introduced to help the learner negotiate real time and real world issues and problems. In the more discipline and employer oriented versions of WBL pedagogies these functions can be united in the person of the academic or alternatively in the workplace professional mentor.

Respondent 9

'I think you don't have to have detailed knowledge of the area you're facilitating. I've got a doctorate [student] at the moment which is one on food hygiene and I know nothing about food hygiene but I'm looking at the WBL abilities that they have, and I am hoping the other examiner will have the food hygiene bit. It does depend on what sort of WBL you're facilitating. If it's negotiated WBL, then you need to know about methodologies because you need to be able to talk to the person about the various approaches that are available. You don't need to know in depth about every single methodology but you do need to know enough about how data is collected in practice based situations. And how robust that data might be, given the circumstances and the situations that the people are in and the things they're trying to achieve. How much is enough data? I think what we're trying to do in negotiated WBL is make people's projects better. They're doing projects they would do anyway, but they're doing them better than they would've done because we're providing them with sort of like consultancy to do improved and better work in their work places; so knowledge of that sort of thing is very useful' (April 2011).

v)   Reflection/reflexivity

Ideas of knowledge being derived from practitioners reflecting on practice have been developed by Schön (1984). The literature that has grown around Schön's formulations argues that what is embodied as knowledge is revealed through reflection and deliberation either in action or after action.

Reflection can also construct shared understandings amid confusing and conflicting conceptions and interpretations of work and context. Groups learn to observe and experiment with their own collective tacit understandings and established processes-in-action. Action is called upon to bring the individual's and group's mental models, often untested and unexamined, into consciousness. It is a form of 'reflection-in-action', which attempts to discover how and what was contributed to an unexpected or expected outcome, taking into account the interplay between theory and practice. For example,

Respondent 7

'The key [characteristics of] to me are recognising the workplace as a site of knowledge and understanding that the workplace is a site of learning and how to reflect on that knowledge in learning in order to change practice, or in order to understand what you're doing to make it better, to understand your development. There are huge aspects there of appreciative enquiry and the students that come to us quite often say, 'I've never written an academic essay, I don't think I'm capable of doing this', and yet when we go through the first module with them, the self review module, reflective module, it's very clear that they've got a huge amount of experience and a huge amount of skill, and yet they've never thought that they have had, they've always thought that academia is out of their reach, and so this is a brilliant course for the people like that' (April 2011).

The work of Boud (2006, 2010) specifically focuses on the relevance of reflection to learning that occurs in the workplace. Boud has been writing on reflection and the formal WBL of professional courses since 1998 when he pointed out that if the challenging nature of reflection is poorly understood by teachers and just equated with thinking, it may become 'domesticated' and fail to lead to real questioning of experience by students. He also argues that course developers need to recognise that reflective activities must be used flexibly, since the social and cultural context in which they occur will influence the kinds of reflection that are possible.

In *Productive Reflection at Work* (2006) Boud and colleagues focus on reflection and informal learning at work and develop earlier ideas about the importance of social context. They suggest a new role for reflection in the context of organisational productivity. Opportunities for informal and collective reflection are created by the current trends towards organisational de-layering and devolving of management responsibilities to teams in the effort to remain sustainable. Conditions for effective collaborative reflection are discussed, such as the need for the workplace to be structurally designed to support reflective learning and also, in contrast, that un-designed, informal spaces are also made available, where group reflection through spontaneous dialogue can occur. An ethical dimension to reflection is also stressed, with discussion of the development of capacity for reflection as a means for the workforce to make sense of work and, by giving it meaning, contribute to organisational sustainability and excellence. These ideas are reinforced by many of the respondents, for example,

Respondent 6

'We're trying to get the learners from a starting point to a finishing point where they're autonomous, independent learners able to command and control their own knowledge, if you like. Who are reflective practitioners and can analyse their practice, that of others, so on and so forth' (March 2011).

Moon (2004), building on her earlier work in this area, provides a 'handbook' of reflective activities that can be incorporated into formal educational programmes. This practical focus is preceded by a discussion of reflection as an aspect of experiential learning. It is this that makes the book relevant to work based learning. She argues that both reflection and experiential learning are relatively unmediated by teachers (in the sense that they do not rely on a formal taught curriculum), and thus their value extends beyond formal learning into the kinds of self-managed continuing professional development that may occur in the workplace.

Fook (2006, 2010) offers a definition of reflection that highlights its relation to social context: 'the ability to understand the social dimensions and political functions of experience and meaning making and the ability to apply this understanding in working in social contexts'. This position clearly aligns with Boud's work and confirms there is now a new focus on reflection as a collective activity. Respondent 5 below articulates the wide range of reflection expected from work-based learners.

Respondent 5

'We're assessing the articulation of their knowledge, their articulation of their reflective skill, their critical reflection, their critical analysis, their understanding of self and their context, their synthesis of a range of ideas, theories, and their engagement with published sources, and public discourses rather than just referring to what level, have they engaged with them, have they argued with them?' (April 2011).

Divergent conceptions of reflection make it difficult to research and develop the concept systematically and this in turn can reduce the contribution that studies of reflection can make to theories of work based learning.

Kolb's experiential learning cycle (1984), with its 'reflective observation' stage, and Schön's notion of the reflective practitioner (1987) were the most frequently drawn on texts.

Respondents noted that reflection is not an add-on to enhance learning by helping practitioners make meaning out of experience, but key to structuring continuous professional development. A lack of understanding about what reflection is can lead to it being required of learners too early in their learning. It is not sufficient for learners to be told about the value of reflection if they are unable to turn this knowledge into practice. Practitioners and course developers need to support the growth of learners' capabilities to reflect.

Respondents provided examples of how reflection can be embedded in WBL programmes using group rather than individual activities.
The use of reflection as a pedagogic tool remains a contested yet important area of pedagogical consideration in WBL. Papers that explore this, by describing the embedding of reflective activities in WBL programmes of study, also illustrated the range of discipline areas in which it is deployed. Graham et al (2006), along with Nikolou-Walker and Garnett (2004), provide details of the use of reflection in generic work-based programmes and concurs with many of the respondents.

Respondent 7
   'Students are asked to do some form or reflective commentary on their CPD, they have to demonstrate to us what CPD they've done and they've got to demonstrate that by providing evidence of what they've done, and the amount of time they've undertaken, it might be a portfolio with a reflective element to it, and we can use different tools there; it might be a single reflective summary or it could be using a learning journal or it could be a critical log or it could be a combination of all of those things' (March 2011).

Respondent 2
   'The modules follow the process of reflective practice and so we work to those kind of design principles, those curriculum principles of critical reflection ' (March 2011).

There have been more developments in thinking about reflective practices that are critical of education processes that focus solely on the individual and their reflection of self. In Bradbury et al's (2010) *Beyond Reflective Practice: New Approaches to Professional Lifelong Learning*, a strong critique is made of some current practices.
Beyond reflection would be critical reflexive practice that incorporates the social context of reflection – both its relevance to organisational learning and its practical educational use in group settings.

There is a lack of consensus about reflection and of theorising about it which is likely to affect the effectiveness of its application. Since reflection is now applied widely in WBL, these are both important considerations for future work in the area.

b.   Workplace mentors, tutors and assessors

It is fairly common to find mentors and even tutors and assessors taking part in the learning and teaching of WBL as they are often key in pedagogical approaches to WBL; what perspectives might there be about more employer/ professional influence on pedagogy?

One of the sample universities organises a specific award ('Supporting WBL' 60 credits at Level 6) for their partner tutors who are based in organisations and contribute to the learning and teaching on their accredited programmes. The respondent (15) states that the best people that academics can learn from are the partner tutors. However because the partner tutors do not have such in depth pedagogical understanding or experience in HE teaching, there is a need to build up their confidence.

They are trained in preparing students for assessment and supporting students on the University's programmes and they are introduces to an understanding of the ethos of WBL in HE The university does not tell them how to teach, it is more of an activity based training- from delivery to facilitation. Information is provided which acts as an enabler for students to find things out for themselves and take responsibility for their own learning, supporting them as they reflect and investigate further. It creates a support framework and mechanism to individuals and gets them access to resources to provide an independent culture of learning. People from 6-7 different companies participate, learning from each other, sharing experience and ideas, engaging with peer support from the trainers thus providing a virtual community of practice developed on-line and by e-mail. They develop a portfolio in which they reflect on each session and activity and say what they learned- discussion, recommendations, what action will be taken next. A summary reflection is written at the end.

This respondent found that timing needs to be flexible for the workplace tutors. The curriculum is based on FHEQ subject benchmarks and needs to be fit for purpose.

c.   The implications of practices for the role of the adviser

Both as an outcome of the literature review and the interviews conducted confirmed that the WBL academics require characteristics in relation to their pedagogical practices. It has repeatedly occurred during the interviews that the academics would consider themselves as facilitators instead of teachers and they acknowledge the experiential learning and expertise of the learner whom they are guiding.

Respondent 1

'A facilitator, a coach, in a coaching environment so what I encourage the student to do is ask questions of themselves and to come up with the answers for themselves. I don't see myself as the font of all knowledge or the 'guru' of knowledge. More often than not the student is the subject expertise, so my role is to help them think about how to articulate that expertise into academic learning, and most students need the support on the academic side of their work, the writing and the presenting of an essay and how to reference correctly and how to conduct a literature search, how to review literature and critique it. That's perhaps an area that a lot of students aren't so familiar with but they are experts in the workplace' (April 2011).

Respondent 4

'I would say that the pedagogical basis, because the approach we take is very much a kind of constructivist approach to learning and of self-direction and negotiation and reflection and all of those things, there's a big onus on the learner that the more they put into it the more they will get out of the process, I suppose. So the tutor's role is to support, guide and advise them on their journey... at the start would be to explain the whole process and methodology and how it all works, to make sure they understand that you are their first point of contact for queries etc. and any questions, make sure that you've got clear communication channels and how the thing is set up, depending upon... Some of the courses, the way we run it is we have group sessions every so often that everybody attends, others it's much more individual or it's done as an online thing. To help them to identify the scope of any work based project, what they are going to do, is a key part of the tutor's role, advise them on how they're going to go about it, developing the methodology' (March 2011).

Respondent 2

'I wouldn't describe them as pedagogical relationships. I would describe them as "andragogical" relationships in the sense that they are adult learners in the workplace..." (April 2011).

The features specific to WBL mean that academics involved in work-based programmes have a role that differs from that of most subject-based tutors in several ways. They need to act as facilitators, advisers and expert resources rather more than as teachers and be familiar with using the processes and strategies associated with WBL.

Respondent 4

'[I consider myself] as a facilitator. We do stand up and talk to groups, teach, but obviously it's about working with either individuals or groups of learners to develop their learning, learning programmes, and then working with them to work through those' (March 2011).

The constituents of the conceptual knowledge and skill base needed for advising in WBL includes knowledge of work and context, learning consultancy, transdisciplinarity, enquiry, reflexivity and reviewing, and WBL learning strategies.

These factors create significant differences in the requirements for inducting WBL tutors and those for inducting other academic staff, and require a culture-change for existing staff who become involved in WBL programmes.

A better understanding of the pedagogical practices in use in WBL programmes, the underlying rationale/s for these practices and how these practices are similar to/differ from more traditional academic programmes will provide the basis for the development of guidelines and resources for new and existing HE staff working in the field of WBL. Recent on going research at the Institute for Work Based Learning into doctoral level academic advisers reflecting on their own practices produced similar thinking on co-creation of knowledge, transdisciplinarity and learning conversations between student and adviser. An example of one such reflection is included in Appendix b demonstrating the usefulness such a reflection exercise might have on the inducting of WBL advisers.

The findings in the analysis of the interviews show that WBL requires a reflective and evaluative approach which involves analytic and theoretical reasoning (see Appendix B). Advisers need knowledge of reflective practice, for example Schön (1976); reflexivity about one's own learning; and the effects of personal learning history (one's own and others') on current conceptualisation and practice. These kinds of abilities involve strategies and practices for noticing, recording, interpreting and representing development of peer learning strategies (face-to-face and electronic to support learning and aid reflection). They involve knowledge of self-assessment frameworks; forms of documenting and presenting learning outcomes; levels and standards of achievement; and ways of operationalising them and relating them to learning outcomes.

There has been a move away from conventionally located disciplinary student work towards highly contextualised tasks that relate to the needs of learners and engage with the external world.

The change in role of the academic adviser has not occurred solely because of new contexts but because of a growing awareness of the contributions that academic advisers can make. Part of the change in role includes a shift from dependence on single supervision to accessing wider and distributed sources of support. As such there has been a decentring of the role of adviser, but there is still a fundamental role that has more emphasis on the total environment in which the learner is engaged and the holistic nature of their learning experiences. To this end advisers need to have the awareness of a range of working contexts and cultures and ensure that their advisees have the preparation, resources and self-monitoring strategies they need. Advisory practices also vary greatly from the minimal, i.e. initial meeting and final marking of the completed product, to the extended, i.e. regular meetings throughout the period.

A work-based epistemology is the basis for the field of work based learning in higher education. This includes a framework of values that does not encourage conformity to rigid systems or to restrict the individual's freedom to represent working knowledge in relation to the context within which it is understood. Advisers are able to utilise the provision in higher education that can interrupt dominant value systems and practices by making available conceptual and cognitive tools that both question and provide alternatives. A framework of reflexive practice and a genealogy of work, for example, serve to contextualise the contingent and discursive nature of work. Advisers, in their teams and in the dissemination of their practice need to continually challenge their own practices and judgements.

The adviser is not a passive agent and can work alongside the student to develop rather than divert students' understanding. WBL provides the possibilities to build on existing abilities and involve the active deployment and development of critical and reflective abilities initiated whilst doing work. Learners can be enabled to start their academic study from a position of current understanding; they represent themselves and their own learning, and take responsibility for the knowledge content and how it is formulated. The process can be confirmatory to a sense of self and be personally and professionally developmental. It is only by continuous consciousness-raising of the range of possibilities and contexts of learning that we can attempt to articulate a good design of the process.

It is not only a change in the specific tasks that advisers must perform or knowledge they need to have that is changing; power relationships within the student/adviser dynamic in all kinds of WBL have long been an important concept. The power dynamic between adviser and student becomes more balanced, or perhaps less imbalanced when each offers expertise about the shaping of the work. Advisers who are used to being 'the expert' or 'the professional consultant' may have difficulty in changing to this different role.

The expertise of the role of adviser is one that is an extension of the traditional academic role – this expertise in higher education is one that differentiates and adds to the role of the academic/learning professional within a HE context – this expertise often come from the experience of working with HE and industry/workplace partners but it can also come from acquiring learning about this form of education and delivery (through taught programs e.g. a PGCHE)

University structures themselves may not always be conducive to treating students as experts, independent learners or workers who enter the university with knowledge status. Academic cultures, often through the power of the disciplines, reflect social inequalities of power that work to maintain and reinforce inequalities through academic practices. Knowledge, that appears for example in work-based projects and is sometimes contested (Garrick and Rhodes 1998, Usher and Solomon 1999), is an important aspect of power. Subjugation of knowledge through the now often hidden hierarchies contained in assumptions around class, race and gender (Hammick and Acker 1998) is still prevalent in changing forms. These are some of the many ways in which the higher education system is bound up with power relations giving cause to inevitable power relationships between adviser and learner. In whatever way differing contexts of learning create change or attempts are made to democratise the work-based learner/adviser relationship, the academy still gives the grades and remains the final arbiter of knowledge claims. Advisers are still able to impact on the construction of meaning of academic work. One reason for this is that the interpretation of any text is not objective or true but one of a plurality of interpretations, constrained by discursive and material positioning of both student and adviser (Lea and Street 1998) and this remains the case whatever the context for learning.

The creation of a rich and supportive learning environment within which students can manage their own learning, draw support from others and access the resources they need, can provide much of the pedagogical support required for WBL. The adviser continues to play a vital but changed role that demands a wider more complex set of abilities and who can ultimately identify when it is not being effective and act on this observation.

There is a necessity to rethink learning and teaching practices. Academic advisers now find themselves subject to new educational and vocational expectations where they are dealing with a re-appraisal of their role alongside a reduction in the resources available for each student.

A better understanding of the pedagogical practices in use in WBL programmes, the underlying rationale/s for these practices and how these practices are similar to/differ from more traditional academic programmes will provide the basis for the development of guidelines and resources for new and existing HE staff working in the field of WBL.

The conception of the role of academic and professional advisers in WBL needs to change from one focused on teacher and supervisor to one of learning adviser. The activities in which they engage need to be reappraised and the skills and knowledge of those acting in an advisory role need to be extended.

d. An approach to issues of ethics in WBL that prioritise values and utility

The interviews revealed that the field of Work Based Learning approaches knowledge in professional practice contexts and that there are values implicit in learning through work. Knowledge generated from practice may change values embedded in higher education. There needs to be a fuller understanding of the kinds and types of knowledge that are recognised by academia and to diversify the criteria by which this knowledge is legitimised.

Work and learning takes place in multiple and contrasting sites where knowledge is often shared, co-produced and created through professional practice. The pedagogic field of WBL engages practice situations where knowledge production tends to be driven by 'real world' and `real time' imperatives. The focus on professional knowledge plays a more central role in WBL in contrast to the more conventional university subject-based courses. In WBL, priority is clearly given to the nature and content of professional knowledge, whereas this may have a sliding scale of importance in the more standard university programmes.

As higher education engages more with the spheres of work practices and adopts broader epistemologies to take curriculum areas like WBL into account, a more detailed assessment of the relationships between teaching and learning is required. For example, WBL discourses use a variety of inscriptive practices or, simply put, ways of writing and recording such as accreditation of professional knowledge as well as academic knowledge

(Armsby et al 2006). Professional practice presents sites of learning and knowledge production outside the defined spaces of academia with its demarcated subject areas. This requires new pedagogies of teaching and learning as well as the uses of generic criteria (Costley and Armsby 2006) to assess the quality of work-related outputs, including new knowledge.

Such positioning of WBL raises the issue of core values of higher education because the outcomes of WBL are regarded as purposeful and useful to specific practice contexts and of concern to the more 'social', vocationally oriented knowledge that also incorporates utilitarian demands This has meant the arrival of new players on the higher educational terrain such as work based learners with new interests in the generation of and conceptions about the definition and relevance of `knowledge'. The approach and attitude of academic authority in relation to these different, more professionally focused interests and values can vary within different university programmes.

From one perspective, the value of such a 'social ability' that has more purposeful ends generated by WBL strategies can be seen as an alternative or an addition to the 'cultural' value of academic autonomy which aspires to seek truth for its own sake. WBL pedagogies can thus facilitate new knowledge alliances with differing interests often connected to work contexts and can therefore have 'values' implications that may change the rank order of established values in academia.

Within the WBL field, practitioners from the student body (and sometimes university tutors) can form connections through non-academic partnerships, personal and professional relationships, economic imperatives and other factors that are based on practical or common knowledge conceptions. This is a view which prioritises professional practice and concerns itself with questions of the purpose and consequences of knowledge rather than simply knowledge itself. The identification of values becomes paramount because there is always an immediate engagement with the views and needs of others within work and professional contexts.

Bleiklie and Byrkjeflot (2002) use the term 'utility oriented knowledge' to identify that the more conventional scientific approach involves truth and merit, whilst a socially responsible approach veers more towards ethics that prioritise the principles of values and utility. Thus, whilst knowledge production can be argued as being led by a relationship between meaning and truth, the knowledge application that is crucial for WBL programmes centres more around values and utility. A move away from the prime ethical concern being that of truth and merit towards values and utility has implications that change the rank order of established ethics in academia. This arises because of the

widening concept of knowledge in WBL which is centred in a professional/ community context and how it is purposive to specific practice contexts which are more socially and vocationally oriented. Consequently the values and utility inherent in WBL come in addition to the 'culture' of academic knowledge seeking 'truth' for its own sake.

A wider concept of the knowledge sphere as considered in WBL may reflexively engage with academic and socially responsible principles. Values that may be accruing to the WBL field have been found to be in issues around 'power', 'politics', `trust', `gratitude' and `care' (Costley et al 2010 chapters 3, 4 and 5, Gibbs 2009).

Challenges have been made to this wider concept of knowledge, doubting for example any knowledge production that does not align itself easily within a subject discipline which, it is argued, brings with it conventional assurances of depth and rigour. Another objection has been how, in the context of Mode-2 knowledge (Nowotny et al 2001), with its breakdown of traditional notions of objectivity and validity, can knowledge be said to have a sound epistemological basis and be reliable. Yet another concern is that changes in the so called `knowledge economy' are behind the changes to more professionally oriented degrees which are more about enterprise than education (Tennant 2004). This, it is argued, results in discourses from a business-oriented focus influencing WBL in a way that prioritises entrepreneurial success over more worthy attributes and leads to an instrumentalist discourse which blocks the in-built criticality of the academic knowledge production process.

These concerns need to be addressed whilst the wider knowledge connections and the values that emerge through WBL pedagogies, themselves arise from a multiplicity of contexts and approaches located outside the university. The traditional practice of teaching a body of knowledge that is then learned becomes only a small proportion of the value that can be shared between universities and various communities and individuals. WBL seeks to incorporate the knowledge of professional contexts informed by a more wide-ranging knowledge of the area. This engagement creates differing sets of values with differing priorities which contribute to knowledge production and application. It enhances rather than reduces social ability and contributes to knowledge from which everyone can benefit.

The findings in relation to the ethical consideration in WBL pedagogies suggest that such a widening concept of knowledge is put into a professional context and that WBL provides a way of addressing knowledge that is to an extent outside of disciplinary cultures and can offer a fresh view of values that has resonance with practice and engages higher education more coherently with learning at work.

e.   Critique of Work Based Learning

The past twenty years has not been 'plain sailing' for the advocates of WBL in higher education. There have been a number of institutional, pedagogical and ideological objections to the practices of WBL in HE and their theoretical. For the sake of convenience, these criticisms can be categorised under a number of overlapping headings. A first and foremost resistance to WBL has come from some groups of traditionally research-based universities which have remained suspicious both of the learning and knowledge claims of WBL pedagogies. This *institutional resistance* has been mainly due to what Nottingham (2011:121) refers to as ' "tribal" behaviour' displayed by discipline-based academics who guard their modes of knowledge creation and study. WBL, with its APEL and widening participation orientations, is sometimes seen by discipline-based academics as an easy way to enter higher education and an equally convenient way to acquire a degree. This can sometimes be understood as diluting the knowledge creating functions of higher education with what could at most be regarded as competence training.

Other institutional issues relate what is asserted to be the labour-intensive support required from the universities for WBL because of the need for a flexible curriculum structure, the multiplicity of boards for accreditation purposes and the added strains put on university administrations because of the requirements of the `non-standard' programmes and adult learners usually located in workplaces. WBL systems are seen as being too complicated and demanding since many courses designed for mature students call for more support for the learner's autonomous learning rather than the traditional didactic model of teaching as knowledge transmission. Furthermore, it can be argued that an individualised approach to WBL can make its delivery by advisers more expensive than the cohort approach adopted to deal with the massification of HE although, more recently, e-learning technologies have tended to counteract this charge by urging individuals as well as cohorts of learners to use virtual learning environments to a greater degree (Costley and Armsby, 2008).

Conversely, there have been accusations of WBL being used primarily for remunerative purposes, with practitioners selling their services for financial gain and thus willingly shedding their identities as academics or, alternatively, allowing non-academics running these programmes into the academy through the back door as advisers, support staff and in other capacities generating practices which could prove deeply unsettling for academia, challenging its authenticity and integrity (Gustavs and Clegg 2005).

This juxtaposition of `education' and `skills' also pertains to the wider pedagogical implications of locating learning in the work process or the workplace. Raelin (2008) for example writes that WBL in higher education can be seen as a management tool that displays critical elements such as workplace learning in the midst of daily work processes, knowledge creation and utilisation as a team activity in an organisation, and the generation of competences and aptitudes that would result in better and more productive practices. This can be regarded as an *instrumentalist* view of the nature of WBL in which the three-way partnerships between learners, the university and organisations can become problematic in that much of the individual and organisational learning is concerned with acquiring certain categories of market-led skills, competences and capabilities leading possibly to a crude vocationalism.

As one academic points out:

Respondent 3

'So at the beginning there was very much this feeling of, again, the democratisation of higher education, empowerment, access, widening participation, all of that, and that was part of the New Labour manifesto, and the reason I'm talking about New Labour is because I think the changes had come in response to government edicts and policy and thinking. So New Labour came in with this plan and that was exciting, and as they stayed in term longer, the plan shifted through a series of policies really from a kind of widening participation for the individual, if you like, to more engagement with employers. And so I think what was behind it was that New Labour began to see education as its main economic policy, so that whole campaign of education, education, education, I don't know whether it was 2004, 2005, and kind of saw people as a sort of human resource, human capital, that kind of thing and so it ploughed a lot of energy, policy and funding into education, into schooling and higher education. And what that meant for work based learning, there was a series of bids, policies followed up by bids, that were inviting Universities to take a more employer facing orientation.'

The critiques of instrumentalism being potentially embedded in WBL can be taken further to challenge the *knowledge claims* of WBL pedagogies. Given the key role attributed to `reflection' and reflective practices, it can be suggested that these do not necessarily create new or different knowledges but can at best create certain situational insights. One of the biggest criticisms of the use of `reflective' strategies in work based learning programmes is that they are primarily designed to assist worker/learners to gain accreditation/recognition for their existing knowledge, rather than to support them to generate `new' knowledge (Nottingham 2011:54).

A set of more cutting criticisms relate to the lack in WBL of subject discipline-specific content which is then taken further to challenge if WBL pedagogies do actually create new forms of knowledge. The status of the experience gathered in work situations is frequently challenged by discipline-based epistemologies, established processes and academic paradigms (Armsby, Costley and Garnett 2006). These challenge the `transdisciplinarity' claims of the newer versions of WBL.  If work-based projects are defined by their pre-given ends (usually involving employers as part of the tri-partite agreement), it is then no more than finding ways of adopting means to these ends. This cannot be called `theoretical' because there is no theoretical object of knowledge as such and what is produced is a lower order of knowledge which is instrumental, a spontaneous by-product of technical activity. Politically, this could make WBL vulnerable to `technical practice' in the service of the existing economic order because of the embeddedness of WBL projects in proceduralised corporate governance under conditions of the financialised capitalist markets. Many academics remain sceptical about transdisciplinarity and cannot find the depth of substantive knowledge to satisfy their expectations.

It can however be argued in favour of WBL pedagogies that the transdisciplinary nature of WBL is based on certified QAA and HEFCE generic assessment criteria that do not require knowledge of a particular subject or body of knowledge that is necessarily held in a discipline. The abilities of the work-based learner are often judged upon broad, generic criteria that are directly related to practical, real world outcomes. This approach is gradually finding acceptance in university practices, and one of the key bottlenecks for its further dissemination has been the limited supply of properly equipped academics who can assess across disciplines and across professional roles. Also Foucault's conception of `subjugated knowledges' can be deployed to argue that the APEL process liberates these and puts them into circulation in academic discourse, saving them from marginalisation in mainstream academia and thereby also expanding our understanding of epistemology beyond the rigid discipline boundaries populating traditional academia. This can be seen as transforming the production, validation and communication of knowledge and re-conceptualising the meaning of learning (Seibert and Mills 2007).

5.   Outputs

a.   Curriculum Guide

An example Post Graduate Certificate in Higher Education – Teaching and Supporting Learning with Work Based Learning Guide.

The report and recommendations have been used to inform the development of a WBL Adviser PGCert at postgraduate level. The credits can be used towards a graduate diploma or masters degrees. The PGCert in part, mirrors WBL pedagogical processes so that tutors experience reflection in practice, identification of previous learning, negotiating, using and reflecting on work-based evidence. The PGCert can be used for the induction of new staff as well as the continuing professional development of existing staff. It is anticipated that the PGCert may be of interest to learning and development professionals working in private, public and community sectors and thus form a resource for employers who engage with HEIs to jointly advise/mentor work-based learners.

From September 2011 the Centre for Learning and Teaching Enhancement in one university has been offering a newly validated PG Cert in Higher Education. The programme builds on the highly successful PG Cert HE programme that has been running within the University for a number of years, by offering more flexibility, different modes of study and some additional CPD opportunities to a wider range of staff. The programme is a vital developmental vehicle for those who are new WBL tutors as well as those who may have been teaching for a while but have had no formal guidance in learning and teaching strategies. The programme offers an important grounding in teaching techniques and practices as well as providing support mechanisms for the continuing development of teaching practice beyond the confines of the programme itself. Crucially, it recognises WBL as a teaching approach in its own right. The content and assessment strategy can be adapted to a WBL context and the programme team are highly experienced in facilitating this approach.

Key Features

- The programme is comprised of three modules that allow students to develop their practice at an appropriate level and pace. (see below)

- The programme can normally be completed in one year of part time study

- The programme carries a tariff of 60 Credits at Masters Level that will contribute to progression onto the full MA in Higher Education programme if desired.

- There are two intakes per year in September and January to facilitate an appropriate time for staff to take the programme.

- The programme is available in a taught mode to members of staff based on local campuses.

- There is a Distance Learning mode for members of staff at overseas and partner institutions.

- Individual modules within the programme are designed to be a relevant stand alone CPD options for appropriate non-academic members of staff who work in roles which support students' study.

- Successful completion of the full programme confers Fellowship of the Higher Education Academy (HEA) status on members of staff with a stepping off point of Associate Fellow of the HEA after 2 modules.

Content of the Programme

The programme consists of two 15 credit modules and one 30 credit module, these will normally be taken consecutively.

Module 1 - Developing Teaching (15 Credits)

This module focuses on you and your development as a teacher, it offers a range of practical techniques and methods that support your work with students and allow you to grow in confidence. The core elements of the module are:

- Teaching Methods

- Teaching Modes

- Teaching Materials

- Giving Feedback

- Learning Management and support

- Working with Diversity

For those specialising in WBL:
This module is about the theoretical perspectives on work based learning. It aims to provide a frame about the ontology of work based learning; different forms of knowledge; the history of work based learning ie; where it is coming from and how it has started to be recognised as an academic subject in HE. Despite the presumption that in WBL practice

and experience always precede theory, this module attempts to make participants understand the philosophy and psychology of WBL.

The module will be formatively and summatively assessed by:

- Tutor and Peer Observations of teaching (formative)

- Maintenance of a Teaching Journal (formative)

- Reflective Report accompanied by a portfolio of evidence (summative)

Module 2 - Supporting Learning (15 Credits)

This module focuses on the development of your ability to promote student engagement and learning through the study and application of a range of pedagogic theories that support and promote student centred learning and deep approaches to learning. The core elements are:

- Developing independent learning

- Problem based learning

- Learning styles

- Threshold pedagogic theory

- Assessment for learning

- Embedding e-learning

The second module is more about practicalities of WBL. It is aims to provide insight to the quality assurance of HE negotiated type programmes, so it's about the APEL mechanisms and how to facilitate APEL claims, how many credits students can APEL and how to weigh workplace artefacts in terms of credit value. It also aims to develop skills about how to set a negotiated work based learning frameworks, how the programme is managed, and accreditation of prior experiential learning. It requires being a flexible module due to the unique character of process.

The module will be formatively and summatively assessed by:

- Tutor and Peer Observations of teaching (formative)

- Development of independent research into teaching and learning within the students' own area of practice (formative)

- Delivery of a Conference Presentation, workshop or online paper exploring an important aspect of professional teaching practice (summative)

Module 3 - Theory into Practice (30 Credits)

This module focuses on the key aspects and considerations of module and programme design paying particular attention to the role and design of assessment systems to promote and support learning. The module looks further at the possibilities for on line delivery and assessment within the experience of study for students. Throughout this module students will undertake an action research project that will allow them to develop particular important areas of their practice. The core elements are:

- Programme Design

- Module Design

- Assessment Design

- Supporting Learning through Feedback

- Design for Diversity

- Applied Learning Technologies

- Action Research Project (Negotiated Outcomes)

The third module is about facilitation and assessment of WBL in HE. In order for it to meet the professional standards, there needs to be documentation provided at the end of the module. These would include evidencing involvement in curriculum design, negotiating assessment. This module, in relation to the other two, aims to provide or develop pedagogical skills about facilitating a WBL student and assessing the work produced within a WBL programme.

The module will be formatively and summatively assessed by:

- Reflective Report with portfolio of evidence (formative)

- Action Research Report (Summative)

- Tutor Observation of teaching (Summative)

The following guide can be applied within the framework:

What the WBL tutor needs to know:
The kind of expertise held by academics who are tutors in WBL and that qualifies them to progress the learners through the WBL awards, short courses, modules, placement activities, involves some or all of the following summarised capabilities.

1.   *A full understanding of the structure of the award programme or module etc*.
This includes learning strategies in Work Based Learning:

- Refection on learning

- Reflexivity

- Learning agreements/ contracts

- Planning your own study

- WBL methodologies

2. *A knowledge of how APEL fits into a Work Based Learning award, module or short course etc is often required*

This involves knowledge of APL/APEL at different national qualifications framework levels; knowledge of the balance required between accredited learning and other curriculum requirements; knowledge of learning agreements; knowledge of how the structure fits into university and national (sometimes also international) systems and structures.

Understanding and knowledge of the tenets that are fundamental to the paradigm within which the award/ module/ short course etc has been constructed and evolved. Drawing upon the already extensive operational experience of academic advisers in work based knowledge creation, recognition and use, a case is made to argue that we need to rethink the premises and traditional constructions about learning and knowledge if higher education is to play a role in recognising curricula emanating outside the university and reconciling it with the expertise that is unique to higher education. Explication of the richness of work as a source of learning can also be found in Boud and Solomon (2001). Other examples of these tenets are that learners are rooted in their particular context rather than in disciplinary knowledge, that they have insider knowledge and are primarily concerned with advanced professional practice. Also there is a focus on student autonomy and capability, particularly learner–centredness.

3. *Understanding and knowledge in an epistemology of practice where knowledge is created and used rather than codified*.

Whilst such an epistemology is already understood by professional people at work in their CPD and other reflexive activities, WBL can formalise this high level thinking. Advisers need knowledge of reflective practice, knowledge of programme planning and learning agreements and knowledge of practitioner-led research and development. Research in WBL is connected to development and change and the generation of new knowledge for practice and new practices. These activities require research knowledge that specialises in methodological approaches of development and systemic change rather than those used in discipline-based knowledge. It also creates a particular situation with regard to ethics in

doctoral work. Advisers have to steer learners into producing a work-based project that involves high level judgements and decision making that influences change in complex real life situations and has an impact in the candidate's organisation or professional area.

4. *A pedagogical understanding that relates not only to the teaching of adults but also to the acknowledgement of learners' expertise and position.*

Learners doing part time WBL awards require a positionality as a worker to get the full benefit of a WBL experience in a formalised programme of study. For example, on Master and Doctorate level awards they are likely to be senior professionals who are in a position to influence and affect change within an organisation, professional area or community. They are likely to have considerable experience and capability and wish to develop their practice through a 'real world' research approach.

Advisers and learners work alongside Candidates, rather than acting as teacher or instructor, to help them develop themselves resulting in them approaching their work more critically and with an added rigor towards their research and development activities.

Tutors need to know why their students wish to undertake the award and often also why their employer wishes to sponsor them. WBL offers students the opportunity to develop themselves further because it is project-based, grounded in practice and tailored to the requirements of professional people at work. From current research, (Nixon 2008) it is found that an important reason why many practitioners select WBL is that it offers them a new and challenging learning opportunity that will develop them further and provide a new challenge. Learners and often their employers are also particularly attracted to the way the work-based project has been conceptualised in that it is directly related to their real time work activities.

5. *Assessment knowledge that includes a full understanding of the generic NQF levels, the purposes and aims of the learning*

Tutors and assessors should have an understanding of academic requirements in terms of the level of criticality and research and development practice that is required at the relevant HE level. Further, they need to be able to acknowledge the potential influence the project will have or has had in a particular professional area and the personal and professional development that has been undertaken by the work-based learner. The key areas of academic and professional knowledge and ability are reflected in the Level descriptors that act as the benchmark against which assessors must reach their decisions.

Key elements will be incorporated into a Continuing Professional Development framework at the University.

Public dissemination

Dissemination during the project

Date	Activity	Outcome
March-April	Preparation of conference paper on preliminary findings.	Presentation of conference paper at WBL Research informed Learning and Teaching conference.
July		Presentation of conference paper at UALL WBL conference.
5-6 July		Presentation of conference paper at HEA annual conference, Nottingham
Sept		Research report with guidelines for Academic Development posted on website.
Nov	WBL Adviser Module development	Relevant resources for module posted on website
Dec 2011		Presentation of conference paper at Researching Work and Learning conference

Dissemination post Project

Outputs will be circulated through the Middlesex University website, the WBL e-journal, workshops and conferences (see Appendix A: attached poster prepared for the HEA conference in 2011) and academic papers (papers are currently being prepared).

Some key groups will be targeted through the Universities Association for Lifelong Learning WBL network 24th and 25th March 2012

Middlesex plays a key role in a number of WBL related national networks including:

- the Universities' Association for Lifelong Learning WBL Network

- the Universities Vocational Awards Council

- Ufi-Learndirect

- Professional Practice SIG

- UKGCE

- HEA WBL research network

The above networks will be accessed in order to undertake initial consultation with potential users of the research as well as the dissemination of the report with guidelines for the development of WBL advisers. Other sites for disseminating conference papers, the project report including guidelines, and academic development resources include:

- the HEA EvidenceNet website and the ESCalate subject centre

- the University's own partner organisations in the UK and overseas.

- The Institute for Work Based Learning overseas regional centres in Cyprus, North Cyprus, Greece, Hong Kong and Ireland, with a new centre soon to be opening in Beijing.

- the IWBL website

- the WBL e-journal

- the UALL WBL website

Middlesex is involved in the organisation of two national WBL conferences each year: the WBL Futures conference and the UALL WBL conference, which was hosted in collaboration with UWIC in 2011. Furthermore, academics at Middlesex are on the organising committees of key international WBL conferences including the Researching Work and Learning conference. These national and international conferences provide an ideal opportunity for disseminating the project findings and outputs to WBL practitioners.

Impact

The short term impact of the project is the development of a PGCert for WBL advisers at Middlesex University as well as ongoing CPD for more experienced academics. The medium-term impact of the project will be enhanced pedagogical practices in use by WBL advisers.

A longer term impact of the project will be enhanced student learning experiences and increased retention and progression of WBL students in HE programmes. It is anticipated that tutors who have a better understanding of the shifting roles associated with the successful delivery of WBL programmes as well as the pedagogical principles underlying various WBL strategies will be able to more effectively engage the growing number of non-traditional learners entering HE programmes. Thus the project links with current government policy and strategies supporting the collaboration between employers and HEIs in terms of teaching, learning and research (BIS, 2009; Connor and Hirsh 2008; Wedgwood 2006). In addition, the adoption of WBL teaching and learning strategies may be useful for tutors working with more traditional students, for example when students undertake work placements and work-based projects as part of their programme.

Preliminary research suggests that WBL programmes contribute to enhanced organisational performance (Nixon 2008). Another longer term impact of the project will be the production of graduates with impact in their work organisations and broader communities of practice as an integral element of WBL pedagogy is a project-based model of learning where students undertake projects in their own workplaces.

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Appendix A   Poster

Poster submitted for the HEA conference, Nottingham 2011

Appendix A   Poster

Exploring Pedagogies of Work Based Learning

Irem Inceoglu and Carol Costley
Middlesex University, IWBL

Scope of presentation

The Institute for Work Based Learning at Middlesex University is awarded by HEA ESCalate to carry on a project on pedagogies of work based learning.

"WBL Pedagogies and Academic Development" is a 12 months project commenced in January 2011 and will end by the end of December 2011.
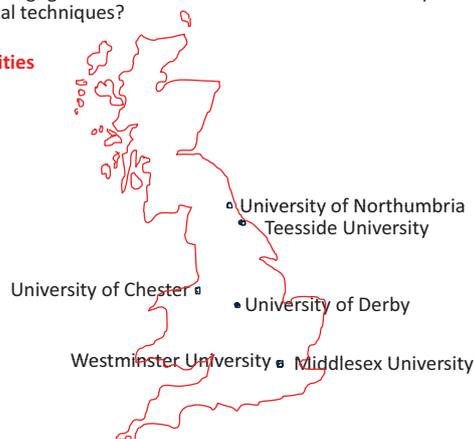
Aims of the project

- to examine the pedagogical practices of tutors working on work based learning (WBL) programmes in HE.
- to contribute to an emerging literature on WBL pedagogies
- to address a potential barrier to the successful delivery of WBL programmes in HE, which is the availability of adequately prepared staff to act as WBL advisers.

Guiding Research Question

What are the pedagogies of WBL and what is the rationale underpinning these pedagogical techniques?

Partner Universities

University of Northumbria
Teesside University
University of Chester
University of Derby
Westminster University
Middlesex University

Methodology

- Interpretive approach to guide the collection and analysis of data in the project.
- Data collection through in-depth interviews with WBL experts in partner universities [The interviewees are selected in relation to their expertise in the field from a range of universities that are known to have expertise in the field]
- Literature review
- Focus groups with WBL academics
- Interpretation of interviews in relation to WBL strategies
- Ongoing dissemination and feedback

The advisory role in WBL and some frequently found differences compared to non-WBL advising

Work-based learning advising	Non-work-based learning advising
3-way relationship: often mediated between student, adviser, work supervisor	Direct 2-way relationship: Student, adviser
Commonly involves parties other than the student, adviser and work supervisor	Less common to involve parties other than the student and tutor
Multi-mode contact	Typically face-to-face
Negotiation of topic and process	May be unilateral
Plan negotiated at start	Plan is more often emergent
Formalised 3 way learning agreement	Learning agreement not common
May be assessed by practitioner	Occasionally assessed by practitioners (depends on course)
Products highly varied, but typically include reflective component	Conventional academic output: reports, etc, may not include reflective component
Learner is an insider and expert in subject area/context	Tutor expert in subject area/topic
Adviser expert in frameworks/levels of achievement	Framework/level of achievement pre-defined for student
Adviser expert in epistemology of practice (including linking knowledge)	Tutor expert in epistemology of discipline
Adviser and learner have distinct areas of expertise	Tutor and learner often in relationship of authoritative power
APEL is usually an aspect of WBL courses and programmes	APEL is less likely to be used

From: Boud, D., & Costley, C. (2007). From project supervision to advising: new conceptions of the practice. *Innovations in Education and Teaching International, 44*(2), 119-130.

Features of WBL

- WBL is a growing part of HE provision in the UK and internationally;
- WBL provides benefits in terms of engaging with employers and widening participation *particularly among adult learners who would not otherwise engage with HE and in many cases lack formal entry qualifications for study at the relevant level*;
- Successful implementation of WBL depends on staff being able to act successfully as facilitators, advisers and expert resources, as opposed to working in a more traditional academic role as subject expert;
- Work-based programmes typically employ different structures, approaches and processes from those used in subject-based academic programmes;
- Prior learning claims are generally assessed against the student's overall learning aims, as expressed in a learning agreement or contract, rather than against a predefined field of study.
- Assessment draws on workplace activity and analysis and reflection upon it, and often uses generic criteria in conjunction with students' own learning objectives.
- WBL could be implemented in different models ranging between a degree in work based studies to work placements within a subject-based degree programme.

WBL MODELS	TYPICAL ATTRIBUES
Work based studies degree (for individuals)	Content negotiated by learner, P/T degree programme F/T employment
WBL degree in cohorts	Content designed with contribution of employer, P/T degree programme F/T employment
Foundation degree	content designed by HE in relation to employer, F/T or P/T degree programme
Sandwich year	Content designed with employer, 1 year F/T work as a part of a degree programme
In-house training (e.g. NVQ)	Short courses to contribute job roles during employment
Conventional degree programme to support work role (e.g. MBA)	Content designed by HE, P/T or evening degree programme F/T employment
Work placement within a programme of study to integrate aspects of professional life to L&T experience	Specific outcomes to be delivered for the programme of study,

Comments

There are several kinds of learning technologies that are typical of WBL practices and that there are broad philosophical approaches to the role that differ from the more conventional teacher- student relationship. Common WBL strategies could be listed as:

- Accreditation [APEL]
- Planning WBL [Learning agreements/contracts]
- Practitioner-led projects
- Research methodology
- Reflection/reflexivity

In relation to these constituents of the conceptual knowledge and skill base needed for advising in WBL are:

- Work and context
- Learning consultancy
- Transdisciplinarity
- Enquiry
- Reflexivity and reviewing
- Learning strategies used in WBL

The features specific to WBL mean that academics involved in work based programmes have a role that differs from that of most subject-based tutors in several ways. They need to act as facilitators, advisers and expert resources rather more than as teachers and be familiar with using the processes and technologies associated with WBL.

These factors create significant differences in the requirements for inducting WBL tutors from those in inducting other academic staff, and require a culture-change for existing staff who become involved in WBL programmes.

A better understanding of the pedagogical practices in use in WBL programmes, the underlying rationale/s for these practices and how these practices are similar to/differ from more traditional academic programmes will provide the basis for the development of guidelines and resources for new and existing HE staff working in the field of WBL.

Appendix B   Reflections on Practice as an Academic Adviser

When thinking about advising, my colleagues and I talk of working at the interface of different domains, of co producing knowledge, of transdisciplinary approaches to knowledge creation but these are not new. They are a process of recovery from the differentiation of disciplines which most markedly took place in the west in the eighteenth century in response to the specialist demands of a rapidly evolving, capitalist society scientifically and technologically based.

The movement to communicate, learn from and evolve knowledge through encounters and re-engagement with each other is not one of assimilation or colonialism but of creativity, of catalysts that regenerate and originate in response to the stagnancy of a managerialism which seeks to harness knowledge in functional bite size pieces to fit into pre conceived templates that can be managed, measured, priced and sold. Central to this movement is the communication between different realms of experience which has as its aim not the hegemony of one tribe over the other but an encounter which is, among other things, a prophylactic against stagnation.

For such encounters to have a chance of providing the conditions for new knowledge to emerge, we need skilled interpreters. I have considered what these might be called and for the moment I have come up with knowledge hermeneuts, interpreters between different realms of experience and knowledge (as in Thoth and Hermes Trismegistus). What might the attributes of a knowledge hermeneut be? To arrive at some understanding of what that might be in me, I have sought some language and inspiration from my other domains of practice: anthropology and psychotherapy.

The notion of interpreter, or hermeneut is key to what defines the *good* school teacher, the *inspirational* tutor, the *informed* manager, the *enabling* facilitator, the *safe* psychotherapist, the *professional* coach. In professional studies, it is the capacity to be the knowledge hermeneut that we look for in advisers for our candidates. The hermeneut listens, is transparent about what he/she brings to the encounter, privileges the phronesis or practical wisdom of the candidate, engages, seeks often through tricks to open up and be open to knowledge connections the way neural pathways are stimulated and developed between different areas of the brain. Living in our world, our world as the externalisation of the nature of our brains influenced by both our biological inheritance and the transformed dynamic of what we externalise, is a sometimes macabre, sometimes ecstatic, sometimes quite ordinary dance which is played out at an individual level in the relationship between candidate and adviser facilitating connections not only

between other realms of knowledge but between the disparate parts in the individual themselves.

The hermeneut is also the anthropologist evolving from the 'observer', trying to bracket off their own experience, to the 'participant observer' recognising the reflexivity required to fully comprehend human impact on each other and the world, to the 'advocate' who can no longer separate themselves from what they have encountered once they have uncovered the internal connection which Bruns (1992:252) believes is a prerequisite for understanding. 'Basic to hermeneutics both ancient and modern is that idea that there is no making sense at a distance; one must always work out some kind of internal connection with what one seeks to understand.'
The knowledge hermeneut can also be the ethnographer going through these different stages of knowing with various candidates, all the time accumulating and processing these knowledges in a form of ethnology which distils commonalities and differences from a range of encounters and perspectives, a process which in itself contributes to new thinking.

To be a skilled knowledge hermeneut is an aspiration for me. The experiences I bring personally and professionally to my encounters with a wide range of candidates on a professional studies programme is that of social anthropologist, psychotherapist and researcher. After many years of visiting tribes I have found a home in professional studies, in this open space of multiple languages and experiences, welcoming to all kinds of visitors willing to explore with each other and with their advisers their various experiences then go on their way to pollinate others with their evolving knowledge in an ever growing creative network. Here we meet the American scientist drawn to Malaysia to learn about boat building who says he can never look at science in the same way again; the designer of aeroplane wings which keep you and I safe now questioning why the optimisation principles in engineering do not include a human one; the hard working manager who wants to advocate change in her organisation to improve the work environment finding rationales and solidarity among the many writers she would never have known and accessed before; the unsung hero who has quietly dedicated twenty years to widening participation in higher education at last finding his voice through a critical reflection of his achievements; the woman who has brought dance, education and business together rejoicing that she has managed to do so without compromising on the creativity and spontaneity which define dance; my third sector doctoral candidates who weave informed and creative connections supporting optimistic futures in a level of society which most of us only read about in the newspapers.

How such individual changes take place which impact professional environments and how new knowledge emerges is through what may be called learning conversations, or perhaps more appropriately, edifying conversations (Rorty, 1979: 360) as this stresses the enriching potential of encounters between difference.

Another attribute of a hermeneut can be found in Rorty's (1989) explication of the Aristotelian notion of ironist. Rorty sees the ironist as fulfilling three conditions: someone who has 'radical and continuing doubts' about her own vocabulary and is open to those of others, realises that any arguments in her present vocabulary cannot resolve the doubts and does not think her vocabulary is closer to reality than others.   To have an edifying conversation requires an openness to change, to synthesis, to new chemical compounds and catalysts, to evolving vocabularies.

Such conversations arrive at understanding aspects of each other's culture, the fusion of which generates something new. Such conversations are in fact, to borrow from Gadamer, the very conditions of understanding. It is not about prescribing *a procedure of understanding but to clarify the conditions in which understanding takes place*. (from *Truth and Method* cited in Bruns, p. 12)

Listening is another attribute of the knowledge hermeneut which contributes to the edification of each participant in the learning conversation, but not any kind of listening more a Heideggerian notion of what happens when true listening occurs.
In true listening one enters not simply into another's subjectivity but into what is said, ' It matters to Heidegger that in German the word for listening and hearing is also the word for belonging. "We have heard (*gehort*)," Heidegger says, "when we belong (*gehoren*) to what is said." When one listens one steps out of the aggressive mode of grasping and knowing into the mode of belonging' (Bruns, 1992:157)

Added to this there is the type of active and reflecting back listening. This listening is tuned into what is not said as much as to what is said through an attitude of observation, respect and engagement of the heart and mind which it could be argued is at the core of understanding what we do and why we do it.

Trickster to many implies deception and in fact the later derivatives of Thoth, the progenitor of hermeneutics, mainly Hermes and Mercury, seemed to have lost the balance of their role as interpreters to become tools of the gods who seemed eminently content with making a fool of mortals through cunning and deceit no longer as a learning exercise for mutual and progressive co-existence but from the will to dominate and be amused at the limitations of the 'other.' Little did the gods know that this was a prelude

to their annihilation, the end of an old paradigm. Trickster in the hermeneutic sense is the story teller, the maker of parables, the skilled practitioner of metaphors which Aristotle said was a natural human ability. Metaphors are in themselves bridges of and to understanding.

The knowledge hermeneut is an ethical practitioner as a way of being more than from following a code of conduct. It is highly likely then that they will have a sense of justice, balance and social responsibility. I am not saying that these are the prerequisites of a good adviser/knowledge hermeneut only that they are in a sense an occupational hazard if one meets the other with an openness to understanding and to belonging in the Heideggerian sense. Bruns (1992:263) sums this up well when talking about Whitman's ethics of the open road and Kateb's explication of it:

'As a readiness to convert tolerance to recognition; to admire and appreciate, especially that which may be overlooked or despised; to acknowledge that one is not the only real thing in the world, and that others are just as real to themselves...The effort to live outside oneself, to lend oneself to the acknowledgement of other persons, to creatures and things, exists and is underwritten by the sense that one is multiple, various, full of contradictions, full of moods that "do not believe in each other".'

In the knowledge hermeneut, one looks for the value of respect for the experience of others, the value of seeking to engage and co create not to dominate and swallow up, the value of not separating a human being from their autonomy and their creativity, the value of a commitment to usefulness, to the idea of social responsibility and making a difference, the value of respect for difference and to cooperate in solutions which are appropriate for the habitus of other, not the habitus of that with which one is most familiar. I am reminded of a story I heard many years ago when I was training as a psychotherapist which was used to demonstrate the pitfalls of being a solution focussed therapist. I later found out that it was most probably one of the wise tales originating in Africa. A writer was walking along the road and saw a monkey jump from the tree into the river. It picked up a fish and placed it on the tree. The writer asked the monkey, 'What did you do that for?' The monkey answered, 'I am saving the fish from drowning'.

This respect for practice, for difference, for new knowledge generated through cooperative understanding and for the application of knowledge in fulfilment of social responsibility takes not only individual academics out of their habitus but the whole university.
I look forward to such a future for universities.

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