

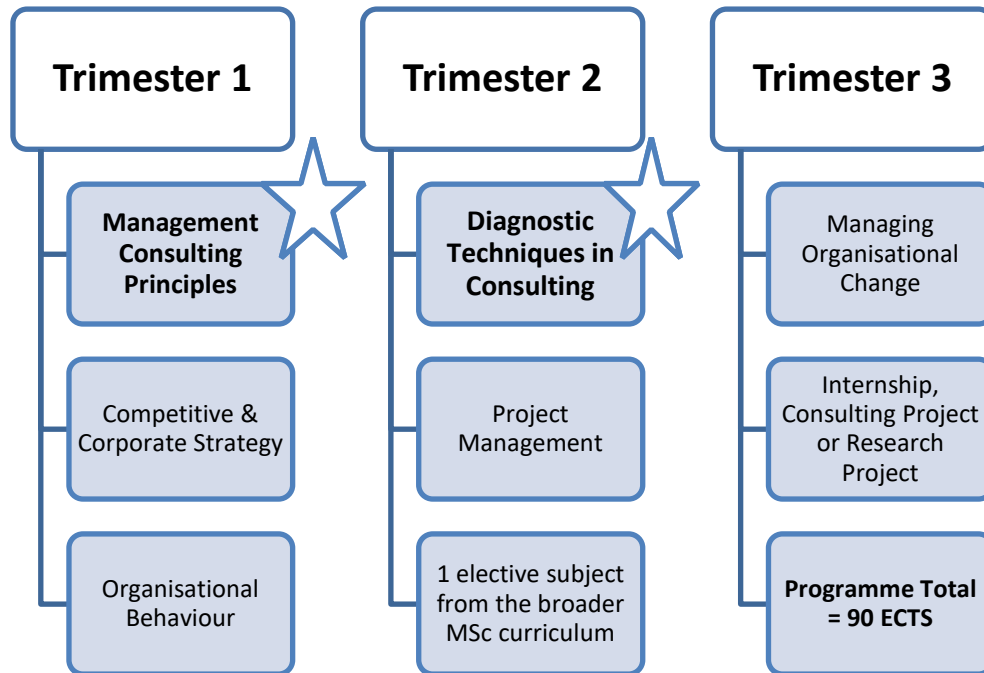
Learning with University Stakeholders in the SME Sector: The Case of Company Clinics

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EUA 2024 European Learning & Teaching Forum

Plan for Today

- Setting the Context
- Understanding Work Integrated Learning
- Case: Company Clinics
- SME Participation
- Key Findings
- Discussion

MSc in Management Consultancy: Programme Structure



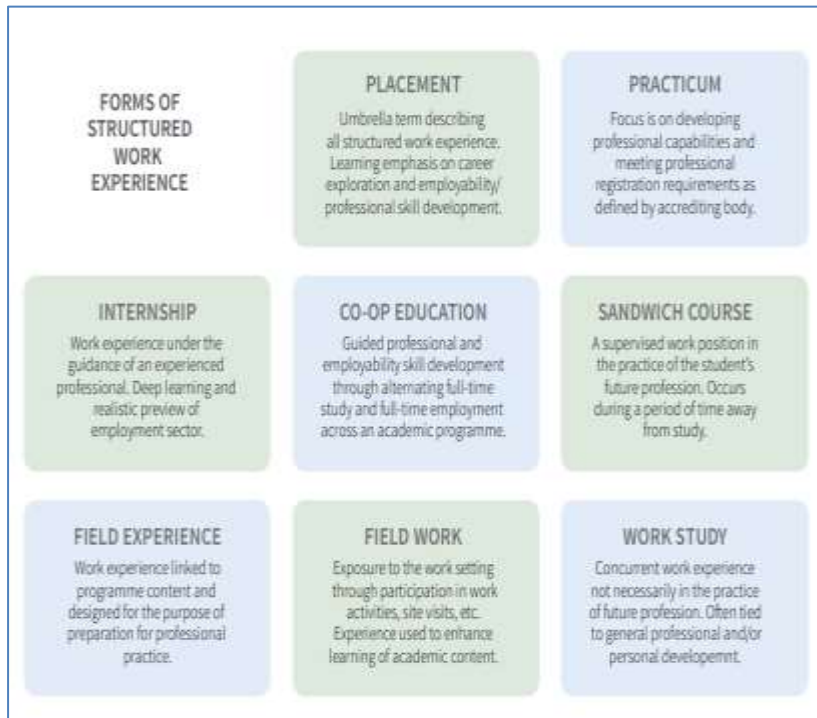
Student Profile

- 73 students
- Majority pre-experience
- Mix of nationalities
- Average age = 23

Company Clinics

- Introduced 10 years ago
- Student teams have 2 weeks to complete a consulting project for an Irish SME

Understanding Work Integrated Learning (WIL)

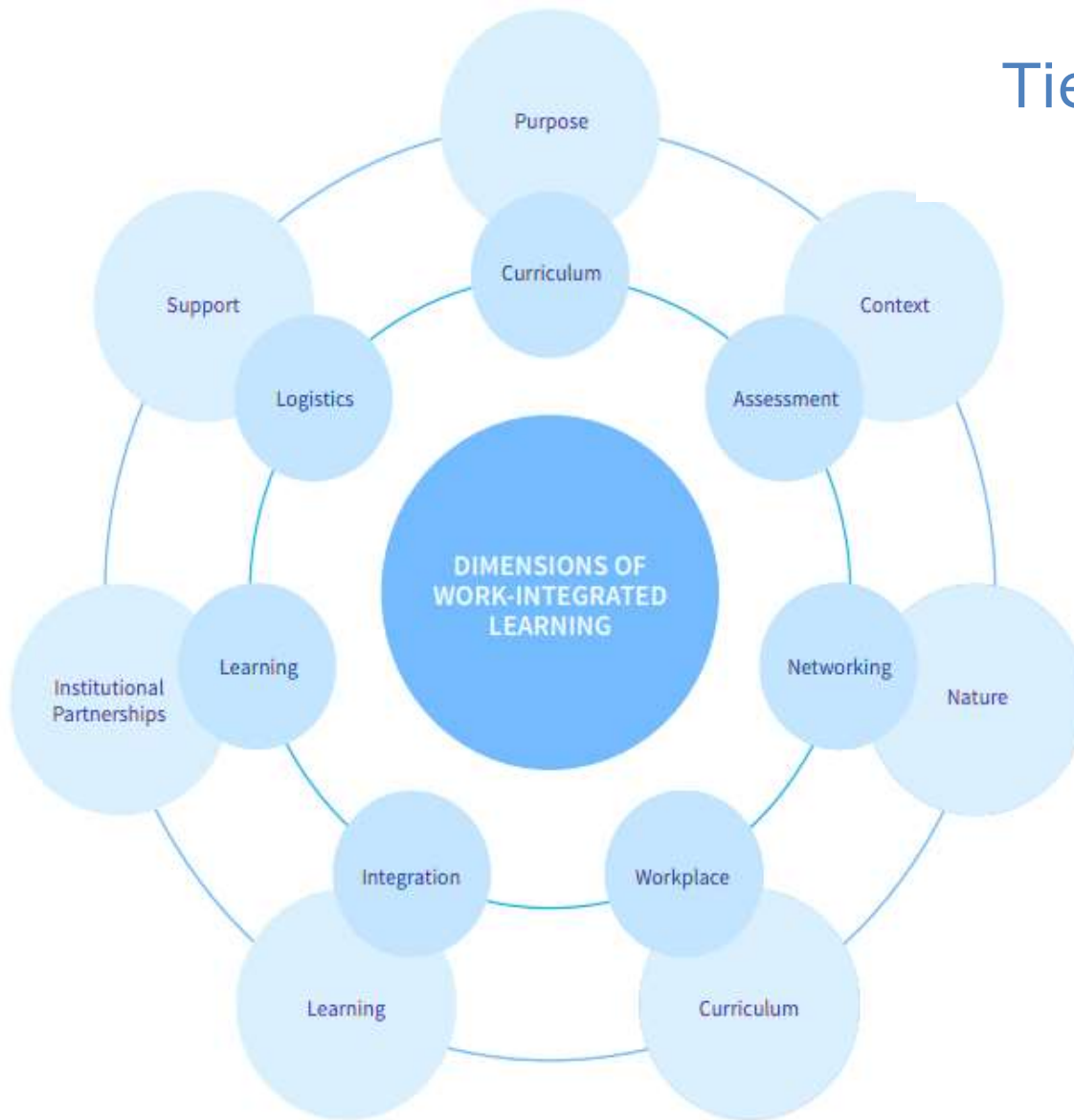


(HEQCO 2016, 34; based on O'Shea 2014)

- **Work Integrated Learning (WIL)** integrates academic learning with practical work experience. (Billett 2014)
- Students gain the opportunity to **apply theoretical knowledge in real-world settings** and enhance their understanding and skills in a specific field.
- WIL programs require **industry partners** for students to gain hands-on experience, develop professional networks, and acquire industry-specific competencies.
- Can **bridge the gap** between classroom theory and workplace practices, facilitating students' **career entry and development**.

Ties to Learning Theory

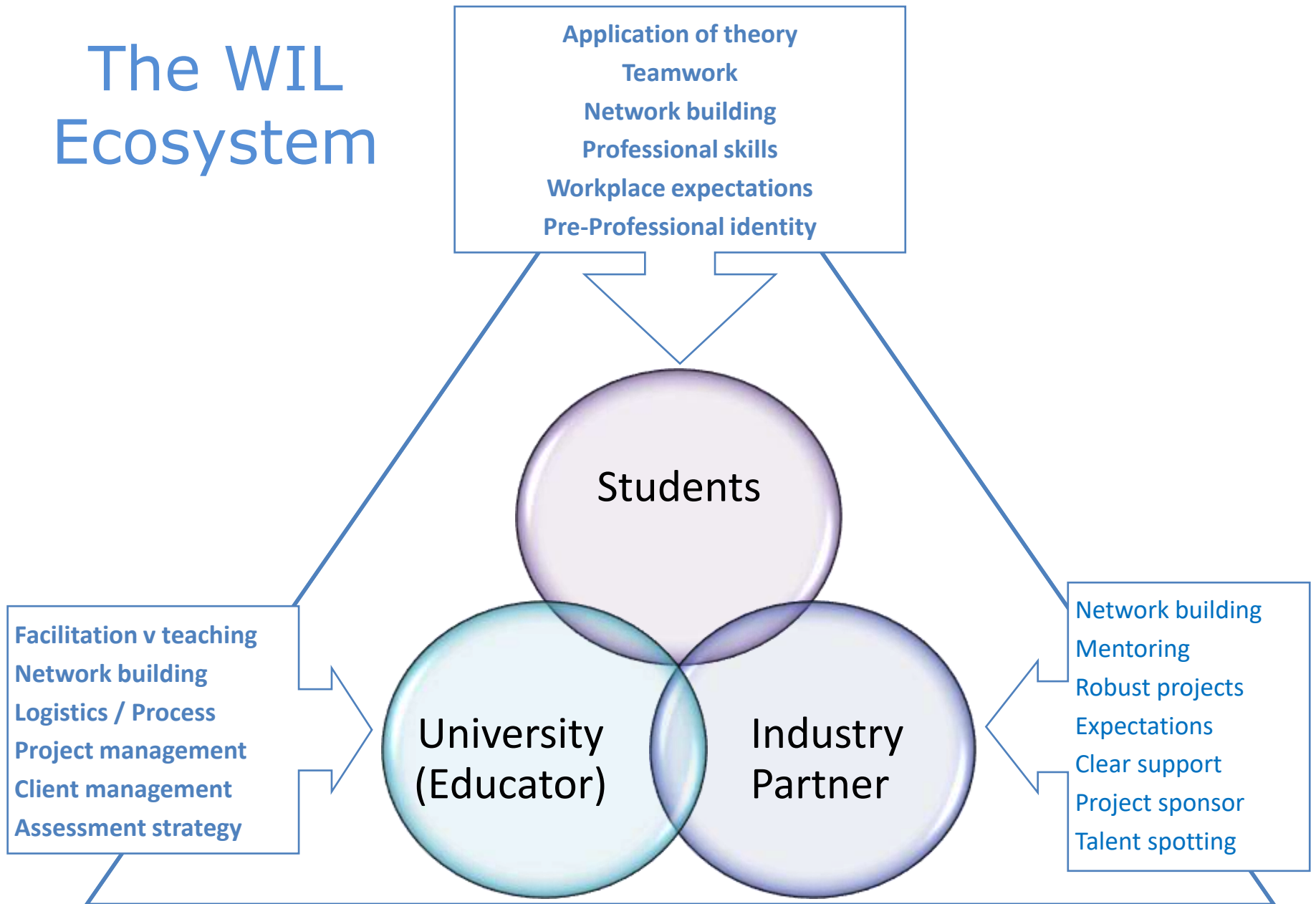
Sattler (2011) and Keating (2006)



Dimensions of WIL (Ontario 2010)

- Situated learning theory
- Action theory and boundary crossing
- Pedagogy of the workplace
- Action learning
- Transformational learning theory
- Kolb's modes experiential learning cycle

The WIL Ecosystem



(Authors' own model)

Company Clinics

- 6 clinics in total starting in week 4, with 2 student teams per clinic
- Teams receive the project brief and their client contact information on Brightspace
- Two weeks later they present their findings to the client in class
- Client companies receive copies of the presentations and a written report



SME Experiences & Overall Lessons

Brand name, serious students

'We wanted younger people looking at our business'.

'Gained In-depth insights and strategic outlook'

'Opportunity to connect as an alumnus'

'You've so many things to do and only so many hours in the day. It's great to get key insights from their research.'

'Confirmed our thinking and brought some new information'.

'Independent voice and new perspectives'

'Surprised that from a relatively low level of interaction they produced decent output. They found out a good bit about us which isn't easy to do.'

'We'd ask better questions if we had our time again'.

A time-efficient way to get valuable insights

Set out clear goals at the start

Clarify the question you need answered

Realign the student direction / focus if needed

Findings

Discussion Questions

- What practical elements have you sought to introduce to your teaching?
- What have been the challenges in doing so, or what concerns have prevented you from doing so?
- Does your university offer internships? If so, what do you see as the pros and cons?
- Will you try to use Work Integrated Learning in your teaching? If so, what format will it take? Which stakeholders will you target as partners?
- Are there any other questions or concerns that you would like to discuss or ask us about?

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