

Learning Outcomes and Experiential Learning Symposium October 11, 2018



Experiencing Quality: Quality Assurance in Experiential Learning

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Experiencing Quality Workshop



Workshop Overview

1. The scope of a experiential education quality assurance framework in the Ontario college context
2. Key principles & inherent challenges
3. Experiential learning inventory and minimum criteria
4. Example of program level data
5. Mechanisms for ongoing quality assurance

Working Definition of EL

“The process whereby students come to learn from experiences in educational, workplace and practice settings and integrate the contributions of those experiences in developing the understanding, procedures, and dispositions required for effective professional practice, including criticality. Work-integrated learning arrangements include the kinds of curriculum and pedagogic practices that can assist, provide, and effectively integrate learning experiences in both educational, workplace and practice settings.”

Billett, S. (2015). The practices of using and integrating practice-based learning in higher education. In M. Kennedy, S. Billett, S. Gherardi & L. Grealish (eds.), *Practice-based learning in higher education: jostling cultures* (pp. 15-30). New York: Springer.

Scope of Experiential Learning

Ontario Colleges offer:

- A wide variety of credentials (e.g. from apprentice programs to degrees) with clearly focused vocational outcomes across diverse sectors/industries/fields
- Programs with varying experiential learning components (e.g. labs, shops, studios, performances, externships, coops, apprenticeships, mandatory practicums, field placements, etc.)
- Programs in sectors with disparate mentorship cultures

Key Principles for QA Framework

- Define, document, evaluate and showcase experiential education in its various forms at the college
- Define and track experiences at a course level and student participation
- Ensure consistency and quality of the experience for all stakeholders in similar EL and WIL across the college while supporting programs' ability to employ sector-specific language and requirements
- Avoid privileging some types of experiential learning over others – their value is based on the pedagogy of the program and the requirements of the sector/field

QA Challenges

- Respect the diversity of EL experiences - their unique strengths and challenges and the language they use in their sectors
- Categorize diverse EL experiences as simply as possible (Occam's Razor)
- Allow room for EL experiences that have yet to be developed
- Develop quality assurance criteria for each category that are relevant and robust
- Establish ongoing tracking and quality assurance processes that are not burdensome

Step One: Catalogue Activity

Creating EL Categories: Small Group Activity

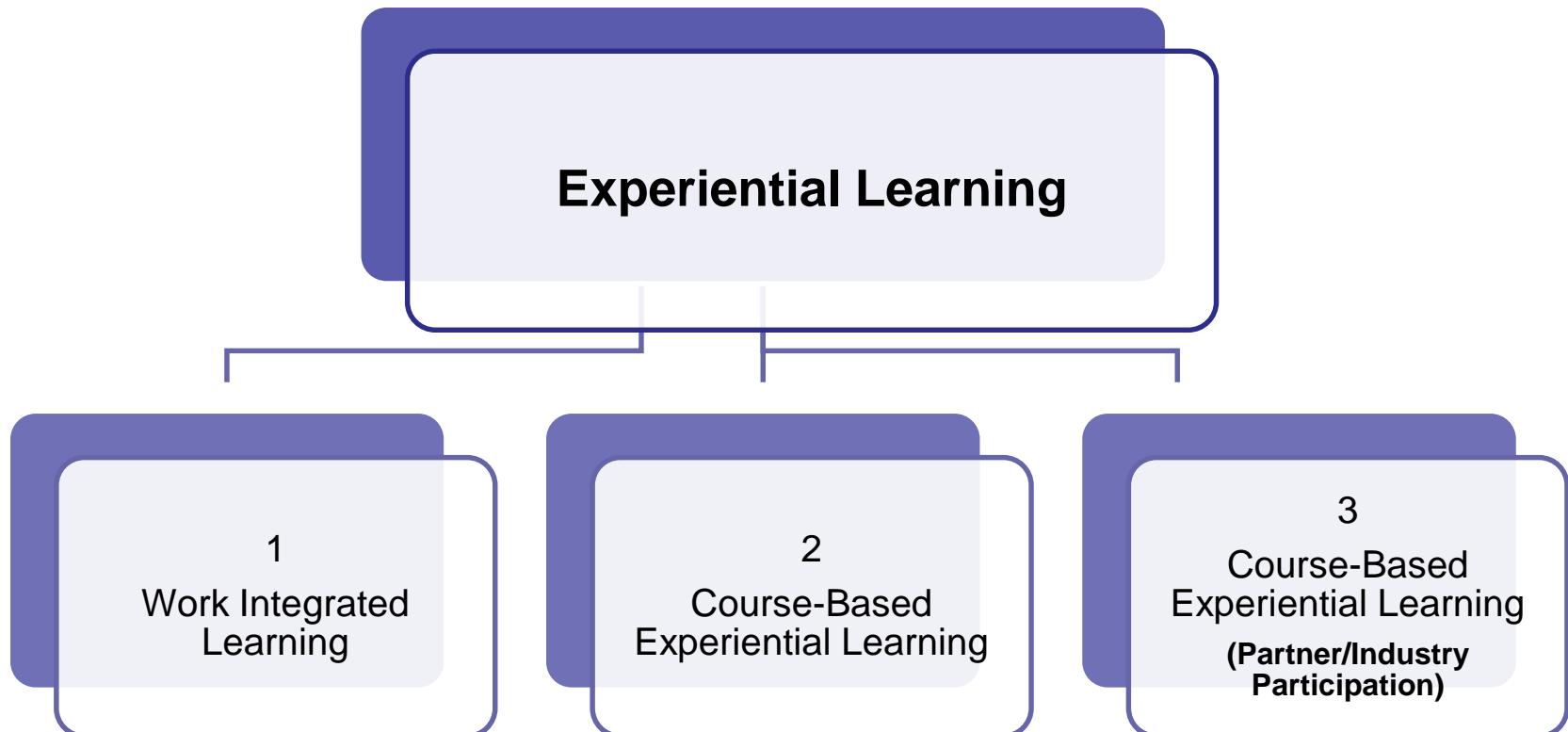
Thinking of your organization:

1. How would divide or categorize experiential learning experiences (on a high level) in order to begin the work of establishing quality assurance criteria?
2. Can you keep it to 3 -5 larger categories?



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EL Categories



Quality Criteria

Experiential Learning (EL) (Kolb, 1984):

- Hands on experience
- Reflection
- Critical analysis
- Experimentation

Work Integrated Learning (WIL) (McRae & Johnson, 2016):

- Authenticity in workplace setting
- Curricular integration – theory to practice
- Outcomes that lead to learning and employability
- Critical reflection for learning and transfer

WIL Categories Activity

Further Subdividing WIL Categories: Small Group Activity

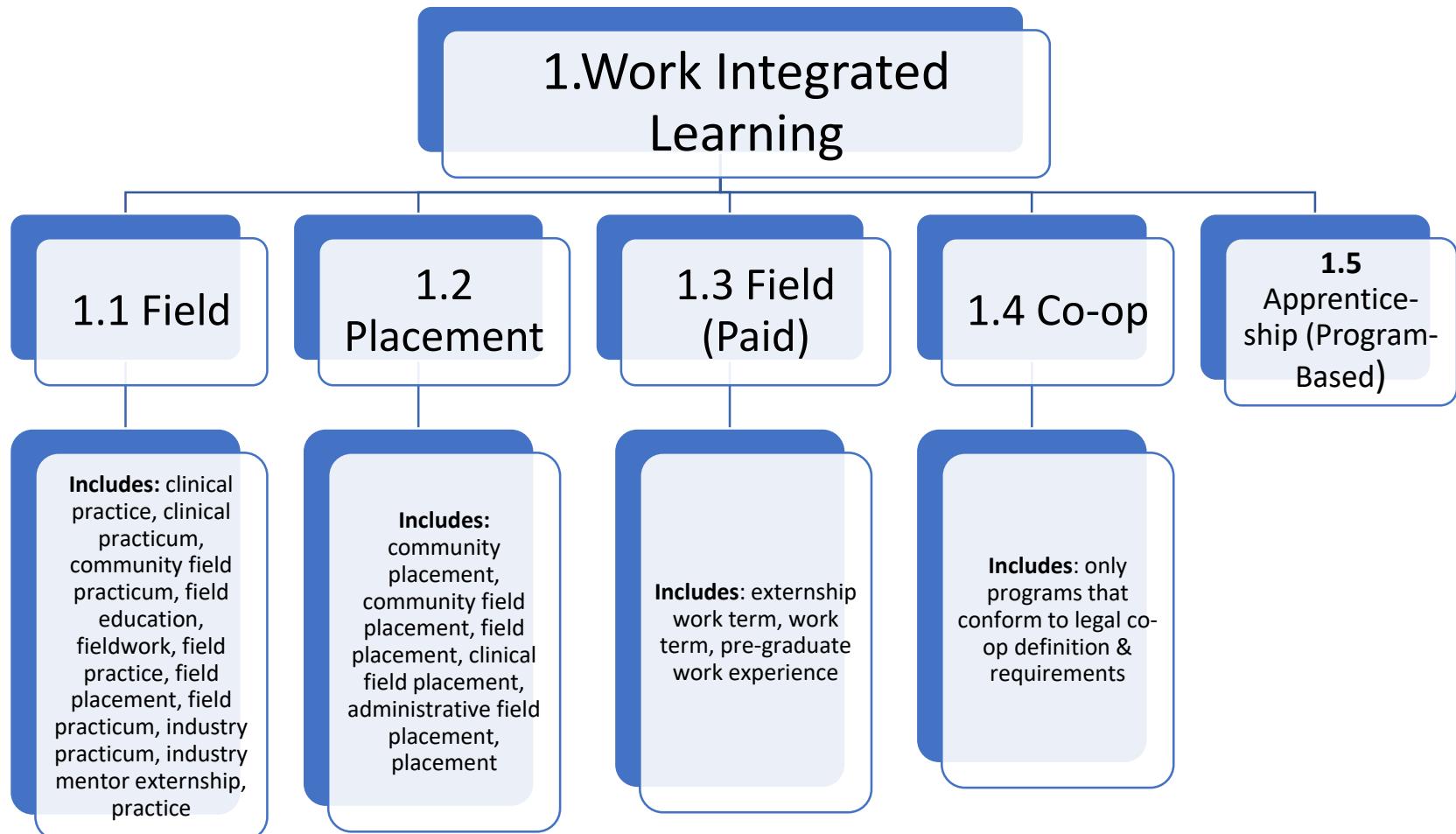
Thinking about the variations in Work Integrated Learning (WIL) in your institutions

1. What factors will need to be taken into account in further subdividing the WIL category for tracking & quality assurance purposes?



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WIL Sub-Category Example



Qualifying Criteria for WIL

All courses that **qualify** as WIL in our database:

1. The experience counts towards course credit and/or credential completion.
2. The experience formally and intentionally integrates a student's academic studies with **learning in a workplace setting**.
3. The student is exposed to authentic demands that improve their job-ready skills, interpersonal skills, and transition to the workforce.
4. The experience is structured with purposeful and meaningful activities which develop the understanding, procedures and dispositions required for effective professional practice, including criticality.
5. The experience includes student self-assessment and evaluation of the student's performance and learning outcomes by the college.

Course Based EL Sub-category Example

2. Course-based Experiential Learning

2.1 Labs; Shops; Simulations

2.2 Capstone

2.3 Applied Research

Includes: many different EL experiences and course names including but not limited to: lab, shop, simulation, studio, workshop, “experience” (see trades), applications, practical, portfolio, drafting

Includes: many different EL experiences and course names including but not limited to: capstone, project, showcase, performance, experiential thesis

Includes: market and feasibility research, research and development, industry research and development, applied research methods, research and applications

Qualifying Criteria for Course-based EL

All courses that qualify as Course-based Experiential Learning in database:

1. The experience counts towards course credit and/or credential completion.
2. Students spend a minimum of 50% of course time engaged in hands-on, sector-specific knowledge and skill development.
3. A description of the sector-specific experiential learning is included in the course description.
4. Each student receives expert, constructive feedback regarding skill demonstration at regular intervals.
5. Students are evaluated on learning outcomes that include the demonstration of sector-related practical skills.

Overview of Remainder of Workshop

We will:

- Provide detailed examples of centre, school and program level EL data
- Describe our anticipated EL data generating capabilities
- Share our plans for ongoing quality assurance processes and their integration
- Invite comments, observations, questions