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The Process of Designing and Analysing a Qualitative Study into Multiple WIL Experiences

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The Process of Designing and Analysing a Qualitative Study into Multiple WIL Experiences
Overview

- Background research
- Evolvement of the design process
- Analysis process
- Implications for the facilitation of Teaching and Learning
- Conclusions
The Research Team

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Inspiring tomorrow’s professionals
The Search for Perfect WIL Model

Researchers sensitive to range factors
• Model that dovetails with ever changing student needs
• Best chances of subsequent employment
• Reasonable administrative overheads
Baseline Research

- Drysdale’s major International study explores psychological factors related to WIL (Drysdale et al., 2011).
- University of Huddersfield formed part of this study.
- Our initial analysis suggested, the more WIL experiences, the more hope, agency and intrinsic goal motivation reported (Purdie et al., 2011)
- This study aims to tease out experiential details of learning on placement, draw strategic implications for the sector.
UK Models of WIL

- UoH ‘all course have work related elements’ (UoH, 2008)
- UK fees now £9000
- Sandwich fees viable – Wilson suggests £1000
- Sandwich degree
  - work experience sandwiched inside academic studies
- Short placements: History, Community Studies
- Professional placements
  - Workplace mentor
  - Match student learning outcomes with available placements
The Qualitative Project

• Most qualitative research discipline specific
• This research over a range of disciplines
• Not role specific placement
• Aim broad aspects of
  – Personal development
  – Learning
  – Sense of progression across work placements
Aimed focus group, identify common issues
- Project objectives incompatible with RA short contract
- Instead Kelly’s Repertory Grid (Fransella, 2005) based on Personal Construct Psychology (Kelly, 1995)
- Investigates how individuals make sense of the world and their identity. Participants asked to consider:
  - Work characteristics of colleagues
  - His/her own characteristics
  - Points along placement journey
- Outcome: few links made, little about relational aspects
Design Process Salmon Line to Placement Timeline

- Salmon Line (King & Horrocks, 2010)
- Single line between 2 concepts to facilitate reflection on how progression occurs from one concept to another.
- Developed this to include temporal aspects of learning from multiple placements: a line labelled ‘before placement’ and ‘after placement’
- Called ‘Placement Timeline’
- Successful in eliciting data addressing the project aims.
Significant moments in learning and personal development

Episodes of work experience/placements, in chronological order
What does the placement time do?

**Before Placements**
- **Encourages elaboration on aspects of learning and personal development.**
- **Allows the consideration of work experiences outside of the university degree.**

**After Placements**
- **Facilitates thinking about the progression of skills and abilities across time.**
- **Helps students think about how they have changed.**
- **Facilitates comparing and contrasting of different work experiences, and making links between them.**

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**I think that's where I began to start running on wards. I wasn't running on my own, but I think that's where I got into it.**

**I've got fantastic feedback from the students who were on placements.**

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**A place to start thinking about the progress of skills and abilities across time.**

**Allows the consideration of work experiences outside of the university degree.**

**Helps students think about how they have changed.**

**Facilitates comparing and contrasting of different work experiences, and making links between them.**
• Semi-structured interviews can yield large volumes textual data
• Thematic analysis, looks for patterns
• Template analysis (King, 2012)
• Accommodates a priori focus i.e.
  – overarching issues of learning and personal development
  – Shared by students across diverse subject areas.
Template Analysis

- Develop coding structure (template) from initial transcripts
- Applied to subsequent interview data
- Modified as new themes or subtleties come to light
- Focus on overall issues – not job specific roles
- Details coded as low level themes
- Subsumed in higher level themes as analysis progresses.
- Allows research teams to share early findings.
Example Templates

- Show in word
Implications

- **Purpose**: explore how multiple WIL impacts on the student learning experience.
- **Soft skills development on WIL**
- **Findings now about advocating change to WIL models**
  - Principles and practicalities developed over many years
- **Challenge teaching and learning practitioners to consider our research when planning WIL delivery**


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