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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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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
Design Process – Focus Group and PCP

- 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
• 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

PLACEMENT TIMELINE Method

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What does the placement time do?

Facilitates thinking about the progression of skills and abilities across time.

- **Encourages elaboration on aspects of learning and personal development.**
- **Before placements**
  - Work task-oriented only.
  - Got used to working on wards.
  - Got used to complex care.
  - Learnt roles of nursing, working more autonomously.
  - Begin to manage patient's health and surgical.

- **After placements**
  - Network: staff nurse, made me very calm, very cathartic.
  - Worked as staff nurse, made me very calm, very cathartic.
  - Worked as staff nurse, made me feel very calm, very cathartic.

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

- Helps students think about how they have changed.

- Helps students think about the bigger picture, and how their experiences fit together.

- Facilitates comparing/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

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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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