

**INFLUENCE OF WORK INTEGRATED LEARNING ON THE ENHANCEMENT OF
OFFICE MANAGEMENT AND TECHNOLOGY COMPETENCIES OF STUDENTS**

BY

NOMFUNDO GLADYS KHOZA

MASTER OF TECHNOLOGY IN BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION

In the

Faculty of Management Sciences

CENTRAL UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY, FREE STATE

SUPERVISOR: DR P. RAMBE

CO-SUPERVISOR: DR L. MEDA

DECLARATION

I Nomfundo Gladys Khoza, Student Number 210090928, do hereby declare that this dissertation submitted to Central University of Technology, Free State for the M.Tech: Business Administration is my own independent work and has not been previously submitted by me at another university. I furthermore, cede copyright of the dissertation in favour of the Central University of Technology, Free state.



SIGNATURE OF STUDENT

19 JUNE 2016

DATE



SIGNATURE OF SUPERVISOR

19 JUNE 2016

DATE



SIGNATURE OF CO-SUPERVISOR

19 JUNE 2016

DATE

DEDICATION

I dedicate this dissertation to my late parents, Mr Mzamo and Mrs Nomnikelo Khoza for their great inspiration. The dissertation is also dedicated to Sboniso Dlamini for his endless support and encouragement during the course of my studies: without him it would not have been possible for me to complete this study.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I wish to express my heartfelt gratitude to the Almighty God for meeting my every need throughout my study and guiding me to this day. I am enormously blessed. **1 Thessalonians 5:18** in everything give thanks; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.

I express my sincere appreciation and gratitude to my supervisor and mentor, Dr Patient Rambe (affectionately known by his postgraduate students as *Mufasa*), for providing me with tremendous guidance which ensured my journey's pleasant success. I will forever be grateful to him. *Ndinotenda zvikuru neruyamuro rwenyu (I am very grateful for your invaluable assistance).*

I am also grateful to my co-supervisor, Dr Lawrence Meda, for his guidance and encouragement. *Chokwadi Ishe ngavakukomborei (May the gracious Lord richly bless you).*

I thank my family, my elder sister Thandazile Khoza and brothers S'phamandla and Zenzele Khoza, for their love and patience. My gratitude is also extended to my beloved colleagues Misses Modise Disebo, Mlungwana Khanya, Moeti Evodia, Jafeta Reitumetse and Mpiti Nosiphiwe for their quality support.

Finally, I would express my appreciation to the Central University of Technology (CUT) for granting me the permission to conduct my research, which involved students and staff members as participants. I am indebted to these academics and students, without whom, this research would not have been possible. I sincerely believe that the outcomes of this research will not only benefit the CUT but the South African and other Universities of Technology in general.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

DECLARATION	I
DEDICATION.....	II
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	III
LIST OF FIGURES.....	VIII
LIST OF TABLES	IX
LIST OF ACRONYMS.....	XI
ABSTRACT	XII
CHAPTER ONE: OUTLINE OF THE INTRODUCTION	1
1.1 INTRODUCTION	2
1.1.1 <i>Definition of key concepts</i>	2
1.1.1.1 Work Integrated Learning.....	3
1.1.1.2 OMT students' competencies.....	3
1.1.1.2.1 OMT students' knowledge	4
1.1.1.2.2 OMT students' skills.....	4
1.1.1.2.3 OMT students' abilities	5
1.2 PROBLEM BACKGROUND.....	5
1.3 PROBLEM STATEMENT.....	6
1.4 AIM OF THE STUDY.....	7
1.5 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES.....	8
1.6 RESEARCH QUESTIONS.....	9
1.7 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY.....	9
1.8 LIMITATION OF THE STUDY	10
1.9 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS.....	10
1.10 STRUCTURE OF THE STUDY	11
CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW OUTLINE	12
2.1 INTRODUCTION	13
2.1.1 <i>Defining Work Integrated Learning</i>	13
2.1.2 <i>Dimensions of WIL</i>	14
2.1.3 <i>Challenges to the implementation of WIL</i>	14
2.2 THEORIES OF WORK-INTEGRATED LEARNING	15
2.2.1 <i>Experiential Learning Theory</i>	15
2.2.2 <i>Situated Learning Theory</i>	16
2.2.3 <i>Activity Theory and Boundary Crossing</i>	17
2.2.4 <i>Pedagogy of the Workplace Theory</i>	18
2.3 STUDENTS' EXPERIENCES WITHIN THE WORK ENVIRONMENT	18
2.3.1 <i>Students' Placement and assessment</i>	18
2.3.2 <i>Portfolio of Evidence</i>	20
2.3.3 <i>Professional Identity</i>	22
2.3.3.1 The challenges of developing a professional identity.....	22
2.3.3.2 WIL and professional identity development	24
2.4 STUDIES ON WIL	25
2.4.1 <i>WIL in the Australian Context</i>	26
2.4.2 <i>WIL in South African context</i>	28
2.4.3 <i>WIL in the Central University of Technology (CUT) context</i>	30

2.5	PURPOSE OF DEVELOPING OFFICE MANAGEMENT COMPETENCIES	31
2.5.1	<i>Office Management skills</i>	33
2.5.2	<i>Critical role of office management competencies to students in South Africa</i>	33
2.5.3	<i>Studies on the enhancement of OMT competencies in the European context</i>	35
2.8	SUMMARY OF THE CHAPTER	37

CHAPTER THREE: OUTLINE OF RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY..... 38

3	INTRODUCTION	39
3.1	POSITIVIST EPISTEMOLOGY	39
3.2	RESEARCH APPROACH	39
3.3	RESEARCH DESIGN	40
3.4	POPULATION.....	41
3.4.1	<i>Target population</i>	42
3.5	SAMPLE SIZE	42
3.5.1	<i>Sampling techniques</i>	42
3.5.2	<i>Data collection instruments</i>	42
3.6	QUESTIONNAIRE DESIGN.....	43
3.6.1	<i>Structure of the Questionnaire</i>	43
3.7	DATA COLLECTION	45
3.8	DATA ANALYSIS.....	45
3.9	RELIABILITY AND VALIDITY OF THE INSTRUMENTS	46
3.10	RESEARCH ETHICS	47
3.10.1	<i>Voluntary participation</i>	47
3.10.2	<i>Informed consent</i>	47
3.10.3	<i>Confidentiality/anonymity</i>	47
3.10.4	<i>Privacy</i>	48
3.11	SUMMARY OF THE CHAPTER	48

CHAPTER FOUR DATA PRESENTATION: STUDENTS' PERSPECTIVES..... 49

4.1	INTRODUCTION	49
4.2	STUDENTS' BIOGRAPHICAL SUMMARY	49
4.2.1	<i>Gender composition of the participants</i>	50
4.2.2	<i>Age composition</i>	50
4.2.3	<i>Home language distribution</i>	50
4.2.4	<i>Qualifications</i>	50
4.2.5	<i>Role in this business</i>	51
4.2.6	<i>Years of Experience</i>	51
4.2.7	<i>Years of experience in management</i>	51
4.2.8	<i>Number of employees in this business</i>	52
4.2.9	<i>Highest qualification</i>	52

STUDENTS' QUESTIONNAIRE RELIABILITY ANALYSIS..... 52

4.3	RESULTS AND DISCUSSION ON RESEARCH QUESTIONS.....	54
4.3.1	<i>Overall influence of WIL on the enhancement of students' competencies</i>	54
4.3.1.1	Planning of task/work	55
4.3.1.2	Time consciousness.....	56
4.3.1.3	Managing multiple conflicting priorities, time management, allocation of time	56
4.3.1.4	Knowledge of timeous execution of business functions	57
4.3.2	<i>Space management knowledge</i>	58
4.3.2.1	Handling paperwork	58

4.3.2.2	Knowledge of managing space and adapting to new technology	59
4.3.2.3	Knowledge of managing space	59
4.3.3	<i>Skills learning</i>	60
4.3.3.1	Computer, technical, oral and leadership skills	61
4.3.3.2	Computer and technical skills	61
4.3.3.3	Leadership skills	61
4.3.3.4	Team leadership.....	62
4.3.4	<i>Abilities enhancement</i>	62
4.3.4.1	Creativity and the ability to operate office machines	63
4.3.4.2	Ability to follow procedures	64
4.3.4.3	Leadership and ability to maintain confidence.....	64
4.4	STUDENTS' PERSPECTIVES ON THE EFFECTS OF WIL PROGRAMMES ON THE BROADENING OF OMT COMPETENCIES	64
4.4.1	<i>Effects on Content Selection</i>	65
4.4.1.1	Familiarization with space management.....	66
4.4.1.2	Students' enhanced knowledge	66
4.4.1.3	Adaptive knowledge	66
4.4.1.4	Task management knowledge	67
4.4.2	<i>Effects on course organisation</i>	67
4.4.2.1	Exploratory factor analysis for Course Organisation	67
4.4.3	<i>Effects on Course Organisation sub-construct 1 (Factor 1)</i>	69
4.4.3.1	Written, leadership and listening skills.....	70
4.4.3.2	Improved technical skills	70
4.4.3.3	Lesson plans	71
4.4.4	<i>Effects on Course Organisation sub-construct 2 (Factor 2)</i>	72
4.4.4.1	Content relevance	72
4.4.4.2	Content relevance improved knowledge	73
4.4.5	<i>Effects on Course Organisation sub-construct 3 (Factor 3)</i>	74
4.4.5.1	Oral skills.....	74
4.4.5.2	Quality of the content	75
4.4.6	<i>Effects on Teaching Modalities</i>	75
4.4.6.1	Space management.....	77
4.4.6.2	Knowledge of organisational functions	79
4.4.6.3	Practical orientation	79
4.4.6.4	Effects on Technology Assisted Curricula Delivery.....	79
4.4.6.5	Computational skills	80
4.4.6.6	Computational and technical skills.....	81
4.5	CORRELATIONS BETWEEN WORK INTEGRATED LEARNING AND STUDENTS' PERSPECTIVES	81

CHAPTER FIVE: EDUCATORS AND ORGANISATIONAL PERSPECTIVES 85

5.1	ANALYSIS OF EDUCATORS' DATA.....	85
5.2	EDUCATORS' BIOGRAPHICAL SUMMARY	85
5.3	RESULTS AND DISCUSSION ON RESEARCH QUESTIONS FOR EDUCATORS	87
5.3.1	<i>Educators' perceptions of the office management knowledge they consider foundational to students' effective participation in WIL programmes at CUT</i>	87
5.3.1.1	Time management knowledge.....	87
5.3.1.2	Space management knowledge	88
5.3.1.3	Task management knowledge.....	88
5.3.1.4	Knowledge of emerging technology	90
5.3.2	<i>Educators' perspectives on the influence of WIL programmes in broadening office management and technology skills and abilities</i>	90
5.3.2.1	Skills	91
5.3.2.1.1	Computer and technical skills.....	91
5.3.2.2	Abilities	92

5.4	ANALYSIS OF THE ORGANISATIONAL WORK FORCES' PERSPECTIVES ON THE INFLUENCE OF WIL ..	93
5.5	ORGANISATIONAL WORK FORCE'S BIOGRAPHICAL SUMMARY	94
5.5.1	<i>Gender</i>	94
5.5.2	<i>Age group</i>	94
5.5.3	<i>Language background of the organisational workforce</i>	95
5.5.4	<i>Highest qualification</i>	95
5.5.5	<i>Role in the business</i>	95
5.5.6	<i>Distribution of years of experience on the job</i>	95
5.5.7	<i>Years of experience in management</i>	96
5.5.8	<i>Number of employees in the business</i>	96
5.5.9	<i>Academic attainments of the organisational workforce</i>	96
5.6	RESULTS AND DISCUSSION ON RESEARCH QUESTIONS FOR THE ORGANISATIONAL WORKFORCE.....	97
5.6.1	<i>Time management knowledge considered by organisational workforce</i>	97
5.6.2	<i>Timeous Knowledge</i>	98
5.6.3	<i>Space management knowledge</i>	98
5.6.4	<i>Task management knowledge</i>	99
5.6.5	<i>Knowledge of Microsoft</i>	100
5.6.6	<i>Task management knowledge (2)</i>	100
5.6.7	<i>Time management knowledge (2)</i>	102
5.6.8	<i>Space management knowledge (2)</i>	103
5.6	ORGANISATIONAL WORK FORCE'S PERSPECTIVES ON THE INFLUENCE OF WIL PROGRAMMES IN BROADENING OFFICE MANAGEMENT AND TECHNOLOGY COMPETENCIES	104
5.7.1	<i>Student skills impacted by WIL placements</i>	104
5.7.2	<i>Student abilities impacted by WIL placements</i>	105
5.8	SUMMARY OF THE CHAPTER	106
 CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS		107
6.1	INTRODUCTION	107
6.2	CONCLUSION BASED ON THE LITERATURE	108
6.3	CONCLUSION BASED ON EMPIRICAL RESEARCH	109
6.4	RECOMMENDATIONS.....	112
6.4.1	<i>Recommendations for policy</i>	113
6.4.2	<i>Recommendations for practice</i>	114
6.4.3	<i>Implications for future research</i>	115
6.5	LIMITATIONS	116
6.6	CONCLUDING REMARKS	116
 REFERENCES.....		118
AUTHORS BIOGRAPHY		127
ANNEXURE A		128
ANNEXURE B		130
ANNEXURE C		131
ANNEXURE D		153

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1.1 Chapter one flow diagram.....	1
Figure 2.1 Chapter two flow diagram	12
Figure 2.2 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK	356
Figure 3.1 Chapter 3 Flow diagram	388

LIST OF TABLES

Table 4.1. Biographical information for students	49
Table 4.2. Reliability Analysis (Student questionnaire).....	53
Table 4.3. Overall influence of WIL on the enhancement of Knowledge.....	55
Table 4.4 Space management knowledge.....	58
Table 4.5 Skills Learning.....	60
Table 4.6. Abilities Enhancement.....	63
Table 4.7 Lectures content selection	65
Table 4.8. KMO and Bartlett's Test for course organisation questions	67
Table 4.9. Exploratory factor analysis for course organisation questions	68
Table 4.10. Effects on Course Organisation 1	69
Table 4.11. Effects Course organisation 2.....	72
Table 4.12. Course Organisation 3	74
Table 4.13. KMO and Bartlett's Test for Teaching Modalities questions.....	75
Table 4.14. Exploratory factor analysis for Teaching Modalities questions.....	76
Table 4.15. Teaching modalities 1	77
Table 4.16. Teaching modalities 2.....	78
Table 4.17 Technology Assisted Curricula Delivery	80
Table 4.18: Correlations between Work Integrated Learning and Students' Perspectives.....	82
Table 5.1 Biographical information for educators	86
Table 5.2 Time management knowledge.....	87
Table 5.3. Space management knowledge.....	88
Table 5.4. Task management knowledge	89
Table 5.5 Skills.....	91
Table 5.6. ABILITIES.....	92
Table 5.7. Organisational work force's biographical summary	94
Table 5.8. Time management knowledge considered critical to student participation in WIL by organisational workforce	97
Table 5.9 Space management knowledge of students considered critical to participation in WIL by organisational workforce	98
Table 5.10 Task management knowledge considered critical to student participation in WIL by the organisational workforce	99

Table 5.11 Task management knowledge considered by organisational workforce as critical to student engagement in WIL.....	101
Table 5.12 Time management knowledge (2) considered by organisational workforce as critical to student participation in WIL.....	102
Table 5.13 Space management knowledge (2) considered by the organisational workforce as critical to student participation in WIL.....	103
Table 5.14. STUDENTS' SKILLS IMPACTED BY WIL PLACEMENTS.....	104
Table 5.15. STUDENTS' ABILITIES IMPACTED BY WIL PLACEMENTS	105

LIST OF ACRONYMS

Acronym	Full words
WIL	Work Integrated Learning
OMT	Office Management and Technology
CUT	Central University of Technology
UoTs	University of Technologies
SA	South Africa
SETA	Sector Education and Training Authorities
HEIs	Higher Educational Institutions
N.Dip	National Diploma
ICTs	Information and Communication Technologies
SMME	Small, Micro and Medium Enterprise
CV	Curriculum Vitae
BIHECC	Business Industry and Higher Education Collaboration Council
GAP	Graduate Attributes Programme
ACEN	Australian Collaborative Education Network

ABSTRACT

This study draws on the existence of a highly demanding business context marked by aggressive graduate competition for successful placements, and companies' demand for an assortment of work-related competencies (knowledge, skills and abilities), which demands the university curriculum to embrace Work Integrated Learning (WIL), in its exploration of the contribution of WIL in preparing Office Management and Technology (OMT) students at the Central University of Technology (CUT) for the world of work. The study particularly examines the perceptions of CUT educators, students and the organisational workforce (business owners who render attachments/WIL experience to students) with regard to the way in which WIL enhances students' professional competencies. Since WIL is widely conceived as an educational approach that aligns academic and workplace practices for the mutual benefit of students and workplaces, a survey involving educators, students and organisational workforce (employers, management and employees) involved in WIL was conducted to unravel the relationships between student participation in WIL and the enhancement of their OMT competencies. The findings of this study suggest that students' participation in WIL develops their competencies and prepares them to adapt sufficiently in the real world of work. This quantitative study revealed that competencies acquired by OMT students during their successful placements are transferable across a wide range of contexts, activities and tasks. The study draws from awareness of many challenges that face WIL to recommend that the need for a strengthening of the partnership between organised industry and higher education in order to develop more communication that focuses on the placement of the students who need to complete their WIL programmes.

CHAPTER ONE: OUTLINE OF THE INTRODUCTION

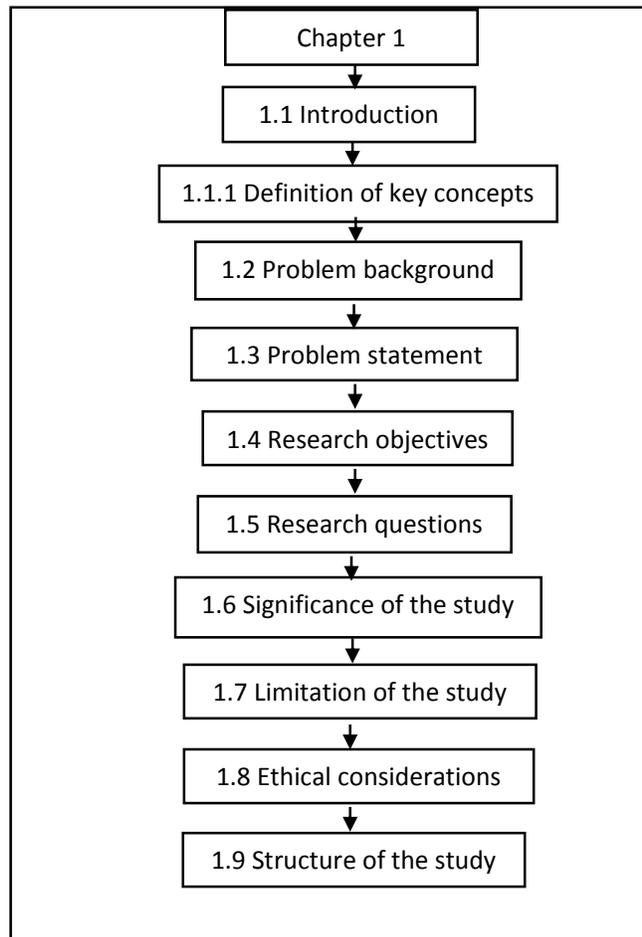


Figure 1.1 Chapter one flow diagram

1.1 INTRODUCTION

This study focuses on the contribution of Work Integrated Learning (WIL) to the enhancement of office management competencies, which are the knowledge, skills and abilities, of Office Management and Technology (OMT) students at the Central University of Technology (CUT) in Bloemfontein, Free State. Work Integrated Learning (WIL) is an umbrella term for a range of approaches and strategies that integrate theory with the practice of work within a purposefully designed curriculum (Patrick, Peach, Pocknee, Webb, Fletcher & Pretto, 2008). In the OMT context, WIL encompasses curricular, pedagogic and practical assessment practices across a range of academic disciplines that integrate formal learning and practical Office Management and Technology competencies. Although work simulations are professional manifestations of integrating the work context into OMT curricular requirements and activities, what remains speculative in mainstream literature is whether WIL has fundamental qualitative benefits for the individual students (Biggs, 2003), in particular the enhancement of OMT competencies.

Mainstream literature reports that WIL improves the capacity of students to adapt swiftly and flexibly to the demands of work (Sattler, 2011) and increases the relevance of knowledge acquired in academic contexts through its congruence to the requirements of the work place. Schilling and Klamma (2010) highlight that WIL offers a dual emphasis on the development of the learner and the organisation by impacting contextual learning that is founded on the theory of constructivism. This unfolds as learners make meanings by contextualising the content acquired within a learning environment in the workplace. As such, the demand for WIL among students has become more acute due to the impact of globalisation on the workplace, which requires management skills to respond decisively to rapid technological and knowledge changes (Northedge, Cloete & Chapman, 2005).

1.1.1 Definition of key concepts

Various working definitions of the main concepts adopted for this study are outlined below in an effort to avoid misinterpretations and lack of clarity in this study.

1.1.1.1 Work Integrated Learning

The term Work Integrated Learning describes an approach to career-focused education including classroom-based and workplace-based forms of learning that are appropriate for a relevant professional qualification (Winberg, Engel-Hills, Garraway & Jacobs, 2011). According to Bourner and Millican (2011), WIL, hereinafter referred to as experiential learning, is an integral component of various programmes at the Central University of Technology (CUT), in Bloemfontein, Free State, South Africa. One of CUT's programmes, the National Diploma in Office Management and Technology (N.Dip OMT), stipulates the successful completion of WIL by learners as a basis for the award and conferment of this qualification. The OMT diploma at CUT can be conceived as a rebranded version of Secretarial and Clerical studies programme given the prominence of typing, clerical, secretarial, telephone handling and technology related duties in this programme. However, the identity of office management and technologists needs to be understood as transcending that of being "glorified secretaries as it embraces distinct knowledge and skills such as project management and technology management skills" (Winberg, Engel-Hills, Garraway & Jacobs, 2011:5). Therefore, WIL aligns academic and workplace practices for the mutual benefit of students and workplaces and should be demonstrably appropriate for the qualification concerned (Northedge, *et al.*, 2005).

1.1.1.2 OMT students' competencies

Competency is a term that is used in both scientific and everyday language. Scholtz (2007:67) defines competency as "the capability to apply or use a set of related knowledge, skills, and abilities required to successfully perform critical work functions or tasks in a defined work setting". Ferreira and Van Antwerpen (2012) highlight that office management and technology personnel include: secretaries, personal assistants, executive assistants, office managers and office coordinators in all types of businesses, who perform a variety of tasks such as clerical work, telephone reception work, stenography, computer programming, document compilation and the management of information and communication systems. While office management has focused traditionally on file handling, typing, reception and other secretarial duties, the portfolio of this profession has expanded with the advent of information and communication technologies (ICTs). As a result, office management now includes the managing of computer documents, basic programming and computer-based

communication such as Skyping (Voice Over Internet Protocol). The effective application of these skills in the work environment means that substantial levels of “analysis and reasoning, research, problem solving, and oral communication skills” (Van Zyn, 2013:162) are required to prepare students adequately for the complex work environment. This raises critical questions about the possible impact of WIL on the enhancement of OMT competencies. The competencies are discussed below:

1.1.1.2.1 OMT students’ knowledge

Knowledge is the fact or condition of knowing something owing to familiarity gained through experience or association (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2004). There are however many possible and plausible definitions of knowledge. A frequently used definition states knowledge as ideas or understandings which an individual or entity, such as an organisation possesses and uses to take effective action (Wilton, 2012) and achieve the individual's or entity's goal(s). Therefore, the OMT programme equips students with knowledge on how to engage in important tasks and in that way, making the students function better in organisational settings.

1.1.1.2.2 OMT students’ skills

Magnus (2014) defines a skill as the ability to use one’s knowledge effectively and readily in the execution of performance and describes it as the power or habit of doing things competently. Magnus (2014) opines that this definition underscores a skill as based on using knowledge expertly; the objective of which is to bring that knowledge to a maximum level of competency. Therefore, the acquisition of practical skills can be described in terms of learners’ behaviour and their willingness to learn a particular skill to the maximum level expected of them for gainful employment in the global labour market (Wilton, 2012). In the same way, OMT education can be conceived as providing skills, knowledge and attitudes necessary for effective employment in secretarial and management occupations. It is on the basis of this understanding that WIL is considered as a potential avenue for the acquisition and enhancement of vocational skills that seek to improve the autonomy and self-reliance of students in the work environment. Mindful of the diversity of competencies expected of office managers and the ever-expanding portfolio they manage. WIL is considered by the OMT department at CUT as an integral component of office management programme delivery, and an effective instrument for enhancing

professional practice and developing management knowledge, skills and abilities among students (Wilton, 2012). In fact, WIL is widely regarded as a point of difference in developing graduate employability as it enhances the students' office and general management competencies such as knowledge of time consciousness, computer and technical skills, and creative thinking abilities (Northedge, *et al.*, 2005). Therefore, office management skills for the OMT programme, where a range of competencies in managing customers, general human relations, technology, time coordination of clerical tasks and secretarial duties, are considered as critical in breaching the gap between disciplinary (i.e. OMT) knowledge and the demands of the corporate sector for more complex decision making, flexible action and multitasking.

1.1.1.2.3 OMT students' abilities

Abilities can be defined as a cognitive function involving the creative potential to generate new ideas and concepts, and to think divergently and productively in an academic domain. In this regard, the study support the viewpoint of Meintjes and Grosser (2010) that abilities undergird creative thinking such as solving problems in ways that show initiative as well as develop, implement and lead in the production of new ideas.

1.2 PROBLEM BACKGROUND

South Africa's higher educational institutions (HEIs) are often criticized for producing graduates who are theoretically competent and ill-equipped to deal with the real complexities of the world of work (Ferreira & van Antwerpen, 2012). This problem is often attributed to curricula that are silo-based and focus on deepening disciplinary knowledge rather than strengthening the professional competence of students. Pienaar (2010) observes that employers often complain that graduates lack the necessary office managerial skills and competencies critical to their full integration into workplace. In the same vein, Van Wyk and Daniels (2004) concede that most South African graduates possess inadequate work place management skills. While there is a general recognition of inadequate managerial skills (Van Wyk & Daniels, 2004; Pienaar, 2010; Meintjes & Niemann-Struweg, 2011), these authors propose different interventions to mitigate this challenge. For instance, while Pienaar (2010) implores university educators to use appropriate pedagogies (e.g. authentic assessments) in

order to prepare students sufficiently for the workplace, Meintjes and Niemann-Struweg (2011) propose experiential learning alternatives (such as internships) as invaluable components of professional development for South African students. The South African context, where possession of relevant experience has become a key requirement for successful placement and retention of graduates (Orrell, 2004), demands an authentic assessment on disciplinary knowledge that critically foregrounds students into inquiry-based learning, which at the same time offsets the general sense of graduate work environment inadequateness within South Africa.

The demand for secretaries, office managers, and office administrators in South Africa has increased due to the expansion of government departments in the post-apartheid era, and the rise of the small, medium and micro-enterprise (SMME) sector as well as other non-governmental organisations. In February 2010, the Association for Office Professionals of South Africa had a membership of just under 30 000, of whom fewer than 5% were males (Ferreira & van Antwerpen, 2012). The population of male secretaries in the government sector has however, been increasing slowly (Ferreira & van Antwerpen, 2012). This large demand for secretaries, office managers, and administrators triggers stiffer graduate competition for the fewer available jobs and prompts more stringent corporate sector demands for complex management skills, competencies and abilities from the OMT graduates. These complexities point to the importance of WIL as a means of preparing students to adequately meet the challenges and demands of the corporate sector (Patrick, *et al.*, 2008) and as a strategic lever for overcoming a highly competitive work environment. It comes as no surprise that organisations in competitive contemporary markets, are demanding that any investment in learning be converted into productive outcomes that rapidly progress the organisation towards pre-defined strategic goals (Wilton, 2012). As such, WIL is one possible expression of this conversion of disciplinary knowledge into productive outcomes.

1.3 PROBLEM STATEMENT

An increase in the number of unemployed graduates in South Africa (SA) is well documented in the literature (Patrick, *et al.*, 2008; Wilton, 2012). One of the major explanations for the rise in unemployed graduates is the reluctance, by prospective employers, to employ inexperienced graduates (Tucker & McCarthy, 2010) due to the

need for additional training, such as graduate trainee programmes and the financial costs associated with it. Brookfield (2012) concurs that employers often prefer employing individuals with experience and sophisticated office management skills for the good reputation of their organisations and to increase organisational profit.

More so, organisations often require graduates who are self-starters as they are concerned about rescheduling work and loss of production time, owing to the deployment of experienced staff into training programmes for the novices. Since the 21st century office management demands for students, academics and the institution make WIL more complex but relevant (Patrick, *et al.*, 2008), it becomes conceivable that WIL be made an integral part of the OMT curricula. Many new graduates find it difficult to obtain relevant pre-work experience, due to lack of training and an absence of graduate studies with a complete package of Work Integrated Learning in their faculties (Bourner & Millican, 2011). As a result, student participation in WIL should become a pre-condition for graduation in all faculties where practical experience is considered necessary for successful placement. Nonetheless, it is anticipated that the vigorous pursuit of research into WIL can potentially optimise the credibility and “graduateness” of university students, as some of the students hardly have the resources to complete the compulsory WIL, especially in cases where students have to look for their own placements (Van Zyn, 2005).

The problem, therefore, is that while there is general consensus at SA universities on the potential of WIL to improve student preparedness for work, there is lack of evidence on the exact impact of WIL on the enhancement of knowledge, skills and abilities of the OMT graduates and on performance of the organisation where WIL takes place (Kundasami, 2007).

1.4 AIM OF THE STUDY

The aim of the study is to contribute empirical knowledge to the growing body of literature on WIL and work preparedness by exploring how WIL influences and impacts a compendium of disciplinary and professional knowledge, skills and abilities (i.e. competencies) of university students (Cooper, Orrel & Bowden, 2010; Mcilveen, Mcnamara, Kift, Butler, Field, Brown & Gamble, 2012).

1.5 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The main research objective is to examine the overall influence of WIL on the enhancement of competencies of the OMT students who are attached to organisations during WIL.

The minor research objectives are:

1. To examine the students' perspectives on the effect of WIL programmes on the broadening of their office management and technology competencies (skills and abilities).
2. To explore the educators' perceptions of the office management knowledge they consider foundational to effective participation in WIL programmes at CUT.
3. To examine the educators' perspectives on the influence of WIL programmes on the broadening office management and technology competencies.
4. To investigate the organisational workforce's perceptions of the office management knowledge they consider foundational to students' effective participation in their organisations.
5. To examine the organisational workforce' perspectives on the influence of WIL programmes on the broadening of office management and technology competencies.

1.6 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The main research question is:

What is the overall influence of WIL on the enhancement of competencies of OMT students who are attached to organisations during WIL?

The subsidiary research questions are as follow:

1. What are the students' perspectives on the influence of WIL programmes in broadening their office management and technology competencies (skills and abilities)?
2. What are the educators' perceptions of the office management knowledge they consider foundational to effective participation in WIL programmes at CUT?
3. What are the educators' perspectives on the influence of WIL programmes in broadening office management and technology competencies?
4. What are the organisational workforces' perceptions of the office management knowledge they consider foundational to students' effective participation in their organisations?
5. What are the organisational workforce' perspectives on the influence of WIL programmes in broadening office management and technology competencies?

1.7 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The participant triangulation method is employed in this study. The method covers three types of participants, the organisational workforce, educators, and students, who provided a multi-pronged perspective on understandings of the impact of WIL in broadening the OMT students' competencies. This participant triangulation is critical to establishing whether WIL makes a significant contribution to OMT graduates' work and industry-readiness, as well as in preventing a unilinear and monologue perspective on the matter (Wilton, 2012).

The significance of this study lies in the enrichment of the current body of fundamental professional knowledge by demonstrating those competencies most impacted by

student participation in WIL (Kemmis & Smith, 2008). The multiple perspectives brought by the educators, students and organisational workforce will benefit the CUT by ensuring that pedagogical and labour market outcomes of WIL are understood and considered by all and not by different parties (Cooper, Orrel & Bowden, 2010). For the OMT students, the benefits relate to their adequate preparation for the workplace, their improved reflective capacities, enhanced lifelong learning, and more acquaintance with the world-of-work (Dressler & Keeling, 2007). The advancement of CUT's niche areas at diploma levels depends on integrating WIL into most of its programmes. As a result, the integration makes the students more employable because of their diplomas' "hands-on" training, and therefore, an improvement of the quality of WIL should be high on the agenda of the institution (Schilling & Klamma, 2010:42).

1.8 LIMITATION OF THE STUDY

The survey was limited to educators and mentors, students and the organisational workforce who participated in the WIL programme. As a result, the findings from the current study only capture the views of these participants and excludes those of non-participants.

Although a quantitative study was relevant to the unravelling of the relationships between the aforementioned concepts, it may be inadequate for providing multiple realities or perspectives on a complex subject matter such as WIL (Nyström, 2009). Nevertheless, the use of participant triangulation provided a basis for the development of diverse perspectives from different participants of the WIL programme at CUT.

1.9 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

The researcher ensured that the research was conducted in the most ethical way. Firstly, privacy and anonymity of the respondents were ensured. These were guaranteed through a concealment of the survey respondents' personal identities by, for instance, preventing the capturing of their names, residential location and contact details, and reporting the results in aggregate form to protect their identities. Anonymity is ensured through the research report's none reference to individuals or organisations' identities (Brookfield & Holst, 2011). The ethical principle of informed disclosure was adhered to by informing participants the purpose of this research, the average duration for its completion by typical participants, and that there were no

financial incentives for participating in the study. Participants were also informed that they could withdraw from the study without any threat of sanctions or threats. The ethical issues, pertaining to this study are discussed further in Chapter 3. The next section outlines how this report is structured.

1.10 STRUCTURE OF THE STUDY

Chapter 1 introduces the study. It also defines the concepts used in the study and outlines its problem statement, the research aim and objectives, research questions, significance of the study and its limitation, as well as the ethical considerations to the study.

Chapter 2 reviews literature on work integrated learning. It reviews the definition of WIL, its perceived benefits, and potential to enhance OMT competencies of students, as well as its implications for organisational performance.

Chapter 3 outlines the research methodology adopted in this study.

Chapter 4 analyses data from students who were participating in the study and presents as well as discuss the results.

Chapter 5 analyses data from educators and organisational workforce's as well as discuss the findings.

Chapter 6 presents recommendations and conclusions.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW OUTLINE

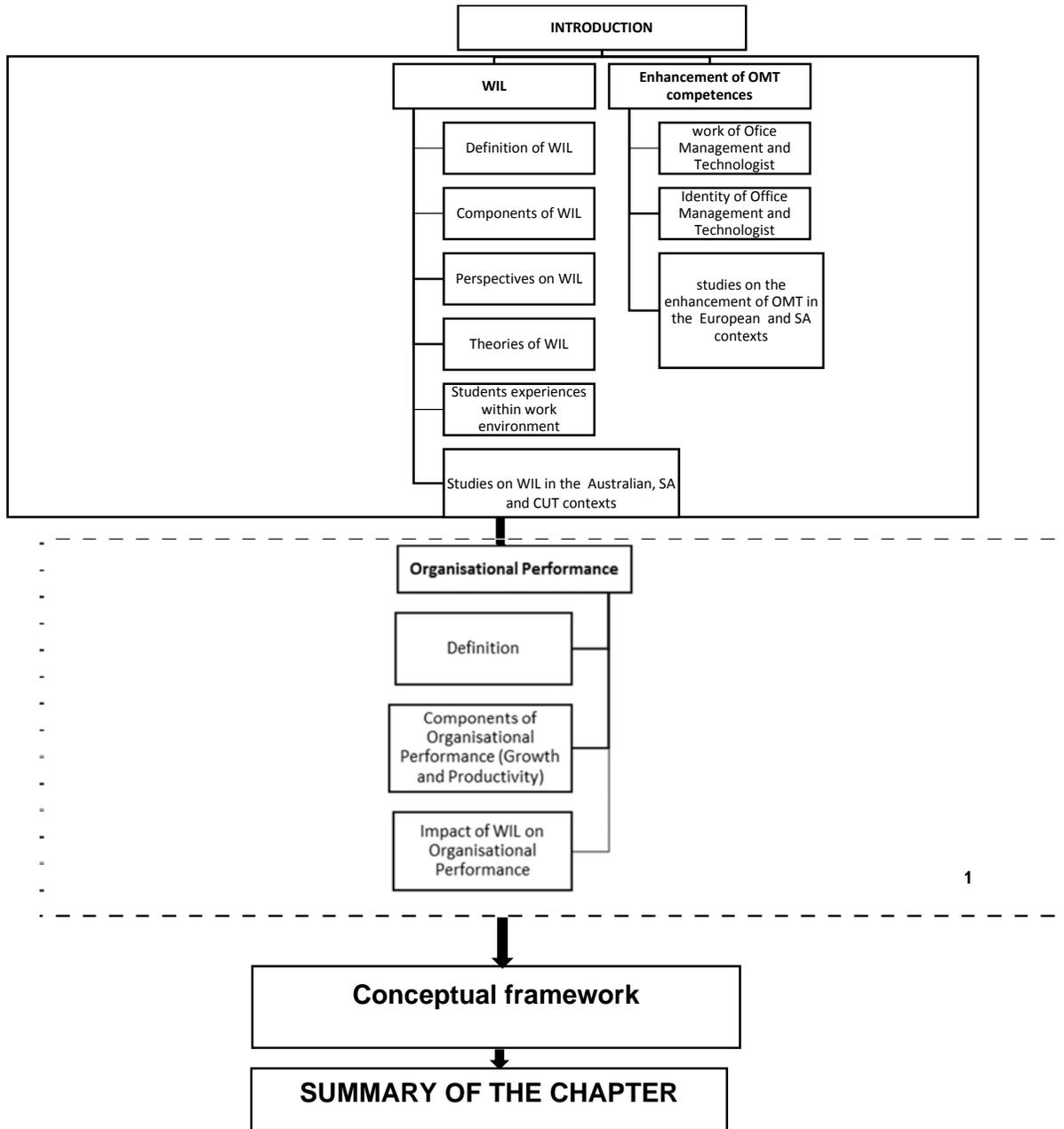


Figure 2.1 Chapter two flow diagram

¹The focus of the study is on the influence of WIL on the enhancement of OMT students' competences. As such, although improved OMT competencies are deemed to positively influence organisational performance, this study does not examine the improved competencies-organisational performance relationship as students are only attached to organisations for a short period of time. Such a duration, complicates the determination of the real impact of their activities on organisational performance. Therefore, organisational performance is just a dummy outcome variable (for illustration purposes in this diagram), which is not examined in the findings of this study even though it is discussed in the literature review.

2.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter reviews literature focusing on the concept of Work Integrated Learning (WIL) and the OMT competencies. It considers the definitions of these concepts, and explores their constitutive components as well as the theories associated with their conceptualisation and application within the work environment. The literature review also covers the impact of WIL on students' professionalism and professional identity, and captures the various studies on WIL across different geographical contexts.

2.1.1 Defining Work Integrated Learning

It should be acknowledged that the growing global demand for work-ready graduates in the workplace calls for the need of greater WIL in the education sector (Cooper, Orrel & Bowden, 2010). The foresaid fundamental importance of WIL shows that an understanding of the term and its constitutive components cannot be overemphasised. Mcilveen, Mcnamara, Kift, Butler, Field, Brown and Gamble (2012) define WIL as an activity which integrates academic learning with its application in the workplace. It is widely used to describe situations where students spend time in a workplace setting as part of their learning (Schilling & Klamma, 2010) in an effort to expand their professional skills and work-related repertoires.

Sattler (2011:19) suggests that the term WIL emerged in order to “give new meaning to the notion of cooperative education”. A cooperative education considers the combination of classroom-based education with practical work experience. Brookfield (2012), however, suggests that WIL should be the general term for learning that occurs when one is undertaking industrial and professional practical experience in an accredited program of postsecondary study. It can thus be inferred that WIL strives to expose students to industrial contexts with the intention to equip them with required practical work experiences. Brookfield (2012) notes that WIL is expressed through six imperatives, which are: work readiness; life-long learning; human and social potential; internalised thinking; knowledge transfer, and career development. In concurrence with this view, the author considers WIL as advantaging the prospective employee (that is the student) in multiple ways such as: expanding their critical thinking, expanding the transferability of work-related skills and enhancing their work preparedness. Finally and most importantly, literature (Dressler & Keeling, 2007; Brookfield, 2012) asserts that WIL must be intentional, organised, real-world oriented,

and accredited within an educational structure that considers the student, teacher/supervisor, curricula, teaching methodologies, and the social function of education.

2.1.2 Dimensions of WIL

WIL can take different forms such as placements, internships, practicals, supervised practice and simulations (Patrick, *et al.*, 2008) and for this reason, these terms will be used interchangeably with WIL. Other dimensions of WIL are games or workshops that allow students to engage in an activity relevant to specific tasks or duties (O'Malley & Ryan, 2006). Office Management and Technology (OMT) students at the Central University of Technology, Bloemfontein, in the Free State, are involved in different kinds of experiential learning practices such as critical thinking, problem solving and decision making that are directly related to their work contexts. WIL enhances what Trede (2012) describes as three levels of reflection: *knowing-in-action* (learning from doing); *reflection-in-action* (on-the-spot reflection when students can still change events); and *reflection-on-action* (thinking back how events unfolded and learning from them). The CUT students can engage in knowing-in-action through participation in processes of continuous learning taught by their educators during classrooms. They can also reflect-on-action when confronted with situations that require them to pay critical attention to the practical values and theories which inform everyday actions. These business contexts, where WIL can be applied, vary from placement of students in professional work to other practice settings that are directly relevant to their discipline studies (Smith, 2012). For Cooper, Orrel and Bowden (2010), internships, cooperative education, and apprenticeships construe WIL as programs that support “anticipatory socialisation”. That is, they are intended to help students develop an accurate self-concept, and gain a realistic understanding of various career fields and organisational environments.

2.1.3 Challenges to the implementation of WIL

While WIL has proven critical to improving graduate professional attributes and equipping students for the world of work, these appealing promises should not persuade researchers to elide its downsides (Eraut, 2000). Mcilveen, *et al.* (2012:26) contend that “WIL tends to emphasize the concerns of employers and the workplace rather than those of students and the balance is often tilted towards learning to work

as opposed to learning to learn”. WIL is, therefore, not just about preparing students for work and careers.

2.2 Theories of Work-Integrated Learning

Theories of WIL emerged from a number of disciplines, including cultural anthropology, education, adult education, psychology, sociology, human resources development, and organisational development (Sattler, 2011). The limited space available for a review of these theories demands that only those relevant to the current study be explored in the subsequent sections of this literature review. Therefore, the following sections briefly summarises a handful of theoretical perspectives on the way in which learning takes place in workplace contexts.

2.2.1 Experiential Learning Theory

WIL is fundamentally rooted in the theory of experiential learning (Sattler, 2011). The experiential learning theory underscores contextualised problem solving and creative thinking skills. The theory thus resonates with Eraut’s (2007) call for a learning philosophy that is grounded in experience and argument that true education is achieved after exposing learners to problem-solving task in authentic environments. The 2012 year CUT students’ exposure to WIL enabled their participation in planning and project management skills, and training on how to interact and socialise well with co-workers and supervisors. Sattler (2011) is of the opinion that education must provide a continuum of opportunities for practice and be intelligently guided by educators in order for it to support students with the kind of thinking and reflection that will permit them to reconstruct their experience. The high order thinking-related tasks that CUT students are exposed to during their industrial placements include creative thinking, leadership and listening skills. This view of experiential learning draws from constructivism, which conceives meaning as actively constructed by learners through personal experience and interaction with activities and tasks rather than through the one-way transmission of knowledge from teacher to students (Sattler, 2011). The fundamental basis for experiential learning is positively identified in the work of theorist, Kolb (2005), which shows that experiential learning is built on six additional foundational propositions namely, learning as a process, relearning, disagreement and resolution of conflicts, adaptation of the world, transactions between the person and the environment, and creating knowledge.

Kolb and Kolb's (2005) theorisation borrows heavily from the work of Jean Piaget's concepts, especially his concepts about *accommodation* and *assimilation*, which are founded on his understanding of child development psychology as infants interact with their social world. In a similar way, students engage in sense making processes through their interaction with co-workers, and in activities and tasks in the work environment, some which result in the reconstitutions of their mental structures. To understand the processes associated with experiential learning, Kolb (2005) developed a four stage experiential learning cycle that moves the learner in a circular and recursive pattern from *concrete experience*, through *reflective observation*, to *abstract conceptualization* and *active experimentation* (Kolb & Kolb, 2005). In the context of the CUT, students can gain concrete experience in WIL programmes by applying Kolb's four stages of experiential learning. Reflective observation also unfolds among the attached students through listening to different point of views.

2.2.2 Situated Learning Theory

The situated learning theory, unlike cognitive theories that focus on the individual as learner, emphasizes the social and contextual nature of learning (Cooper, Orrel & Bowden, 2010). It also recognises the limits to the transfer of abstract classroom knowledge when situations differ profoundly from one another. Learning is conceptualized as a relational process situated in a specific context that involves the co-participation of newcomers and the experienced (Sattler, 2011). In a work context, students can serve as protégés of the experienced workers and learn through active participation in discussion, imitation and observation of the experienced employees. Learners, thus, acquire knowledge, skills and abilities through a process of legitimate peripheral participation in relatively stable and defined communities of practice (Smith, Lave & Wenger, 2009). Contact with experienced practitioners also allows the novices to develop their understanding and mastery, until they eventually become practitioners themselves (Sattler, 2011).

The process of learning in communities of practice through the receipt of assistance, collaboration, and observation is a different learning process to that which takes place at school (Smith, Lave & Wenger, 2009) where individualism is rewarded in assignments, tests and examinations than collaborative work. As a result, situated or contextualized learning responds to different student learning styles, and is regarded

by some scholars as a critical factor in promoting student motivation and learning among at-risk students (Ikavalko & Martinsuo, 2000; Brookfield & Holst, 2011; McLennan, 2008). The situated learning theory requires learners to have access to communities of practice and expects host organisations to be actively involved in providing opportunities for learners to observe, discuss, and try out different practices (Sattler, 2011). In addition, some literature claims that the situated learning theory privileges the learning that takes place outside educational institutions, and devalues the contributions of school-based knowledge acquisition (Trede, 2012). Nevertheless, WIL can be viewed as an example of the practical application of a group community of practice as student groups are often assigned and attached to organisations to engage with different practices as part of their curriculum requirements.

2.2.3 Activity Theory and Boundary Crossing

The theory emphasizes the need to consider both educational settings and the workplace as contexts through which students can learn and develop. Blackwell, Bowes, Harvey, Hesketh and Knight (2012:43) distinguishes between traditional “vertical” forms of learning, and “horizontal” or cross-context development, which is the learning that happens when existing practices are challenged by new situations. Learners must be able to cross boundaries between workplace “activity systems” – that is, each workplace’s division of labour, rules, and procedures – in order for them to contribute new forms of social practice and produce new forms of knowledge (Campbell & Zegwaard, 2011:90). Students should, therefore, be able to transcend the boundaries of the work environment activity system by transferring knowledge gained from the workplace environment to other environments.

Students should develop the capacity to participate within workplace activities and cultures, and learn how to draw upon their formal learning experiences to interrogate workplace problems and practices, as well as develop “poly contextual” skills that can be re-situated, instead of simply transferring knowledge, across different workplace contexts (Kolb & Kolb, 2005:19). Reflection plays a central role in fostering the integration of on- and off-campus learning (Sattler, 2011). Reflection is critical for the student on WIL programmes practical experience. Schilling and Klamka (2010) distinguish between reflection-on-action and reflection-in-action, both of which are essential in situated contexts. Reflection-on-action is similar to the concept of

reflection in experiential learning theory, and involves thinking back over one's action. Reflection-in-action involves quick thinking on one's feet in the midst of carrying out professional activities (Cooper, Orrel & Bowden, 2010). Finally, Campbell and Zegwaard (2011) add a third one, which is reflection-before-action.

2.2.4 Pedagogy of the Workplace Theory

Pedagogy of the workplace draws from situated learning, and is informed by socio-cultural frameworks that distinguish three levels for understanding practice: socio historical, occupational, and situational (Sattler, 2011). This theory regards the learning that happens in workplaces as equally valuable – and equally transferable – to the learning that takes place in formal educational institutions. Workplace settings are more than simple settings where classroom knowledge and occupational practices are experienced, as they also provide essential learning experiences in their own right (Cranton, 2011). Opportunities for participation are unevenly distributed across workplaces and this distribution is based on employment status, industrial affiliations, gender and other characteristics. People's learning success in the workplace is determined by access to learning opportunities and individual agency, which is the decision by individuals to engage in opportunities afforded to them and the meaning they construct from these experiences (Cooper, Orrel & Bowden, 2010). In this view, the process of learning is shaped by interactions between what is available in the workplace, and how individuals choose to engage with the opportunities available. The learning environment is not fixed, but results from the changing relationship between organisational factors, social relations, and individual agency (Cooper, Orrel & Bowden, 2010).

2.3 Students' experiences within the work environment

2.3.1 Students' Placement and assessment

It is important to highlight that the attainment of the WIL experience is founded on a successful placement within the industrial or work context. Since WIL is integrated into the academic curriculum, an assessment of the student performance within the work environment is the basis for determining their capacity to meet organisational and academic goals. The assessment of the student's professional competence should be based on the goals and criteria established in the placement plan (Higgs, McAllister & Whiteford, 2009). This is vital because a huge aspect of work integrated learning (WIL)

is the development of professional competence, which is the ability of students to perform in the workplace (Higher Educational Committee, 2011). Alignment theory, for instance, suggests that the assessment of WIL should include a determination/evaluation of students' demonstration of professional competence in the workplace (Brookfield, 2012).

The assessment of professional competence in WIL is, however, problematic. It may be impractical for the academic supervisor to directly assess professional competence if there were a large number of students in external placements (Bauman, 2005). If evidence of professional competence is provided by the student, the student's ability to articulate his or her own capabilities will interfere with the validity of the assessment (Campbell & Zegwaard, 2011). In addition, if evidence of professional competency is provided by the supervisor then the assessment is heavily dependent on the individual supervisor and may be unreliable (Trede, 2012). Therefore, for a student work place experience to be successful, the organisation should offer students an opportunity to work with various staff members in the workplace to provide access to a wide experiences (Martin & Hughes, 2009), and one experienced staff member should be designated as the supervisor.

It is important that the student negotiates a realistic schedule of experiences and responsibilities within the organisation prior to the placement and keep to it, although students should be prepared to take on voluntary duties outside the boundaries of their project(s) (Martin & Hughes, 2009). Some organisations are not able to offer an extended work experience or an adequate work space for the student, but may still offer valuable opportunities (Trede, 2012). In the case of the CUT students, WIL takes place during a three months long attachment involving the application of theory into practice and assessments by employers and educators using a WIL portfolio.

In such cases it is important that student honestly assesses their ability to work independently (without constant supervision) (Trede, 2012), often away from the organisation. The supervisory commitment of the organisation should also be assessed and the student should maintain close contact with both the organisation, and academic supervisors during the placement. Academic mentors from the CUT, make frequent visits to the places of work hosting students in order to offer advice,

support and evaluation to ensure that the students' experience is meaningfully enriched.

Martin and Hughes (2009) suggested that students should:

- Be loyal to the placement agency;
- Recognise their responsibilities to their employer or client, the public, and fellow employees;
- Disclose any financial or other interest that they may have which may impair their professional judgment when dealing with their employer or client;
- Maintain high standards of professional behaviour during placement. This includes meeting the ethical expectations of the placement agency, especially with regard to confidentiality and discretion in comments to third parties;
- Be punctual and loyal to the daily routines of the agencies in which they are placed. Professional practice requires that a framework of routine be set and maintained;
- Meet the standard of dress required by the agency, as a result, they should ask when unaware of the expectations.

Martin and Hughes (2009) add further what students should not do during their work place learning. The students should therefore not:

- Conduct themselves in a manner that prejudices the professional status or reputation of the placement agency;
- Make comparison with, or statements about other members that are not based on verifiable facts;
- Disclose any confidential information or matters related to their work or the business of their client, without the expressed authority of their employer or client;
- Entertain or accept any covert reward, profit, or use for personal gain any information obtained in their professional capacity;
- Neither misrepresents their competence nor, without disclosing its limits, undertakes work beyond it.

2.3.2 Portfolio of Evidence

A portfolio is an appropriate assessment in WIL because it encourages reflection (Washobourn, 2001) and assesses the development of professional competence.

Literature suggests that a portfolio of evidence is an example of sustainable assessment “that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of student to meet their future learning needs” (Washobourn, 2001:78). Portfolios can be used in conjunction with a placement plan negotiated by both students and placement supervisors because there is flexibility in relation to what is included (Marius, 2006). The portfolio should include exemplars of student work, the supervisor’s reports and student reflection on their learning and professional competence.

The evidence relied upon to make the assessment of professional competence should be provided by both the student and workplace supervisor. It is appropriate that the student’s own claims be summatively assessed in relation to their professional competence (Brookfield & Holst, 2011). A further benefit to the inclusion of a student’s own claims to their professional competence in the assessment is that, any appropriate feedback assists students to develop judgement in relation to their own capabilities (Kemmis & Smith, 2008). A portfolio is, thus, best suited to incorporating the workplace supervisor’s assessment of professional competence without requiring further involvement in assessment activities outside the workplace.

The portfolio also enables integration between the elements of WIL, reflection, learning theory, professional competence and career management (Brookfield & Holst, 2011) by intergrating theoretical knowledge gained from the class with the professional knowledge acquired from the work enviroment. Where possible, the student’s claims to their professional competence should be supported by direct evidence provided to the academic faculty. This evidence may be in the form of samples of work included in the portfolio, digital recordings of work performance or an ‘on the job assessment by the academic (Kundasam, 2007). If there are a large number of different work placements, then the provided direct evidence should be flexible enough to meet the needs of all students. The workplace supervisor should be involved in the assessment of the students’ competence by providing a final report (Kundasam, 2007). The WIL programmes at the CUT bring together the student, educators and the employment sector in their encounter with opportunities that equip the OMT students with more competencies. Ideally the final report would contribute to the summative assessment and not a mere formative assessment. However, should the supervisor’s report be

summative, then the supervisor should be guided by the institution's assessment policies and a clear criteria for the assessment has to be established (Du Toit, 2012).

2.3.3 Professional Identity

There is an increasing focus on the student as the nexus of integrating the classroom with workplace learning. Students are learners at university and pre-accredited professionals in the workplace, and can be facilitators of peer learning in both contexts (Trede, 2012). Student participation in professional roles through workplace learning experiences provides opportunities for transformative learning that shapes professional identity formation and a sense of professionalism (Bauman, 2005). Bauman (2005) claims that no matter how self-reflexive one is in shaping a self-identity, some things just have to be done. It is difficult and contested to define what a good professional is, because it varies according to workplace cultures and policies. Therefore, a professional identity is interdependent with the structural context and the situations of others (Trede, 2012).

2.3.3.1 The challenges of developing a professional identity

Every professional has a professional identity and as such, the question is how it is consciously and purposefully chosen (Trede, 2012). It is impossible to imagine a professional without a professional identity; but it is possible that professionals cannot articulate students' professional values and commitments, hence they cannot purposefully draw on the core of their identity (Wilton, 2012). WIL's role therefore, is to prepare students for their future work roles (Kemmis & Smith, 2008) by allowing them to express their professional identity. Work role preparation that is critical to the development of a professional identity includes disciplinary knowledge, technical skills and the intelligence about how to work in a team, communicate with others, and learn tacit ways of working through observations and socializing into workplace cultures (Trede, 2012). Helping students to develop a sense of professional identity and engage with issues of professionalism can enhance workplace learning experiences. It strengthens a sense of purpose and focus to WIL (Kundasam, 2007). This study, which explores the capacity of WIL participation to enhance the professional competencies of students therefore, contributes to the broadening of the phenomenon of professional identity formation and professionalism of the students and demonstrates the role that WIL can play in this (Eraut, 2000). The current study argues

that WIL is an ideal space for the development of a professional identity and students' professionalism because it is a space that straddles both learning and work.

The key message taken from Nyström's (2009) views on professional identity formation is that Universities of Technology (UoTs) focus on pedagogy and related learning and teaching strategies, thus implying that a professional identity is formed along the way. The experience of attending a university course in itself is seen as automatically impacting on students' professional identity development. However, Kundasam (2007) postulates that universities should capitalize on the available opportunities in order to help students reflect and make sense of WIL experiences. The formation of a professional identity is a significant and yet often hidden outcome of WIL (Cleary, Flynn, Thomasson, Alexander & McDonald, 2007). Should identity development be facilitated and steered, or should students be left to form their own identity? This question is complex to answer because even though students may unquestioningly affiliate and identify with current practices (McLennan, 2008), they may not have a professional identity of their own due to limited exposure to the work environment. It should also be noted that students tend to reproduce what they observe, are exposed to and that which already exists, as well as replicate the practice that which they will be assessed against (Campbell & Zegwaard, 2011).

There is a danger that arises from a failure to appraise workplace experiences. An existential definition of self-identity has been described as "knowing what one is doing and why one is doing it" (Cranton, 2011:55). This implies a reflexive consciousness and an *external* (strategic) identity. It also implies that people can articulate the reasons behind their actions. Thus, it is important to note that, apart from knowing and doing, articulating reasons and actions is part of the professional identity development process (Patrick, Peach & Pocknee, 2009). The development of a professional self-identity may however be compromised by the fact that many of the students' actions are non-conscious and, or emotional, and are difficult to make conscious. Eraut, (2000) argues that non-conscious learning and tacit knowledge needs to be made explicit through collective reflective dialogues in order to share practice knowledge and develop expertise. Eraut (2000) notes further that it is imperative to illuminate tacit aspects of practice. Therefore, it is necessary to share and articulate motivations for actions in order for practice to be learnt and for a professional identity to be formed.

The lack or failure of any reflective in the process of acquiring a professional identity is disastrous to the student because professionalism informs decision making and judgment-based practice (Higgs, McAllister & Whiteford, 2009), just as professionalism is informed by a professional identity. Professionalism comprises more than rules because it is a fluid concept and highly dependent on the context (Trede, 2012). Although professionalism is fundamental to the development of a work place identity, Kemmis and Smith (2008) claim that the competencies-based approach to understanding professionalism which is often peddled by universities alludes to a master able practice and erodes the notion of professionalism. The focus of WIL is to prepare students to be masters of their professional identity through making them capable of competently performing certain tasks and by helping them to be identified as professionals in their field of work. The challenge with this competence-based approach is that it elides and fails to build on the capabilities that students bring to the work place as the approach prices work activities and tasks rather than the identities that the students bring into the work environment.

2.3.3.2 WIL and professional identity development

Although there are a number of challenges faced in the attempts at fostering a professional identity through WIL, as highlighted in the previous sub-section, WIL is still an ideal space to develop professional identity and professionalism within students. This is because a WIL program prepares students for practice. The program also enables the students to learn professional roles, understand workplace cultures, acquire skills on how to professionalize and socialize into a community of practice, and develop into argentic workforce participants (Winberg, Engel-Hills, Garraway & Jacobs, 2011). WIL is therefore, a space where professional identity formation should be stimulated and initiated. In addition, the common features of professional identity development and WIL are that they are complex, fluid and pervasive (Trede, 2012). They traverse different spaces and identities such as: self as learner and as professional; self at university and in workplaces; and learning about theory and practice (Nyström, 2009). This means that the CUT students can systematically assimilate coherent professional identities as they traverse different spaces such as their homes, the university and the work place.

Professional identity development shapes and is shaped by work-integrated learning experiences as the latter comprises activities designed to entrench particular professional identities, just as the development of a solid professional identity demands having a coherent WIL programmes. Professional identity development is then a lens that can be used to make sense of experiences, practice and work (Nyström, 2009). As a result, Campbell and Zegwaard (2011) called for explicit approaches to WIL that assist in developing students' professional identities. Campbell and Zegwaard (2011) affirmed that universities play a key role in assisting students with the disciplinary knowledge. This role calls for a critical preparation and appraisal of work experiences, hence, a sense of professionalism for future practice in a world that is constantly in flux is critical and fitting in an effort to actively capitalize on the opportunities that form professional identity development (Bauman, 2005). A critical approach to WIL, thus, has the goal of preparing students to contribute actively to practice.

2.4 Studies on WIL

The changing patterns of technology have altered the demand for particular occupations and skills, and require that employees' skill and knowledge level be developed continuously (Cranton, 2011). This change has contributed to the renewed interest in WIL. In addition, increased global competition amongst institutions for students has contributed significantly to the changed status of WIL in higher education (Cooper, Orrel & Bowden, 2010), and the CUT is no exception. This is particularly important for the CUT, a sister university to a more prestigious traditional university, the University of the Free State, which tends to be a first premier choice for prospective students compared to the CUT, due to its former Technikon status (with a limited tradition to leading research). There is considerable competition between universities to brand themselves in their competition for students (Cooper, Orrel & Bowden, 2010). Many universities are now insisting that students combine work experience with academic work (Cooper, Orrel & Bowden, 2010). Employers are also demanding WIL experience as they seek graduates who are work-ready and familiar with organisational practice (Cranton, 2011). The CUT's Graduate Attributes Programme (GAP) stipulates a compendium of graduate qualities that CUT graduates should hold upon completion of their studies. The qualities, such as innovation and (technical) problem solving, community engagement, technological literacy and technical and

conceptual competence, resonate and can be enhanced by WIL (see CUT Graduate Attributes, 2016).

Universities are also concerned that there is a move away from the liberal arts degree into more career-oriented courses (Brookfield, 2012). In view of this recognition, the rebranding of the CUT graduates through GAP and WIL is a clear acknowledgement and gesture towards fulfilling this shift in focus. WIL provides a way for some universities to: promote their institutional distinctiveness, maintain students' theoretical and practical base; contribute to the development of citizens with social responsibility; and address the general concern that education has become too theorized (Patrick, Peach & Pocknee, 2009).

2.4.1 WIL in the Australian Context

There has been renewed interest in WIL from the beginning of the 1990s across a range of disciplines in Australia (Armatas & Papadopouls, 2014). Appropriately structured learning experiences that are based on the workplace have the potential to provide learners with opportunities to note the relevance of prior learning at the workplace (Armatas & Papadopouls, 2014). Students at the CUT are increasingly being called by their educators and employers to demonstrate competence in the workplace by applying their disciplinary knowledge and conceptualisation on the work place environment, thereby highlighting the importance of drawing on their prior learning. Learning in the workplace can occur in many ways, which can be formal, informal, purposive and accidental. It can also occur at an individual, group or organisational level (Armatas & Papadopouls, 2014) and examples include through practicals, demonstrations, work place attachments and simulations of the work environment. Unlike learning in the classroom, there tends to be less control over work-based learning with respect to prescription, predictability and explicitness of the learning (Campbell & Zegwaard, 2011). There is also a shift from the distinction between theory and practice made in the classroom to a more 'seamless know-how' in the workplace (Armatas & Papadopouls, 2014) and hence there are no absolute truths that need to be revealed to students through work. Rather, the workplace is a social situation in which knowing and learning are co-constructed (Van der Klashorst & Van der Klashorst, 2010). Therefore, students can transform experience into knowledge through their experiences.

The Australian higher education sector is generally under growing pressure from government, industry and the community to demonstrate its ability to respond to skill shortages, the requirements of a professionalized workforce and the demand for work-ready graduates (Patrick, Peach & Pocknee, 2009). Universities are increasingly required to show how theory and practice combine at undergraduate and postgraduate degree level to generate graduates who are work-ready. Therefore, contemporary Australian universities are expected to develop highly informed and skilled graduates whose capacities extend their own active generation of occupationally related knowledge, and also 'prepare a highly productive, professional labour force including the preparation of graduates in relevant fields for professional practice' (Patrick, Peach & Pocknee, 2009). It is in light of this that WIL becomes very relevant to preparing students for the complex Australian job market. Significantly, four of the nine recommendations by the Business, Industry and Higher Education Collaboration Council (BIHECC) reported on graduate employability in Australia (Cleary, *et al.*, 2007) hence WIL may serve as a vital mechanism to develop graduate attributes and employability skills.

Many Australian institutions have increased their emphasis on WIL curriculum with the inclusion of WIL goals in institutional strategic directions and the provision of internal structures and support (McNamara, 2013). WIL has the potential to provide a rich, active and contextualized learning experience for students, which contributes to their engagement in learning (McLennan, 2008). The growth and enhancement of WIL in Australian universities is supported at the corporate strategic level, within disciplines and from careers and employment elements (Patrick, Peach & Pocknee, 2009). Industry is also increasingly prepared, as a response to skill shortages, to offer a variety of WIL experiences in an effort to access future employees prior to graduation (Patrick, *et al.*, 2008). Given such growing interest in WIL, the Australian Collaborative Education Network (ACEN), including five state-based ACEN groups, was established in late 2006 to fill the need for a supportive network of WIL staff (Patrick, Peach & Pocknee, 2009).

The ACEN project is a means seeking to contribute towards the learning and teaching agenda in relation to WIL. This includes maximizing an important opportunity to build strong capacity and capability across the higher education sector via a networked

community of practice to extend the range of WIL approaches and promote 'good practice' across the sector (Patrick, Peach & Pocknee, 2009). Reflecting on his study of Australia Universities, McLennan (2008) highlights that most of these institutions strengthened their commitment to WIL by adding its components to their strategic directions and re-shaping universities to manage and support WIL provision more effectively. This process is occurring in the context of both an appreciation of Australian labour and managerial skills challenges as well as a greater recognition of the workplace as a unique and valuable learning environment for students (McLennan, 2008).

2.4.2 WIL in South African context

The South African higher education system comprises of research-intensive universities; comprehensive universities, and universities of technology. Indeed, many universities, across South Africa, pride themselves in providing career-focused education (Wilton, 2012). They have found it necessary and useful to prepare students for the world of work, and to help students gain practical experience through, for example, work placements. Thus, WIL, in various forms, has been a distinguishing feature of professional education at South Africa universities.

While there are distinct knowledge differences between, for example, a two-year diploma and a four-year professional bachelor's degree, WIL, in various forms, has always formed an important part of technical, vocational and professional higher education in South Africa (Wilton, 2012). It has been recognised that specific kinds of learning are required in order for graduates to integrate successfully into work settings. Van Zyn (2005) opines that people learn by doing, and that all genuine education is achieved through experience. The author subscribes to the notions of learning by doing and that of 'vocation' as a calling to a deeply felt and ethically grounded identity within a chosen career that encompasses the importance of critical and scholarly engagement with the key issues of public life that link professional and vocational competence. This understanding makes WIL handy in heightening critical thinking and reflection about the professions that the students will enter into.

For learning to occur, students need to observe and reflect on experience, develop concepts to make sense of the experience, and apply as well as test out these

concepts through new experiences. The Higher Educational Committee (2011) points out the importance of reflection and reflective practice in the education of professionals. WIL poses several challenges to traditional universities, universities of technology and comprehensive universities in South Africa (Smith, Lave & Wenger, 2009; Wilton, 2012). The challenge WIL offers relates to the development of students' employability in a broad, rather than a narrow, sense that includes and aligns theoretical learning with practice-based learning (Trede, 2012). Within the context of the Universities of Technology (UoT), WIL broadly refers to on-campus and workplace learning activities and experiences which integrate theory with practice in academic learning programs (Trede, 2012). This includes work placements, internships and practicum and project-based learning (Eraut, 2000). WIL represents a collaborative effort by industry and Universities of Technology in South Africa to enhance student learning through facilitating the application of theory into real-life practice (Van Zyn, 2005). WIL has attracted considerable attention in recent years as an instrument for enhancing professional practice and developing work-readiness, among undergraduates, to the standard which industry expects of new graduates (Jackson, 2013). For the CUT, the practice facilitates the OMT students to partake their WIL in a real working environment.

The common theme among UoT in South Africa is the opportunity for students to apply theory to practice in real workplace and community settings. By exposing students to work environments, WIL enhances students' practical knowledge of the workplace, the sector, and the industry, and allows them to "see theory in a lived context" (Marius, 2006:45). It is assumed that students gain new skills and develop new competencies when they practice what they would have learned in their academic programme. There is however, limited literature that tests this assumption on practising students (those in WIL programmes), hence this study. Nonetheless, students return to the classroom better prepared for the rest of their courses, and get more out of their academic programme. Both institutions and employers view WIL as preparing students to enter the labour market with marketable, relevant, and transferable skills, as well as an ability to use the most up-to-date technology in workplace settings, and "soft skills" in communication, critical thinking, and collaboration (Smith, 2012:95). It is also viewed as providing students with essential workplace skills such as "coming to work on time,

being dressed properly, conducting their selves properly, being organised, and time management” (Trede, 2012:86).

2.4.3 WIL in the Central University of Technology (CUT) context

WIL at the CUT offers a holistic approach to education by equipping students with the necessary theoretical background, providing an opportunity for them to apply the theoretical concepts in practice, and enables them to develop the skills required for entry into the workforce upon graduation (CUT Graduate Attributes, 2016). WIL is considered as a critical component of qualifications offered by a UoT that distinguishes it from the traditional universities. Graduates of the UoT gain easy access to their traditional university counterparts (Marius, 2006) by demonstrating ability to function in mutiple complex contexts. A good example of WIL is simulation, which consists of explicit learning outcomes that contribute to the exit-level outcomes of the qualification (Trede, 2012). With reference to CUT, simulations are conducted in the OMT labs, where lecturers develop OMT students’ technical and computer skills high enough and relevant to the world of work. WIL, therefore, adds to the value of the qualification by making the students nationally and internationally competitive. Washobourn (2001) agrees that learning in work placement needs to be deliberate and intentional, supported by induction of students and supervisors into work processes, and imaginative with regard to the development of appropriate assessment to ensure the maintenance of high standards and adequate duty of care.

The current situation at the CUT is that there is pressure to address the deficiencies that might exist in the assessment of WIL. As a result, there is need to develop some coordinated response across the different departments and sectors to ensure a good quality assessment of WIL. Ikavalko and Martinsuo (2000) described WIL students as bringing fresh and new perspectives on gaining a professional identity, pushing students to think outside the box, and infusing workplaces with an infectious sense of excitement and energy. Therefore, a majority of employers identified students’ creativity and motivation as compelling benefits of their involvement with WIL (Ikavalko & Martinsuo, 2000).

2.5 Purpose of Developing Office Management Competencies

According to Brookfield (2012), competencies often serve as the basis for skill standards that specify the level of knowledge, skills, and abilities required for success in the workplace as well as potential measurement criteria for assessing their attainment. Northedge, Cloete and Chapman (2005) add that competency can be attributed to individuals, social groups or institutions, when they possess or acquire the conditions for achieving specific developmental goals and meeting important demands presented by the external environment. In the context of this study, competency describes a solid collection of prerequisite knowledge, skills and abilities for the successful performance of meaningful tasks, activities and actions in particular academic and professional domains such as office management knowledge, space management, and technological skills.

Brookfield (2012) describes enhancement of office management and technology competencies as programs that focus on the development of best practices from education, psychology and technology. The enhancement of OMT competencies enables students to improve both their overall performance in any identified area and the overall quality in particular learning contexts (Martin, Hughes & Edwards, 2011). Enhancement of competencies prioritizes developing human resources capacity through developing knowledge, skills and abilities (Wilton, 2012). People traditionally believe that it is possible to qualify for a job and then execute that job forever without having to learn more (Washobourn, 2001). However, the everchanging global outlook with regard to skill requirements debunks this. While the traditional belief was plausible, due to the low cognitive demands of jobs during that time, it is now inconceivable owing to the increasing complexity of office management skills that are demanded in the working environment (Schilling & Klamma, 2010). Smith (2012) adds that skill-based learning enhances office management skills – and enhancing management skills helps the students to get employed and stay employed.

While the involvement in training or upgrading programs does not guarantee students perfect jobs or indeed any job, enhancing office management skills can definitely improve their chances for success in the execution of office management abilities. Office management skills can be seen as a subset of graduate attributes and not the other way around (Kundasam, 2007). Implicit in these attributes is an understanding

that career and employability are necessarily lifetime learning and a development process (Evans, Hodkinson, Rainbird & Unwin, 2006) rather than a solitary onetime event. This study, therefore, operationalises the enhancement of office management skills of office management students by testing their application in the work contexts.

Participation in WIL is regarded as enhancing student confidence, with apprenticeship programs singled out by key institutional informants as providing students with high levels of independence and entrepreneurship (Campbell & Zegwaard, 2011). The potential of service-learning programs, under whose auspices WIL belong, to “open students’ eyes to a world they might not otherwise have been exposed to,” and provide transformational experiences and “spiritual growth” (Ikavalko & Martinsuo, 2000:78) can not be contested. The assessment and evaluation component of WIL is also viewed as a benefit to students, which contributes to the development of student capacities for critical self-reflection and self-awareness (Patrick, *et al.*, 2008). Many university students believe that the purpose of their tertiary education is to prepare them for a particular field (Marius, 2006). WIL programs, therefore, enable students to develop a range of office management skills, behaviours and self-awareness that is critical to the completion of their academic studies, and assist in preparing them for a successful career skills enhancement that is needed for success in the work environment (Trede, 2012).

Schilling and Klamma (2010) state that office management competencies can also be referred to as transferable or essential competencies as they are not only transferable across contexts but are important in getting and keeping a job. They elaborate that the acquisition of these skills assists with following:

- Getting along with fellow workers;
- Asking for help when workers need it;
- Ensuring customer courtesy;
- Teaching punctuality;
- Enhancing proper time management;
- Empowering the individual to solve problems;
- Enhancing adaptability and responsibility;
- Promoting basic reading, writing and math.

2.5.1 Office Management skills

Much of the mainstream OMT literature outlines divergent characteristics of office management skills and differentiate them from other kinds of managerial characteristics and practices (Eraut, 2000; Brookfield & Holst, 2011; Campbell & Zegwaard, 2011). According to Kundasam (2007), office management skills are behavioural and they are not personality attributes or stylistic tendencies. Office management skills consist of identifiable sets of actions that individuals perform that lead to certain outcomes and can be observed by mentors/employers. Office management skills may involve engaging with other people and require cognitive work. For instance, there is document processing, the development of graphical display of information and presentation of such information. Successful management development, of course, is more than just following a cookbook list of sequential behaviours. The development of highly competent office management skills is much more complicated than that of skills such as those associated with a trade (Mcilveen, *et al.*, 2012). Practice without the necessary conceptual knowledge is sterile and ignores the need for flexibility and adaptation to different situations (Eraut, 2000). As a result, the development of competencies in office management skills is inherently tied to both conceptual learning and behavioural practice. This development is not just intended for individuals who plan to enter managerial positions or who currently manage organisations (Ikavalko & Martinsuo, 2000) as it is meant to help students better manage many aspects of the working environment. It is, therefore, intended to assist them to change their behaviour, improve competencies, and to improve their emotional intelligence.

2.5.2 Critical role of office management competencies to students in South Africa

The critical importance of office management competencies has to be conceived from the perspective of Universities of Technologies and that of the national economy. In recent years, the University of Technology environment and labour market in South Africa have been characterized by an increasing preoccupation with the concept of graduations. The impetus has been a greater understanding of the role that a University of Technology can play in contributing to the new knowledge-based economy, which needs to be driven by highly skilled, competent and flexible students (Higgs, McAllister & Whiteford, 2009). Universities are increasingly responsible for producing employable graduates that contribute significantly to a knowledge-driven

economy. Increasing and widening participation in Universities of Technology has been a global phenomenon of the 21st century (Lynn, *et al.*, 2012) and in South Africa in particular. From the national economic perspective, the role of office management skills is to produce students who can accelerate economic growth, prosperity and development. Industry and practice in South Africa are generally satisfied with the technical, professional or discipline-specific knowledge base of graduates, but raise concerns about the work readiness of graduates with regard to their generic employability skills (Melinde, Jo-Anne, Neil, Natasja & Hester, 2012). The employers are increasingly on the lookout for graduates who have acquired problem-solving and critical thinking skills, and therefore, university graduates without the ability to apply their knowledge intelligently in the work setting are of no use to employers within changing economic conditions (Erasmus, Loedolff, Mda & Nel, 2013).

The graduates' limited work orientation has led to WIL being used as a pathway for accelerating work readiness in professional education. Melinde, *et al.* (2012) points that employers and professional bodies expect that, in addition to technical expertise, graduates should demonstrate a variety of skills, such as interpersonal and team-building, good communication, and respect for cultural diversity. As a result, South African graduates are increasingly called upon to demonstrate competencies in many functional areas such as computational literacy, numerical competencies, linguistic competence, and deep reflection as well as problem solving and critical thinking. Cranton (2011) states that practical knowledge is cued, used, developed and transmitted through immersion in the context. The acquisition of office management skills cannot be dissociated from its context of application, given the hands-on nature of skills such as interpersonal relations, space management and time management. Office management skills can play a significant role in advancing the employability skills of graduates and does not simply prepare graduates for work, but rather develops attributes that generally embody well-rounded graduates (Schilling & Klamma, 2010). It can, therefore, be assumed that since office management skills develop well-round graduates, then a greater improvement in work performance can be expected from students who applied these skills to multiple contexts and outside the classroom than their counterparts.

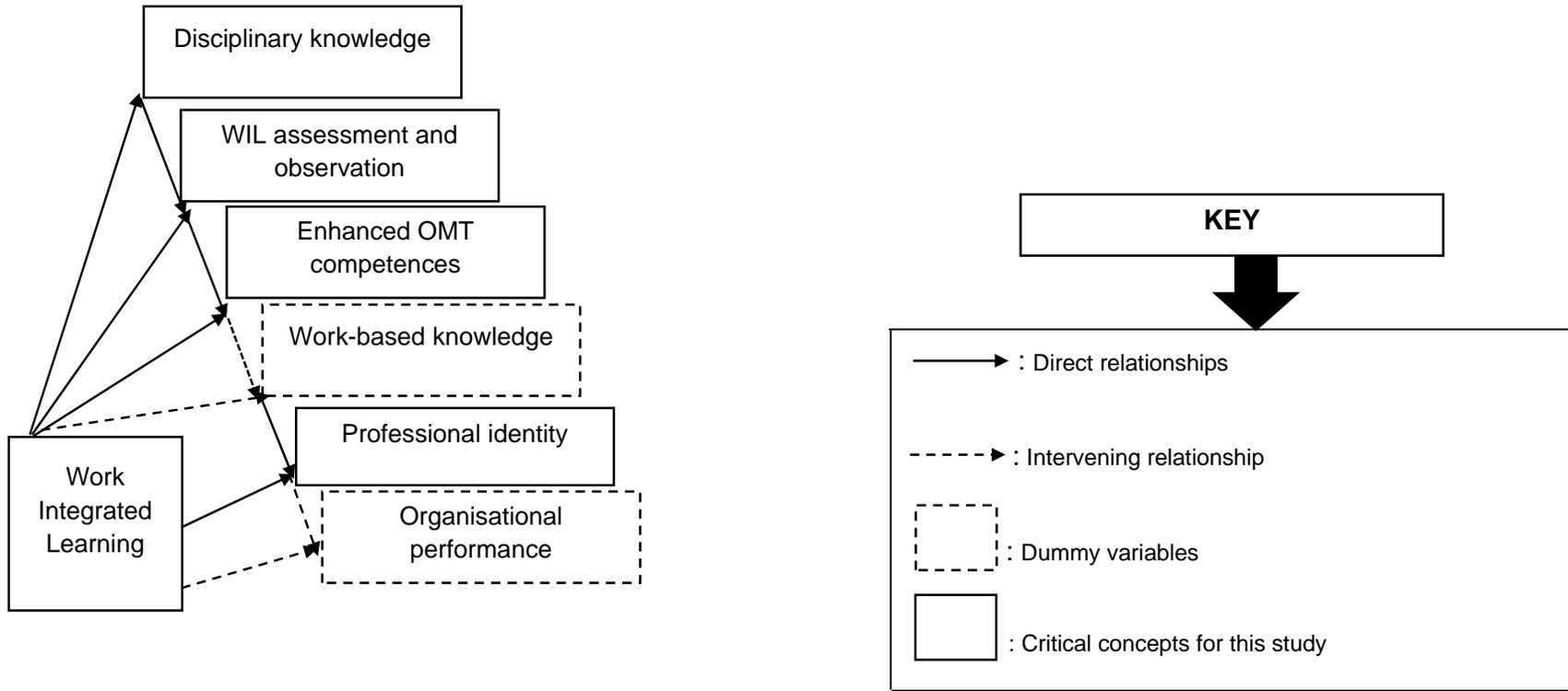
2.5.3 Studies on the enhancement of OMT competencies in the European context

Skills development is dominant in Europe in order to generate employment opportunities for employees, allow for the learning of new technologies and workplace practices, assist in engaging in social dialogue, and in participating in opportunities for continued learning (Higgs, McAllister & Whiteford, 2009). Basic and vocational education in Europe prepares young people for the world of work and on-going workplace learning. The policy environment, quality of local training service providers, and growth strategies of enterprises coincide in favour of expanding on-the-job training on the continent (Cleary, *et al.*, 2007). Sattler (2011) suggest that employment services must share information about occupations and skills needed in the labour market and ease the school to work transition in Europe. Furthermore, having a more skilled workforce can stem the decline in employment in the formal European economy. Hence, the quality of the available training must be improved through the extension of the services provided by vocational training systems to under-served areas, improvements in informal apprenticeships, and measures to help small enterprises upgrade their technical and entrepreneurial skills (Cleary, *et al.*, 2007).

.

Figure 2.2 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

36



Possible pathway to enhanced competence and professional “graduateness” (Author’s own compilation)

2.8 SUMMARY OF THE CHAPTER

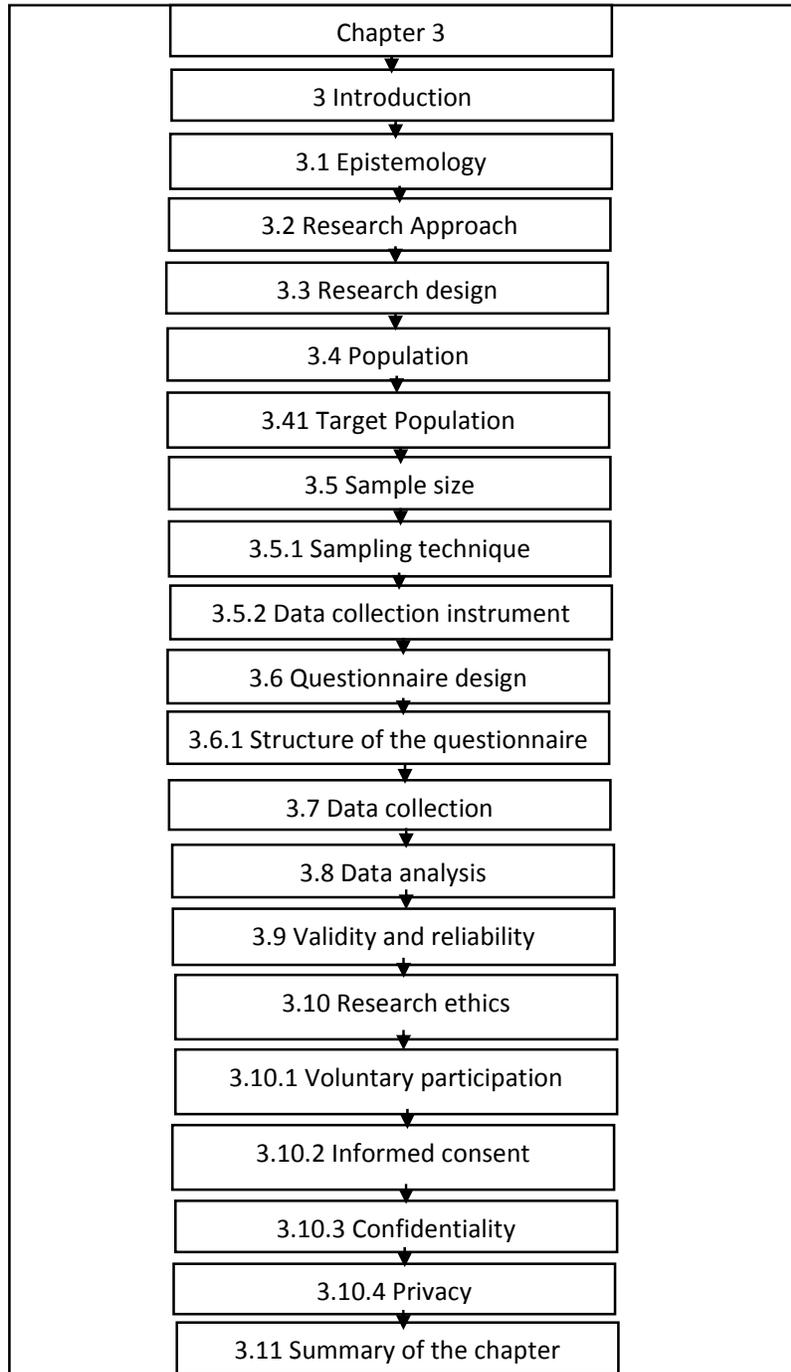
This study demonstrates the importance of assessing and determining the capacity of WIL to enhance the professional competencies in the program. The assessment of professional competencies in WIL, through a collaborative approach, has been suggested. This assessment involves the use of a portfolio that combines the report of the workplace supervisor, the student's claims about their own capability and evidence of capability provided to or collected by the academic supervisor. While the supervisor's report may play a key role in the assessment process, the final responsibility for grading should rest with the university academic/educator who should guarantee the alignment of the assessment with the university's curricula requirements.

It is noted here, that graduates and employers should perceive industry involvement in all aspects of the graduate curriculum as beneficial, particularly because it exposes students to real- world problems and give them experience in meeting deadlines and managing their time. Work placements provide an excellent platform on which students can progress at the workplace and provide further opportunities for their development. Through WIL, graduates would be expected to gain a range of opportunities for professional and competency development provided by their employers. The chapter concludes with this author's proposed model on how to enhance competence and professional-based graduateness.

The next chapter focuses on the research methodology and design. The chapter also describes the methods or techniques through which data was gathered and their appropriateness to the phenomenon under study. It also outlines the sampling methods adopted in the study. Finally, the choice of participants considered for this study, students, educators and organisational workforce, are also presented, just as the reliability of the research tools is considered in Chapter 3.

CHAPTER THREE: OUTLINE OF RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

Figure 3.1 Chapter 3 Flow diagram



3 INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter reviewed mainstream literature on Work Integrated Learning (WIL) and its implications for the enhancement of Office Management and Technology competencies across European, Australian and South African contexts. The literature review demonstrated that although the current WIL assessment practices adopted in various contexts are quite rigorous, there is little evidence to indicate that students play a significant role in the final assessment processes of WIL. Although literature provided compelling arguments justifying the need for students to demonstrate mastery of various competencies and make convincing claims about their possession of these competencies, there was no hard evidence to back up the claims that students were availed with sufficient opportunities to make their own defence on such competencies. Studies that covered students' presentation of logical and critical viewpoints on the assessment process itself, their self-assessment and critique of the final assessment of their WIL process are hard to encounter. This chapter provided a detailed narrative of the research methodology: the epistemology, approach, design, sampling, instruments and procedures utilized for data collection and data analysis.

3.1 Positivist epistemology

A positivist epistemology was adopted in this study. Positivist epistemology is held by hard realists or hard science researchers who believe in a single identifiable reality. This epistemology posits that a single truth can be measured and studied, and exists independent of human recognition. Positivist epistemology seeks to predict and control the nature of the social world (Lincoln & Guba, 2005; Merriam, Caffarella & Baumgartner, 2007). As a result, this study examined relationships of association/influence, in particular the influence of WIL on the enhancement of professional competencies of university students, using a positivist epistemology, which was considered ideal for describing and explaining relationships between these concepts. Literature suggests that a positivist epistemology is ideal when the intention of the researcher is to make legitimate knowledge claims (Edwin, 2009).

3.2 Research approach

Consistent with the positivist epistemology, this study adopts a quantitative approach to gathering and analysis of quantitative data. A quantitative approach emphasises the use of numerical values to understand relationships between concepts. This study

deems it inconceivable to empirically determine the relationship between WIL sub-concepts and the enhancement of academic and professional competencies without recourse to a quantitative approach. The power of numbers in the quantitative approach lies in the articulation of relations of causality, association and co-variance between and amongst variables (Merriam, 2007).

3.3 Research design

Burns and Grove (2009) define a research design as a blueprint for conducting a study with control over factors that may interfere with the validity of the findings. In addition, Butcher, Smith, Kettle and Burton (2011) consider research design as a programme that guides the researcher in collecting, analysing and interpreting observed facts. A research design captures how the instrument is designed in consistence with the research questions, how the phenomena of WIL and academic and professional competencies are interrogated, and how participants (OMT students, educators and organisational workforce) were sampled, accessed and researched with a view to reaching conclusions about the research problem.

Based on this explanation, therefore, a research design provides a plan of action for a study that permits accurate assessment, from the commencement to the conclusion of the project, in order to explore the relationships between independent and dependent variables (Edwin, 2009). By the same breadth, an authentic exploration of the relationship between WIL (independent variable) and the dependent variable (competence enhancement) necessitated the development of an objective tool (a structured questionnaire) for the assessment of this relationship between concepts to ensure that the results generated are credible, reliable, dependable and generalizable to the entire population of the study. This study, therefore adopted a quantitative case study design.

A case study is a specific instance (i.e. a case) that is designed to illustrate a more general principle. It however, demands considerable investment of time, effort, and attention in order to comprehensively capture the details of the phenomenon under investigation. It also provides a unique example of real people in real situations, thus, enabling the reader to understand ideas more clearly than by simply presenting them with abstract theories or principles (Henning, 2004). Hence, this research adopts a quantitative case study to explore the impact of WIL on the enhancement of academic and professional competencies of OMT students at the Central University of Technology, in Bloemfontein, Free State. Since a quantitative approach emphasises an etic perspective of external observer, the researcher adopts a detached and neutral perspective and gives more credence to an objective tool in data collection and analysis. This can be contrasted with an emic perspective, where the researcher becomes deeply involved with the participants at all stages of the data collection process and engages in inter-subjective construction and co-construction of reality with participants. In other words, an emic perspective allows the researcher to become involved and immersed in the study.

3.4 Population

A population is the number of potential respondents or participants that a researcher wants to generalize results of the study from (Payne, 2011). The population of this study comprised all the 3rd year Office Management and Technology students at the Central University of Technology in Bloemfontein and Welkom campuses. These were extracted from the enrolment and admissions records and corroborated with evidence of lecture attendance records of Third Year lecturers on both campuses (Bloemfontein and Welkom campuses). The study's population consisted of 150 Third Year students and 11 lecturers who teach Third Year students. The WIL records were accessed to determine the number of organisational workforce (employers, management and employees) who had some WIL contractual obligation and /partnerships with the Central University of Technology (CUT), Free state. There were 21 organisational workforces in the WIL records at this University that had partnered with this university. Therefore, the population comprised of 150 Third Year students, 21 organisational workforces and 11 Third Year lecturers thus giving a total of 125 respondents.

3.4.1 Target population

The target population refers to the total group of individuals from which a sample is drawn (Dzansi, 2014). The target population of the study comprises 94 students who actually participated in WIL, 10 lecturers who actually participated in WIL and 21 organisational workforces that had active partnerships with the CUT.

3.5 Sample size

Dzansi (2014:28) defines a sample as “a representative portion of a population” whose results the researcher wants to make generalisations about. The target population of 94 OMT students who had undergone experiential training/WIL were randomly chosen from the Bloemfontein and Welkom campuses, just as a total of 21 organisational workforce from 11 approved organisations and 10 academic supervisors from the OMT department at the Central University of Technology, Free State.

3.5.1 Sampling techniques

Van zyn (2005) defines sampling techniques as determining the percentage of the population to be interviewed or studied. Probability sampling was used in this study. Edwin (2009) highlights that probability sampling is the sampling technique in which the samples are gathered in a process that gives all the individuals in the population equal chances of being selected. In this sampling technique, the researcher guarantees that every individual has an equal opportunity for the selection through the use of randomization (Freestone, Williams, Thompson & Trembath, 2007). While simple random sampling was used for the selection of students (who formed the bulk of the study) consistent with the positivist epistemology, the only exception to the positivist approach was the selection of employers, where purposive sampling was adopted-itself a deviation from positivism. Since there were few employers who were in partnership with CUT (by virtue of signing Memoranda of Association), these employers could not be selected using simple random sampling as they were just a few of them.

3.5.2 Data collection instruments

Edwin (2009) defines data collection as the process of gathering and measuring data on variables of interest in an established systematic fashion that enables one to answer stated research questions, test hypotheses and evaluate outcomes. Data

collected using the structured questionnaires were used to provide diverse perspectives on the overall impact of WIL on the enhancement of knowledge, skills and abilities of the OMT students.

A structured questionnaire, which includes the low level of involvement of the researcher and high number of respondents (Polit, Beck & Hungler, 2010) was used for data collection. Payne (2004) suggest that this type of questionnaire may be a useful way of contacting dispersed groups of people, or those who might not wish to be questioned face-to-face. The questionnaires were handed out physically to the OMT students, educators and organisational workforce by the researcher.

3.6 Questionnaire design

The researcher drew on the research questions of the study and the findings discussed in the detailed literature review in the designing of the questionnaire. The questionnaire consisted of close-ended questions based on a Likert scale format. According to Payne (2004) questions can be pre-coded when using Likert scale, thus turning the processing of data for computer analysis into a simple task. Payne (2004) states further that closed ended questions enhance the comparability of answers and can be easily completed by respondents. The respondents had to select the most appropriate answer from a number of predetermined alternatives. Finally, the questions were divided into different sections.

3.6.1 Structure of the Questionnaire

Section A: This section focused on collecting the generic demographic data of the students, educators and organisational workforce. As a result it assisted in gathering data regarding the respondents' gender, age, educational background, and year of experience on that job, year of experience in managerial capacity, and role in the business and the number of employees in the business.

Section B and C for students' questionnaire: In answering students' perceptions, the researcher relied on retrieving as much information as possible from the questionnaires distributed to students. As a result, this section's questions focused on

the role that students played in the process of their assessment and the influence of content and participation in WIL programmes on the broadening of their competencies.

Section B and C for educators' questionnaire: This section provided questions that solicited educators' response on the office management knowledge they consider foundational to students' effective participation in WIL programmes at the CUT. The other section also rendered questions about the educators' perspectives on the influence of WIL programs in broadening the students' office management and technology competencies.

Section B, and C for organisational workforce' questionnaire: This section provided questions that solicited organisational workforce' responses on the office management knowledge they consider foundational to students' effective participation in their organisations. The other section also provided questions that solicited organisational workforce' responses on the influence of WIL programmes with regard to the broadening of the students' office management and technology competencies.

3.7 Data collection

Edwin (2009) defines data collection as the process of gathering and measuring data on variables of interest in an established systematic fashion that enables one to answer the stated research questions, test hypotheses and evaluate outcomes. Data collected using the structured questionnaires was used to provide diverse perspectives on the influence of WIL on the enhancement of competencies of OMT students. Structured questionnaires, which includes the low level of involvement of the researcher and high number of respondents (Polit, Beck and Hungler, 2010) were used for data collection. Payne (2004) suggest that this type of questionnaire may be a useful way of contacting dispersed groups of people, or those who might not wish to be questioned face-to-face. As a preparatory step, the researcher contacted all third year OMT lecturers via email to secure the lists of students on the Bloemfontein and Welkom campuses so that she would know the appropriate numbers of questionnaire to print out for distribution. The questionnaires were availed to OMT students during their lectures and the researcher required the educators to distribute the questionnaire in their lecture environment. The researcher further distributed the questionnaires to those employers who were in partnership with CUT. The researcher also distributed by hand all the questionnaires to the OMT educators who participated in the study for their completion and submission to her.

3.8 Data analysis

Data from the questionnaires was subjected to quantitative analysis using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). An experienced statistician was contracted to conduct the statistical analysis. This analysis produce both descriptive and inferential statistics. Descriptive statistics as the name suggests is used to describe characteristics of the phenomenon under investigation (Edwin, 2009). Descriptive statistics consists of the central tendency, amount of variability and the extent to which different variables are related to one another. In this study, the descriptive statistics include means and percentages displayed in tables and cross-tabulations.

3.9 Reliability and validity of the instruments

Reliability used the same number of respondents.

Table 3.1. Reliability

Section	N	Number of questionnaire items	Cronbach's Alpha	Comment
Overall influence of WIL on the enhancement of knowledge (questions 10-16)	94	7	0.875	High internal consistency
Space management knowledge (questions 17-25)	94	9	0.918	High internal consistency
Skills (questions 26-36)	94	11	0.923	High internal consistency
Abilities (questions 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33)	94	6	0.846	High internal consistency
Content selection (questions 37-42)	94	7	.899	High internal consistency
Course organisation 1 (questions 57,58,60,63-69)	94	10	0.94	High internal consistency
Course organisation 2 (questions 50-54,59,61,72)	94	8	0.929	High internal consistency
Course organisation 3 (questions 55,56,62,70,71)	94	5	0.929	High internal consistency
Teaching modalities 1 (questions 73-77,82-86)	94	10	0.938	High internal consistency
Teaching modalities 2 (questions 78-81)	94	4	0.878	High internal consistency
Technology assisted curricula delivery (questions 87-91)	94	5	.846	High internal consistency
All Likert scale questions	94	82	0.967	High internal consistency

For adequate reliability, a construct (subsection) must have a Cronbach's Alpha value of at least 0.700. Any value less than 0.700 is indicative of a low internal consistency/reliability. The American Public Human Service Association (2012), articulates that reliability pertains to the consistency of scores. The less consistency within a given measurement, the less useful the data may be in analysis. Thus, Table 4.2 shows that all constructs in the questionnaire had high internal consistency as

indicated by Cronbach's Alpha values greater than 0.7. Overall the whole questionnaire had a very high Cronbach's Alpha, thus making it highly reliable. Pretorius (2012) states that there are different reports about the acceptable values of alpha, ranging from 0.70 to 0.95.

3.10 Research ethics

The researcher adhered to particular research ethics while conducting the study. Payne (2011) described ethics as the form of moral choices and decisions that cover the whole process of research from the choice of the topic to the implications of the research results. The following ethical issues were, therefore, considered by the researcher.

3.10.1 Voluntary participation

Ferreira and van Antwerpen (2012) state that any participation in a study should be strictly voluntary. In this study, respondents were given the freedom to decide on whether to participate or not, as a result, the participants were not forced to participate. The researcher also informed participants that participation in the research was voluntary and that they can withdraw from the study at any time without any sanctions. Finally, the researcher provided informed disclosure by availing her contact information, and the subject of the investigation.

3.10.2 Informed consent

Schilling and Klamma (2010) state that researchers must provide potential participants with clear, detailed and factual information about the study. For this purpose, the researcher attached a cover page on the questionnaire that detailed the purpose of this study for participants. Organisational workforces were also availed with a permission letter that affirmed that the Faculty of Management Sciences had provided ethical clearance and hence authorized the student to conduct the study.

3.10.3 Confidentiality/anonymity

Schilling and Klamma (2010) maintain that a research report should not be presented in a way that allows readers to discern how a particular participant would have responded to questions in any given study. For this study, the researcher assured respondents of their anonymity by desisting from collecting information, such as their

names, residential location and contact details, which could expose their personal identities. Kundasami (2007) affirms that confidentiality is maintained when anything that is learned about the participant is held in the strictest of confidence. For this reason, the data collected from respondents was analyzed and reported in aggregate form to protect the individual identities of respondents.

3.10.4 Privacy

Kundasami (2007) asserts that researchers should not invade the private space of respondents in their data collecting process. As a result, respondents were asked, during the data collection process, to avail themselves at their convenience to avoid invading their privacy. Although it can be argued that any research, by virtue of it involving interaction with human subjects in their habitats/ place of abode is intrusive, the level of intrusion was reduced by seeking respondents' permission to participate and giving the questionnaires to respondents to complete at times convenient to them. In addition, the researcher ensured that respondents' privacy was not invaded and that no physical harm was caused on participants. The researcher also followed good research practices, which prioritised respect towards human self-determination and dignity.

3.11 SUMMARY OF THE CHAPTER

This chapter described the detailed process of the quantitative research methodology adopted in this study. The chapter also explained the research approach, research design, how data was collected and described aspects of the instruments used, as well as the ethical issues considered and applied to this investigation. The next chapter presents how data was analyzed, results presented and the way these results are discussed and interpreted.

CHAPTER FOUR DATA PRESENTATION: STUDENTS' PERSPECTIVES

4.1 INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter outlined the research design and methods used in this study. This chapter focuses on data presentation, analysis and discussion. The results of findings are presented in two parts: The first part, which is Chapter 4, focuses on students' perspectives while the second part, which is Chapter 5 focuses on the educators and organisational workforce' perspectives on WIL. The study findings are presented and aligned with each research hypothesis.

4.2 Students' biographical summary

This section analyses the general biographical profile of the students who responded to this study.

Table 4.1. Biographical information for students

Biographical variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Q1. Gender	Female	46	49%
	Male	48	51%
Q2. Age group	<25 years	90	96%
	25-34	4	4%
Q3. Home Language	English	18	19%
	Afrikaans	20	21%
	Sesotho	30	32%
	IsiZulu	10	11%
	IsiXhosa	16	17%
Q4. Qualification	Matric and below	84	89%
	FET or equivalent	8	9%
	University Degree/Diploma	2	2%
Q5. Role in this Business	Manager	1	1%
	Employee	88	94%
	Other	5	5%
Q6. Year of experience on this job	below 1 year	94	100%
Q7. Year of experience in management	below 1 year	92	98%
	over 20 years	2	2%
Q8. Company size	2-3 employees	2	2%
	6-10 employees	2	2%
	11-15 employees	6	6%
	16-20 employees	84	89%
Q9. Highest qualification	Matric and below	39	41%
	Tertiary certificate	51	54%
	Diploma/Degree	4	4%

4.2.1 Gender composition of the participants

The results in Table 4.1 illustrate that the gender composition of respondents was 51% (n=48) males and 49% (n=46) females. The students were self-selected by virtue of the fact that both genders were expected to participate in WIL in accordance with the requirements of the curriculum. This seems to emphasise the equal opportunity rendered in the OMT department for both genders who undergo WIL before attaining their National Diploma qualifications. Pretorius (2012) ascertains that, substantive equality should aim to break the cycle of disadvantage associated with out-groups. More so, it should promote respect for the equal dignity and worth of all irrespective of their gender.

4.2.2 Age composition

Most of the students who participated in this study were mainly below the age of 25 years (96%) as would be expected of most students. Only 4% of the students were in the age group of 25 to 34 years as indicated in Table 4.1. The dominance of the below 25 age group is consistent with the fact that a majority of undergraduate students who participate in WIL are young adults below 25 years age group.

4.2.3 Home language distribution

Table 4.1 illustrates that most of the participants had Sesotho (32%) as their home language followed by Afrikaans (22%), English (19%), IsiXhosa (17%) and IsiZulu (11%). In spite of the linguistic diversity reflected in the results, it is apparent that a sizable number of participants were both Sesotho and Afrikaans speaking. This demographic can be attributed to the site of investigation, Bloemfontein, where the majority are Sesotho and Afrikaans home language speakers. Abeysekera (2010), notes that the majority of Bloemfontein residents speak Afrikaans, English, and Sesotho, even though some of the other 11 official languages are also spoken.

4.2.4 Qualifications

In terms of education, a majority (89%) had a Matric and below as their highest qualification, suggesting that the dominant percentage comprised students who were still in the process of attaining their tertiary qualifications. A paltry 9% had FET education or equivalent with only 2% having university degrees or diplomas. The presence of this minority tertiary institution graduate student presence could be an

indication of the increasing complexity of the work environment, which is making the possession of an additional qualification (e.g. an additional university degree or diploma) more desirable.

4.2.5 Role in this business

Table 4.1 demonstrates that a majority of the respondents (94%) were employees, which could be a clear indication that when students undergoing their WIL they are treated as employees. Kundasam (2007), highlights that employers should guarantee that the quality of students they receive as new employees is one that will contribute to their respective industries. This may suggest that students who are successfully placed in organisations during WIL often hold the status of employees rather than that of management. In contrast to this, only 1% of respondents reported holding managerial positions during their WIL attachments, while the rest held undesignated positions.

4.2.6 Years of Experience

Table 4.1 illustrates that all respondents had less than 1 year of working experience in this job. This finding is consistent with the policy directive of WIL programme at the CUT, Free State, which stipulates that OMT students enrolled for the National Diploma in Office Management and Technology cannot be attached to an organisation for a period exceeding 3 months. More so, this statistic points to the limited job experience of most of these students. However, only 2% (2 respondents) had over 20 years' experience at management level. This figure may signify the small number of students who re-enter the university (e.g. as mature entry students) after gaining or through experience acquired from their professions.

4.2.7 Years of experience in management

About 98% of the respondents had less than one year of managerial experience whilst 2% had over 20 years of experience in management. This points to the limited experience of students who are undertaking undergraduate studies. This buttresses employers' claims that although graduates are theoretically grounded, they often lack a broad repertoire of professional experience and skills required for them to be self-starters in their first appointments. Employers are also demanding WIL experience as

they seek graduates who are work-ready and familiar with organisational practice (Cranton, 2011).

4.2.8 Number of employees in this business

In Table 4.1 most business (89%) had between 16 and 20 employees whilst 7% had between 11 and 15. This could be an indication of the fact that the OMT students were mostly placed in small and micro enterprises. The absence of a large industrial sector and the prevalence of small and micro-enterprises in Bloemfontein possibly explains the small size of the organisations that the majority of students are attached to (Nel & Rogerson, 2004).

4.2.9 Highest qualification

In terms of the highest qualification, more than half (54%) of the respondents had obtained a tertiary certificate, whilst only 4% had a diploma or degree. These statistics are reflective of the entry level qualifications of most of the students admitted into the CUT programmes, where a majority often have an additional qualification (e.g. a professional certificate) in addition to the main post-secondary qualification (i.e. matric qualification). This could be reflective of two issues: 1). The increasingly competitive nature of university education where the possession of a matric qualification has become insufficient for accessing tertiary education, 2). It could also be indicative of the traditional preference of Universities of Technology (UoTs) (i.e. former Technikons) to admit students with professional qualifications (given UoTs' long tradition of training students for professional occupations) to those pursuing traditional university qualification (with strong research orientation) (Patrick, *et al.*, 2008).

Furthermore, 42% of the respondents had matric and below. This may signify that, although the CUT may be preferring to enrol students with an additional qualification (in addition to Matric qualification), matriculants remain the formidable supply of prospective university entrants for this university (Eraut, 2000).

STUDENTS' QUESTIONNAIRE RELIABILITY ANALYSIS

The questionnaire had the sub-constructs as listed in Table 4.2. A five point Likert Scale was used in order to weigh the extent of agreement/disagreement with the respondents' statements.

Table 4.2. Reliability Analysis (Student questionnaire)

Section	N	Number of questionnaire items	Cronbach's Alpha	Comment
Overall influence of WIL on the enhancement of knowledge (questions 10-16)	94	7	0.875	High internal consistency
Space management knowledge (questions 17-25)	94	9	0.918	High internal consistency
Skills (questions 26-36)	94	11	0.923	High internal consistency
Abilities (questions 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33)	94	6	0.846	High internal consistency
Content selection (questions 37-42)	94	7	.899	High internal consistency
Course organisation 1 (questions 57,58,60,63-69)	94	10	0.94	High internal consistency
Course organisation 2 (questions 50-54,59,61,72)	94	8	0.929	High internal consistency
Course organisation 3 (questions 55,56,62,70,71)	94	5	0.929	High internal consistency
Teaching modalities 1 (questions 73-77,82-86)	94	10	0.938	High internal consistency
Teaching modalities 2 (questions 78-81)	94	4	0.878	High internal consistency
Technology assisted curricula delivery (questions 87-91)	94	5	.846	High internal consistency
All Likert scale questions	94	82	0.967	High internal consistency

Jackson (2015) defines a Likert scale as a psychometric response scale that is used in questionnaires to obtain the respondents' preferences or degree of agreement with a statement or set of statements. Cronbach's Alpha was used to verify if the questionnaire items and the constructs they are intended to measure can be relied upon to address the objectives of the study (that is its internal consistency). Internal consistency is concerned with the interrelatedness of a sample of test items, whereas homogeneity refers to unidimensionality (Pretorius, 2012). Furthermore, a measure is

said to be unidimensional if its items measure a single latent trait or construct (Pretorius, 2012).

A low value of alpha could be due to a limited number of questions, poor interrelatedness between items or heterogeneous constructs (Pretorius, 2012). Moreover, if a low alpha is due to poor correlation between items then some should be revised or discarded. The easiest method to find them is to compute the correlation of each test item with the total score test; items with low correlations (approaching zero) are deleted. If the alpha value is too high it may suggest that some items are redundant as they would be testing the same question but in a different guise (Pretorius, 2012).

4.3 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION ON RESEARCH QUESTIONS

This section presents results of the statistical analysis and answers to the research questions investigated in the study. Tables and percentages are used to present the results. Cronbach's Alpha test was used to determine statistical significance of different variables.

4.3.1 Overall influence of WIL on the enhancement of students' competencies

This section addresses the main question on the overall influence of WIL on the enhancement of competencies of the OMT students who had an experience of being attached to organisations during their WIL. Table 4.3 contains a summary of the results of questions that dealt with the overall influence of WIL on the enhancement of OMT students' knowledge.

Table 4.3. Overall influence of WIL on the enhancement of Knowledge

OVERALL INFLUENCE OF WIL ON THE ENHANCEMENT OF KNOWLEDGE		Frequency Distribution					Descriptives		Latent Factor (Principal component) Coefficient	
		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	% Agree/ Strongly Agree	Mean		Std Dev
Q10. Participation in WIL has positively impacted my knowledge of time consciousness.	Count	0	0	1	14	79	98.9%	4.83	0.41	0.655
	%	0%	0%	1.1%	14.9%	84.0%				
Q11. Participation in WIL has positively impacted my knowledge of managing multiple conflicting priorities without loss of focus and composure.	Count	0	0	2	18	74	97.9%	4.77	0.47	0.819
	%	0%	0%	2.1%	19.2%	78.7%				
Q12. Participation in WIL has positively impacted my knowledge of time management (such as to determine the appropriate allocation of time).	Count	0	0	2	17	75	97.9%	4.78	0.47	0.873
	%	0%	0%	2.1%	18.1%	79.8%				
Q13. Participation in WIL has positively impacted my knowledge of appropriate allocation of time to tasks/work activities.	Count	0	0	2	16	76	97.9%	4.79	0.46	0.884
	%	0%	0%	2.1%	17.0%	80.9%				
Q14. Participation in WIL has positively impacted my knowledge of time conscious planning of tasks/work activities (current and future).	Count	0	0	0	22	72	100.0%	4.77	0.43	0.74
	%	0%	0%	0.0%	23.4%	76.6%				
Q15. Participation in WIL has positively impacted my knowledge of appropriate time-based sequencing of tasks/work activities.	Count	0	0	2	20	72	97.9%	4.74	0.49	0.8
	%	0%	0%	2.1%	21.3%	76.6%				
Q16. Participation in WIL has positively impacted my knowledge of timeous execution of business functions.	Count	0	1	2	22	69	96.8%	4.69	0.57	0.556
	%	0%	1.1%	2.1%	23.4%	73.4%				
Cronbach's Alpha							0.875			
% of total variation accounted for by latent factor							59.12%			

The Cronbach's Alpha value of 0.875 indicates that the items that make up the construct of the overall influence of WIL on the enhancement of knowledge have a high internal consistency, hence they can be summarized by a single measure which reliably represents all the items of this construct.

4.3.1.1 Planning of task/work

Since students had overwhelmingly positive responses to most items on the questionnaire, only those responses with the highest percentages/ mean scores are reported in this study due to the limitation of space. All respondents (100%) strongly agreed to the fact that participation in WIL had a positive impact on their knowledge of time consciousness such as planning of task/work activities (current and future). The

dominant percentage (100%) could mean that students' participation in WIL equipped them with the basics of a professional working context such as planning their daily working activities in advance by applying learned knowledge from WIL. Therefore, the inculcation of knowledge on task planning into students is conceived as assisting them to change their work planning style and improving their execution of work tasks and/activities. In almost every productive activity in the real world, students should be able to plan because planning is essential, regardless of the job role or responsibilities, since every worker is a component of a group or team vital for the smooth functioning of an organisation (Kundasam, 2007).

4.3.1.2 Time consciousness

The result demonstrates that 98.9% of the respondents strongly agreed that participation in WIL impacted positively on their knowledge of time consciousness. This finding demonstrates that students' time consciousness is enhanced through WIL placement practices such as the requirement for these individual attachés to keep a time log, as this assisted them to determine how they expended their time productively and observe punctuality at work. This finding reinforces Martin, Hughes and Edwards' (2011) finding that when students' OMT competencies are improved, their overall performance in any identified area and overall quality of their work in different learning contexts is also enhanced.

4.3.1.3 Managing multiple conflicting priorities, time management, allocation of time

A total of 97.9% of the respondents strongly agreed that WIL participation had a positive impact on their knowledge of managing multiple conflicting priorities with no loss of focus and composure. The majority of the students also indicated that WIL had helped them in their time management (97.9%) whilst a similar percentage claimed that participation in WIL had a positively impacted on their knowledge of appropriate allocation of time to tasks. In general, the WIL program produced positive results in all areas of managerial work knowledge.

About 97.9% of respondents highlighted that their participation in WIL assisted them in managing multiple conflicting priorities and time management, which are key considerations in organisational productivity. This finding suggests that WIL enhances

the capacity of students to re-examine and align their priorities to organisational needs and to adapt sufficiently to the world of work. The findings resonates with Lynn, Christine and Graham's (2012) claim that WIL is an educational approach that aligns academic and workplace practices for the mutual benefit of students and workplaces.

4.3.1.4 Knowledge of timeous execution of business functions

An overwhelming majority (96.8%) of the students claimed that participation in WIL impacted positively on their timeous execution of business functions. It can be contended that WIL ethos and practices are founded on the Theory of Experiential learning, which emphasises on the learners' transition from listening and visualising job-related concepts and constructs to the practical application of what they have been taught (Kolb & Kolb, 2005). The finding that participation in WIL impacted on the students' timeous execution of business functions corroborates Smith's (2012) findings that participation in WIL impacted on student interaction with a real-work context and their undertaking of authentic work activities such as knowing how business should operate.

4.3.2 Space management knowledge

Table 4.4 illustrates the results of the students' responses on WIL's effect on their knowledge of space management.

Table 4.4 Space management knowledge

SPACE MANAGEMENT KNOWLEDGE		Frequency Distribution					Descriptive		Latent Factor (Principal component) Coefficient	
		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	% Agree/Strongly Agree	Mean		Std Dev
Q17. Participation in WIL has positively impacted my knowledge of managing space such as keeping a clean and organised OMT office.	Count	0	0	3	17	74	96.8%	4.76	0.50	0.766
	%	0%	0%	3.2%	18.1%	78.7%				
Q18. Participation in WIL has positively impacted my demonstration of advanced proficiency by quickly adapting to new technology and easily acquiring new technical skills.	Count	0	0	3	17	74	96.8%	4.76	0.50	0.596
	%	0%	0%	3.2%	18.1%	78.7%				
Q19. Participation in WIL has positively impacted my appropriate handling of all paperwork.	Count	0	0	1	17	76	98.9%	4.80	0.43	0.788
	%	0%	0%	1.1%	18.1%	80.9%				
Q20. Participation in WIL has positively impacted my maintenance of control over the physical environment.	Count	0	0	2	11	81	97.9%	4.84	0.42	0.835
	%	0%	0%	2.1%	11.7%	86.2%				
Q21. Participation in WIL has positively impacted my knowledge of managing task such as balancing conflicting.	Count	0	0	4	13	77	95.7%	4.78	0.51	0.882
	%	0%	0%	4.3%	13.8%	81.9%				
Q22. Participation in WIL has positively impacted my knowledge of the organisational functions and procedures of the office.	Count	0	0	2	12	80	97.9%	4.83	0.43	0.927
	%	0%	0%	2.1%	12.8%	85.1%				
	%	0%	0%	3.2%	9.6%	87.2%				
	%	0%	0%	2.1%	28.7%	69.2%				
Cronbach's Alpha								0.918		
% of total variation accounted for by latent factor								62.56%		

The Cronbach's Alpha value of 0.918 indicates that the items that make up the construct of Space Management Knowledge have a high internal consistency. Hence, they can be summarized by a single measure, which reliably represent all the items of this construct.

4.3.2.1 Handling paperwork

A majority of the student participants (98.9%) indicated that WIL enhanced their knowledge of how to appropriately handle all paperwork in the office. This dominant percentage could mean that WIL opportunities improve the employment readiness of these potential office managers, office administrators and secretaries. The different

aspects of handling paper work that WIL equips students with includes putting office papers neatly in clearly labelled folders, trays, boxes and files as a component of creating a well organised working environment.

4.3.2.2 Knowledge of managing space and adapting to new technology

Participation in WIL was conceived to impact on student management of office resources such as such as office space and technology. A huge student response of 97.9% and 95.7% were affirmative of the view that participation in WIL positively impacted on their knowledge of adapting to new technology and managing task. Although the terminology used to describe WIL programmes and practices varies, they are all premised on a common understanding of the importance of enabling students to integrate theoretical knowledge gained through formal study into practically oriented work contexts (Kundasami, 2007).

4.3.2.3 Knowledge of managing space

The results indicate that 96.8% of the respondents were of the opinion that WIL had positively impacted on their knowledge of managing space and creating an organised OMT office. A similar percentage believed that WIL positively impacted on their demonstration of advanced proficiency as they quickly adapted to new technology and easily acquired new technical skills. This demonstrates that WIL experiences provided students with the knowledge requisite for the management of space, such as keeping the office clean all the time (Cooper, Orrel & Bowden, 2010). The other finding shows that the students' participation in WIL enhanced their technology skills, which serves as an advantage in the contemporary business environment (Smith, 2012).

4.3.3 Skills learning

Table 4.5 illustrates a summary of the results on the learning of skills in the WIL programme.

Table 4.5 Skills Learning

Skills		Frequency Distribution						Descriptives		Latent Factor (Principal component) Coefficient
		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	% Agree/Strongly Agree	Mean	Std Dev	
Q26. Participation in WIL has positively impacted on my computer and technical skills such as: Displaying proficiency using standard office equipment like a personal computer, fax, photocopier and scanner.	Count	0	0	2	15	77				
	%	0%	0%	2.1%	16.0%	81.9%	97.9%	4.80	0.45	0.699
Q27. Participation in WIL has positively impacted on my OMT computer and technical skills such as: Demonstrating advanced proficiency by quickly adapting to new technology and easily acquiring new technical skills.	Count	0	0	2	15	77				
	%	0%	0%	2.1%	16.0%	81.9%	97.9%	4.80	0.45	0.869
Q28. Engagement in WIL has enhanced my leadership skills such as: Team leadership.	Count	0	0	5	11	78				
	%	0%	0%	5.3%	11.7%	82.9%	94.7%	4.78	0.53	0.875
Q29. Engagement in WIL has enhanced my leadership skills such as: Co-supervision of colleagues' activities.	Count	0	0	3	14	77				
	%	0%	0%	3.2%	14.9%	81.9%	96.8%	4.79	0.48	0.868
Q30. Engagement in WIL has enhanced my leadership skills such as: people management skills (e.g. coordination of efforts from different people)	Count	0	0	3	11	80				
	%	0%	0%	3.2%	11.7%	85.1%	96.8%	4.82	0.46	0.852
Q31. Engagement in WIL has enhanced my leadership skills such as: Petty cash management skills (e.g. invoicing, receipting, computer based filing, corporate banking).	Count	0	1	3	8	82				
	%	0%	1.1%	3.2%	8.5%	87.2%	95.7%	4.82	0.53	0.857
Q32. Engagement in WIL has enhanced my leadership skills such as: Listening skills e.g. listen actively to OMT lecturers.	Count	0	1	1	32	60				
	%	0%	1.1%	1.1%	34.0%	63.8%	97.9%	4.61	0.57	0.627
Q33. Engagement in WIL has enhanced my oral skills to speak with confidence using clear and concise sentences.	Count	0	0		16	78				
	%	0%	0%	0%	17.0%	83.0%	100.0%	4.83	0.38	0.543
Q34. Engagement in WIL has enhanced my written skills such as: Producing well thought-out texts.	Count	0	0	2	12	80				
	%	0%	0%	2.1%	12.8%	85.1%	97.9%	4.83	0.43	0.714
Q35. Engagement in WIL has enhanced my written skills such as: Professional correspondence free from grammatical and spelling errors.	Count	0	1	2	10	81				
	%	0%	1.1%	2.1%	10.6%	86.2%	96.8%	4.82	0.51	0.763
Q36. My involvement in WIL has improved my telephone/E-mail skills to use high quality, professional oral and written skills to project a positive image of the business.	Count	0	0	2	8	84				
	%	0%	0%	2.1%	8.5%	89.4%	97.9%	4.87	0.39	0.726
Cronbach's Alpha								0.923		
% of total variation accounted for by latent factor								59.39%		

The Cronbach's Alpha value of 0.923 indicates that the items that make up the construct of skills have a high internal consistency. Hence, they can be summarized by a single measure and still measure the skills factor (construct) reliably.

4.3.3.1 Computer, technical, oral and leadership skills

The item on which WIL had the highest impact is the enhancement of oral skills such as speaking with confidence and using clear and concise sentences in which 100% of the respondents agreed strongly. A dominant percentage (100%) of students concurred that participation in WIL improved their presentation skills, especially their articulating messages using relevant content owing to good oral presentation skills in learnt at the work place. The enhancement of oral skills for students should involve planning for their presentations, and conducting research to ensure the delivery of well-constructed messages. This findings resonates with Smith's (2014) views on the need for business graduate employees to be equipped with an understanding of workplace oral communication skills.

4.3.3.2 Computer and technical skills

A total of 97.9% of the students who participated in the research strongly agreed that participation in WIL impacted positively on their computer and technical skills. This highlights that students' computer skills, such as word processing, graphical, PowerPoint presentations, emailing and technical drawing, improved through participation in WIL. The acquisition of such staple computer-based and technical skills relevant to the OMT domain can be conceived as a component related to the gaining of a professional identity, as competent office managers, office administrators, and secretaries, through participating in a community of practice (Smith, Lave & Wenger, 2009). This finding supports the view that students' participation in professional roles through workplace learning experiences provide opportunities for transformative learned skills that shape their professional identity formation and their development of a sense of professionalism (Bauman, 2005).

4.3.3.3 Leadership skills

An overwhelming majority (96.8%) of students affirmed that their participation in WIL enhanced their leadership skills. It is undoubtable that the development of OMT students' leadership skills influences their team members to positively channel their task executions to meet customers and communities' needs, expectations and aspirations. Although student leadership can only be conceived as nascent and emergent, it is clear that it can motivate fellow employees and transform communities and ultimately the corporate world when fully developed. This reasoning gels well with

Trede's (2012) claim that the great leaders' creation of a vivid and compelling vision of the future motivates fellow employees to want to achieve it, and more importantly it is everyone's dream to work for a company that makes a difference in the world (Trede, 2012).

4.3.3.4 Team leadership

The ranking of the items that fall under skills is demonstrated in Table 4.5. A majority of the skills items were also highly and positively impacted upon by WIL. For instance, 94.7% of the respondents were of the view that participation in WIL enhanced their leadership skills such as, equipping them with skills to lead effectively and improving their positive confidence in a working environment. This finding buttresses recent research which demonstrates that with effective leadership, most participants within any organisation tend to work towards the greater good (May, 2016). Although not reported in our study, it would be expected that true leadership skills inspire genuine allegiance, which contributes to a greater level of loyalty and dedication (May, 2016).

4.3.4 Abilities enhancement

The summary statistics on the effect of WIL on the enhancement of abilities are presented in Table 4.6. The table indicates that, in general, the students' participation in WIL affected their abilities positively.

Table 4.6. Abilities Enhancement

Abilities		Frequency Distribution						Descriptives		Latent Factor (Principal component)
		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	% Agree/Strongly Agree	Mean	Std Dev	
Q37. My participation in WIL has improved my creative abilities.	Count %	0 0%	0 0%	3 3.2%	9 9.6%	82 87.2%	96.8%	4.84	0.45	0.776
Q38. My participation in WIL has improved my ability to operate office machines.	Count %	0 0%	0 0%	3 3.2%	7 7.5%	84 89.4%	96.8%	4.86	0.43	0.883
Q39. My participation in WIL has improved my ability to follow guidelines/procedures for the preparation of administrative forms.	Count %	0 0%	0 0%	2 2.1%	7 7.5%	85 90.4%	97.9%	4.88	0.38	0.893
Q40. My participation in WIL has improved my ability to maintain a good working relationship with a diverse workforce, customers and visitors.	Count %	0 0%	0 0%	2 2.1%	5 5.3%	87 92.6%	97.9%	4.90	0.36	0.904
Q41. My participation in WIL has improved my ability to lead and provide instruction to clerical support staff.	Count %	0 0%	0 0%	1 1.1%	31 33.0%	62 67.0%	98.9%	4.65	0.50	0.553
Q42. My participation in WIL has improved my ability to maintain confidentiality of documents and office information.	Count %	0 0%	0 0%	1 1.1%	10 10.6%	83 88.3%	98.9%	4.87	0.37	0.540
Cronbach's Alpha								0.846		
% of total variation accounted for by latent factor								59.91%		

The Cronbach's Alpha value of 0.846 indicates that the items that make up the construct of abilities have a high internal consistency. Hence, they can be summarized by a single measure and still measure the abilities factor (construct) reliably.

4.3.4.1 Creativity and the ability to operate office machines

Here, 96.8% of all the student respondents agreed strongly that WIL participation improved their creative abilities. It can be affirmed that participation in WIL contributes to improving the creative expression of students, which is critical to organisational success. A similar percentage strongly agreed that participation in WIL improved their ability to operate office machines. The result could indicate that students' participation in WIL enhanced their technical abilities such as their word processing abilities, mastery of typing, and the ability to print, fax and copy documents using office machines. The broad repertoire of technological skills on the OMT profession signifies the expansion and growth of this domain. This observation resonates with Van Zyn's (2013) observation that, while OMT focused traditionally on file handling and typing, the profession has since expanded with the advent of information and communication technologies to include managing computer documents and computer-based communication such as Skyping (Van Zyn, 2013).

4.3.4.2 Ability to follow procedures

A demonstrable percentage (97.9%) agreed to the capacity of WIL to improve their ability to follow procedures for the preparation of administration forms and managing their relationships with all other stakeholders. This suggests that most business operations rely on complete and accurate workplace documents for communication, information management and record keeping to occur. Such compelling feedback indicate that the students' changing roles may require them to engage in the write-up of emails and letters, and completion of documents and reports while avoiding mistakes (Van Zyn, 2013).

4.3.4.3 Leadership and ability to maintain confidence

There was a very strong affirmation (98.9%) among students of the potential of WIL to improve their capacity to provide leadership to clerical and support staff. A similar percentage also reiterated the capacity of WIL to engender their confidence in the delivery of their duties. These impressive statistics bear testimony to the power of the work place environment which WIL nurtures in order to transform the practical orientation of students. According to Grabe (2010), the development of students' abilities during their participation in WIL depends on the capacity of employers to invest in the betterment of students' abilities so that the students increase their competence in the world of work. These tightly knit findings resonate with Mcilveen, Mcnamara, Kift, Butler, Field, Brown and Gamble's (2012) claim that WIL tends to emphasize the concerns of employers and the workplace rather than those of students and the balance is often tilted in favour of learning to work as opposed to learning to learn (Mcilveen, *et al.*, 2012). Nevertheless, there was no hard evidence to support the view that students' academic competencies were compromised by their 3 months placements on the WIL programme. In fact, literature seems to suggest that participation in WIL may positively augment students' academic abilities (such as their leadership).

4.4 Students' perspectives on the Effects of WIL programmes on the broadening of OMT competencies

This section addresses the second objective guiding this study: To examine students' perspectives on the effect of WIL programmes on the broadening of their office management and technology competencies (that is knowledge, skills and abilities). A

descriptive analysis is employed here in an effort to explore the students' perspectives on the items that address the above objective.

4.4.1 Effects on Content Selection

Table 4.7 shows the results of the content selection questions. These questions ascertained the relevance and appropriateness of the academic content that the students were taught in their lectures. This construct is presented first and its relationship with WIL is presented later in a cross tabulation that shows the correlations (see Table 4.18).

Table 4.7 Lectures content selection

Lectures Content Selection		Frequency Distribution						Descriptives		Latent Factor (Principal component)
		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	% Agree/Strongly Agree	Mean	Std Dev	
Q43. The lecturers' choice of content taught was helpful in familiarizing me with adaptability knowledge such as managing multi conflicting OMT priorities without loss of composure.	Count	0	0	2	13	79				
	%	0%	0%	2.1%	13.8%	84.0%	97.9%	4.82	0.44	0.836
Q44. The lecturers' choice of content taught was helpful in familiarizing me with time management knowledge such as determining the appropriate allocation of time on OMT tasks.	Count	0	0	1	12	81				
	%	0%	0%	1.1%	12.8%	86.2%	98.9%	4.85	0.39	0.873
Q45. The lecturers' choice of content taught was helpful in familiarizing me with space management knowledge such as: Keeping a clean and organised OMT office,	Count	0	0	1	12	81				
	%	0%	0%	1.1%	12.8%	86.2%	98.9%	4.85	0.39	0.817
Q46. The lecturers' choice of content taught was helpful in familiarizing me with space management knowledge such as: Appropriately handling all OMT paperwork.	Count	0	0	0	12	82				
	%	0%	0%	0%	12.8%	87.2%	100.0%	4.87	0.34	0.832
Q47. The lecturers' choice of content taught was helpful in familiarizing me with space management knowledge such as: Maintaining control over the physical OMT environment.	Count	0	0	0	28	66				
	%	0%	0%	0%	29.8%	70.2%	100.0%	4.70	0.46	0.6
Q48. The lecturers' choice of content taught was helpful in familiarizing me with task management knowledge such as balancing conflicting OMT priorities in order to manage workflow.	Count	0	0	3	11	80				
	%	0%	0%	3.2%	11.7%	85.1%	96.8%	4.82	0.46	0.776
Q49. The lecturers' choice of content taught was helpful in familiarizing me with office management knowledge such as the appropriate handling of all paperwork.	Count	0	0	2	9	83				
	%	0%	0%	2.1%	9.6%	88.3%	97.9%	4.86	0.40	0.841
Cronbach's Alpha								0.899		
% of total variation accounted for by latent factor								64.150%		

Cronbach's Alpha

The Cronbach's Alpha value of 0.899 indicates that the items that make up the construct of lecture content selection have a high internal consistency. Hence, they can be summarised by a single measure and measure the construct reliably.

4.4.1.1 Familiarization with space management

All students (100%) agreed strongly that the lecturers' choice of content helped them familiarize with space management such as maintaining control over the physical working environment and appropriately handling all office paperwork. This points to the fact that the OMT lecturers' choice was very helpful to students when partaking their WIL. The statistic proves that when students' space management is vicariously enhanced, the students will be able to operate sufficiently in the office without any loss of control. According to Trede (2012), employees should be able to control and operate through physical spaces of the business or organisation and manage paper works. This could be a single floor, multiple floors within a building, or multiple floors within multiple buildings.

4.4.1.2 Students' enhanced knowledge

About 98.9% believed that their lecturers' taught content helped them to get familiarized with time management knowledge. This shows that the students' participation in WIL equipped them with a sense of time management which readily resonated with the lecturers' content covering this issue. The statistic suggests that work integrated learning ensures that students are able to go to work on time and meet strict work deadlines without wasting time, something that students internalised and cohered well with when they were taught on the same subject (i.e. time management) by their lecturers.

4.4.1.3 Adaptive knowledge

A majority of the students (97.9%) believed that their participation in WIL improved their understanding of the relevance of lecture content on adaptive knowledge such as managing multi-conflicting OMT priorities without loss of composure. Furthermore, 97.9% of the student respondents agreed strongly that WIL improved their familiarity with lectures' content on office management. This means that students' WIL portfolios, which specified that after completing their work integrated learning they should be able to operate smoothly in the working environment by managing the office appropriately, was instrumental in the students' gaining of knowledge on the suitability of lecturer content on office management. This interpretation on the connection of WIL experience to office management feeds into Jackson's (2015) perspective that although office management principles such as the layout of the office, are often

overlooked, they invariably affect the way employees perform their jobs and the type of task that the employees perform. As such, a good office is not only functional but provides comfortable work areas for employees.

4.4.1.4 Task management knowledge

An overwhelming majority (96.85%) of the students believed strongly that the WIL program increased their awareness of lecturer content on task management. Student participation in WIL seemed to have broadened their OMT competencies, especially their capacity to judge the academic merit of the content delivered by their educators. This supports the view that students seem to be satisfied with the most important strategies learned during their programmes such as knowing how to balance conflicting office priorities in order to manage workflow (Brookfield, 2012).

4.4.2 Effects on course organisation

The study also determined the overall Effects of WIL programmes on students. As a result, it evaluated the influence of student participation in WIL by focusing on their perceptions on the way their lecturers organised the courses. The construct of course organisation had many questionnaire items and this necessitated the use of exploratory factor analysis to divide the questions (items) into sub-constructs (themes).

Table 4.8. KMO and Bartlett's Test for course organisation questions

KMO and Bartlett's Test		
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		0.877
Approx. Chi-Square		1986.514
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Df	253
	Sig.	0.000

4.4.2.1 Exploratory factor analysis for Course Organisation

The results in Table 4.8 indicate that the sampling adequacy is high as evidenced by the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure of sampling adequacy provides an index, between 0 and 1, of the proportion of variance among the variables that might be common variance (i.e. that might be indicative of underlying or latent common factors) (Smith, 2012). The SPSS software package suggests that a KMO near 1.0 supports a factor analysis and that anything

less than 0.5 is probably not amenable to useful factor analysis. According to Sibiya (2012), the Bartlett's test compares the observed correlation matrix to the identity matrix. In other words, it checks if there is a certain redundancy between the variables that can be summarized with a few number of factors. If the variables are perfectly correlated, only one factor is sufficient. This could be indicating that the questionnaire items for course organisation can be split into sub-constructs as they are highly correlated.

Table 4.9. Exploratory factor analysis for course organisation questions

Course Organisation Questions	Factors		
	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3
Q57. Content quality improved my written skills such as: Producing well thought-out OMT ideas in texts.	0.558		
Q58. Content quality improved my written skills such as: Professional correspondence on OMT issues free from grammatical and spelling errors.	0.664		
Q60. Quality of OMT content improved my OMT computer and technical skills such as: Demonstrating advanced proficiency by quickly adapting to new technology and easily acquiring new technical skills.	0.653		
Q63. Content significance improved my OMT leadership skills such as: Co-supervision of colleagues' activities.	0.754		
Q64. Content significance improved my OMT leadership skills such as: People management skills (e.g. coordination of efforts from different people).	0.658		
Q65. Content significance improved my OMT leadership skills such as: Petty cash management skills (e.g. invoicing, receipting, computer based filing, corporate banking).	0.770		
Q66. Content significance improved my OMT leadership skills such as: Listening skills e.g. listening actively to OMT lecturers.	0.764		
Q67. Understanding of lesson plans of the OMT course enhanced my ability to operate office machines.	0.746		
Q68. Understanding of lesson plans of the OMT course enhanced my creative thinking abilities.	0.681		
Q69. Understanding of lesson plans of the OMT course enhanced my ability to follow guidelines/procedures for the preparation of administrative forms.	0.580		
Q50. Structuring of the OMT course enhanced my grasp of concrete OMT practicals such as (computer skills evaluations).		0.775	
Q51. Content relevance improved my knowledge of OMT work adaption such as time consciousness.		0.758	
Q52. Content relevance improved my OMT knowledge of work adaption such as managing multiple conflicting priorities without loss of focus and composure.		0.775	
Q53. Content quality improved my OMT knowledge of time management (such as to determine the appropriate allocation of time).		0.679	
Q54. Quality of OMT content delivered improved my listening skills e.g. listening actively to OMT lectures.		0.625	
Q59. Quality of OMT content improved my OMT computer and technical skills such as: Displaying proficiency using standard office equipment like the computer, fax, photocopier and scanner.		0.624	
Q61. Content significance (i.e. its academic impact) improved my knowledge of time- based sequencing of OMT tasks/work activities.		0.577	
Q72. Understanding of the lesson plans of the OMT course enhanced my ability to maintain confidentiality.		0.735	
Q55. Quality of OMT content improved my oral skills (e.g. to speak with confidence about OMT concepts using clear, concise sentences).			0.631
Q56. Quality of content improved my time management knowledge (such determining the appropriate allocation of time to OMT tasks).			0.766
Q62. Content significance helped in improving my OMT leadership skills such as: Team leadership.			0.394
Q71. Understanding of the lesson plans of the OMT course enhanced my ability to lead and provide instructions to a clerical support staff.			0.561
Eigenvalue	12.653	1.548	1.194

The results in Table 4.9 demonstrate that there were three factors with eigenvalues greater than 1, hence, the questions under course organisation can be subdivided into three sub-constructs which will be used as measures of the course organisation.

4.4.3 Effects on Course Organisation sub-construct 1 (Factor 1)

Table 4.10 presents the results for the first and main construct (Factor 1) of course organisation.

Table 4.10. Effects on Course Organisation 1

Course Organisation 1		Frequency Distribution					Descriptives		Latent Factor (Principal component) Coefficient	
		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	% Agree/ Strongly Agree	Mean		Std Dev
Q57. Content quality improved my written skills such as: Producing well thought-out OMT ideas in texts.	Count %	0 0%	0 0%	1 1.1%	13 13.3%	80 85.1%	98.9%	4.84	0.40	0.773
Q58. Content quality improved my written skills such as: Professional correspondence on OMT issues free from grammatical and spelling errors.	Count %	0 0%	0 0%	1 1.1%	14 14.9%	79 84.0%	98.9%	4.83	0.41	0.765
Q60. Quality of OMT content improved my OMT computer and technical skills such as: Demonstrating advanced proficiency by quickly adapting to new technology and easily acquiring new technical skills.	Count %	0 0%	0 0%	2 2.1%	10 10.6%	82 87.2%	97.9%	4.85	0.41	0.840
Q63. Content significance improved my OMT leadership skills such as: Co-supervision of colleagues' activities.	Count %	0 0%	0 0%	1 1.1%	20 21.3%	73 77.7%	98.9%	4.77	0.45	0.759
Q64. Content significance improved my OMT leadership skills such as: People management skills (e.g. coordination of efforts from different people).	Count %	0 0%	0 0%	2 2.1%	18 19.2%	74 78.7%	97.9%	4.77	0.47	0.834
Q65. Content significance improved my OMT leadership skills such as: Petty cash management skills (e.g. invoicing, receipting, computer based filing, corporate banking).	Count %	0 0%	0 0%	2 2.1%	20 21.3%	72 76.6%	97.9%	4.74	0.49	0.862
Q66. Content significance improved my OMT leadership skills such as: Listening skills e.g listening actively to OMT lecturers.	Count %	0 0%	0 0%	1 1.1%	16 17.0%	77 81.9%	98.9%	4.81	0.42	0.871
Q67. Understanding of the lesson plan of the OMT course enhanced my ability to operate office machines.	Count %	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	10 10.6%	84 89.4%	100.0%	4.89	0.31	0.747
Q68. Understanding of the lesson plan of the OMT course enhanced my creative thinking abilities.	Count %	0 0%	0 0%	1 1.1%	11 11.7%	82 87.2%	98.9%	4.86	0.38	0.863
Q69. Understanding of the lesson plan of the OMT course enhanced my ability to follow guidelines/procedures for the preparation of administrative forms.	Count %	0 0%	0 0%	1 1.1%	7 7.5%	86 91.5%	98.9%	4.9	0.33	0.778
Cronbach's Alpha								0.940		
% of total variation accounted for by latent factor								65.73%		

The Cronbach's Alpha value of 0.940 indicates that the items that make up the first sub-construct of course organisation have very high internal consistency. Hence, they

can be summarized by a single measure and still represent all the ten items of the construct reliably.

4.4.3.1 Written, leadership and listening skills

A majority (98.9%) of the students concurred strongly that their participation in WIL improved their written skills such as: producing well thought-out OMT ideas in texts and Professional correspondence on OMT issues. Their participation in the WIL program also influenced their OMT leadership skills such as: Co-supervision of colleagues' activities and listening skills such as actively listening to their OMT lecturers. Student involvement in WIL also enhanced their understanding of the lesson plans of the OMT course, which enhanced their creative thinking abilities and capability to follow guidelines/procedures in the preparation of administrative forms. It is generally thought that WIL comprises exposure to formal employment, which is integrated within a learning programme, as a result, it enables students to combine theoretical knowledge gained through academic study, with practical knowledge-based information attained via engagement in a work or professional context (Brookfield, 2012). Nevertheless, the above findings deviate from Brookfield (2012) as they prove that the reverse is also true, in that WIL allows the integration of knowledge gained from the work context with the academic knowledge assimilated in the classrooms.

Brookfield (2012) adds that WIL is underpinned by the assumption that certain learning outcomes are best acquired by means of direct experience and reflection. Though this holds water, the bulk of the findings support a reverse flow, where knowledge acquired during WIL shapes students perceptions on content and modes of academic inquiry. Although *knowing-in-action* (learning from doing); *reflection-in-action* (on-the-spot reflection when students can still change events) were plausible, the bulk of the findings reported in this sub section of the findings lend credence to the view that most students engaged in *reflection-on-action* (thinking back at how events unfolded and learning from them) (Trede, 2012).

4.4.3.2 Improved technical skills

With regard to the other questions, 97.9% of the students agreed strongly that their participation in WIL improved their perceptions of content quality when they were

covering improved OMT computer and technical skills by quickly adapting to new technology and easily acquiring new technical skills. Other lecture content that was impacted on positively through participation in WIL related to technical skills enhancement include:

- OMT leadership skills such as people management expertise such as the coordination of efforts from different people.
- OMT leadership skills such as petty cash management activities such as invoicing, receipting and computer based filing as well as corporate banking.

While there is a growing consensus on the need for a shift from the distinction between theory and practice made in the classroom to a more seamless know-how in the workplace (Scholtz, 2007; Wilton, 2012; Magnus, 2014) as is supported in the study findings, the same findings invert Marius' (2006) advice on the importance of exposing students to situations where they can practise (in real work contexts) what they have learnt (in class) in a situation that gives meaning relevant to their chosen careers (Marius, 2006). In other words, the study's findings are contrary to Marius' thesis as they are more about how WIL exposure can transform students' academic knowledge and academic skills base in the university contexts.

4.4.3.3 Lesson plans

All students (100%) believed that WIL participation impacted on their understanding of the lesson plans of the OMT course on the enhancement of their ability to operate office machines. This point to that fact an exposure to WIL contexts improves student understanding of course content, which mediates the enhancement of their technical capabilities. This finding indicates seamless integration of work place practices into the classroom practice, especially the unique ways in which the changing patterns of technology in the work place are illuminating student understanding of the constitution of academic content and altering the configuration of students' skills and knowledge levels continuously.

4.4.4 Effects on Course Organisation sub-construct 2 (Factor 2)

The results for the second sub-construct of course organisation are presented in Table 4.11.

Table 4.11. Effects Course organisation 2

Course Organisation 2		Frequency Distribution					Descriptives		Latent Factor (Principal component) Coefficient
		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Mean	Std Dev	
Q50. Structuring of OMT course enhanced my grasp of concrete OMT practicals such as computer skills evaluations.	Count %	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	8 8.5%	86 91.5%	100.0%	4.89 0.32	0.848
Q51. Content relevance improved my knowledge of OMT work adaption such as time consciousness.	Count %	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	10 10.6%	84 89.4%	100.0%	4.84 0.37	0.793
Q52. Content relevance improved my OMT knowledge of work adaption such as managing multiple conflicting priorities without loss of focus and composure.	Count %	0 0%	0 0%	1 1.1%	10 10.6%	83 88.3%	98.9%	4.81 0.46	0.866
Q53. Content quality improved my OMT knowledge of time management such as to determine the appropriate allocation of time to tasks.	Count %	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	13 13.8%	81 86.2%	100.0%	4.84 0.37	0.829
Q54. Quality of OMT content delivered improved my listening skills e.g. listening actively to OMT lectures.	Count %	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	8 8.5%	86 91.5%	100.0%	4.89 0.32	0.861
Q59. Quality of OMT content improved my OMT computer and technical skills such as: Displaying proficiency using standard office equipment like the computer, fax, photocopier and scanner.	Count %	0 0%	0 0%	1 1.1%	11 11.7%	82 87.2%	98.9%	4.86 0.42	0.813
Q61. Content significance (i.e. its academic impact) improved my knowledge of time-based sequencing of OMT tasks/work activities.	Count %	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	6 6.4%	88 93.6%	100.0%	4.95 0.23	0.755
Q72. Understanding of lesson plans of the OMT course enhanced my ability to maintain confidentiality.	Count %	0 0%	0 0%	1 1.1%	12 12.8%	81 86.2%	98.9%	4.81 0.46	0.825
Cronbach's Alpha								0.929	
% of total variation accounted for by latent factor								68%	

A Cronbach's Alpha value of 0.929 indicates that the items that make up the second sub-construct of course organisation have a very high internal consistency. Hence, they can be summarized by a single measure.

4.4.4.1 Content relevance

The results demonstrate that all students (100%) who participated in WIL agreed strongly to the fact that the structuring of the OMT course enhanced their grasp of

concrete OMT practicals such as (computer skills evaluations). This suggests that student exposure to WIL improves course delivery, which mediates their improvement in OMT practicals such as speed test in order to improve their typing speed and computer literate skills. WIL also shaped content relevance, which vicariously improved student knowledge of OMT work adaption such as time consciousness. By the same token, WIL participation influenced content significance (i.e. its academic impact), which indirectly improved the students' knowledge of time-based sequencing of the OMT tasks/work activities.

Student involvement in WIL also influenced the quality of the OMT content that was delivered. This in turn mediated student improvements in their listening skills, for example the ability to listen actively to OMT lectures. The WIL programme was also positively associated with content quality, which mediated the enhancement of OMT students' knowledge of time management such as their determination the appropriate allocation of time. This supports the importance of WIL in skill acquisition and refinement as a complement to traditional on-campus learning. The result, therefore, bears testimony to the capacity of WIL placement to build on the foundation skills developed in the traditional class setting and enhance student confidence and experience in skill application under the guidance of workplace supervisors (Smith, 2012).

4.4.4.2 Content relevance improved knowledge

A huge 98.94% of the students responded to the other three questionnaire items in the affirmative: that is student participation in WIL influenced positively the relevance of content. This then mediated their acquisition of OMT knowledge in particular work adaption such as managing multiple conflicting priorities without loss of focus and composure. Similarly, WIL also impacted on the students' understanding of OMT lesson plans, which enhanced their ability to maintain confidentiality of information from office and other work documents. More importantly, WIL participation was reported as having positively shaped the acquisition of quality OMT content, which vicariously improved their computer and technical skills to the extent that the displayed proficiency in the use of standard office equipment such as the computer, fax, photocopier and scanner. The overwhelmingly positive feedback from students on work-related skills suggests that participating in WIL significantly benefits students

through the development of their professional employability skills. Coll, *et al* (2009) add that WIL ensures that students' competencies are well enhanced and that students stay employable (Smith, 2012).

4.4.5 Effects on Course Organisation sub-construct 3 (Factor 3)

The results for the third sub-construct of Course Organisation are presented in Table 4.12.

Table 4.12. Course Organisation 3

Course Organisation 3		Frequency Distribution					Descriptive		Latent Factor (Principal component) Coefficient	
		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	% Agree/ Strongly Agree	Mean		Std Dev
Q55. Quality of OMT content improved my oral skills (e.g. speaking confidently about OMT concepts using clear and concise sentences).	Count %	0 0%	0 0%	2 2.1%	35 37.2%	57 60.6%	97.9%	4.59	0.54	0.698
Q56. Quality of content improved my time management knowledge (such as determining the appropriate allocation of time to OMT tasks).	Count %	0 0%	0 0%	1 1.2%	18 19.2%	75 79.8%	98.9%	4.79	0.44	0.808
Q62. Content significance improved my OMT leadership skills such as: Team leadership.	Count %	0 0%	0 0%	2 2.1%	29 30.9%	63 67.0%	97.9%	4.65	0.52	0.630
Q70. Understanding of the lesson plans of the OMT course broadened my ability to maintain good working relationships with a diverse workforce, customers and visitors.	Count %	0 0%	0 0%	2 2.1%	23 24.5%	69 73.4%	97.9%	4.71	0.50	0.736
Q71. Understanding of the lesson plans of the OMT course enhanced my ability to lead and provide instructions to clerical support staff.	Count %	0 0%	0 0%	1 1.2%	12 12.8%	81 86.2%	98.9%	4.85	0.39	0.822
Cronbach's Alpha								0.780		
% of total variation accounted for by latent factor								55.07%		

4.4.5.1 Oral skills

About 97.9% of the students agreed strongly that WIL improved the quality of OMT content, which in turn, impacted on their oral skills. This suggests that students' skills, including, computing, communication, social, and problem-solving skills, improved.

4.4.5.2 Quality of the content

Almost everyone (98.9%) agreed strongly that: The quality of content improved their time management knowledge (such determining the appropriate allocation of time to OMT tasks). The understanding of an OMT lesson plan enhanced their ability to lead and provide instruction to other clerical support staff. The dominance of positive affirmation suggests that work integrated learning is a significant strategy for the development of students' knowledge. The intention behind work integrated learning is to produce graduates who are able to integrate, adapt and apply this knowledge across diverse global contexts. Although it is assumed that an emphasis on learning in the workplace increases the innovative capacity within organisations where the students are attached (Sattler, 2011), the findings here suggest the opposite in that they show that work place practices shaped academic practices within the university. This suggests a bi-directional relationship of WIL and institutional/academic practices within the university.

4.4.6 Effects on Teaching Modalities

The construct of Teaching Modalities had fourteen questionnaire items which needed to be split into sub-constructs using exploratory factor analysis.

Table 4.13. KMO and Bartlett's Test for Teaching Modalities questions

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.916
Approx. Chi-Square		1109.568
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Df	91
	Sig.	.000

Exploratory factor analysis for Teaching Modalities

The results in Table 4.13 indicate that the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy is high (0.916) and the Bartlett's Test of Sphericity is significant (Chi-square=1109.586, df=91, p-value=0.000). This ultimately shows that the questionnaire items for Teaching Modalities can be split into sub-constructs as they are highly correlated.

Table 4.14. Exploratory factor analysis for Teaching Modalities questions

Teaching Modalities Questions	Factors	
	Factor 1	Factor 2
Q73. OMT lecturers enhanced my adaptability knowledge such as managing multi conflicting priorities without loss of composure.	0.743	
Q75. OMT lecturers enhanced my space management knowledge such as: Appropriately handling all paperwork.	0.786	
Q76. OMT lecturers enhanced my space management knowledge such as: Maintaining control over the physical OMT environment.	0.778	
Q77. OMT Lecturers' help broadened my task management knowledge such as balancing conflicting priorities in order to manage the workflow.	0.764	
Q83. The practical orientation of the OMT course (e.g. simulations and practicals) improved my OMT space management knowledge such as: Appropriately handling all paperwork.	0.712	
Q84. The practical orientation of the OMT course (e.g. simulations and practicals) improved my OMT space management knowledge such as: Maintaining control over the physical OMT environment.	0.730	
Q85. The practical orientation of the OMT course (e.g. simulations and practicals) broadened my OMT task management knowledge such as balancing conflicting priorities in order to manage the workflow.	0.651	
Q86. The practical orientation of the OMT course (e.g. simulations and practicals) broadened my OMT knowledge of the organisational function and procedures of the office.	0.586	
Q78. OMT Lecturers' broadened my knowledge of the organisational function and procedures of the office.		0.807
Q79. The practical orientation of the OMT course (e.g. simulations and practicals) improved my OMT knowledge such as managing multi conflicting priorities without loss of composure.		0.782
Q80. The practical orientation of the OMT course (e.g. simulations and practicals) improved my OMT knowledge such as determining the appropriate allocation of time on tasks.		0.847
Q81. OMT Lecturers enhanced my time management knowledge such as determining the appropriate allocation of time on tasks.		0.682
Cronbach's Alpha	0.938	0.878

The exploratory factor analysis results in Table 14 demonstrate that the two sub-constructs of Teaching Modalities are very reliable (Cronbach's Alpha >0.700).

Effects on Teaching Modalities sub-construct 1 (Factor 1)

The results of the first teaching modalities sub-construct (factor 1) are presented in Table 4.15.

Table 4.15. Teaching modalities 1

Teaching Modalities 1		Frequency Distribution					Descriptives	Latent Factor (Principal component) Coefficient		
		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree			% Agree/ Strongly Agree	Mean
Q73. OMT Lecturers enhanced my adaptability knowledge such as managing multi conflicting priorities without loss of composure.	Count %	0 0%	0 0%	2 2.13%	16 17.0%	76 80.9%	97.9%	4.79	0.46	0.766
Q75. OMT Lecturers enhanced my space management knowledge such as: Appropriately handling all paperwork.	Count %	0 0%	0 0%	1 1.06%	13 13.8%	80 85.1%	98.9%	4.84	0.4	0.832
Q76. OMT Lecturers enhanced my space management knowledge such as: Maintaining control over the physical OMT environment.	Count %	0 0%	0 0%	2 2.13%	9 9.6%	83 88.3%	97.9%	4.86	0.4	0.906
Q77. OMT Lecturers' help broadened my task management knowledge such as balancing conflicting priorities in order to manage workflow.	Count %	0 0%	0 0%	1 1.06%	10 10.6%	83 88.3%	98.9%	4.87	0.37	0.847
Q83. The practical orientation of the OMT course (e.g. simulations and practicals) improved my OMT space management knowledge such as: Appropriately handling all paperwork.	Count %	0 0%	0 0%	1 1.06%	10 10.6%	83 88.3%	98.9%	4.87	0.37	0.800
Q84. The practical orientation of the OMT course (e.g. simulations and practicals) improved my OMT space management knowledge such as: Maintaining control over the physical OMT environment.	Count %	0 0%	0 0%	2 2.13%	10 10.6%	82 87.2%	97.9%	4.85	0.41	0.885
Q85. The practical orientation of the OMT course (e.g. simulations and practicals) broadened my OMT task management knowledge such as balancing conflicting priorities in order to manage the workflow.	Count %	0 0%	0 0%	3 3.19%	24 25.5%	67 71.3%	96.8%	4.68	0.53	0.653
Q86. The practical orientation of OMT course (e.g. simulations and practicals) broadened my OMT knowledge of the organisational function and procedures of the office.	Count %	0 0%	0 0%	3 3.19%	12 12.8%	79 84.0%	96.8%	4.81	0.47	0.775
Cronbach's Alpha							0.938			
% of total variation accounted for by latent factor							66.06%			

The first construct of Teaching Modalities has a very high internal consistency (Cronbach's Alpha=0.938).

4.4.6.1 Space management

The results show that 97.9% of the students agreed that the practical orientation of the OMT course (simulations and practical) improved their OMT space management knowledge. The researcher interprets that the hands-on nature of practicals could have deepened students' grasp of OMT concepts, constructs and methodologies through learning by doing, hence deepening the students' knowledge base. A total of 98.94% of the students were affirmative that their OMT lecturers enhanced their space

management knowledge. An equal percentage also agreed that their lecturers helped them in broadening their task management knowledge on issues such as balancing conflicting priorities in order to manage the workflow.

The students' approval rating in all questions on Teaching Modalities is very high thus indicating that the educators' teaching strategies for various programmes were well received and appreciated by students. These very high percentages suggest that the teaching modalities and practical orientations in various programmes were essential and relevant to students' learning process.

Effects on Teaching Modalities sub-construct 2 (Factor 2)

Table 4.16. Teaching modalities 2

Teaching Modalities 2		Frequency Distribution						Descriptives		Latent Factor (Principal component) Coefficient
		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	% Agree/Strongly Agree	Mean	Std Dev	
Q78. OMT Lecturers' help broadened my knowledge of the organisational function and procedures of the office.	Count %	0 0%	0 0%	3 3.2%	23 24.5%	68 72.3%	96.8%	4.69	0.53	0.718
Q79. The practical orientation of the OMT course (e.g. simulations and practicals) improved my OMT knowledge such as managing multi conflicting priorities without loss of composure.	Count %	0 0%	0 0%	2 2.1%	18 19.2%	74 78.7%	97.9%	4.77	0.47	0.743
Q80. The practical orientation of the OMT course (e.g. simulations and practicals) improved my OMT knowledge such as determining the appropriate allocation of time on tasks.	Count %	0 0%	0 0%	3 3.2%	13 13.8%	78 83.0%	96.8%	4.80	0.48	0.772
Q81. OMT Lecturers' helped to enhance my time management knowledge such as determining the appropriate allocation of time on tasks.	Count %	0 0%	0 0%	2 2.1%	14 14.9%	78 83.0%	97.9%	4.81	0.45	0.705
Cronbach's Alpha								0.878		
% of total variation accounted for by latent factor								73.47%		

The second construct of teaching modalities also has a very high internal consistency (Cronbach's Alpha=0.878 and accounts for 73.47% of the information contained in the original questionnaire items before they are combined into one variable).

4.4.6.2 Knowledge of organisational functions

The results in Table 4.16 illustrate that 96.8% of the students believed that the OMT lecturers' help in lectures and practical sessions broadened their knowledge of organisational functions and procedures of the office. The same percentage agreed strongly that the practical orientation of the OMT course (i.e. simulations and practicals) improved their OMT knowledge such as determining the appropriate allocation of time on tasks (Smith, 2012).

4.4.6.3 Practical orientation

An overwhelming majority (97.9%) of the respondents agreed strongly that the practical orientation of the OMT course (simulations and practical) improved their OMT knowledge on issues such as the management of multi-conflicting priorities without loss of composure. Moreover, 97.9% of the students agreed strongly that the OMT lecturers' guidance during practicals and simulations enhanced their time management knowledge on determining the appropriate allocation of time on tasks. This overwhelming consensus among students seems to support the view that mentoring enables students to understand and learn about the realities of a workplace (Smith, 2014).

4.4.6.4 Effects on Technology Assisted Curricula Delivery

As with the aforementioned teaching related components, the construct of technology assisted curricula delivery also received a very high positive feedback from the students who participated in this study.

Table 4.17 Technology Assisted Curricula Delivery

Technology Assisted Curricula Delivery		Frequency Distribution					Descriptives		Latent Factor (Principal component) Coefficient	
		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	% Agree/ Strongly Agree	Mean		Std Dev
Q87. The use of interactive technologies in the OMT course improved my computational skills like computer and technical skills such as: Displaying proficiency using standard office equipment like computer, fax, photocopier and scanner.	Count	0	0	1	14	79	98.9%	4.83	0.41	0.773
	%	0%	0%	1.1%	14.9%	84.0%				
Q88. The use of interactive technologies in the OMT course improved my computational skills like computer and technical skills such as: Demonstrating advanced proficiency by quickly adapting to new technology.	Count	0	0	2	8	84	97.9%	4.87	0.39	0.835
	%	0%	0%	2.1%	8.5%	89.4%				
Q89. The use of interactive technologies in the OMT course improved my computational skills like computer and technical skills such as: Easily acquiring new technical skills.	Count	0	0	2	5	87	97.9%	4.90	0.36	0.870
	%	0%	0%	2.1%	5.3%	92.6%				
Q90. The use of instructional technology for OMT demonstrations such as data projectors enhanced my written skills such as: Producing well thought-out texts.	Count	0	0	2	30	62	97.9%	4.64	0.53	0.728
	%	0%	0%	2.1%	31.9%	66.0%				
Q91. The use of instructional technology for OMT demonstrations such as data projectors enhanced my written skills such as: Professional correspondence free from grammatical and spelling errors skills.	Count	0	0	2	10	82	97.9%	4.85	0.41	0.694
	%	0%	0%	2.1%	10.6%	87.3%				
Cronbach's Alpha								0.829		
% of total variation accounted for by latent factor								61.26%		

The construct Technology Assisted Curricula Delivery is very reliable as indicated by a very high internal consistency (Cronbach's Alpha=0.829) and a single factor derived from principal components represent this construct would retain 61.26% of the information in the original five questionnaire items that make up the construct. A single summary variable (factor) to represent this construct will thus be calculated and later correlated with other summary variables developed in the sections above.

4.4.6.5 Computational skills

Table 4.17 demonstrates that 98.9% of the students who participated in the study agreed strongly to the fact that the use of interactive technologies in the OMT course improved their computational abilities such as computer and technical skills. The result might highlight that after watching their lecturers' proficient use of interactive technologies, such as notebooks, data projectors, video conferencing and Skype, the

students went on to learn by imitation through their proficient use of standard office equipment that include the computer, fax, photocopier and scanner. This implies a transfer of technological proficiencies across different contexts.

4.4.6.6 Computational and technical skills

The result demonstrates that 97.9% of the students who participated in the study strongly agreed to the fact that the use of interactive technologies in the OMT course improved their computational and technical skills (Q88 and Q89). Similarly, the use of instructional technology for OMT demonstrations enhanced students' written skills (Q90 and Q91). The dominance (97.9%) of affirmative responses demonstrates the importance that students attach to interactive instructional technologies perhaps, due to the increasing importance of digital technologies in a technology saturated work environment of the 21st Century (Smith, 2012). In addition, the interactive components of interactive technologies might have exposed students to real-world problems, giving them experience in controlling activities and manipulating tasks during execution.

4.5 Correlations between Work Integrated Learning and Students' Perspectives

Having presented the different constructs independently in the previous sections, the current subsection presents the results of correlations between these constructs/variables (factors) created by summarising the items under each construct as discussed above (see Table 4.18). The new variables are reliable representatives of the questionnaire items that fall under them as indicated by the Cronbach's Alpha values for each item which indicated high reliability. The correlations show that all the Work Integrated Learning variables, in relation to Overall Influence of WIL on the enhancement of knowledge, skills and abilities, are significantly correlated to the variables that fall under the students' perspectives on the effect of the WIL program on the broadening of OMT competencies.

Table 4.18: Correlations between Work Integrated Learning and Students' Perspectives

Pearson's Correlations			Work Integrated Learning				Students' Perspectives On The Effect Of The WIL Programme On The Broadening Of Office Management And Technology Knowledge, Skills And Abilities					
			Overall Influence Of WIL On The Enhancement Of Knowledge	Space Management Knowledge	SKILLS	ABILITIES	Lecture Content Selection	Course Organisation 1	Course Organisation 2	Course Organisation 3	Teaching Modalities 1	Teaching Modalities 2
	Space Management Knowledge	Correlation p-value N	0.711** 0.000 94	-								
	SKILLS	Correlation p-value N	0.665** 0.000 94	0.747** 0.000 94	-							
	ABILITIES	Correlation p-value N	0.746** 0.000 94	0.730** 0.000 94	0.804** 0.000 94	-						
Students' Perspectives On The Effect Of WIL Programme On The Broadening Of Office Management And Technology Knowledge, Skills And Abilities	Lecture Content Selection	Correlation p-value N	0.562** 0.000 94	0.750** 0.000 94	0.749** 0.000 94	0.752** 0.000 94	-					
	Course Organisation 1	Correlation p-value N	0.718** 0.000 94	0.781** 0.000 94	0.784** 0.000 94	0.800** 0.000 94	0.727** 0.000 94	-				
	Course Organisation 2	Correlation p-value N	0.767** 0.000 94	0.786** 0.000 94	0.749** 0.000 94	0.787** 0.000 94	0.759** 0.000 94	0.792** 0.000 94	-			
	Course Organisation 3	Correlation p-value N	0.697** 0.000 94	0.770** 0.000 94	0.710** 0.000 94	0.689** 0.000 94	0.642** 0.000 94	0.717** 0.000 94	0.737** 0.000 94	-		
	Teaching Modalities 1	Correlation p-value N	0.766** 0.000 94	0.839** 0.000 94	0.825** 0.000 94	0.850** 0.000 94	0.776** 0.000 94	0.866** 0.000 94	0.830** 0.000 94	0.735** 0.000 94	-	
	Teaching Modalities 2	Correlation p-value N	0.693** 0.000 94	0.724** 0.000 94	0.628** 0.000 94	0.635** 0.000 94	0.737** 0.000 94	0.693** 0.000 94	0.694** 0.000 94	0.638** 0.000 94	0.769** 0.000 94	
	Technology Assisted Curricula Delivery	Correlation p-value N	0.680** 0.000 94	0.747** 0.000 94	0.729** 0.000 94	0.830** 0.000 94	0.762** 0.000 94	0.761** 0.000 94	0.802** 0.000 94	0.740** 0.000 94	0.847** 0.000 94	0.667** 0.000 94

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 4.18 contains the correlations between the various constructs of Work Integrated Learning and students' perspectives on the effect of the WIL programme on the broadening of office management and technology knowledge, skills and abilities.

Lecture Content Selection is significantly and positively correlated with the overall influence of WIL on the enhancement of knowledge (correlation=0.562, p-value=0.000), Space Management Knowledge (correlation=0.750, p-value=0.000), SKILLS (correlation=0.749, p-value=0.000) and ABILITIES (correlation=0.752, p-value=0.000). It is also important to note that the correlations are of high effect size, hence, there is a strong relationship between WIL and Lecture Content Selection.

The first construct of course organisation (Course Organisation 1) is significantly and positively correlated with the overall influence of WIL on the enhancement of knowledge (correlation=0.718, p-value=0.000), Space Management Knowledge (correlation=0.781, p-value=0.000), SKILLS (correlation=0.784, p-value=0.000) and ABILITIES (correlation=0.800, p-value=0.000). The correlations are of high effect size, hence, there is a strong relationship between WIL and Course Organisation 1.

The second construct of course organisation (Course Organisation 2) is significantly and positively correlated with the overall influence of WIL on the enhancement of knowledge (correlation=0.767, p-value=0.000), Space Management Knowledge (correlation=0.786, p-value=0.000), SKILLS (correlation=0.749, p-value=0.000) and ABILITIES (correlation=0.787, p-value=0.000). The correlations are of high effect size, hence, there is a strong relationship between WIL and Course Organisation 2.

The third construct of course organisation (Course Organisation 3) is significantly and positively correlated with the overall influence of WIL on the enhancement of knowledge (correlation=0.697, p-value=0.000), Space Management Knowledge (correlation=0.770, p-value=0.000), SKILLS (correlation=0.710, p-value=0.000) and ABILITIES (correlation=0.689, p-value=0.000). The correlations are of high effect size, hence, there is a strong relationship between WIL and Course Organisation 3.

The first construct of Teaching Modalities (Teaching Modalities 1) is significantly and positively correlated with the overall influence of WIL on the enhancement of knowledge (correlation=0.766, p-value=0.000), Space Management Knowledge (correlation=0.839, p-value=0.000), SKILLS (correlation=0.825, p-value=0.000) and ABILITIES (correlation=0.850, p-value=0.000). The correlations are of high effect size, hence, there is a strong relationship between WIL and Teaching Modalities 1.

The second construct of Teaching Modalities (Teaching Modalities 2) is significantly and positively correlated with the overall influence of WIL on the enhancement of knowledge (correlation=0.693, p-value=0.000), Space Management Knowledge (correlation=0.724, p-value=0.000), SKILLS (correlation=0.628, p-value=0.000) and ABILITIES (correlation=0.635, p-value=0.000). The correlations are of high effect size, hence, there is a strong relationship between WIL and Teaching Modalities 2.

The construct of Technology Assisted Curricula Delivery is significantly and positively correlated with the overall influence of WIL on the enhancement of knowledge (correlation=0.680, p-value=0.000), Space Management Knowledge (correlation=0.747, p-value=0.000), SKILLS (correlation=0.729, p-value=0.000) and ABILITIES (correlation=0.830, p-value=0.000). The correlations are of high effect size, hence, there is a strong relationship between WIL and Technology Assisted Curricula Delivery.

The four constructs of WIL are also highly correlated among themselves and to a high effect sizes. Likewise, the seven constructs of students' perspectives on the effect of the WIL program on the broadening office management and technology knowledge, skills and abilities are also highly and significantly correlated to large effects sizes.

CHAPTER FIVE: EDUCATORS AND ORGANISATIONAL PERSPECTIVES

This chapter presents, interprets and discusses the second segment of the results of the educators and organisational work force' responses to questionnaire questions. The first part of this segment covers the educators' data followed by that of the organisational work force' data.

5.1 Analysis of educators' data

This section addresses the objectives related to the educator's data which are: 1) to explore educators' perceptions of the office management knowledge they consider foundational to students' effective participation in WIL programmes at CUT, and 2) to examine educators' perspectives on the influence of WIL programmes in broadening office management skills and technology competencies.

5.2 Educators' biographical summary

The biographical profile of the educators is presented in Table 5.1. Since there were only ten educators, it was considered ideal to discuss this data in a more qualitative rather than quantitative way.

Table 5.1 Biographical information for educators

Biographical variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Q1.Gender	Female	8	80%
	Male	2	20%
Q2.Age group	<25 years	4	40%
	25-34	1	10%
	35-44	3	30%
	45-54	2	20%
Q3.Home Language	English	1	10%
	Afrikaans	4	40%
	Sesotho	2	20%
	IsiZulu	1	10%
	IsiXhosa	2	20%
Q4.Qualification	University Degree/Diploma	5	50%
	Postgraduate	5	50%
Q5.Role in this Business	Employee	7	70%
	Other	3	30%
Q6.Year of experience on this job	below 1 year	2	20%
	2-5 years	2	20%
	6-10 years	1	10%
	11-15 years	3	30%
	16-20 years	1	10%
	over 20 years	1	10%
	Q7.Year of experience in management	below 1 year	4
2-5 years		3	30%
11-15 years		3	30%
Q8.Number of employees in this business	6-10 employees	1	10%
	11-15 employees	6	60%
	16-20 employees	3	30%
Q9.Highest qualification	Diploma/Degree	6	60%
	Postgraduate	4	40%

The sample for educators is small, as a result, no reliability measures (Cronbach's Alpha) were computed. However, the summary tables present percentages of those who fall in each category of responses relating to the questions posed. Only ten educators took part in this research, eight females and two males. Of these ten, four were below 25 years, one was between 25 and 34 years, three between 35 and 44 years and the last two were between 45 and 54 years old. This indicates that the OMT department has a predominantly young adult workforce. One respondent's home language was English, 4 were Afrikaans, 2 were Sesotho, 1 was IsiZulu and 2 were isiXhosa. In terms of qualifications 5 had a University degree or diploma and of the remaining 5 had postgraduate qualifications.

5.3 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION ON RESEARCH QUESTIONS FOR EDUCATORS

5.3.1 Educators’ perceptions of the office management knowledge they consider foundational to students’ effective participation in WIL programmes at CUT

Table 5.2 illustrates the lecturers’ responses to the effect of students’ time management knowledge on effective participation in WIL.

Table 5.2 Time management knowledge

Time management knowledge		Frequency Distribution					Descriptives	
		Strongly Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	% Agree/Strongly Agree	Mean	Std Dev
Q10. I consider student knowledge of appropriate allocation of time to tasks/work activities to be critical to their effective participation in WIL.	Count %	0 0%	0 0%	1 10%	9 90%	100%	4.90	0.32
Q11. I consider student knowledge of time conscious about planning of tasks/work activities (current and future) as critical to their effective participation in WIL.	Count %	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	10 100%	100%	5.00	0.00
Q12. I consider student knowledge of timeous execution of business functions to be critical to their effective participation in WIL.	Count %	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	10 100%	100%	5.00	0.00
Q13. I consider student knowledge of appropriate time-based sequencing of tasks/work activities as foundational to their effective engagement in WIL.	Count %	0 0%	0 0%	2 20%	8 80%	100%	4.80	0.42

5.3.1.1 Time management knowledge

All educators strongly agreed to all questions asked in this section. This demonstrates that lecturers believed strongly that time management is crucial for the student’s effective participation in WIL. Edwin (2009) acknowledges that time has become a premium resource in the contemporary business world. In addition “successful time management will help every employee to become more effective in completing their tasks in order to meet strict deadlines in an organisation” (Polit, Beck & Hungler, 2010:78).

5.3.1.2 Space management knowledge

Table 5.3. Space management knowledge

Space management knowledge		Frequency Distribution						Descriptives	
		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	% Agree/Strongly Agree	Mean	Std Dev
14. I regard student knowledge of managing the work space to be critical to their effective participation in WIL.	Count	0	0	0	5	5	100%	4.5	0.53
	%	0%	0%	0%	50%	50%			
Q15. I regard student knowledge of keeping a clean and organised office to be critical to their effective participation in WIL.	Count	0	0	0	3	7	100%	4.7	0.48
	%	0%	0%	0%	30%	70%			
Q16. I regard student knowledge of appropriate handling all paperwork as foundational to their effective engagement in WIL.	Count	0	0	0	4	6	100%	4.6	0.516
	%	0%	0%	0%	40%	60%			
Q17. I regard student knowledge of maintaining control over the physical environment to be critical to their effective participation in WIL.	Count	0	0	1	4	5	90%	4.4	0.700
	%	0%	0%	10%	40%	50%			

All respondents strongly agreed to the questions asked in this section except on one question which considered student knowledge of maintaining control over the physical environment in relation to their effective participation in WIL 90%. The simulations and practical sessions in academic environments and the job activities and tasks in the work environments tend to be regulated by the educators and work supervisors respectively. As such, although learner-centered environments are encouraged in both contexts, these may not always be student driven (Smith, Lave & Wenger, 2009). By the same token, educators did not overwhelmingly support the view that students need to sufficiently manage their space (i.e. space management) for them to effectively participate in WIL (Lynn, *et al.*, 2012) (See Table 5.3).

5.3.1.3 Task management knowledge

Table 5.4 demonstrates the lectures' responses to the effect of students' task management knowledge on effective participation in WIL.

Table 5.4. Task management knowledge

Task management knowledge		Frequency Distribution						Descriptives	
		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	% Agree/Strongly	Mean	Std Dev
Q18. I perceive student knowledge of Microsoft packages (e.g. Microsoft Word, Excel, PowerPoint) to be critical to their effective participation in WIL.	Count %	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	2 20.00%	8 80%	100%	4.80	0.42
Q19. I perceive student knowledge of basic reception handling as foundational to their effective engagement in WIL.	Count %	0 0%	0 0%	1 10%	1 10%	8 80%	90%	4.70	0.68
Q20. I perceive strong knowledge of accounting and book keeping as critical to their successful participation in WIL.	Count %	0 0%	0 0%	4 40%	4 40%	2 20%	60%	3.80	0.79
Q21. I perceive student knowledge of website design and development as foundational to their effective participation in WIL.	Count %	0 0%	2 20%	5 50%	1 10%	2 20%	30%	3.30	1.06
Q22. I perceive student knowledge of emerging technology (e.g. databases, social media platforms, business-related games etc.) to be foundational to their successful participation in WIL.	Count %	0 0%	0 0%	3 30%	6 60%	1 10%	70%	3.80	0.63

All educators perceived student knowledge of Microsoft packages, such as Microsoft Word, Excel and PowerPoint presentations, as critical to their effective participation in WIL. Sixty percent of the respondents perceived strong knowledge of accounting and book keeping as critical to their successful participation in WIL, with the other 40% maintaining neutral perceptions. This split in opinion may suggest that the importance of book keeping and accounting may be a function of the organisations that students will be attached, which vary in terms of their requirements for the use of these skills (Smith, 2012). Only 30% perceive student knowledge of website design and development as foundational to student effective participation in WIL. This implies that a majority of educators do not necessarily regard these skills as critical to student involvement in WIL programmes as employers do not often require them for successful student performance. It might also mean that the organisations that these students are attached to do not have a strong technological orientation, as a result, these skills are ancillary to the work demands (Lynn, *et al.*, 2012).

5.3.1.4 Knowledge of emerging technology

On the student knowledge of emerging technology, 70% strongly agreed that this is fundamental to the students' successful participation in WIL. This could mean that although more organisations are embracing the use of emerging technologies, some may still be stuck in the use of traditional technologies, hence their limited reception of new technologies. Therefore, although knowledge transfer is critical to student functioning in the work environments, this is not exclusive to all skills, for not all skills are necessarily transferable or need to be transferred. This contradicts Wenger, McDermott and Snyder's (2002) claim about the fundamental importance of the transfer of task management knowledge in reflecting processes in the work environment, where knowledge acquired through experience in one situation is taken on by users in a different location.

5.3.2 Educators' perspectives on the influence of WIL programmes in broadening office management and technology skills and abilities

This section considers the educators perspectives on the influence of WIL programmes in broadening office management and technology skills and abilities. This sub section focusses on skills and abilities.

5.3.2.1 Skills

Table 5.5 presents the items that cover skills development.

Table 5.5 Skills

Skills		Frequency Distribution						Descriptive	
		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	% Agree/Strongly	Mean	Std Dev
Q23. Placement ignites students' computer and technical skills such as, effective word processing, processing spreadsheets, Power Point presentations.	Count %	0 0%	0 0%	1 10%	3 30%	6 60%	90%	4.5	0.71
Q24. Placement advances students' computer and technical skills such as, displaying proficiency in using standard office equipment like computer, fax, photocopier and scanner.	Count %	0 0%	0 0%	1 10%	4 40%	5 50%	90%	4.4	0.7
Q25. Placement advances students' computer and technical skills such as, demonstrating advanced technological proficiency by quickly adapting to new technology and easily acquiring new technical skills.	Count %	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	6 60%	4 40%	100%	4.4	.516
Q26. Placement ignites students' leadership skills such as, team leadership.	Count %	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	7 70%	3 30%	100%	4.3	0.48
Q27. Placement ignites students' leadership skills such as, co-supervision of colleagues' activities.	Count %	0 0%	0 0%	2 20%	4 40%	4 40%	80%	4.2	0.79
Q28. Placement enhances students' leadership skills such as, people management skills (e.g. coordination of efforts from different people).	Count %	0 0%	0 0%	3 30%	1 10%	6 60%	70%	4.3	0.95
Q29. Placement improves students' leadership skills such as, petty cash management skills (e.g. invoicing, receipting, computer based filing, corporate banking).	Count %	0 0%	0 0%	1 10%	4 40%	5 50%	90%	4.4	0.7
Q30. Placement advances students' leadership skills such as, listening skills.	Count %	0 0%	0 0%	1 10%	2 20%	7 70%	90%	4.6	0.7
Q31. Placement enhances students' oral skills to speak with confidence using clear, concise sentences.	Count %	0 0%	0 0%	1 10%	1 10%	8 80%	90%	4.7	0.68
Q32. Placement improves students' written skills such as, producing well thought-out texts.	Count %	0 0%	1 10%	0 0%	5 50%	4 40%	90%	4.2	0.92
Q33. Placement enhances students' written skills such as, professional correspondence free from grammatical and spelling errors.	Count %	0 0%	1 10%	1 10%	1 10%	7 70%	80%	4.3	1.34
Q34. Placement improves students' telephone/E-mail skills to use high quality, professional oral and written skills to project a positive image of the business.	Count %	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	2 20%	8 80%	100%	4.8	0.42

5.3.2.1.1 Computer and technical skills

Generally most educators strongly agreed to the questions in this section. Ninety percent of the educators were in agreement with the fact that placement enhances students' computer and technical skills such as effective word processing, processing spreadsheets and Power Point presentations. All respondents agreed to the notion that placement ignites students' computer and technical skills such as, demonstrating advanced technological proficiency by quickly adapting to new technology and easily

acquiring new technical skills. This possibly demonstrates reflection-in-action among students where students deploy technical competencies and skills in the academic environment to influence and change tasks and activities in the environments as they execute them.

5.3.2.2 Abilities

Table 5.6 demonstrate the lecturers' views on how students' various abilities affect their participation in WIL.

Table 5.6. ABILITIES

Abilities		Frequency Distribution						Descriptive	
		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	% Agree/Strongly Agree	Mean	Std Dev
Q35. Placement impacts on students' creative thinking abilities.	Count %	0 0%	0 0%	1 10%	5 50%	4 40%	90%	4.3	0.68
Q36. Placement influences students' ability to operate office machines.	Count %	0 0%	0 0%	1 10%	2 20%	7 70%	90%	4.6	0.7
Q37. Placement enhances students' ability to follow guidelines/procedures for the preparation of administrative forms.	Count %	0 0%	0 0%	1 10%	5 50%	4 40%	90%	4.3	0.68
Q38. Placement improves students' ability to maintain good working relationships with a diverse workforce, customers and visitors.	Count %	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	5 50%	5 50%	100%	4.5	0.53
Q39. Placement impacts on students' ability to lead and provide instruction to other clerical support staff.	Count %	0 0%	0 0%	2 20%	4 40%	4 40%	80%	4.2	0.79
Q40. Placement enhances students' ability to maintain confidentiality.	Count %	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	4 40%	6 60%	100%	4.6	0.52
Q41. I regard student knowledge of balancing conflicting priorities in order to manage workflow as foundational to their effective engagement in WIL.	Count %	0 0%	0 0%	1 10%	3 30%	6 60%	90%	4.5	0.71

All educators (i.e. 100%) were in agreement that placement impacts on students' ability to maintain good working relationships with a diverse workforce, customers and visitors. They also overwhelmingly concurred (100%) that placement impacts on students' ability to maintain confidentiality. The educators' answer to the research question which focuses on Office Management and Technology (OMT) skills and abilities shows that they consider the knowledge as foundational to effective participation on WIL programmes at CUT. The purpose of this question is to solicit information from academic supervisors on

how they get a clear understanding of how to sharpen and harness an assortment of skills possessed by students in order to broaden the students' competencies (Smith, 2012). The dominant percentage strongly agreed to the capacity of WIL placements in maintaining good working relationships with a diverse workforce, which demonstrates the contribution of WIL to maintain confidentiality indicate that WIL facilitates the transition between preparing for and operating in a high skills work environment. Patrick, *et al.* (2009) claims that WIL empowers students to understand, adapts to and applies skills in the workplace. This finding has some resonance with the educators' overwhelming acknowledgement (90%) that placement impacts on students' creative thinking abilities.

5.4 Analysis of the organisational work forces' perspectives on the influence of WIL

This section addresses the objectives related to the organisational work force's data which are to: 1) Investigate organisational work force's perceptions on the office management knowledge they consider foundational to effective participation of students in WIL programmes at CUT and 2). To examine organisational work force' perspectives on the influence of WIL programmes in broadening office management skills and technology competencies of students.

5.5 Organisational work force's biographical summary

Table 5.7. Organisational work force's biographical summary

Biographical variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Q1. Gender	Female	4	19%
	Male	17	81%
Q2. Age group	35-44	11	52%
	45-54	7	33%
	55 and above	3	14%
Q3. Home Language	English	9	43%
	Afrikaans	5	24%
	Sesotho	3	14%
	IsiZulu	2	10%
	IsiXhosa	2	10%
Q4. Qualification	FET or equivalent	1	5%
	University Degree/Diploma	20	95%
Q5. Role in this Business	Manager	6	29%
	Owner	6	29%
	Manager/owner	2	10%
	Employee	6	29%
	Other	1	5%
Q6. Year of experience on this job	below 1 year	1	5%
	6-10 years	4	19%
	11-15 years	5	24%
	16-20 years	4	19%
	over 20 years	7	33%
Q7. Year of experience in management	below 1 year	1	5%
	2-5 years	6	29%
	6-10 years	7	33%
	11-15 years	4	19%
	16-20 years	1	5%
	over 20 years	2	10%
Q8. Number of employees in this business	6-10 employees	1	5%
	11-15 employees	3	14%
	16-20 employees	17	81%
Q9. Highest qualification	Tertiary certificate	1	5%
	Diploma/Degree	20	95%

5.5.1 Gender

The results in Table 5.7 show that males constituted a majority of the respondents (81%). The dominance of males over females could be attributed to the higher levels of male exposure and participation in ownership and management of businesses as compared to their female counterparts (19%) (Lynn, *et al.*, 2012).

5.5.2 Age group

Table 5.7 illustrates that those in the 35-44 age range made up 52% of the respondents whilst those in the 45-54 category made up 33% and the remainder (14%) was aged above 55. These more dominant age groups seem to mirror the active working population

in South Africa, where the middle ages (35-55 age group) tend to dominate the work environment as an organisational workforce.

5.5.3 Language background of the organisational workforce

In spite of the linguistic diversity reflected in the results, it is apparent that a sizable number of participants were both English and Afrikaans speaking. This demographic aspect can be attributed to the site of investigation, Bloemfontein, where the majority speak Sesotho, English and Afrikaans. Census South Africa (2011), ascertain that, a majority of Bloemfontein citizens speak Afrikaans, English and Sesotho, even though the other 11 official languages are also spoken.

5.5.4 Highest qualification

Only one respondent (5%) had an FET or equivalent qualification, whilst the remaining 20 (95%) had either a university degree or diploma. This suggests that a majority of the organisational workforce were moderately educated (Lynn, *et al.*, 2012).

5.5.5 Role in the business

Of the total number of organisational workforce this study dealt with, 6 were managers, another 6 were employees and that last 6 were owners. In addition, 2 were both managers and owners of the business. This balance amongst organisational workforce is indicative of the balanced distribution of designations across various levels of the organisational hierarchy. While McNamara (2013) claims that, the workplace supervisor (organisational workforce) has the primary role in supervising the student and providing learning opportunities, the evidence here suggests the contrary as there was a fair distribution of different role players who supervised students during their work placements.

5.5.6 Distribution of years of experience on the job

In terms of experience on the job, 7 organisational workforces had over 20 years' experience, 5 had between 11 and 15 years' experience and only 1 person had below 1 year. This could mean that the organisational workforce had established their businesses and these businesses had been operational for a long duration. The findings seem to

contradict evidence from mainstream literature, which points out that South African businesses tend to fail and fold up operations after their first five years of existence (Cranton, 2011). Nevertheless, our findings may not be generalizable to the entire South Africa, as the current study involved a small sample of Bloemfontein's organisational workforce who had partnered with CUT with regard to WIL.

5.5.7 Years of experience in management

The organisational workforce had a variety of levels of business experience. The biggest 7% of the respondents had 6-10 years' experience in a management role while 6% had 2-5 years of experience. This demonstrates that the organisational workforce had varying levels of business experience ranging from new business entrants to mature business experience.

5.5.8 Number of employees in the business

As far as the size of business is concerned, 81% of the respondents' businesses had 16-20 employees, whilst 14% had 11-15 employees. Only 5% had 6-10 employees. It is clear from these findings that most of the businesses operated by the organisational workforce were small businesses. According to the Small Business Act of South Africa, a small business is a company that is independently owned and operated as well as limited in size and in revenue depending on the industry. The predominance of small business resonates with the national picture on small businesses, where such businesses are conceived to dominate the national business climate (Marius, 2006).

5.5.9 Academic attainments of the organisational workforce

As far as the highest qualification is concerned, 95% of the organisational workforce had a Diploma/degree and only 5% had a tertiary certificate. The statistics indicates that the organisational workforce consisted of fairly educated business people (Marius, 2006).

5.6 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION ON RESEARCH QUESTIONS FOR THE ORGANISATIONAL WORKFORCE

This section of the study addresses the important question about the Organisational work force' perceptions on the office management knowledge they considered foundational to effective student participation in WIL programmes at the CUT.

5.6.1 Time management knowledge considered by organisational workforce

Table 5.8 presents results from questionnaire items that examined time management knowledge required of students during their participation in WIL.

Table 5.8. Time management knowledge considered critical to student participation in WIL by organisational workforce

Time management knowledge		Frequency Distribution						Descriptive	
		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	% Agree/ Strongly Agree	Mean	Std Dev
Q10. I consider student knowledge of appropriate allocation of time to tasks/work activities to be critical to their effective participation in WIL.	Count	0	0	0	0	21			
	%	0%	0%	0%	0%	100%	100%	5.00	0.00
Q11. I consider student knowledge of time conscious planning of tasks/work activities (current and future) as critical to their effective participation in WIL.	Count	0	0	0	9	12			
	%	0%	0%	0%	43%	57%	100%	4.57	0.51
Q12. I consider student knowledge of timeous execution of business functions to be critical to their effective participation in WIL.	Count	0	0	0	1	20			
	%	0%	0%	0%	5%	95%	100%	4.95	0.22
Q13. I consider student knowledge of appropriate time- based sequencing of tasks/work activities as foundational to their effective engagement in WIL.	Count	0	0	0	2	19			
	%	0%	0%	0%	10%	90%	100%	4.9	0.30

The whole organisational workforce (100%) considered in this study strongly agreed that student knowledge of appropriate allocation of time to tasks/work activities is critical to their effective participation in WIL. They strongly agree that student knowledge of time conscious planning of tasks/work activities (current and future) is critical to their effective participation in WIL.

5.6.2 Timeous Knowledge

All respondents (100%) were of the opinion that student knowledge of timeous execution of business functions is critical to their effective participation in WIL. Likewise, all organisational workforces (100%) considered student knowledge on appropriate time-based sequencing of tasks/work activities as foundational to student effective engagement in WIL. This could mean that the organisational workforce value the importance of appropriate time allocation to tasks as critical to their effective execution of tasks. Time management knowledge, which involves techniques for prioritizing activities and using time effectively while eliminating disruptions and time wastage can be learned by students. This finding concurs with Wilton’s (2012) claim that time management is an endless series of decisions, small and large, that gradually change the shape of everyone’s management of life decisions and tasks.

5.6.3 Space management knowledge

Table 5.9 considers the space management knowledge required of students by the Bloemfontein organisational workforce during their WIL attachments.

Table 5.9 Space management knowledge of students considered critical to participation in WIL by organisational workforce

Space management knowledge		Frequency Distribution					Descriptive		
		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	% Agree/Strongly Agree	Mean	Std Dev
Q14. I regard student knowledge of managing the work space to be critical to their effective participation in WIL.	Count %	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	3 14%	18 86%	100%	4.86	0.36
Q15. I regard student knowledge of keeping a clean and organised office to be critical to their effective participation in WIL.	Count %	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	6 29%	15 71%	100%	4.71	0.46
Q16. I regard student knowledge of appropriate handling of all paperwork as foundational to their effective engagement in WIL.	Count %	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	2 10%	19 90%	100%	4.9	0.3
Q17. I regard student knowledge of maintaining control over the physical environment to be critical to their effective participation in WIL.	Count %	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	1 5%	20 95%	100%	4.95	0.22

All organisational workforces (100%) strongly agreed to all the important questions on space management knowledge required of students for their effective participation in WIL. These findings point to the synergy between space management knowledge and other responsibilities expected of prospective office managers/administrators/secretaries in their place of work. For example, the management of repositories of information in order to facilitate information access and reuse, demands a correspondingly well managed office space for such information management to occur effectively. This interpretation corroborates Cranton’s (2011) findings that work integrated learning assessments of proper space knowledge management should consummate well with the work environment for each student to meet the criteria expressed in the working objectives.

5.6.4 Task management knowledge

Table 5.10 indicates the organisational workforce’ (employers, management and employees) responses to questions about Task management knowledge that they considered foundational to students’ effective participation in WIL programmes.

Table 5.10 Task management knowledge considered critical to student participation in WIL by the organisational workforce

Task management knowledge		Frequency Distribution					Descriptive	
		Strongly Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	% Agree/Strongly Agree	Mean	Std Dev
Q18. I perceive student knowledge of Microsoft packages (e.g. Microsoft Word, Excel, PowerPoint) to be critical to their effective participation in WIL.	Count %	0 0%	1 4.8%	0 0%	20 95.2%	95.2%	4.90	0.44
Q19. I perceive student knowledge of basic reception handling as foundational to their effective engagement in WIL.	Count %	0 0%	1 4.8%	3 14.2%	17 81.0%	95.2%	4.76	0.54
Q20. I perceive a strong knowledge of accounting and book keeping as critical to their successful participation in WIL.	Count %	0 0%	0 0%	9 43.0%	12 57.0%	100%	4.57	0.51
Q21. I perceive student knowledge of website design and development as foundational to their effective participation in WIL.	Count %	0 0%	0 0%	7 33.0%	14 67.0%	100%	4.67	0.48
Q22. I perceive student knowledge of emerging technology (e.g. databases, social media platforms, business-related games etc.) to be foundational to their successful participation in WIL.	Count %	0 0%	0 0%	4 19%	17 81%	100%	4.81	0.4

5.6.5 Knowledge of Microsoft

Ninety five percent of the organisational force (employers, managers and employees) strongly believed that student knowledge of Microsoft packages (e.g. Microsoft Word, Excel, and PowerPoint) is critical to their effective participation in WIL. An equivalent 95% agreed that student knowledge of basic reception handling is foundational to their effective engagement in WIL. This reveals that students were under no obligation to exclusively discover absolute truths (i.e. academic knowledge) through work integrated learning. Rather, the workplace served as a social situation in which knowing and learning are co-constructed, a platform where students can transform experience into knowledge (Jackson, 2015) and indeed use their using academic knowledge to develop work-based knowledge only. In doing so the students can learn about a whole range of things relevant to the workplace, including the idiosyncrasies of a given organisation (Kundasam, 2007). Nonetheless, as noted by Armatas and Papadopoulos (2013), a fine balance must be kept between meeting the demands of industry and that of higher education institutions.

5.6.6 Task management knowledge (2)

Table 5.11 illustrates the organisational workforce's (employers, management and employees) responses to questions on the Task management knowledge expected of student for them to effectively participate in WIL (2).

Table 5.11 Task management knowledge considered by organisational workforce as critical to student engagement in WIL

Task management knowledge (2)		Frequency Distribution					Descriptive		
		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	% Agree/ Strongly Agree	Mean	Std Dev
Q31. I consider student knowledge of Microsoft packages to be critical to their effective participation in WIL.	Count	0	0	1	2	18	95%	4.81	0.51
	%	0%	0%	5%	9%	86%			
Q32. I regard student knowledge of basic reception handling as foundational to their effective engagement in WIL.	Count	0	0	1	7	13	95%	4.57	0.60
	%	0%	0%	5%	33%	62%			
Q33. I perceive students' strong knowledge of accounting and book keeping as critical to successful completion of WIL.	Count	0	0	0	1	20	100%	4.95	0.22
	%	0%	0%	0%	5%	95%			
Q34. I regard students' knowledge of website design and development as foundational to student completion of WIL.	Count	0	0	0	3	18	100%	4.86	0.36
	%	0%	0%	0%	14%	96%			
Q35. I consider students' knowledge of technology (office software programs, including spread sheets, databases, word processing) as foundational to their effective completion of WIL.	Count	0	0	0	3	18	100%	4.86	0.36
	%	0%	0%	0%	14%	86%			
Q36. I regard student knowledge of balancing conflicting priorities in order to manage workflow as foundational to their effective engagement in WIL.	Count	0	0	0	3	18	100%	4.86	0.36
	%	0%	0%	0%	14%	86%			

A 95-100% of the respondents strongly agreed to the questions asked in this section. This shows that all respondents were of the view that student task management knowledge is critical to their effective participation in WIL. Armatas and Papadopoulos (2013) identified several factors that affect what is learnt in the workplace. These factors include the tasks undertaken and the learning outcomes they are designed to achieve, opportunities for feedback, evaluation and reflection, the resources provided for the learning activities, the learners' readiness and motivation for learning. The current researcher considers WIL as a critical expression of acquired academic knowledge within a complex work context. This view finds support from literature that argues that the ability to apply theory and develop skills in a work context assists students to explore the sustainability of their preferences in their chosen career (Jackson, 2010).

5.6.7 Time management knowledge (2)

Table 5.12 illustrates the organisational workforce’s (employers, management and employees) responses to questions on the student time management knowledge they considered critical to students’ effective participation in WIL.

Table 5.12 Time management knowledge (2) considered by organisational workforce as critical to student participation in WIL

Time management knowledge (2)		Frequency Distribution					Descriptive		
		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	% Agree/Strongly Agree	Mean	Std Dev
Q23. I consider student knowledge of determining the appropriate allocation of time to be critical to their effective participation in WIL.	Count %	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	3 14%	18 86%	100%	4.86	0.36
Q24. I regard student knowledge of planning as critical to their effective participation in WIL.	Count %	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	1 5%	20 95%	100%	4.95	0.22
Q25. I conceive student knowledge of the coordination of tasks and activities as foundational to their effective engagement in WIL.	Count %	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	2 10%	19 90%	100%	4.9	0.3
Q26. I regard student knowledge of the execution of business functions to be critical to their effective participation in WIL.	Count %	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	8 38%	13 62%	100%	4.62	0.5

All respondents (100%) strongly agreed with the questions posed in this section. This shows that all respondents are of the view that the students’ acquisition of time management knowledge leads to an effective participation in WIL. This interpretation corroborates literature that highlights that while WIL courses may equip students with knowledge and skills that are essential for successful functioning in the workplace, students need to have an understanding of the circumstances in which such knowledge and skills can be applied, if they are to acquire and develop authentic expertise (Armatas & Papadopoulos, 2013). As a result, students should be exposed to situations where they can practise what they have learnt in conditions that offer relevant meaning to their chosen careers (Smith, 2012). Furthermore, this finding on work context-based application of academic knowledge points to the importance of appropriately structuring work-based learning to ensure that appropriate learning outcomes are achieved.

5.6.8 Space management knowledge (2)

Table 5.13 demonstrates the space management knowledge which the organisational workforce (i.e. employers, managers, and employees) considered fundamental to student participation in WIL.

Table 5.13 Space management knowledge (2) considered by the organisational workforce as critical to student participation in WIL

Everyone strongly agreed to the questions indicating that they considered space

Space management knowledge (2)		Frequency Distribution					Descriptives		
		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	% Agree/Strongly Agree	Mean	Std Dev
Q27.I consider student knowledge of effectively managing the work space as critical to their effective participation in WIL	Count %	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	7 33%	14 67%	100%	4.67	0.48
Q28.I regard student knowledge of keeping a clean and organised office to be critical to their effective participation in WIL	Count %	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	5 24%	16 76%	100%	4.76	0.44
Q29.I conceive student knowledge of appropriate handling all paperwork as foundational to their effective engagement in WIL	Count %	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	2 10%	19 90%	100%	4.9	0.3
Q30.I consider student knowledge of maintaining control over the physical environment as critical to their effective participation in WIL	Count %	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	1 5%	20 95%	100%	4.95	0.22

management as critical to students' effective participation in WIL. This finding counters the established knowledge on the clear distinction and divorce of higher educational knowledge and technical training from workplace learning -that is the clear separation of acquisition academic knowledge, pursuit of intellectual excellence and critical inquiry from work-based knowledge. The findings point to the seamless integration of both domains of knowledge. Extensive findings on the impact of partnerships between work, real-world learning and formal study (Cooper, Orrel & Bowden, 2010) point to the increasing fusion of competencies and knowledge base demanded of these knowledge domains. This result (100%), therefore, provides that WIL brings a clean marriage between the academic and work-based fronts as it (WIL) blends both domains.

5.6 Organisational work force’s perspectives on the influence of WIL programmes in broadening Office Management and Technology competencies

Two main constructs are discussed in this section. These are the organisational work force’s perceptions on the requisite skills and the abilities required of students.

5.7.1 Student skills impacted by WIL placements

Table 5.14 illustrates the work force’s perspective on whether WIL placements ignite students’ technical and leadership skills.

Table 5.14. STUDENTS’ SKILLS IMPACTED BY WIL PLACEMENTS

SKILLS	Frequency Distribution						Descriptive	
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	% Agree/Strongly	Mean	Std Dev
Q37. Placement ignites students’ computer and technical skills such as effective word processing, processing spreadsheets and Power Point presentations.	Count %	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	2 10%	19 90%	100%	4.9 0.3
Q38. Placement enhances students’ computer and technical skills such as displaying proficiency in using standard office equipment like the computer, fax, photocopier and scanner.	Count %	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	3 14%	18 86%	100%	4.86 0.36
Q39. Placement improves students’ computer and technical skills such as demonstrating advanced technological proficiency by quickly adapting to new technology and easily acquiring new technical skills.	Count %	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	7 33%	14 67%	100%	4.67 0.48
Q40. Placement nurtures students’ leadership skills such as team leadership.	Count %	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	3 14%	18 86%	100%	4.86 0.36
Q41. Placement ignites students’ leadership skills such as co-supervision of colleagues’ activities.	Count %	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	5 24%	16 76%	100%	4.76 0.44
Q42. Placement drives students’ leadership skills such as people management skills (e.g. coordination of efforts from different people).	Count %	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	3 14%	18 86%	100%	4.86 0.36
Q43. Placement enhances students’ leadership skills such as petty cash management skills (e.g. invoicing, receipting, computer based filing, corporate banking).	Count %	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	2 10%	19 90%	100%	4.9 0.3
Q44. Placement improves students’ leadership skills such as listening and listening actively.	Count %	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	2 10%	19 90%	100%	4.9 0.3
Q45. Placement enhances students’ oral skills to speak with confidence using clear and concise sentences.	Count %	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	7 33%	14 67%	100%	4.67 0.48
Q46. Placement improves students’ written skills such as producing well thought-out texts.	Count %	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	21 100%	100%	5 0
Q47. Placement drives students’ written skills such as professional correspondence free from grammatical and spelling errors.	Count %	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	2 10%	19 90%	100%	4.9 0.3
Q48. Placement develops students’ telephone/E-mail skills to use high quality, professional oral and written skills to project a positive image of the business.	Count %	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	2 10%	19 90%	100%	4.9 0.3

All respondents strongly agreed to all questions in this section. This showed that all employers, managers, and employees, constituting the work force, are of the view that placement enhances the skills of students. The findings point to the significance of WIL in honing and deepening the skills base of new work entrants or novices without prior exposure to authentic work environments (Kundasam, 2007). The dominant percentage (100%) organisational workforce also highlights that the future prosperity of any organisation depends ultimately on the number of persons in employment who possess productive skills which cohere with the organisation’s needs.

5.7.2 Student abilities impacted by WIL placements

Table 5.15 illustrates the organisational workforce’s views on the influence of WIL placements on students’ abilities.

Table 5.15. STUDENTS’ ABILITIES IMPACTED BY WIL PLACEMENTS

Abilities		Frequency Distribution						Descriptive	
		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	% Agree/Strongly Agree	Mean	Std Dev
Q49. Placement impacts on students’ creative thinking abilities.	Count %	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	1 5%	20 95%	100%	4.95	0.22
Q50. Placement impacts on students’ ability to operate office machines.	Count %	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	3 14%	18 86%	100%	4.86	0.36
Q51. Placement impacts on students’ ability to follow guidelines/procedures for the preparation of administrative forms.	Count %	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	21 100%	100%	5.00	0.00
Q52. Placement impacts on students’ ability to maintain a good working relationship with a diverse workforce, customers and visitors.	Count %	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	2 10%	19 90%	100%	4.90	0.30
Q53. Placement impacts on students’ ability to lead and provide instruction to other clerical support staff.	Count %	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	6 29%	15 71%	100%	4.71	0.46
Q54. Placement impacts on students’ ability to maintain confidentiality.	Count %	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	6 29%	15 71%	100%	4.71	0.46
Q55. I regard student knowledge of balancing conflicting priorities in order to manage workflow as foundational to their effective engagement in WIL.	Count %	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	2 10%	19 90%	100%	4.90	0.30

All respondents strongly agreed that placement impacts on various students' abilities. The organisational workforce, therefore, considered all students' abilities to be positively impacted by WIL placements. WIL should continue impact on the development of students' ability and open up opportunities for initial and lifelong learning to all undergraduates.

5.8 SUMMARY OF THE CHAPTER

The chapter presented and interpreted the results obtained from the data analysis. The results were presented in the form of frequency tables, and correlation analysis. Chapter 6 presents the conclusion and recommendations for policy and practice as well as the implications for future research.

CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter analysed, presented and discussed the findings on the relationship between Work Integrated Learning (WIL) and the enhancement of the Central University of Technology (CUT) Office Management and Technology (OMT) students' competencies. It draws on a case study of Third Year OMT students at the CUT in its report that the educators, students and the organisational workforce collectively conceived Work Integrated Learning as vital to the development of OMT students' competencies.

These findings were arrived at after addressing the following research objectives on the overall influence of WIL on the enhancement of competencies of the OMT students who are attached to organisations during their WIL:

1. To examine students' perspectives on the effect of WIL programmes on the broadening of office management and technology competencies (i.e. knowledge, skills and abilities).
2. To explore educators' perceptions on the office management knowledge they consider foundational to effective participation in WIL programmes at CUT.
3. To examine educators' perspectives on the influence of WIL programmes on the broadening of office management and technology competencies of students.
4. To investigate organisational workforce' perceptions on the office management knowledge they consider foundational to students' effective participation in their organisations.

5. To examine organisational workforce' perspectives on the influence of WIL programmes on the broadening of office management and technology competencies of students.

While these important research objectives were addressed in the study's findings, the main highlights of these findings are summarised in two conclusion sections of this chapter, which are the conclusion based on mainstream literature and another based on research questions. These sections are not necessarily replications of the findings chapter but constitute summaries of the empirical findings and discussion on the mainstream management literature conducted in this study. Both sections are presented below.

6.2 CONCLUSION BASED ON THE LITERATURE

Work Integrated Learning (WIL) was found to be a vital tool for managing and administering student exposure to the work environment, and as such the discussion on literature conducted in Chapter 2 identifies with mainstream literature, which also conceives WIL as an effective university response to government commitment to decrease the critical levels of unemployment and develop work opportunities for less experienced graduates (Van Zyn, 2013). The study also demonstrated the utmost importance of successfully implementing the WIL process to effectively manage the professional competencies and job opportunity expectations of industrial players and under-experienced graduates in ways that generate an enriching work experience for all parties. WIL is widely conceived as one of government's fundamental strategies for the development of work opportunities for those continuing their tertiary education and new graduates seeking to survive in a highly competitive world of work (Higgs, McAllister & Whiteford 2009).

Universities of Technology, such as the CUT, are concerned about the effective professional preparedness of students from their programmes, hence the integration of professional and academic concerns in the curriculum have been reported in literature as critical to improving the professional readiness of students upon completion of their

studies (Lynn, *et al.*, 2012). Even though university education is not necessarily about job-focused training, hence the complexity of allowing narrow economic or workplace interests to dictate the curriculum, there is no doubt that the fusion of workplace needs and requirements into the curriculum should form an integral part of curriculum restructuring (Kundasam, 2007) to improve graduate-organisational fit and employability of graduates. Since WIL involves a difficult partnership of students, educators (practitioners) and organisational workforce (i.e. employers, managers and employees) with divergent interests, a process of deep reflection on each of the relations, activities and actions by those involved, is critical to the success of WIL (Marius, 2006). Literature also constructs the conclusion that reflection prior to, reflection in and reflection-on-action can facilitate the maximum learning process and the development of the student as a reflective practitioner in this integrative process (Higgs, McAllister and Whiteford, 2009). Although being a reflective practitioner may not necessarily be the overriding mandate of WIL programmes, there is no doubt that a reflective employee stands a better chance of performing work tasks and activities more effectively than his/her counterparts (Trede, 2012).

6.3 CONCLUSION BASED ON EMPIRICAL RESEARCH

Using quantitative analysis techniques, this study examined and reported the findings on six research questions. Each of the research questions is recapped below with a summary of the findings and conclusions related to it.

Main research question: **What is the overall influence of WIL on the enhancement of competencies of OMT students who are attached to organisations during their WIL?** As a precursor to addressing this question, the study examined whether students' participation in WIL impacted their knowledge (i.e. one of the component of competencies). Table 4.3 in Chapter 4 illustrates that a high proportion (100%) of the CUT students reported that their participation in WIL has positively impacted on their knowledge base. To determine whether WIL developed the OMT students' competencies who are attached to organisations, all important sub-constructs of competencies, namely space management knowledge, skills learning and ability enhancement (see Tables 4.18

in Chapter 4) were first presented. Thereafter, these constructs and sub-constructs were correlated with participation in the WIL concept using cross tabulations to address this question. According to Marius (2006), Smith (2012) and Trede (2012), the exposure of students to work environments through WIL enhances students' practical knowledge of the workplace and allows them to see theory in a lived context. **It can be concluded that WIL enhanced the OMT competencies of students attached to organisations.**

Sub-question one: **What are students' perspectives on the effect of WIL programmes on the broadening office management and technology competencies (skills and abilities)?** To address this question, it was important to first ascertain students' general perceptions on the quality of content (i.e. one of the component of WIL programmes) delivered by lecturers to broaden OMT competencies, as a precursor to addressing the question. The findings in Table 4.7 in Chapter 4 indicate that a majority of the respondents (100%) display a positive feeling about lecturers' choice of content. Since the incumbent question investigates students' perceptions on the effect of WIL programmes on the broadening of their OMT competencies, cross-tabulations between sub constructs course organisation, teaching modalities and technology-assisted curricula delivery that address the components of OMT competencies (i.e. skills and abilities) were broadened by this sub construct of WIL programme , as noted in Tables 4.7, 4.9, 4.10, 4.11, 4.12, 4.14, 4.15, 4.16, 4.17 in Chapter 4 that were used to answer question one of the study. The findings support student participation in WIL within authentic work contexts impacted on their OMT competencies (vital in their academic contexts), thus suggesting a reverse flow to the popular assumption that academic knowledge acquired in academic contexts enhances student work preparedness.

The findings contradicts May (2016) and Trede's (2012) claims that classroom-based learning should be conceived as a subset of experience-based learning as it captures learning that occurs through undertaking real work and should be clearly distinguished from learning that takes place in WIL and formal learning that takes place in classrooms. In the case of this study, the binaries espoused in May (2016) and Trede (2012) were challenged through the seamless fusion of the competencies gained in academic and

work contexts. **Therefore it is concluded that students perceived their participation in WIL programmes as broadening their OMT competencies.**

Sub-question two: **What are the educators' perceptions on the office management knowledge they consider foundational to effective participation in WIL programmes at the CUT?** This question investigates the forms of office management knowledge they consider fundamental to students' effective engagement in WIL programmes. The sub constructs time management, task management and space management (which are all components of OMT knowledge) were considered to establish whether the educators considered their possession by students to be pivotal to the students' effective participation in WIL programmes (see 5.2, 5.3 and 5.4 in Chapter 5). These presented tables demonstrate that all these forms of management (i.e. time management, task management and space management) were considered to be foundational to the students' participation in WIL programmes at the CUT. It should be noted however that, although all of the management forms were considered important, they were not of equal strength. Time knowledge was considered to be more important than the other forms of knowledge. An examination of the mean scores on these forms of knowledge, shows that time management was ranked highest by educators, followed by space management and then task management. That time management comes before task management is surprising, especially in view of the concern for effective task management in any organisation's survival. Nevertheless, it could be that students struggle more with time management than with task and space management, which are already embedded in the tasks they accomplish at university. Students' struggle with time management is often evident during test and exam preparations where they often leave preparations to the last minute or the eleventh hour (Martin, Hughes & Edwards, 2011). **It is, therefore, concluded that all office management knowledge (i.e. time, task and space management knowledge) has been considered foundational to the participation in WIL, even though time management topped the list (see mean scores).**

Sub-question three: **What are the educators' perspectives on the influence of WIL programmes on broadening office management and technology competencies?**

The findings in Table 5.5 and 5.6 in Chapter 5 indicate that all educators displayed a positive feeling about the influence of WIL programmes on the broadening of OMT competencies. The findings show that educators perceived WIL programmes to broaden OMT competencies of students such as skills and abilities. Therefore, WIL empowers students to understand, adapt to and apply learned skills and abilities in the workplace (Patrick, *et al.*, 2009). **It is concluded that WIL programmes broaden OMT competencies.**

Sub-Question four: **What are the organisational workforce' perceptions on the office management knowledge they consider foundational to effective participation in their organisations?** The findings in Table 5.8, 5.9 and 5.10 (i.e. time, space and task management knowledge) in Chapter 5 indicate that all organisational workforce office management knowledge (i.e. one of the component of competencies) are fundamental to student participation in their organisations. **It can be concluded that, although the organisational workforces considered all forms of office management knowledge to be critical to students' effective participation in WIL, time management and space management knowledge ranked most important with task management ranked as next important.**

Question five: **What are the organisational workforce' perspectives on the influence of WIL programmes on broadening office management and technology competencies?** The findings in Table 5.14 and 5.15 in Chapter 5 indicate that all organisational workforce are of the view that WIL programmes broaden OMT students' competencies (i.e. skills and abilities). **The organisational workforce felt that there was a positive relationship between these two components of competencies. Hence, both skills and abilities were considered to have more effect on the broadening of competencies.**

6.4 RECOMMENDATIONS

The recommendations are wide and varied in line with the findings of this study.

6.4.1 Recommendations for policy

In view of the many challenges that face WIL programmes, the partnership between organised industry and higher education needs to be strengthened to develop more communication based on the placement of the students who need to complete their WIL programmes (Wilton, 2012). One of the WIL challenges established in literature and indicated in our findings is the perceived misalignment between work place demands and expectations with those of the academic environment (with demands weighing more in favour of the work context). Therefore, the partnership between universities and industry needs to emphasise the realignment of these demands so that university students' curricular intellectual inquiry requirements are not compromised in the pursuit of work place interests and demands.

It is necessary that the CUT build into its institutional system of WIL assessment some valid and reliable processes that take into account the meaningful participation of the students, mentors and academic supervisors. The student capacity for self-evaluation and evidence thereof should be built into this institutional evaluation policy on WIL. This self-evaluation can be cascaded down to the individual departmental evaluation system so that student learning philosophies and work-based repertoires are built into the evaluation process.

There is need to clearly stipulate the assessment and quality assurance for WIL programmes that broaden OMT competencies. The different curriculum models used by UoTs, the Sector Education and Training Authorities (SETAs), and the Council on Higher Education (CHE) will determine Work Integrated Learning (WIL) modalities for different qualification types. The implementation of these will need to involve institutional curricular designers, content developers and lecturers and should be carefully articulated by providers to ensure that students are not only able to qualify for higher education, but rather are also employable and stay employed.

6.4.2 Recommendations for practice

The results demonstrate that WIL programmes enhance OMT competencies considerably (see Table 4.3) hence they are important levers for equipping students for the world of work. In view of its fundamental importance, WIL should be recommended in all strategic programmes /subjects at every level in the students' university career to improve their levels of exposure to the work environment complexities.

Even through educators and the organisational workforces (that is, owners, managers and employers) considered different forms of knowledge to be positively impacted by WIL, the significance of their impact for both parties were not the same. For instance, educators held that WIL impacted on Time management knowledge more than other forms of knowledge, while the organisational workforces considered WIL to significantly influence time and space management knowledge when compared to other forms of knowledge. Particular forms of knowledge were considered to be more fundamental in WIL placements than others by educators and the organisational workforce, thus showing that the constructive alignment of intentions about knowledge to be possessed by students upon after completion of WIL is critical to student meaningful experience in WIL (Biggs, 2003). The study extends Biggs' (2003) argument by showing that such alignment should be considered even before the completion of WIL in order to rationalise expectations and ensure that industry does not benefit from students engagement at the expense of the academe.

A knowledge alignment platform where educators and organisational workforces who engage in WIL assessments are represented should be established. This will ensure the alignment of the knowledge expectations of both parties for students and that employers' workplace demands are not over-privileged at the expense of curricula requirements

The result in in Table 4.7 Chapter 4 indicates a positive effect of WIL on the broadening of the OMT students' skills and abilities (100%). While all OMT competencies appeared to be important to office managers and technologists' productivity and effectiveness in the work environment, it is suspected that not all competencies have equal strength to the

functioning and survival of the organisation. Therefore, it is recommended that on those competencies with the highest impact on organisational performance should be emphasised in WIL programmes and at the same time ensuring that the emphasis on individual competencies is proportionate to their expected impact on organisational outcomes.

Since a one-size-fits-all approach to the application of OMT competencies may not work across organisations, it would be necessary to vary the application of these competencies. The varying application should depend on the nature of the organisation, its size, duration of operation, capital and asset base, and the nature of the industry in which the business operates.

It is also recommended that the impartment of professional competencies, through WIL, should be a three way street in which: 1. The university benefits through transformed pedagogy (teaching and learning) derived from students exposure to simulated work contexts or “real world” work situations and the industry; 2. The student benefits through connecting work integrated learning from the workplace to the pedagogical knowledge gained from the university contexts; and 3. The industry benefits from the successful placement of students with industry-relevant skills as well as reduced training needs for new recruits.

6.4.3 Implications for future research

- Future studies should also involve communities affected by OMT student participation in WIL in order to determine their feelings and perceptions on how they have been socio-economically and environmentally affected by student involvement in WIL.
- While the use of a quantitative approach provided a broad baseline for understanding the overall impact of WIL on academic and professional competencies, by examining the nature of organisational work forces (i.e. employers, managers and employees) and the educators and students’ responses

to WIL related questions, it may not be clear why these stakeholders responded the way they did (i.e. their motivations may not be immediately clear). Future studies may need to adopt mixed research approaches where quantitative research data is corroborated with qualitative research to provide in-depth explanations and clarifications on why stakeholders responded to certain questions in particular ways. The qualitative component of the study will illuminate our understanding of these three different stakeholders' emotional feeling and psychological experiences of being involved in WIL programmes.

6.5 LIMITATIONS

The study findings are limited in that they represented data extracted from one university (The Central University of Technology) and its partners. Therefore, although other Universities of Technology (UoTs) can extrapolate from these findings to make some inferences about their academic situations due to the similarities of organisational structure, size and mandates for UoTs, these findings cannot be generalized to traditional and comprehensive universities due to the differences in contexts.

While this quantitative study's use of a representative sample of students is one of its fundamental strength, these findings are an exclusive snapshot of the OMT Third Year students' perceptions and may not represent the views of other students at the same university nor those of future Third Year OMT students. However, the benefits of participant triangulation remain the fundamental strength of this study.

6.6 CONCLUDING REMARKS

The transition of graduates to the world of work is never a smooth process particularly in view of the corporate sector's compelling and competing demands on students. This observation is important in view of the predominantly theoretical nature of disciplinary knowledge and training of university students, which is often out of step with the set of work-related competencies demanded in work environments. Hence, universities are under pressure to respond to the needs of industry to the extent that they may be disadvantaged changes if they conform heavily and adapt their curricula to the needs of

the market at the expense of intellectual pursuit. That said, there was compelling evidence to support the view that participation in WIL impacted positively on the OMT knowledge, skills and abilities (i.e. competencies) of students, judging from the overwhelming consensus of the OMT students, employers and organisational workforce on the matter.

REFERENCES

Abeysekera, I. 2010. Issues Relating to Designing a Work-integrated Learning Program in an Undergraduate Accounting Degree Program and its Implications for the Curriculum. *Asia-Pacific Journal of Cooperative Education*, 7(1), 7-15.

American Public Human Service Association. 2012. *A guidebook for building Organisational Performance Capacity: A Training system Example*. Washington: Melissa Kanaya.

Armatas, C. and Papadopouls, T. 2014. Approaches to work integrated learning and engaging industry in vocational ICT courses: evaluation of an Australian pilot program. *International Journal of training research*, 11(1), 56-68.

Bauman, Z. 2005. Education in liquid modernity. *The Review of Education, Pedagogy, and Cultural Studies*, 27(1), 303-317.

Blackwell, B.G., Bowes, S., Harvey, F.G., Hesketh, S.D. and Knight, K. 2012. *Grounded Theory: A practical guide for management, business and market researchers*. London: Sage.

Biggs, J. 2013. *Model of constructive alignment in curriculum design*. *Open Educational Resources of UCD teaching and learning*. Dublin: University College.

Brookfield, S. D. 2012. *Teaching for critical thinking: Tool and techniques to help students question their assumptions*. California: Jossey-Bass.

Brookfield, S. and Holst, J.D. 2011. *Radicalizing learning: Adult education for a just world*. California: Jossey-Bass.

Bourner, A. and Millican, H. 2011. *The discovery of grounded theory: Strategies for qualitative research*. Cape Town: Aldine.

Burns, N. and Grove, S.K. 2009. *The practice of nursing research: Appraisal, synthesis, and generation of evidence*. St. Louis, Missouri: Elsevier.

Butcher, B., Smith, C., Kettle, G. and Burton, K. 2011. *An introduction to field research*. London: Routledge.

Campbell, M. and Zegwaard, K.E. 2011. Values, ethics and empowering the self through cooperative education. *Asia-Pacific Journal of Cooperative Education*, 12(3), 205-216.

Statistics South Africa, 2011. Census: *Statistical release*. Statistics South Africa.

Cleary, M., Flynn, R., Thomasson, S., Alexander, R. and McDonald, B. 2007. *Graduate employability skills: Prepared for the Business, Industry and Higher Education Collaboration Council.*, Canberra: Department of Education, Science and Training (DEST).

Coll, V., Eames, N., Paku, L., Lay, B., Hodges, F. and Bhat, J. 2009. *Criteria for Programme Accreditation*. Pretoria: Higher Education Quality Committee.

Cooper, L., Orrel, J. and Bowden, M. 2010. *Work Integrated Learning: A guide to effective practice*, USA and Canada: Routledge.

Cranton, P. 2011. A transformative perspective on the scholarship of teaching and learning. *Higher Education Research & Development*, 30(1), 75–86.

Central University of Technology. 2016. Developing CUT Graduate Attributes.

Dressler, S. and Keeling, A.E. 2007. Benefits of Cooperative Education for students. *Asia-Pacific Journal of Cooperative Education*, Boston: World Association for Cooperative Education, 7(2), 10-15.

Du Toit, P.H. 2012. *Reader for Postgraduate Studies in Professional Development and Facilitating Learning*. Pretoria: University of Pretoria.

Dzansi, D.Y. 2014. *Research Methodology 1*. Central University of Technology: Bloemfontein.

Edwin, V.N. 2009. *Qualitative Research Guide to Design and Implementation*. 2nd edition, UK: Nielsen.

Erasmus, B.J., Loedolff, P.V.Z, Mda, T. and Nel, P.S. 2013. *Managing training and development in South Africa*. 4th Edition. Cape Town: Oxford University Press.

Eraut, M. 2000. Non-formal learning and tacit knowledge in professional work. *British Journal of Educational Psychology*, 70(1), 113-136.

Eraut, M. 2007. Learning from Other People in the Workplace, *Oxford Review of Education*, 33(4), 403-422.

Evans, K., Hodkinson, P., Rainbird, H. and Unwin, L. 2006. *Improving workplace learning*, New York: Routledge.

Federal Republic of Nigeria. 2004. *National Policy on Education*. Lagos: NERDC Press.

Ferreira, E.J. And Van Antwerpen, S. 2012. Barriers experienced by male office management students in a traditionally nonmale environment: A comparative study. *Africa Education Review*, 9(2), 12-17.

Freestone, RP., Williams, S., Thompson, and Trembath. K. 2007. A quantitative approach to assessment of work-based learning outcomes: An urban planning application. *Higher Education Research and Development*, 6(3) 347–61.

Grabe, W. 2010. Fluency in reading—thirty-five years later. *Reading in a Foreign Language*. Cambridge University Press, 22 (1), 71–83.

Guba, E.G. and Lincoln, Y.S. 2005. Paradigmatic controversies, contradictions and emerging confluences. In N.K Denzin and Y.S. Lincoln (Eds.). *The SAGE Handbook of qualitative research* (191-215). Thousand Oaks, California: Sage.

Henning, E. 2004. *Handing your way in Qualitative Research*. Pretoria: Van Schaik Publishers.

Higgs, J., McAllister, L. and Whiteford, G. 2009. The practice and praxis of professional decision-making. In B. Green (Ed.). *Understanding and researching professional practice*. The Netherlands: Sense Publishers.

Higher Educational Committee. 2011. *Work Integrated Learning: Good Practice Guide*, Pretoria: Council on Higher Education.

Ikavalko, H. and Martinsuo, M. 2000. An interactive and experiential games for promoting organisational values. In J.O. Riis, R. Smeds, and R. van Landegehem (Eds.), *Games in operations management*, 7(3),151–162.

Jackson, D. 2010. An international profile of industry-relevant competencies and skill gaps in modern graduates. *International Journal of Management Education*, 8 (3), 29–58.

Kemmis, S. and Smith, T.J. 2008. *Enabling praxis: Challenges for education*. The Netherland: Sense Publishers.

Kolb, A. and Kolb, D. 2005. Learning Styles and Learning Space: Enhancing Experiential Learning in Higher Education. *Academy of Management Learning & Education*, 4 (2), 193-212.

Kundasami, V. 2007. *The assessment of work-integrated learning at a University of Technology*. University of Pretoria.

Lynn, C., Christine, B., Steve, J. and Graham, S. 2012. *improving student engagement and development through assessment*. 1st Edition ed. USA: Routledge.

Magnus, P. 2014. Acquisition of office technology and management skills for self-reliance: a step towards curbing unemployment in Nigeria. *Asia Journal of management science and education*, 3(4), 179-183.

Marius, W. 2006. *Experiential Learning*. Lansdown: Juta Academics.

Martin, A. and Hughes, H. 2009. *How to make the most of Work Integrated Learning: A guide for students, lecturers and supervisors*. Palmerston North, Massey University.

Martin, S., Hughes, L. and Edwards, E. 2011. *Writing in the Business Profession*. Cape Town: Dannels.

May, R. 2016. Importance of Developing Leadership Skills. Webfinace Retrieved at: <http://www.businessdictionary.com/article/730/importance-of-developing-leadership-skills/> Date accessed: 15 June, 2016).

Mcilveen, K., Mcnamara, J., Kift, K., Butler, S.D., Field, K., Brown, W. and Gamble, D. 2012. *Training management in South Africa*. Cape Town: Oxford University Press.

McLennan, B. 2008. *PVV Teaching and Learning Victoria University*. Australia: Victoria University.

McNamara, J. 2013. The challenge of assessing professional competence in work integrated learning. *The journal of Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education*, 38 (2), 183–197.

Melinde, C., Jo-Anne, B., Neil, E., Natasja, H. and Hester, N. 2012. *Developing student graduateness and employability issues, provocations, theory and practical guidelines*. 1st Edition ed. Randburg: Knowres Publishing.

Meintjes, C. and Niemann-Struweg, I. 2011. South African corporate communication practice and its obstacles for future progression. *African Journal of Business Management*. 6(7), 56-78.

Meintjes, H. and Grosser, M. 2010. Creative thinking in prospective teachers: the *status quo* and the impact of contextual factors. *South African Journal of Education*, 30(1), 361-386.

Merriam, S.B, Caffarella, R.S., Baumgartner, I.M. 2007. *Learning in adulthood: A comparative guide*. San Francisco: Jossey Bass.

Nel, E. and Rogerson, C. 2004. Manufacturing industry study of the Free State: Current trends, spatial and sectoral considerations and future prospects. CDS Research Report, LED and SMME Development. Bloemfontein: University of the Free State (UFS).

Nyström, S. 2009. The dynamics of professional identity formation: Graduates' transitions from higher education to working life. *Vocations and learning*, 2, 1-18.

Northedge, Cloete, N. and Chapman, G. 2005. *How to Teach for Transfer*. Palatine: Skylight.

O'Malley, L. and Ryan, A. 2006. Pedagogy and relationship marketing. *Journal of Marketing Education*, 22(4), 195-214.

Orrell, J. 2004. Work-integrated learning programmes: management and educational quality. Paper presented at the Australian Universities Quality Forum. *In Proceedings of the Australian Universities Quality Forum 2004*. Adelaide, Australia, 7–9 July 2004.

Patrick, C. Peach, D. and Pocknee, C. 2009. The WIL (Work Integrated Learning) report: A national scoping study. City: Australian Teaching and Learning Council.

Patrick, C.J., Peach, D., Pocknee, C., Webb, F., Fletcher, M. and Pretto, G. 2008. The Work Integrated Learning report: A national scoping. *Journal of working issues*, 12(3), 33-44.

Payne, G. 2011. *Teaching Quantitative Methods: Getting the Basics*. London: Sage Publications.

Pienaar, M. 2010. The Necessity of Assessment Centres in Teaching and Learning. *In Proceedings of Higher Education Learning and Teaching Association of Southern Africa*, 23 – 25: November 2010.

Pretorius, LLB. 2012. An abbreviated version of the article was presented as a paper at the colloquium: A Language Act for South Africa? Principles, Viability and Practice. University of Free State: Bloemfontein. 27 June 2012.

Polit, D.F., Beck, C.T. and Hungler, B.P. 2010. *Essentials of Nursing Research Methods, Appraisal, and Utilization*. Philadelphia: Lippincott.

Sattler, P. 2011. *Work Integrated Learning in Ontario Postsecondary sector*, Higher Education Quality Council of Ontario: Canada.

Schilling, J. and Klamma, Q. 2010. The difficult bridge between university and industry: a case study in computer science teaching. *Assessment and Evaluation in Higher Education*, 35 (4), 367-380.

Scholtz, D. 2007. Learner guide: Communication II. Cape Town: Faculty of Informatics and Design, CPUT.

Sibiya, N.E. 2012. Work integrated learning experiences of primary health care post basic nursing students in clinical settings. Masters Dissertation, Durban University of Technology, Durban.

Smith, C.D. 2012. Evaluating the quality of work-integrated learning curricula: a comprehensive framework. *Higher Education Research and Development*, 31(2), 247–62.

Smith, M. K., Lave, J, Wenger, E. 2009. The encyclopedia of informal education.

Trede, F. 2012. Role of work integrated learning in developing professionalism and professional identity. *Asia-Pacific Journal of Cooperaive education*, 13(3), 159-167.

Tucker, M.L. and Mccarthy, A.M. 2010. Presentation self-efficacy: Increasing communication competencies through service-learning. *Journal of Managerial Issues*, 13(2), 227-244.

Van der Klashorst, E. and Van der Klashorst, P. 2010. A second-order *cybernetics* approach to the relationship between the intern and the workplace in a Work Integrated Learning (WIL) experience.

Van Wyk, J.A. and F. Daniels. 2004. An integrated mentoring strategy for service learning in higher education. *South African Journal of Higher Education*, 18(2), 359–370.

Van Zyn, D. 2005. *Marketing Research*. Cape Town: Johnson.

Washobourn, P. 2001. Experiential Learning: is experience the best teacher. *Liberal Education*, 82(3), 1-10.

Wenger, E., McDermott, R. and Snyder, W. 2002. *Cultivating communities of practice*, Harvard Business School Press: Massachusetts.

Wilton, S. 2012. *Communicating @ work*. Cape Town: Oxford University Press.

Winberg, C., Engel-Hills, P., Garraway j. and Jacobs C. 2011 .Work integrated learning: Good practice guide. *Council for Higher Education Monitor*, 12.

AUTHORS BIOGRAPHY

Miss Nomfundo Gladys Khoza is a Part-time Lecturer in the Department of Office Management and Technology at the Central University of Technology (CUT), Free State in South Africa. She holds a Bachelor of Technology (BTech) in Office Management and Technology from the CUT. She is just successfully completed her Masters Degree in Business Administration at the same university.

ANNEXURE A

PERMISSION LETTER TO CONDUCT THE STUDY



Central University of
Technology, Free State

■ ACADEMIC PLANNING

Ms NG Khoza

Faculty of Management and Sciences

Department of Business Support Studies

Student Nr: 210090928

nkhoza@cut.ac.za

PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH ON "INFLUENCE OF WORK INTEGRATED LEARNING ON THE ENHANCEMENT OF OFFICE MANAGEMENT COMPETENCIES OF STUDENTS AND ORGANISATIONAL PERFORMANCE: CASE STUDY OF OMT STUDENTS AT THE CENTRAL UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY, FREE STATE IN BLOEMFONTEIN"

Dear Ms Khoza

This is to confirm that you have been granted permission to conduct research on **"INFLUENCE OF WORK INTEGRATED LEARNING ON THE ENHANCEMENT OF OFFICE MANAGEMENT COMPETENCIES OF STUDENTS AND ORGANISATIONAL PERFORMANCE: CASE STUDY OF OMT STUDENTS AT THE CENTRAL UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY, FREE STATE IN BLOEMFONTEIN"**

The conditions of the permission are:

- The survey will not interrupt any of the official activities at the CUT;
- You will supply us with the copy of your report;
- The cost of all related activities will be covered by yourself;
- Recruitment of participants is the sole responsibility of yourself;
- Voluntary nature of the potential participant's decision to consent to participate should be strictly observed;

- You should not disclose a potential participant's decision to participate or otherwise to any other party; Permission does not compel, in any sense, participation of staff members or students in your survey.



DIRECTOR: ACADEMIC PLANNING

DR DM BALIA

18 SEPTEMBER 2015

ANNEXURE B

COVER LETTER



Central University of
Technology, Free State

QUESTIONNAIRE: INFLUENCE OF WORK INTEGRATED LEARNING ON THE ENHANCEMENT OF OFFICE MANAGEMENT AND TECHNOLOGY COMPETENCIES OF STUDENTS.

My name is Nomfundo Gladys Khoza. I am a Master of Technology student in Business Administration at the Central University of Technology (CUT) in Bloemfontein. I am conducting a study on the influence of Work Integrated Learning (WIL) on the enhancement of Office Management and Technology skills of students and organisational performance. At this stage, I am collecting data on the organisational workforce, Academic supervisors and Students' perspectives on how WIL influence the process of assessment in broadening of Office Management and Technology Knowledge, skills and abilities. This study is supervised by Dr Patient Rambe and Dr Lawrence Meda who can be contacted on the following contact details:

Dr Patient Rambe (Main supervisor): 051 507 4064 / prambe@cut.ac.za

Dr Lawrence Meda (Co-Supervisor): 051 507 3440 / lmeda@cut.ac.za

At this stage, I am conducting my field work on this topic and I would be very pleased if you take time to complete this questionnaire. Your participation in this survey is voluntary and your responses are confidential. The results of this survey will be reported in aggregate form to ensure your anonymity. The survey will help establish the importance of WIL assessment in developing students' Office Management and Technology knowledge, skills and abilities and students' professionalism and their professional identity and the influence of WIL in developing organisational performance (growth and profitability). This survey will take approximately 30-40 minutes to complete. I greatly appreciate your assistance.

I will be very grateful if you would answer the sections of this questionnaire as required in brackets.

Yours faithfully

Nomfundo Gladys Khoza.

ANNEXURE C

QUESTIONNAIRES (Students, Educators and organisational workforce)

STUDENTS

SECTION A: DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

1. Gender

1 Female	2 Male
-------------	-----------

2. Age Group

1 < 25 yrs.	2 25-34 yrs.	3 35-44 yrs.	4 45-54 yrs.	5 55 and above
----------------	-----------------	-----------------	-----------------	-------------------

3. Home language

1 English	2 Afrikaans	3 Sesotho	4 IsiZulu	5 IsiXhosa	6. Other language (Please specify).....
--------------	----------------	--------------	--------------	---------------	--

4. Qualifications

1 None	2 Primary schooling	3 Matric & below	4 FET Or equivalent	5 University Degree/ Diploma	6 Postgraduate
-----------	---------------------------	---------------------	---------------------------	---------------------------------------	-------------------

5. Your role in this business

Manager	Owner	Manager/Owner	Employee	Other (specify)	
---------	-------	---------------	----------	-----------------	--

6. Year of experience on this job

1 Below 1 year	2 2-5 years	3 6-10 years	4 11-15 years	5 16-20 years	6 Over 20 years
-------------------	----------------	-----------------	------------------	------------------	--------------------

7. Year of experience in management

1 Below 1 year	2 2-5 years	3 6-10 years	4 11-15 years	5 16-20 years	6 Over 20 years
-------------------	----------------	-----------------	------------------	------------------	-----------------------

8. Company size

1 None	2 One	3 2-5 employees	4 6-10 employees	5 11-15 employees	6 16-20 Employees
-----------	----------	-----------------------	------------------------	-------------------------	-------------------------

9. Your highest academic qualification?

1	2	3	4	5	6
---	---	---	---	---	---

None	Primary	Matric & below	Tertiary certificate	Diploma/ degree	postgraduate
------	---------	----------------	----------------------	-----------------	--------------

SECTION B: WORK INTEGRATED LEARNING

Evaluate the following statement by circling the appropriate response based on the scale below. **Please do not leave any item unanswered.**

SCALES	1	2	3	4	5
Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements. PLEASE MARK THE APPROPRIATE ANSWER WITH 'X'	STRONGLY DISAGREE	DISAGREE	Neutral	AGREE	STRONGLY AGREE

OVERALL INFLUENCE OF WIL ON THE ENHANCEMENT OF KNOWLEDGE		STRONGLY DISAGREE	DISAGREE	Neutral	AGREE	STRONGLY AGREE
10	Participation in WIL has positively impacted my knowledge of time consciousness.	1	2	3	4	5
11	Participation in WIL has positively impacted my knowledge of Managing multiple conflicting priorities without loss of focus and composure.	1	2	3	4	5
12	Participation in WIL has positively impacted my knowledge of managing multiple conflicting priorities without loss of focus and composure.	1	2	3	4	5
13	Participation in WIL has positively impacted my knowledge of appropriate allocation of time to tasks/work activities.	1	2	3	4	5
14	Participation in WIL has positively impacted my knowledge of time management (such as to determine the appropriate allocation of time).	1	2	3	4	5
15	Participation in WIL has positively impacted my knowledge appropriate time- based sequencing of tasks/work activities.	1	2	3	4	5
16	Participation in WIL has positively impacted my knowledge of	1	2	3	4	5

	appropriate allocation of time to tasks/work activities.					
SPACE MANAGEMENT KNOWLEDGE		STRONGLY DISAGREE	DISAGREE	Neutral	AGREE	STRONGLY AGREE
17	Participation in WIL has positively impacted my knowledge of managing space such as keeping a clean and organised OMT office.	1	2	3	4	5
18	Participation in WIL has positively impacted my demonstrating advanced proficiency by quickly adapting to new technology and easily acquiring new technical skills.	1	2	3	4	5
19	Participation in WIL has positively impacted my demonstration of advanced proficiency by quickly adapting to new technology and easily acquiring new technical skills.	1	2	3	4	5
20	Participation in WIL has positively impacted my maintain control over the physical environment	1	2	3	4	5
21	Participation in WIL has positively impacted my appropriate handling of all paperwork.	1	2	3	4	5
22	Participation in WIL has positively impacted my knowledge of the organisational functions and procedures of the office.	1	2	3	4	5
23	Participation in WIL has positively impacted my maintenance of control over the physical environment.	1	2	3	4	5
24	Participation in WIL has positively impacted my knowledge of appropriate handling all paperwork.	1	2	3	4	5
25	Participation in WIL has positively impacted my knowledge of managing task such as balancing conflicting.	1	2	3	4	5
SKILLS		STRONGLY DISAGREE	DISAGREE	Neutral	AGREE	STRONGLY AGREE
26	Participation in WIL has positively impacted on my computer and technical skills such as: Displaying proficiency using standard office equipment like a personal	1	2	3	4	5

	computer, fax, photocopier and scanner.					
27	Demonstrating advanced proficiency by quickly adapting to new technology and easily acquiring new technical skills.	1	2	3	4	5
28	Participation in WIL has positively impacted on my OMT computer and technical skills such as: Demonstrating advanced proficiency by quickly adapting to new technology and easily acquiring new technical skills.	1	2	3	4	5
29	Engagement in WIL has enhanced my leadership skills such as: Co-supervision of colleagues activities	1	2	3	4	5
30	Engagement in WIL has enhanced my leadership skills such as: Team leadership.	1	2	3	4	5
31	Engagement in WIL has enhanced my leadership skills such as: Petty cash management skills (e.g. invoicing, receipting, computer based filing, corporate banking)	1	2	3	4	5
32	Q29. Engagement in WIL has enhanced my leadership skills such as: Co-supervision of colleagues' activities.	1	2	3	4	5
33	Engagement in WIL has enhanced my oral skills to speak with confidence using a clear, concise sentence.	1	2	3	4	5
34	Engagement in WIL has enhanced my leadership skills such as: people management skills (e.g. coordination of efforts from different people)	1	2	3	4	5
35	Engagement in WIL has enhanced my written skills such as: Professional correspondence free from grammatical and spelling errors	1	2	3	4	5
36	Engagement in WIL has enhanced my leadership skills such as: Petty cash management skills (e.g. invoicing, receipting, computer based filing, corporate banking).	1	2	3	4	5
ABILITIES		STRONGLY DISAGREE	DISAGREE	Neutral	AGREE	STRONGLY AGREE
37	My participation in WIL has improved my creative abilities.	1	2	3	4	5

38	My participation in WIL has improved my ability to operate office machines.	1	2	3	4	5
39	My participation in WIL has improved my ability to operate office machines.	1	2	3	4	5
40	My participation in WIL has improved my ability to maintain good working relationship with a diverse workforce, customers and visitors.	1	2	3	4	5
41	My participation in WIL has improved my ability to follow guidelines/procedures for the preparation of administrative forms.	1	2	3	4	5
42	My participation in WIL has improved my ability to maintain confidentiality of documents and office information.	1	2	3	4	5

SECTION C: STUDENTS' PERSPECTIVES ON THE EFFECT OF WIL PROGRAMME ON THE BROADENING OFFICE MANAGEMENT AND TECHNOLOGY KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND ABILITIES

CONTENT SELECTION		STRONGLY DISAGREE	DISAGREE	Neutral	AGREE	STRONGLY AGREE
43	The lecturers' choice of content taught was helpful in familiarizing me with adaptability knowledge such as managing multi conflicting OMT priorities without loss of composure.	1	2	3	4	5
44	The lecturers' choice of content taught was helpful in familiarizing me with time management knowledge such as determining the appropriate allocation of time on OMT tasks.	1	2	3	4	5
45	The lecturers' choice of content taught was helpful in familiarizing me with space management knowledge such as: Keeping a clean and organised OMT office	1	2	3	4	5
46	The lecturers' choice of content taught was helpful in familiarizing me with space management	1	2	3	4	5

	knowledge such as: Appropriately handling all OMT paperwork					
47	The lecturers' choice of content taught was helpful in familiarizing me with space management knowledge such as: Maintaining control over the physical OMT environment	1	2	3	4	5
48	The lecturers' choice of content taught was helpful in familiarizing me with task management knowledge like balancing conflicting OMT priorities in order to manage workflow	1	2	3	4	5
49	The lecturers' choice of content taught was helpful in familiarizing me with office management knowledge such as appropriate handling of all paperwork	1	2	3	4	5
COURSE ORGANISATION		STRONGLY DISAGREE	DISAGREE	Neutral	AGREE	STRONGLY AGREE
50	Structuring of OMT course enhanced my grasp of concrete OMT practicals such as (computer skills evaluations)	1	2	3	4	5
51	Content relevance improved my knowledge of OMT work adaption such as time conscious	1	2	3	4	5
52	Content relevance improved my OMT knowledge of work adaption such as managing multiple conflicting priorities without loss of focus and composure.	1	2	3	4	5
53	Content quality improved my OMT knowledge of time management (such as to determine the appropriate allocation of time).	1	2	3	4	5
54	Quality of OMT content delivered improved my listening skills e.g listening actively to OMT lectures.	1	2	3	4	5
55	Quality of OMT content improved my oral skills (e.g to speak confidence about OMT concepts using clear, concise sentences)	1	2	3	4	5
56	Quality of content improved my time management knowledge	1	2	3	4	5

	(such determining the appropriate allocation of time to OMT tasks).					
57	Content quality improved my written skills such as: Producing well thought-out OMT ideas in texts	1	2	3	4	5
58	Content quality improved my written skills such as: Professional correspondence on OMT issues free from grammatical and spelling errors	1	2	3	4	5
59	Quality of OMT content improved my OMT computer and technical skills such as: Displaying proficiency using standard office equipment like computer, fax, photocopier and scanner.	1	2	3	4	5
60	Quality of OMT content improved my OMT computer and technical skills such as: Demonstrating advanced proficiency by quickly adapting to new technology and easily acquiring new technical skills.	1	2	3	4	5
61	Content significance (i.e. its academic impact) improved my knowledge of time- based sequencing of OMT tasks/work activities	1	2	3	4	5
62	Content significance helped in improving my OMT leadership skills such as: Team leadership	1	2	3	4	5
63	Content significance helped in improving my OMT leadership skills such as: Co-supervision of colleagues activities	1	2	3	4	5
64	Content significance helped in improving my OMT leadership skills such as: People management skills (e.g. coordination of efforts from different people)	1	2	3	4	5
65	Content significance helped in improving my OMT leadership skills such as: Petty cash management skills (e.g. invoicing,	1	2	3	4	5

	receipting, computer based filing, corporate banking)					
66	Content significance helped in improving my OMT leadership skills such as: Listening skills e.g listening actively to OMT lecturers.	1	2	3	4	5
67	Understanding of lesson plan of the OMT course enhanced my ability to operate office machines	1	2	3	4	5
68	Understanding of lesson plan of OMT course enhanced my creative thinking abilities	1	2	3	4	5
69	Understanding of lesson plan of OMT course enhanced my ability to follow guidelines/procedures for the preparation of administrative forms.	1	2	3	4	5
70	Understanding of lesson plan of OMT course broadened my ability to maintain good working relationship with a diverse workforce, customers and visitors.	1	2	3	4	5
71	Understanding of lesson plan of OMT course enhanced my ability to lead and provide instruction to a clerical support staff	1	2	3	4	5
72	Understanding of lesson plan of OMT course enhanced my ability to maintain confidentiality.	1	2	3	4	5
TEACHING MODALITIES		STRONGLY DISAGREE	DISAGREE	Neutral	AGREE	STRONGLY AGREE
73	OMT Lectures enhanced my adaptability knowledge such as to managing multi conflicting priorities without loss of composure	1	2	3	4	5
74	OMT Lectures enhanced my space management knowledge such as: Keeping a clean and organised OMT office	1	2	3	4	5
75	OMT Lectures enhanced my space management knowledge such as: Appropriately handling all paperwork	1	2	3	4	5

76	OMT Lectures enhanced my space management knowledge such as: Maintaining control over the physical OMT environment	1	2	3	4	5
77	OMT Lectures help in broadening my task management knowledge like balancing conflicting priorities in order to manage workflow	1	2	3	4	5
78	OMT Lectures help in broadening my knowledge of the organisational function and procedures of the office.	1	2	3	4	5
79	The practical orientation of the OMT course (e.g. simulations, practicals) improved my OMT knowledge such as to managing multi conflicting priorities without loss of composure.	1	2	3	4	5
80	The practical orientation of the OMT course (e.g. simulations, practicals) improved my OMT knowledge such as determining the appropriate allocation of time on tasks. Adjust as shown above	1	2	3	4	5
81	OMT Lectures enhanced my time management knowledge such determining the appropriate allocation of time on tasks.	1	2	3	4	5
82	The practical orientation of OMT course (e.g. simulations, practicals) improved my OMT space management knowledge such as: Keeping a clean and organised OMT office	1	2	3	4	5
83	The practical orientation of OMT course (e.g. simulations, practicals) improved my OMT space management knowledge such as: Appropriately handling all paperwork	1	2	3	4	5
84	The practical orientation of OMT course (e.g. simulations, practicals) improved my OMT space management knowledge such as: Maintaining control over the physical OMT environment (remember each will be a question on its own)	1	2	3	4	5
85	The practical orientation of OMT course (e.g. simulations, practicals) broadened my OMT task	1	2	3	4	5

	management knowledge like balancing conflicting priorities in order to manage workflow					
86	The practical orientation of OMT course (e.g. simulations, practicals) broadened my OMT knowledge of the organisational function and procedures of the office.	1	2	3	4	5
TECHNOLOGY ASSISTED CURRICULA DELIVERY		STRONGLY DISAGREE	DISAGREE	Neutral	AGREE	STRONGLY AGREE
87	The use of interactive technologies in the OMT course improved my computational skills like computer and technical skills such as: Displaying proficiency using standard office equipment like computer, fax, photocopier and scanner.	1	2	3	4	5
88	The use of interactive technologies in the OMT course improved my computational skills like computer and technical skills such as: Demonstrating advanced proficiency by quickly adapting to new technology	1	2	3	4	5
89	The use of interactive technologies in the OMT course improved my computational skills like computer and technical skills such as: Easily acquiring new technical skills.)	1	2	3	4	5
90	The use of instructional technology for OMT demonstrations such as data projectors enhanced my written skills such as: Producing well thought-out texts	1	2	3	4	5
91	The use of instructional technology for OMT demonstrations such as data projectors enhanced my written skills such as: Professional correspondence free from grammatical and spelling errors skills	1	2	3	4	5

ADDITIONAL COMMENT

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....



THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME.

EDUCATORS

SECTION A: DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

9. Gender

1 Female	2 Male
-------------	-----------

10. Age Group

1 < 25 yrs.	2 25-34 yrs.	3 35-44 yrs.	4 45-54 yrs.	5 55 and above
----------------	-----------------	-----------------	-----------------	-------------------

11. Home language

1 English	2 Afrikaans	3 Sesotho	4 IsiZulu	5 IsiXhosa	6. Other language (Please specify).....
--------------	----------------	--------------	--------------	---------------	--

12. Qualifications

1 None	2 Primary schooling	3 Matric & below	4 FET Or equivalent	5 University Degree/ Diploma	6 Postgraduate
-----------	---------------------------	---------------------	---------------------------	---------------------------------------	-------------------

13. Your role in this business

Manager	Owner	Manager/Owner	Employee	Other (specify)	
---------	-------	---------------	----------	-----------------	--

14. Year of experience on this job

1 Below 1 year	2 2-5 years	3 6-10 years	4 11-15 years	5 16-20 years	6 Over 20 years
-------------------	----------------	-----------------	------------------	------------------	--------------------

15. Year of experience in management

1 Below 1 year	2 2-5 years	3 6-10 years	4 11-15 years	5 16-20 years	6 Over 20 years
-------------------	----------------	-----------------	------------------	------------------	-----------------------

16. Company size

1 None	2 One	3 2-5 employees	4 6-10 employees	5 11-15 employees	6 16-20 Employees
-----------	----------	-----------------------	------------------------	-------------------------	-------------------------

9. Your highest academic qualification?

1 None	2 Primary	3 Matric & below	4 Tertiary certificate	5 Diploma/ degree	6 postgraduate
-----------	--------------	------------------------	------------------------------	-------------------------	-------------------

SECTION B: EDUCATORS' PERCEPTIONS OF THE OFFICE MANAGEMENT KNOWLEDGE THEY CONSIDER FOUNDATIONAL TO EFFECTIVE PARTICIPATION IN WIL PROGRAMMES AT CUT

Evaluate the following statement by circling the appropriate response based on the scale below. **Please do not leave any item unanswered.**

SCALES	1	2	3	4	5
Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements. PLEASE MARK THE APPROPRIATE ANSWER WITH 'X'	STRONGLY DISAGREE	DISAGREE	Neutral	AGREE	STRONGLY AGREE

Time management knowledge		STRONGLY DISAGREE	DISAGREE	Neutral	AGREE	STRONGLY AGREE
10	I consider student knowledge of appropriate allocation of time to tasks/work activities to be critical to their effective participation in WIL	1	2	3	4	5
11	I consider student knowledge of time conscious planning of tasks/work activities (current and future) as critical to their effective participation in WIL	1	2	3	4	5
12	I consider student knowledge of timeous execution of business functions to be critical to their effective participation in WIL	1	2	3	4	5
13	I consider student knowledge appropriate time- based sequencing of tasks/work activities as foundational to their effective engagement in WIL	1	2	3	4	5
Space management knowledge		STRONGLY DISAGREE	DISAGREE	Neutral	AGREE	STRONGLY AGREE
14	I regard student knowledge of managing the work space to be critical to their effective participation in WIL	1	2	3	4	5
15	I regard student knowledge of keeping a clean and organised office to be critical to their effective participation in WIL	1	2	3	4	5

16	I regard student knowledge of appropriate handling all paperwork as foundational to their effective engagement in WIL	1	2	3	4	5
17	I regard student knowledge of maintaining control over the physical environment to be critical to their effective participation in WIL	1	2	3	4	5
Task management knowledge		STRONGLY DISAGREE	DISAGREE	Neutral	AGREE	STRONGLY AGREE
18	I perceive student knowledge of Microsoft packages (e.g. Microsoft Word, Excel, PowerPoint) be critical to their effective participation in WIL	1	2	3	4	5
19	I perceive student knowledge of basic reception handling as foundational to their effective engagement in WIL	1	2	3	4	5
20	I perceive strong knowledge of accounting and book keeping as critical to their successful participation in WIL	1	2	3	4	5
21	I perceive student knowledge of website design and development as foundational to their effective participation in WIL	1	2	3	4	5
22	I perceive student knowledge of emerging technology (e.g. databases, social media platforms, business-related games etc.) to be foundational to their successful participation in WIL	1	2	3	4	5

SECTION C: EDUCATORS' PERSPECTIVES ON THE INFLUENCE OF WIL PROGRAMMES ON BROADENING OFFICE MANAGEMENT AND TECHNOLOGY SKILLS AND ABILITIES

SKILLS		STRONGLY DISAGREE	DISAGREE	Neutral	AGREE	STRONGLY AGREE
23	Placement ignites students' computer and technical skills such as: Effective word processing, processing spreadsheets, Power Point presentations	1	2	3	4	5

24	Placement ignites students' computer and technical skills such as: Displaying proficiency in using standard office equipment like computer, fax, photocopier and scanner.	1	2	3	4	5
25	Placement ignites students' computer and technical skills such as: Demonstrating advanced technological proficiency by quickly adapting to new technology and easily acquiring new technical skills.	1	2	3	4	5
26	Placement ignites students' Leadership skills such as: Team leadership	1	2	3	4	5
27	Placement ignites students' Leadership skills such as: Co-supervision of colleagues activities	1	2	3	4	5
28	Placement ignites students' Leadership skills such as: People management skills (e.g. coordination of efforts from different people)	1	2	3	4	5
29	Placement ignites students' Leadership skills such as: Petty cash management skills (e.g. invoicing, receipting, computer based filing, corporate banking)	1	2	3	4	5
30	Placement ignites students' Leadership skills such as: Listening skills like listening actively.	1	2	3	4	5
31	Placement ignites students' oral skills to speak with confidence using clear, concise sentences.	1	2	3	4	5
32	Placement ignites students' written skills such as: Produces well thought-out texts	1	2	3	4	5
33	Placement ignites students' written skills such as: Professional correspondence free from grammatical and spelling errors	1	2	3	4	5
34	Placement ignites students' telephone/E-mail skills to use high quality, professional oral and written skills to project a positive image of the business.	1	2	3	4	5

ABILITIES		STRONGLY DISAGREE	DISAGREE	Neutral	AGREE	STRONGLY AGREE
35	Placement impacts on students creative thinking abilities	1	2	3	4	5
36	Placement impacts on student's ability to operate office machines.	1	2	3	4	5
37	Placement impacts on student's ability to follow guidelines/procedures for the preparation of administrative forms.	1	2	3	4	5
38	Placement impacts on student's ability to maintain good working relationship with a diverse workforce, customers and visitors.	1	2	3	4	5
39	Placement impacts on students' ability to lead and provide instruction to other clerical support staff	1	2	3	4	5
40	Placement impacts on students' ability to maintain confidentiality.	1	2	3	4	5
41	I regard student knowledge of balancing conflicting priorities in order to manage workflow as foundational to their effective engagement in WIL	1	2	3	4	5



THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME.

ORGANISATIONAL WORKFORCES SECTION A: DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

17. Gender

1 Female	2 Male
-------------	-----------

18. Age Group

1 < 25 yrs.	2 25-34 yrs.	3 35-44 yrs.	4 45-54 yrs.	5 55 and above
----------------	-----------------	-----------------	-----------------	-------------------

19. Home language

1 English	2 Afrikaans	3 Sesotho	4 IsiZulu	5 IsiXhosa	6. Other language (Please specify).....
--------------	----------------	--------------	--------------	---------------	--

20. Qualifications

1 None	2 Primary schooling	3 Matric & below	4 FET Or equivalent	5 University Degree/ Diploma	6 Postgraduate
-----------	---------------------------	---------------------	---------------------------	---------------------------------------	-------------------

21. Your role in this business

Manager	Owner	Manager/Owner	Employee	Other (specify)	
---------	-------	---------------	----------	-----------------	--

22. Year of experience on this job

1 Below 1 year	2 2-5 years	3 6-10 years	4 11-15 years	5 16-20 years	6 Over 20 years
-------------------	----------------	-----------------	------------------	------------------	--------------------

23. Year of experience in management

1 Below 1 year	2 2-5 years	3 6-10 years	4 11-15 years	5 16-20 years	6 Over 20 years
-------------------	----------------	-----------------	------------------	------------------	-----------------------

24. Company size

1 None	2 One	3 2-5 employees	4 6-10 employees	5 11-15 employees	6 16-20 Employees
-----------	----------	-----------------------	------------------------	-------------------------	-------------------------

9. Your highest academic qualification?

1 None	2 Primary	3 Matric & below	4 Tertiary certificate	5 Diploma/ degree	6 postgraduate
-----------	--------------	------------------------	------------------------------	-------------------------	-------------------

SECTION B: ORGANISATIONAL WORKFORCE' PERCEPTIONS OF THE OFFICE MANAGEMENT KNOWLEDGE THEY CONSIDER FOUNDATIONAL TO EFFECTIVE PARTICIPATION IN WIL PROGRAMMES AT CUT

Evaluate the following statement by circling the appropriate response based on the scale below. **Please do not leave any item unanswered.**

SCALES	1	2	3	4	5
Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements. PLEASE MARK THE APPROPRIATE ANSWER WITH 'X'	STRONGLY DISAGREE	DISAGREE	Neutral	AGREE	STRONGLY AGREE

Time management knowledge		STRONGLY DISAGREE	DISAGREE	Neutral	AGREE	STRONGLY AGREE
10	I consider student knowledge of appropriate allocation of time to tasks/work activities to be critical to their effective participation in WIL	1	2	3	4	5
11	I consider student knowledge of time conscious planning of tasks/work activities (current and future) as critical to their effective participation in WIL	1	2	3	4	5
12	I consider student knowledge of timeous execution of business functions to be critical to their effective participation in WIL	1	2	3	4	5
13	I consider student knowledge appropriate time- based sequencing of tasks/work activities as foundational to their effective engagement in WIL	1	2	3	4	5
Space management knowledge		STRONGLY DISAGREE	DISAGREE	Neutral	AGREE	STRONGLY AGREE
14	I regard student knowledge of managing the work space to be critical to their effective participation in WIL	1	2	3	4	5
15	I regard student knowledge of keeping a clean and organised office to be critical to their effective participation in WIL	1	2	3	4	5

16	I regard student knowledge of appropriate handling all paperwork as foundational to their effective engagement in WIL	1	2	3	4	5
17	I regard student knowledge of maintaining control over the physical environment to be critical to their effective participation in WIL	1	2	3	4	5
Task management knowledge		STRONGLY DISAGREE	DISAGREE	Neutral	AGREE	STRONGLY AGREE
18	I perceive student knowledge of Microsoft packages (e.g. Microsoft Word, Excel, PowerPoint) be critical to their effective participation in WIL	1	2	3	4	5
19	I perceive student knowledge of basic reception handling as foundational to their effective engagement in WIL	1	2	3	4	5
20	I perceive strong knowledge of accounting and book keeping as critical to their successful participation in WIL	1	2	3	4	5
21	I perceive student knowledge of website design and development as foundational to their effective participation in WIL	1	2	3	4	5
22	I perceive student knowledge of emerging technology (e.g. databases, social media platforms, business-related games etc.) to be foundational to their successful participation in WIL	1	2	3	4	5
Time management knowledge		STRONGLY DISAGREE	DISAGREE	Neutral	AGREE	STRONGLY AGREE
23	I would consider student knowledge of determining the appropriate allocation of time be critical to their effective participation in WIL	1	2	3	4	5
24	I would consider student Knowledge of planning be critical to their effective participation in WIL	1	2	3	4	5

25	I would consider student Knowledge of coordination as foundational to their effective engagement in WIL	1	2	3	4	5
26	I would consider student Knowledge of execution of business functions be critical to their effective participation in WIL	1	2	3	4	5
	Space management knowledge	STRONGLY DISAGREE	DISAGREE	Neutral	AGREE	STRONGLY AGREE
27	I would consider student Knowledge of effectively managing the work space be critical to their effective participation in WIL	1	2	3	4	5
28	I would consider student Knowledge of keeping a clean and organised office be critical to their effective participation in WIL	1	2	3	4	5
29	I would consider student Knowledge of appropriate handling all paperwork as foundational to their effective engagement in WIL	1	2	3	4	5
30	I would consider student Knowledge of maintaining control over the physical environment be critical to their effective participation in WIL	1	2	3	4	5
	Task management knowledge	STRONGLY DISAGREE	DISAGREE	Neutral	AGREE	STRONGLY AGREE
31	I would consider student knowledge of Microsoft packages be critical to their effective participation in WIL	1	2	3	4	5
32	I regard student knowledge of basic reception handling as foundational to their effective engagement in WIL	1	2	3	4	5
33	I perceive strong knowledge of accounting and book keeping knowledge as critical to successful completion of WIL	1	2	3	4	5
34	Knowledge of website design and development is foundational to student completion of WIL	1	2	3	4	5

35	Knowledge of technology (office software programs, including spreadsheets, databases, word processing)	1	2	3	4	5
36	I regard student knowledge of balancing conflicting priorities in order to manage workflow as foundational to their effective engagement in WIL	1	2	3	4	5

SECTION C: ORGANISATIONAL WORKFORCE' PERSPECTIVES ON THE INFLUENCE OF WIL PROGRAMMES ON BROADENING OFFICE MANAGEMENT SKILLS AND TECHNOLOGY COMPETENCIES

SKILLS		STRONGLY DISAGREE	DISAGREE	Neutral	AGREE	STRONGLY AGREE
37	Placement ignites students' computer and technical skills such as: Effective word processing, processing spreadsheets, Power Point presentations	1	2	3	4	5
38	Placement ignites students' computer and technical skills such as: Displaying proficiency in using standard office equipment like computer, fax, photocopier and scanner.	1	2	3	4	5
39	Placement ignites students' computer and technical skills such as: Demonstrating advanced technological proficiency by quickly adapting to new technology and easily acquiring new technical skills.	1	2	3	4	5
40	Placement ignites students' Leadership skills such as: Team leadership	1	2	3	4	5
41	Placement ignites students' Leadership skills such as: Co-supervision of colleagues activities	1	2	3	4	5
42	Placement ignites students' Leadership skills such as: People management skills (e.g. coordination of efforts from different people)	1	2	3	4	5
43	Placement ignites students' Leadership skills such as: Petty cash management skills (e.g. invoicing, receipting, computer based filing, corporate banking)	1	2	3	4	5

44	Placement ignites students' Leadership skills such as: Listening skills like listening actively.	1	2	3	4	5
45	Placement ignites students' oral skills to speak with confidence using clear, concise sentences.	1	2	3	4	5
46	Placement ignites students' written skills such as: Produces well thought-out texts	1	2	3	4	5
47	Placement ignites students' written skills such as: Professional correspondence free from grammatical and spelling errors	1	2	3	4	5
48	Placement ignites students' telephone/E-mail skills to use high quality, professional oral and written skills to project a positive image of the business.	1	2	3	4	5
ABILITIES		STRONGLY DISAGREE	DISAGREE	Neutral	AGREE	STRONGLY AGREE
49	Placement impacts on students creative thinking abilities	1	2	3	4	5
50	Placement impacts on student's ability to operate office machines.	1	2	3	4	5
51	Placement impacts on student's ability to follow guidelines/procedures for the preparation of administrative forms.	1	2	3	4	5
52	Placement impacts on student's ability to maintain good working relationship with a diverse workforce, customers and visitors.	1	2	3	4	5
53	Placement impacts on students' ability to lead and provide instruction to other clerical support staff	1	2	3	4	5
54	Placement impacts on students' ability to maintain confidentiality.	1	2	3	4	5
55	I regard student knowledge of balancing conflicting priorities in order to manage workflow as foundational to their effective engagement in WIL	1	2	3	4	5

THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME.

ANNEXURE D

From : Dr. I. Manase
Department of English
University of the Free State
Bloemfontein

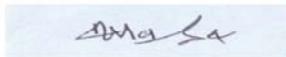
Date : 27 June 2016

To : Whom it may concern

Confirmation of proofreading and editing: Nomfundo Gladys Khoza's Master of Technology in Business Administration Dissertation titled: Influence of Work Integrated Learning on the Enhancement of Office Management and Technology Competences of Students

This serves to confirm that I have proofread and edited Nomfundo Gladys Khoza's above noted Master of Technology dissertation. The suggested language and grammatical construction errors have been attended to and as such the dissertation is now ready for submission for examination.

Sincerely,



Dr. I. Manase

Email: Manasel@ufs.ac.za

Cell: 082 298 6137