# **Work-Based Learning (Framework)**

# **Introduction to Work-Based Learning (WBL)**

Work-Based Learning (WBL) positions a student’s own work/practice as the subject of study and as such is concerned with the development and application of knowledge, understanding and skills that emerge from the context of this work/practice. The workplace is explicitly recognised as a site of knowledge production. WBL comes from learning activities based upon authentic practice and focused upon developing the practitioner’s ability to solve the real problems of their work context.

WBL at higher education level draws on adult learning theories and humanistic theory and highlights the importance of the context in which learning takes place and the work purposes for which the learning is undertaken.

# **The aims of a WBL Framework**

The aims of the University of Hull WBL Framework, in line with the Quality Assurance Agency UK Quality Code, are to:

1. provide an enabling institution-wide approach to the quality and academic standards of work-based provision designed using the Framework for academic awards;
2. enable the student and their organisation/other stakeholder to agree work-based learning activity through the development of a Learning Plan which contributes to the goals of the organisation and the aspirations of the individual;
3. recognise and develop the workplace as a source of learning (e.g. through recognition of formal training courses and learning gained from experience, especially through work);
4. be student-centred and develop the individual, as an effective work-based and life-long learner able to undertake research and development activity of direct relevance to work;
5. encourage and enable individuals to take responsibility for their own continuing development;
6. provide a structured approach to “real” work-based projects which enhances their potential to contribute to the development of the organisation (at levels from local operational to strategic); and
7. focus on the importance of knowledge as a key resource of the work/employer organisation.

**Note that while the WBL Framework is designed to enable rapid and relevant response to employer-led provision, it is not a University requirement that it must be used for existing or all new employer responsive provision.**

# **University of Hull Work-Based Learning Framework**

1. the WBL Framework adopts the modular structure of all University of Hull programmes with a 20 credit module being standard.
2. University of Hull WBL programmes may follow non-traditional University teaching weeks/trimesters.
3. the WBL Framework has four types of learning activity: learning review and professional development; designing practitioner research; negotiated learning; and work-based project (see 5).
4. the WBL Framework can be used in the following ways:
	1. the construction of programmes using various combinations of WBL Framework modules;
	2. the integration of subject specific modules within WBL Framework programmes;
	3. the construction of programmes which are mapped onto external standards (e.g. higher and degree level apprenticeship standards).

# **Standard Work-Based Learning Framework award titles**

For Foundation, Bachelors and Masters Degree programmes, the University WBL Validation Approval process is used to determine whether awards are arts or science based. Approval decisions are reflected in approved programme award titles to determine which of the following are appropriate:

* Foundation Degree Arts (FdA)
* Foundation Degree Science (FdSc)
* Bachelor Degree Arts (BA)
* Bachelor Degree Science (BSc)
* Masters Degree Arts (MA)
* Masters Degree Science (MSc)

All WBL programmes using the WBL Framework will have ‘professional practice’ within its title; for example “BSc Professional Practice in” and is followed by the work-based focus of the programme.

# **Learning activity**

There are four types of WBL modules:

**Type 1 - Learning Review and Professional Development (LRPD)** modules enable students to reflect on current practice and develop action plans for continued personal and professional development. This is a 20 credit module available at levels 4 to 7. Each programme would normally include one of this type of module.

**Type 2 - Designing Practitioner Research** modules introduce students to practitioner research approaches and issues and supports development of a work-based research proposal which supports the work-based project. This is a 20 credit module available at levels 4 to 7.

**Type 3 - Negotiated Learning** modules allow students to undertake negotiated learning on a topic which is related to employment and has been formally agreed as part of the programme approval process. This may include elements to meet particular PSRB requirements. Negotiated learning modules are available as 20 or 40 credit modules at levels 4, 5 and 6, and 20, 30, 40 or 60 at level 7.

**Type 4 - Work-Based Project** modules allow students to undertake a project of a research and development nature which is directly related to employment. In some cases a project may be making the case for a change in practice or in other cases the project might be concerned with the development of a new product or the implementation of new procedures or new processes in a specific work context. This may include elements to meet particular PSRB requirements. The content of the module is formally agreed as part of the programme approval process. Work-based learning project modules are available as 20 or 40 credit modules at levels 4, 5 and 6, and 20, 30, 40 or 60 at level 7.

An example of a WBL Programme using combinations of these modules is included in Appendix 5.

# **WBL Framework Programme Agreement (Learning Agreement)**

Approval may be at the level of the individual student or of a standard programme for cohorts of students.

For cohorts of students the Work-Based Learning Programme Proposal will be prepared by addressing the following headings.

1. ***Programme overview and context*** – a brief overview of the Programme, including a programme context statement.
2. ***Programme aims*** - this should include a clear statement of each programme aim describing how the proposed programme will realise these aims as well as any ethical considerations that may be specific to the programme.
3. ***Proposed award title* -** This should be consistent with the available award titles within the Work-Based Learning Framework.
4. ***Programme design and construction* -** An outline of which University Work-Based Learning Framework components will be used to construct the programme. This should identify the academic level and volume of credit for the programme and each component.
5. ***Description of negotiated programme learning outcomes* -** These should reflect the Work- Based Learning Framework level descriptors.
6. ***Teaching, learning and assessment strategies* –** A description of the teaching, and learning strategies to be employed to support the achievement of identified learning outcomes.
7. ***Negotiated Module(s)/Work-Based Project(s)*  -** Where programmes use Negotiated Modules and/or Work-Based Project modules the negotiated content; aims, learning outcomes and specific assessment requirements of each module needs to be specified to appropriately reflect those of the validated module.
8. ***Professional requirements (as appropriate)*** - A statement how the programme meets professional requirements. For example, professional body requirements, apprenticeship standards.

# **WBL Programme Development Consent and Approval**

Programme development and approval for all WBL programmes is aligned to the University of Hull Code of Practice: New Programmes.

# **WBL Framework**

The University of Hull WBL Framework consists of a range of generic modules (as specified in 5 and 6 above) and in module template documents with set learning outcomes. This framework is the ‘shell’ from which programme teams develop their WBL programmes relevant to their discipline. A WBL programme **must** consist of at least 50% of WBL Framework modules and no more than 50% of non WBL Framework modules.

# **Development Consent**

1. WBL programmes **must** obtain Development Consent before the WBL Programme Validation Process commences. There are two routes for Development Consent – an Apprenticeship route and a Traditional route (see Appendix 4 for a flowchart describing the two routes through approval.
2. Applications for Development Consent for Apprenticeships only **must** be considered by the Apprenticeship Governance Group. The Apprenticeship Governance Group is empowered to make one of the following recommendations to the Programme Management Committee (PMC):
* That Development Consent is granted
* That Development Consent be granted with conditions
* That the application be referred for further substantive work
* That the application be rejected.
1. The Apprenticeship Governance Group will comprise the following:
* Strategic Development Unit representative
* Finance Office representative
* Solicitors Office representative
* Apprenticeship representative
* Head of Academic Quality (or nominee)
* University Registry Services representative
* Directors of Business and Enterprise

In attendance:

Secretary

1. Development Consent for Apprenticeship programmes mirrors University Development Consent Processes.
2. For non-Apprenticeship WBL programmes, the traditional route for Development Consent is to be followed – however in the case of a WBL programme, the WBL Framework Approval process can still be used or a traditional validation can be used (refer to Appendix 4).

# **Programme Approval**

1. Once Development Consent is obtained for WBL Programmes, whether an Apprenticeship or not, the programme will be scrutinised by a WBL Validation Panel. The panel will ensure that the programme meets all the requirements of the approved framework and can be added to the Programme Management Committee (PMC) Register of approved courses. PMC will receive the details of the approvals made by the WBL Validation Panel. The WBL Validation Panel (see Appendix 3 for Terms of Reference) will comprise the following:
* An independent Chair (this should normally be a Faculty Academic Manager or Associate Dean Education from another Faculty);
* APO Apprenticeship representative;
* A deputy Chair (LTE Quality representative);
* Associate Dean (Education) (proposing Faculty)
* An internal member of University academic staff who is independent of, and external to the proposing Faculty
* Secretary

In attendance (as required):

WBL Advisor

External Advisor (subject specialist in the event of a highly specialised area of study)

1. The WBL Validation Panel **should** include a member with expertise in Work-Based Learning.

# **Learning, Teaching and Assessment of WBL Programmes**

1. A variety of assessment methods designed to support the development of the students’ knowledge and understanding should be used within a WBL context. A blended and student-centred approach will be taken making maximum use of communities of practice and opportunities for facilitated experiential learning. As the student's own practice is the 'subject' of study within the field of work-based learning, reflection is a key learning process as it is the means through which an individual student identifies themselves as a ‘work-based student’ in relation to their own work context.

Students will use their own work place as a resource for the forms of written assignments. This provides an opportunity to compare theory and practice in an applied context relevant to their area of expertise. Assessment is based on the work context and is likely to include real life work “products”. Across a major work-based learning award a wide range of assessment tasks will be employed. These tasks might include:

* Individual and group presentations.
* Reports.
* Problem solving briefs.
* Literature based assignments.
* Summative portfolios from CPD activity.
* Research investigations into practice.
* Management and technical reports.
* Reflective portfolios of evidence of learning from work.
* Social learning tools such as blogs and wikis.
* Negotiated assignments.
* Problem and enquiry based tasks.
* Role play.
* Peer assessment.
* Online tests/class based tests

The University Code of Practice: Assessment Procedures should be the main source for all assessment design for WBL programmes.

1. Grades for WBL modules are determined by the Module Board of Examiners. The Programme Board of Examiners makes recommendations for classifications and awards. The standard assessment regulations of the University apply.

# **Progression, Continuation and Classification for WBL Programmes**

1. Decisions for progression, continuation and classification for WBL programmes must made in accordance to the University of Hull Regulations for Undergraduate Degrees and Postgraduate Taught Degrees.
2. Module and Programme Boards, through University Boards of Examiners, are responsible for all Work-Based Learning across programmes. They should pay particular attention to ensuring the provision of resources is appropriate, and effective mechanisms are in place for liaison with and between students and staff wherever based.

# **Annual Monitoring for WBL Programmes**

Annual monitoring of WBL programmes will be in accordance to the University of Hull Academic Monitoring and Review Process (AMRP).

Annual programme monitoring reports **must** include specific commentary on the management of quality in Work-Based Learning.

#  **Student Support**

All students will be enrolled as students of the University of Hull and as such have full access to the standard learning and other support services of the University in relation to their learning needs as well as provisions for learning and other support within the workplace where required. All students will be assigned a Personal Supervisor in accordance with standard University practice or other support as required by the programme, which may include a workplace mentor. Where a mentor is required, support in undertaking a mentoring role will be provided.

**13. Responsibilities**

Obligations for WBL students will be specific to the type of learning and the relationship with the employer and student. Where not specified, standard University obligations will apply. However, as a minimum any agreement with employer related to a WBL programme using the framework will include provisions/indemnities for:

* Health and Safety
* Whistle Blowing
* Liability
* Confidentiality
* Intellectual Property
* Data Protection
* University Property
* Publicity
* Termination

Appendix 1

**University of Hull Work-Based Learning Framework Level Descriptors**

The following level descriptors are informed by the *SEEC Credit Level Descriptors for Higher Education* (SEEC, 2010). The SEEC descriptors attempted to more clearly reference the use of credit in relation to work-based learning and accreditation. The descriptors are also informed by practice at other UK higher education institutions which use a framework approach to WBL.

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| ***Level*** | ***K1 Identification and application of knowledge to work*** |
| **4** | Identification and application of knowledge demonstrates an understanding of the context of own work/practice  |
| **5** | Identification and application of knowledge demonstrates a broad understanding of its current limitations in a range of work/practice contexts  |
| **6** | Identification and application of knowledge demonstrates a critical understanding of the inter-relationship between theory and work/practice |
| **7** | Identification and application of knowledge, demonstrates systematic and critical understanding of theory at the forefront of professional practice |
| ***Level*** | ***K2 Understanding and application of ethical principles to work/practice*** |
| **4** | Understanding of underlying ethical concepts demonstrates an awareness of how they relate to own work/practice  |
| **5** | Understanding of established ethical concepts and principles demonstrates knowledge of the broader contexts of own work/practice  |
| **6** | Understanding of key ethical principles demonstrates a coherent and in-depth knowledge of how they apply to the work/practice of self and others |
| **7** | Critical understanding of ethical principles demonstrates a systematic knowledge and coherent application of professional codes of conduct to the work/practice of self and others |
| ***Level*** | ***I1 Analysis and evaluation of work-based information and concepts***  |
| **4** | Analysis of information and/or ideas contributes to the development of an informed evaluation of own work/practice |
| **5** | Analysis of a range of established information and/or theoretical perspectives contributes to the development of evidence-based evaluation of own work/practice |
| **6** | Analysis and synthesis of a range of information, including some advanced theoretical perspectives, informs judgements and contributes to a critical evaluation of own work/ practice |
| **7** | Systematic analysis and synthesis of a range of information and advanced theoretical perspectives informs the development and critical evaluation of innovative work/practice. |
| ***Level*** | ***I2 Reflection on work-based practice and learning***  |
| **4** | Reflection is informed by the work/practice of others and contributes to the recognition of own work-based learning |
| **5** | Reflection is informed by engagement with other practitioners and provides insights that enhance own work-based learning |
| **6** | Reflection is becoming an established aspect of own practice, is informed by critical engagement with a community of practice and contributes to the coherent development of own work/practice  |
| **7** | Reflection is an established aspect of own practice and leads to significant transformative insights which have the potential to impact on the work/practice of self and often others |
| ***Level*** | ***P1 Work-based inquiry, action planning and problem solving*** |
| **4** | Inquiry methods are selected and applied to own work/practice leading to appropriate action planning and/or problem solving |
| **5** | Inquiry methods are selected and applied to a range of work/practice contexts and lead to effective action planning and/or problem solving of potential significance to self and others |
| **6** | Methods of inquiry, action planning and/or problem solving are critically evaluated and - applied to enhance the work/practice of self and/or others.  |
| **7** | Methods of inquiry , action planning and/or problem solving are systematically and critically evaluated and applied to the work/practice of self and/or others in complex contexts |
| ***Level*** | ***P2 Communication*** |
| **4** | Ideas and information are communicated appropriately for identified work/practice and/or academic audiences |
| **5** | Ideas and information are effectively organised and communicated for a range of work/practice and/or academic audiences  |
| **6** | Ideas and information are coherently constructed and communicated for a range of work/practice and/or academic audiences  |
| **7** | Ideas and information are systematically managed and persuasively communicated for professional work/practice and/or academic audiences  |
| ***Level*** | ***P3 Leadership and responsibility for self-directed learning*** |
| **4** | The ability to take partial responsibility for own learning is demonstrated in the context of own work/practice |
| **5** | The ability to take responsibility for the quality of own learning is demonstrated in a range of individual and/or group work/practice contexts |
| **6** | The ability to take lead responsibility for the management of individual and/or group learning is demonstrated in individual and/or group work/practice contexts - |
| **7** | The ability to lead and be accountable for individual and/or group learning demonstrates critical reflection and analysis of personal motivations. |

Appendix 2: **Principles for designing and developing WBL**

The following principles apply to all programmes of study approved within the validated WBL Framework:

1. WBL Framework programmes that lead to WBL awards can be comprised of Negotiated Learning modules and/or Work-Based Project modules alone (in addition to the Learning Review and Professional Development (LRPD) module) or they may contain a combination of Work-Based Project modules, negotiated modules and non-negotiated Work-Based Learning Framework modules.
2. WBL Framework programmes may contain subject-specific modules from other validated programmes where these comprise no more than 50% of the programme.
3. WBL Framework programmes that lead to WBL awards must reflect the relevant WBL Framework level descriptor (see Appendix 1) and the appropriate QAA Qualification descriptors. This will be described in a WBL Framework Programme Agreement document (known as a Learning Agreement for individual work-based students).
4. Negotiated modules are used as ‘shell’ modules that contain work/practice specific content;
5. Programmes that lead to major awards (Masters, Bachelors Degrees) must include a major Work-Based Project or Negotiated Learning module. For a Masters award the programme must include a 40 or 60 credit project and for Honours Degree the programme must include at least one Work-Based Project or Negotiated Learning module of 40 credits.
6. WBL modules from ‘types’ 1 and 2 (see 5) have specified outcomes for assessment that are not negotiated. However, the way that these modules are delivered can be tailored for specific practice and/or sector/organisation/cohort purposes.
7. WBL Framework programmes include no more than one module from each of ‘types’ 1 and 2 (see 5) (for example one Learning Review and Professional Development and one Designing Practitioner research module would be normal in an Honours Degree whereas two Learning Review and Professional Development modules in the same programme would require special justification).

Appendix 3: **WBL Validation Panel Terms of Reference**

The Panel will consider the programmes put forward by the Faculties of the University taking into account:

* The extent to which the aims of the programme are appropriate including any ethical and/or health and safety considerations.
* The extent to which the proposed programme of study is coherent and consistent with the principles of Work-Based Learning Framework Programme design and construction.
* The extent to which the proposed award title appropriately represents the identified area of work/practice.
* The extent to which the proposed programme appropriately reflects the relevant Work- Based Learning Framework level descriptors and module learning outcomes.
* The extent to which the proposed programme will deploy appropriate personal supervision and teaching, learning and assessment strategies to support the achievement of identified learning outcomes.

The outcome of Panel consideration of programmes can include: approval, approval with conditions and/or recommendations and non-approval.

The Panel will consider the programmes of individual students put forward in learning agreements taking into account:

* The extent to which the proposed programme of study is coherent and consistent with the principles of Work-Based Learning Framework Programme design and construction.
* The extent to which the proposed award title appropriately represents the proposed programme.
* The extent to which negotiated module and work- based learning project modules proposed reflects the relevant Work- Based Learning Framework level descriptors and module learning outcomes.
* Any ethical and/or health and safety consideration raised by the proposed programme.

The outcome of Panel decisions in respect of individual student learning agreements can include; approval, approval with conditions and/or recommendations, non-approval.

It is envisaged that the Panel will meet at least once per trimester.

Appendix 4 – Flowchart

Concept for Employer Responsive Provision

WBL Validation Panel

WBL Framework

WBL Validation Proposal

Validation paperwork

Traditional Dev Con process

Use of WBL Framework

Validation Panel

Not using WBL Framework

Other Employer Responsive Provision

Validation Panel

Major changes

Validation paperwork

Faculty

APO & Faculty

Apprenticeship Dev con paperwork

Existing variant to programme

Use of WBL Framework

No/minor changes

Employer Responsive Provision

Apprenticeship

PMC

If no changes or minor change to qualification (e.g. swap existing module) – recommend to PMC

Apprenticeship Governance Group

Apprenticeship

Appendix 5 – Example of a 3 year WBL programme

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| Year 1 |
| Semester 1 | Semester 2 | Semester 3 |
| Level 4 |
| Learning Review and Professional Development | Taught subject module | Taught subject module | Negotiated Learning module | Taught subject module | Taught subject module |
| 20Reflective e-Portfolio of supply chain professional practice (strengths, gaps and areas for development which then inform their NL modules) | 20Introduction to Contemporary Business Practices | 20World Economy | 20Supply Chain Mgt. Project 1 | 20Accounting & Finance | 20Applications for Contemporary Business Practices |
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| --- | --- |
| Type 1 | Learning Review and Professional Development |
| Type 2 | Designing Practitioner Research Module |
| Type 3 | Negotiated Learning Module |
| Type 4 | Work-Based Project |
| N/A | Existing Taught Module |

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| Year 2 |
| Semester 1 | Semester 2 | Semester 2 | Semester 3 | Semester 3 |
| Level 5 |
| Negotiated Learning module | Taught subject module | Taught subject module | Negotiated Learning module | Taught subject module | Taught subject module |
| 20Leadership and Change  Project 2 | 20Supply Chain Strategy  |                  20Logistics Customer Service | 20BPI Project 3 | Procurement and Supply Chain Operations20 | Supply Chain Information Management and Big Data20 |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Year 3 |
| Semester 1 | Semester 2 | Semester 3 |
| Level 6 |
| Designing Practitioner Research | Taught subject modules |  |
| 20Research Methods (bespoke to practitioner applied and action learning) | 20Supply Chain Network Design | Work Based Project40 |
| 20Supply Chain Sustainability and the Environment Project 4 | 20Global Logistics and Port Management Project 5 |