



Learning & Teaching Enhancement Programme Case study

As a way of capturing the detail and impact of your Learning & Teaching Enhancement Project, please complete the questions below, which align with the QAA Scotland reporting template. *Please answer all questions in 200 words or fewer.* Case studies may be published on the University's website and elements may be used in reports for QAA Scotland. Project teams may be asked to contribute a Blog or Podcast to help to share project activities and outcomes. Any questions, please contact cad@abdn.ac.uk.

A Course Feedback Evaluation: Achievement of Intended Learning Outcomes, Clarity of Assessment Instructions, and Grading Processes in Work-Based Learning

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Context

This section should provide brief details about the context of the project/activity, highlighting any specific challenges and/or strategies it is intended to address.

Text in this section should not exceed **200 words**.

This project was conducted to evaluate student experiences in work-based learning (WBL) courses at different SCQF levels across the University of Aberdeen. These courses are designed to bridge academic learning with real-world professional practice by placing students in industry settings relevant to their field of study. The overall goal was to better understand students' experiences with WBL courses. Specifically, we aimed to gather insights on the achievement of intended learning outcomes, clarity of assessment instructions, and grading processes whilst understanding student experiences of WBL courses, particularly in relation to the development of professional skills, enhancing employability, and student satisfaction.

The research involved conducting semi-structured interviews with 13 participating students across 7 disciplines to capture their reflections, challenges, and achievements. Key challenges this project aims to inform include alignment between student expectations and placement realities, the quality of communication between students and hosts, the effectiveness of course coordination, and assessment purpose, communication,

grading and feedback.

Through analysis of qualitative data from student interviews, the project identified areas of success as well as opportunities for improvement. Insights will inform future course design and delivery, ensuring that WBL opportunities are impactful, inclusive, and better tailored to students' academic and professional development needs.

Description of activity

In this section, you should provide brief and descriptive details of the project/activity. Please include information on student engagement in the project here.

Text in this section should not exceed **200 words**.

The project involved a structured evaluation of student experiences in WBL courses. The research intern was actively involved in designing participation information sheets, consent form, and marketing content for the study. Recruitment was carried out via targeted marketing by the course coordinators using MyAberdeen and social media platforms to invite student participation. Thirteen students from seven different WBL courses took part in in-depth, semi-structured interviews conducted by the research intern lasting approximately 45–60 minutes each. Eleven interviews were conducted online via Microsoft Teams and two were held in person.

Students offered honest reflections on their motivations, challenges, skill development, host experiences, and assessment processes. The research intern anonymised all interview data to ensure confidentiality.

Following data collection, the research intern conducted detailed qualitative analysis to identify common themes and insights into course strengths and areas for improvement. Formal documentation of findings is being compiled to inform future course design. The work will be presented at the UoA symposium, and an abstract has been accepted for the SERA conference.

To further disseminate outcomes and engage the broader university community, an open access podcast series is being developed to share key findings and student stories in an accessible and impactful format.

Evaluation and impact

This section should provide an analysis of evaluation and impact of the project.

To support evaluative activity, institutions are encouraged to use the [resources](#) developed by Professor Stella Jones-Devitt and Dr Liz Austen, particularly the Enhancement Themes Theory of Change model and the Universal Evaluation Framework (UEF).

Text in this section should not exceed **200 words**

This project applied principles from the Universal Evaluation Framework to explore the effectiveness and impact of WBL courses. Thematic analysis revealed that students gained significant professional growth, confidence, and transferable skills. High levels of satisfaction were reported, particularly in relation to academic support and reflective assessment structures. Students generally felt intended learning outcomes were met, though some noted that closer alignment between placements and their field of study

would further enhance the experience. Assessment feedback processes were praised, with students valuing both the timeliness and quality of responses. When asked about preferred formats, most favoured video feedback over text.

However, areas for improvement were also identified, such as the need for earlier host engagement, clearer placement completion guidance, and more support on sustaining professional relationships post-placement. They also recommended more detailed course descriptions, clearer assessment instructions, and examples of past assignments to aid preparation. These findings align with the Theory of Change model by linking short-term outcomes (e.g., enhanced self-efficacy) to longer-term impacts such as employability and professional identity development.

Lessons learned and next steps

A key institutional learning from this project is the importance of preparing students early for placement engagement, both logistically and relationally. When students and hosts collaborate on shared goals from the outset, project alignment and satisfaction improve significantly. Additionally, closing the placement experience with clear guidance and strategies for maintaining professional networks was identified as a gap with strong developmental potential.

The project also reinforced that students value mixed assessment formats and clear, specific feedback tailored to their performance. These practices support deeper engagement and more meaningful learning experiences.

For the wider tertiary education sector, this work underscores the importance of student-centred evaluation and the use of creative dissemination tools (e.g. podcasts) to foster inclusive dialogue. Planned follow-on activities include wider staff briefings, sharing insights through internal learning and teaching events, informing the development of an institutional WBL policy, and adapting the model for other experiential learning contexts within the university.

References

Please provide links to any relevant websites or further information about the activity in this section.

Podcast output:

https://365abdn.sharepoint.com/teams/PROJ_ACEWBL/_layouts/15/stream.aspx?id=%2Fteams%2FPROJ%5FACEWBL%2FShared%20Documents%2FGeneral%2FFaizan%2FInterviews%2FPodcast%201%20%2D%20Faizan%20%26%20Dr%20Heather%5Faud%2Emp4&referrer=StreamWebApp%2EWeb&referrerScenario=AddressBarCopied%2Eview%2E0fc83aef%2D367f%2D4308%2Dbbfc%2Dc2fb9dfac11f&isDarkMode=true