

The CQU Diploma of Professional Practice – Explicitly Preparing WIL Students

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Professional Practice Philosophy

- Educators now need to develop graduates with attributes and abilities previously not considered core to their professional practice
- Engineers Australia accreditation of programs requires demonstration of:
 - effective communication,
 - the ability to work in multi-disciplinary teams
 - utilisation of a systems approach to design
 - an understanding of the social, cultural and ethical responsibilities of the professional engineer
 - sustainability
- Students need to not only be aware of, but have the opportunity to:
 - prepare
 - practice
 - and reflect upon these issues



Professional Practice Implementation

- Co-op Bachelor of Engineering started 1994
- Professional practice skills training delivered by faculty
- Training not formally recognised by university
 - Students received no academic credit
 - Faculty received no income
- Development of Diploma of Professional Practice in 2004



The Diploma of Professional Practice

- Diploma of Professional Practice dual award with Bachelor of Engineering (Co-op)
- Incorporated with the periods of work placement in a professional environment
- Designed around the triple themes of intellectual, social and professional development
- Requires reflection on the learning



Program Structure

- Professional development components presented in an explicit program
- Structured with internal courses delivered before and after both work placement periods
- Offered as a dual award only
- As of 2007 offered with the Physics Co-op program



YEAR	TERM 1	TERM 2
1	Lecture Based Course	Lecture Based Course
	Lecture Based Course	Lecture Based Course
	Project Based Course	Project Based Course
2	Lecture Based Course	Lecture Based Course
	Lecture Based Course	Lecture Based Course
	Project Based Course	Professional Practice Preparation 1
3	Work Experience – Industry Placement External Study Course	Project Based Course
		Lecture Based Course
		Lecture Based Course
		Professional Practice Review 1
4	Lecture Based Course	Work Experience – Industry Placement External Study Course
	Lecture Based Course	
	Professional Practice Preparation 2	
	Project Based Course	
5	Lecture Based Course	Graduation
	Lecture Based Course	
	Professional Practice Review 2	
	Project Based Course	

Professional Practice Preparation 1

- Designed to prepare the second year students for their first work placement
 - Resume and letter writing skills
 - Responding to selection criteria
 - Interview techniques
 - The transition from study to work
 - Employment contracts and conditions
 - Identifying the industry and types of employer they hope to be involved with as an engineering practitioner
 - How to evaluate their own work in terms of the Engineers Australia National Competencies
 - Critical engineering workplace issues including ethics, codes of conduct and OHS.
- Students attend the presentations given by the third year students who have just returned from their work placement



Professional Practice Review 1

- Designed to have the students reflect on their first placement
 - describe their company, their department and their employment conditions
 - description of the work that they did, what projects they were involved in and how the work was achieved
 - reflect on their competence in the position
 - reflect upon what was achieved by the work, and identify what contribution they made to the company, and the significance and value of the experience to themselves, as well as any specific learnings
 - Complete a self evaluation of their personal growth in the areas of intellectual, social and professional growth
 - articulating the change in themselves that demonstrates that the growth has occurred
 - articulate and analyse the workplace issues that they had to deal with and the solutions that they developed
 - Write a Career Episode Report for potential use in CPEng application



Professional Practice Preparation 2

- Designed to prepare the 4th year students for their second work placement
- students investigate:
 - Their skills and attributes
 - Professional responsibility
 - Career exploration
 - Career management
 - Further interview skills
 - Further review of Engineers Australia National Competencies for CPEng
- students attend the presentations by the fifth year students returning from their second work placement



Professional Practice Review 2

- Designed to have the students reflect on their second placement
 - Similar to Professional Practice Review 1
 - Additionally reflect on their career planning process, and evaluate their ability to function in their chosen career
 - Write a Career Episode Report for use in CPEng application

Conclusion

- Co-operative education is capable of informing, or even to some extent, enhancing the development of a graduate's generic skills
- Incorporating and integrating explicit professional practice skills development, enables a significant internalisation of professional practice
- Similar to one offered at the University of Technology, Sydney (UTS)
 - evidence that there is an increasing perception amongst industry and educators that the professional practice skills require explicit development and recognition