

How HEIs can engage with enterprises to develop flexible work-based curricula

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Key Findings

- 1. Infrastructure and procedural developments**
- 2. Establishment of an organisational development provider network**
- 3. Business Development and Marketing**
- 4. Expansion through co-funded numbers**
- 5. Development of the University's work based curriculum**
- 6. Accreditation of in-house training to develop sustainable business relationships with employers**

Establishment of a provider network

- The providers
- Co-funding
- Building on initial training
- Working with Further Education Colleges and private providers

Business Development and Marketing

- Establish a team
- Publicity materials
- Events
- Customised programmes
- Aligning individual learning to organisational objectives
- Business Development team view from the employer perspective

Development of the work based curriculum

- A Work based learning framework curriculum within universities
- Awards across the qualification framework from pre-University, through certificates, diplomas, Bachelors, Masters and Doctorates
- Quality Assurance to approve framework titles

Accreditation of in-house training and individual experience

- Accreditation (the award of University credits for individual learning or training programmes) can be promoted as a starting point for university awards
- Accreditation plus focused work-based projects e.g. Advanced Diploma and Postgraduate Certificate in Hospitality Management

University recognition of external higher-level learning activity

- **Accreditation is the formal mechanism for the recognition of learning that is achieved outside the University's validated programmes of study.**
- **It uses the Middlesex University academic credit framework to evaluate and quantify such learning in terms of credit points at a particular academic level**
- **It operates to quality assure the learning outcomes and assessment of education and training activities delivered by employers and other organisations**
- **The recognition of learning supports personal and professional development and can be used towards the achievement of University qualifications**
- **A formal recognition that high-level knowledge, understanding and skills exist and can be developed outside of the university**

What are the components of the Work Based Learning Framework?

Review of Learning

- Reflection on prior learning gained through work/practice experience
- Situating own work/practice within the wider contexts of the relevant professional field
- Development of a claim for the accreditation of this learning

Professional Development

- Development of skills for work-based HE and planning own professional development
- Reflection on the wider contexts of work-based practice and learning
- Engagement with networks, employers, practitioners within the relevant professional field

Practitioner Inquiry

- Identification of methods of inquiry to inform own and/or others work/practice
- Inform the planning and developing of projects, inquiries or other work-based activity
- Identification and critical appraisal of relevant professional and other literature

Negotiated Work Based Learning Projects

- Negotiated learning and assessment to reflect the context of specific areas of practice
- Address real-life issues to enhance identified aspects of professional practice
- To promote innovative proposals for work/practice development and change

How Work Based Learning Framework programmes can be constructed

Required Work Based Learning Framework components

A

An Approved WBL Framework Programme Agreement

*Award Title
Negotiated Learning Outcomes
Specified Learning, Teaching and
Assessment strategies*

B

A Negotiated WBL Project Module

Required for Foundation, Bachelor's and
Master's Degree programmes

*Individually negotiated project, inquiry or
other work-based activity*

Optional Work Based Learning Framework components

C

Accredited Learning

*Prior certificated and
experiential learning,
In-company training*

D

Other
WBL Framework
Modules

E

Other
Middlesex University
Subject-based Modules

Qualifications that can be gained from a WBL Framework

<i>FHEQ Level</i>	<i>Middlesex University Awards</i>	<i>Total Credits</i>
4	University Certificate	40
4	Certificate of Higher Education	120
5	University Diploma	40
5	Higher Diploma	120
5	Diploma of Higher Education	240
5	Foundation Degree	240
6	Graduate Certificate/Advanced Diploma	60
6	Graduate Diploma	120
6	Bachelor's Degree	300
6	Bachelor's Degree with Honours	360
7	Postgraduate Certificate	60
7	Postgraduate Diploma	120
7	Master's Degree	180

Examples of WBL Framework programmes

- **Advanced Diploma and PG Cert Retail Banking Practice**
- **Certificate of Higher Education Management Practice**
- **Advanced Diploma and MSc Project Management Practice**
- **FdA Professional Practice in Leadership and Management for Care Services**
- **BA (Hons) Professional Practice in Arts**
- **MA Professional Practice in Dance Technique Pedagogy**
- **University Certificate Work Based Learning Studies (Personal and Professional Development)**
- **Postgraduate Diploma Work Based Learning Studies (Approved Clinician)**
- **FdA Professional Practice in Construction Operations Management**

The way knowledge is created and used

- Course design and candidate support
- Flexible patterns of research and development
- Critical engagement and critical reflection
- Employer engagement



Learning in the enterprise is linked with higher education learning

- Knowledge is created and used rather than codified
- Driven by real-world and real-time imperatives
- Positionality
- Complexity
- Insider knowledge
- Situatedness
- Cross and Trans-disciplinarity
- New epistemologies

Higher education institutions respond to enterprises and learner needs

Evaluation of the WBL programmes show:

- **Confidence, aspirations and expertise**
- **Intellectual skills; synthesis, judgement, “seeing the bigger picture”, self motivated**
- **Status with clients and colleagues**
- **Recognition from professional communities**
- **Greater insight into work practices**
- **Greater understanding of specific fields of expertise and wider knowledge of management, leadership and generally ‘how things work’**
- **Some experienced the WBL programme as life-changing**

Direct benefit to organisations

- The projects often made a real change in organisations
- There were raised credentials and expertise for the employee
- Improved work efficiency; ability to take on more demanding roles, being sought after as an expert.
- Employees credibility at work, more important to them than their academic achievement
- “They gave us a discipline, a way of looking at the needs of our business”

Mags Thomas, HRM manager at Toshiba Tec

WBL as Integrated Curriculum, EU funded, 2013

Work relevant curricula

Greater co-operation between HEIs and enterprises

Effective integration of WBL into the curriculum

Improving the match between graduate skills and employer's needs

Flexible pedagogies, HE Academy Report 2014

Engaging with employers in course design; p/t mode, flexible

Student and employer feedback on their expectations

Student assessment and pedagogy

Up to date thinking on curriculum/ technology in teaching.

development and implementation

Professional and personal development



- Work Based Learning as a field of study at Middlesex - 1992
- Queens Anniversary Prize for integrating formal education and employment through work-based learning 1995
- Centre of Excellence for Work Based Learning 1999
- QAA commendation for work-based learning
 - *the distinctive contribution of the Institute for Work Based Learning to the University's portfolio of educational provision – QAA 2009*
- Middlesex University Organisational Development Network – HEFCE WFD project 2009-2013
- Higher Apprenticeship development projects
- Work Based Learning Research Centre
- Doctorate in Professional Studies (DProf), DProf by Public Works – since 1997
- University Accreditation Services – APEL and accreditation of external courses
- The University Work Based Learning Curriculum Framework
- Development and delivery of WBL and Professional Practice programmes