Enhancing Workplace Learning through Personal Mobile Technology to connect Learning and Work

Prof F. Trede
In collaboration with Prof P. Goodyear, Ms S. Macfarlane, Ms. F. Tayebjee, Dr L. Markauskaite, Dr C. McEwen

Blended Learning Summit
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Outline

1. Definition of Workplace Learning (WPL)
2. Benefits and challenges of WPL
3. Primacy of student agency
4. Affordances of Mobile Technology for WPL
5. Project aims, methodology and findings
6. Capacity Building Framework development
7. Resources
What is WPL?

Workplace learning refers to students’ active participation and **purposeful engagement** with **real world** professional roles and responsibilities in authentic workplace environments supported by sound **learning and teaching strategies** and **appropriate supervision**.
Who is here?

What are your practices, hopes, fears and barriers around mobile technology in workplace learning?
WPL

Benefits:

• Students learning professional roles in professional settings
• Developing professional identity and sense of professionalism and citizenship
• Students develop capabilities for future practice
What makes WPL partnerships so challenging?

WPL challenges - Student perspectives

Cultural capital barriers
Challenging learning relationships

Limited support on placement
Limited opportunity for collective reflection
Unable to ask questions
What is agency?

A capacity to (inter)act with the environment bound in time.
Student agency

• Capacity to act
• Not feeling helpless
• Requires determination, efficacy, reflexivity
• Needed in complex environments

Park, 2011; Hitlin & Elder, 2007
Rich learning environment and affordances of MT

How can MT enhance student agency in WPL?
MT affordances to enable agency

• Connected learning across settings
• Connected learning before and after actions
• Connected learning with peers, teachers, practitioners
• (Co)creating and producing new knowledge, insights, resources and practices
• Developing online professional profile
Project Aims

• To help students make better use of their personal mobile devices for workplace learning

• To achieve shared understanding between students, academics and WPL educators

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Theoretical underpinnings

- Fostering the development of students’ agency in WPL
- Designing for predictable and for emerging practices
- Drawing on an expansive understanding of the entangled relationships between learning, technology and work
Methodology

- **Target**: Students, workplace educators and academics in health and education courses with WPL components.

- **Phase 1**: Surveyed 77 participants’ practices and perceptions of PMD use for learning on placement.

- **Phase 2**: Sought feedback from 214 participants on resources designed
Phase 1 findings

- High use of mobile devices
- High confidence in using mobile devices
- Many opportunities to use mobile devices
- Positive impact on connection and learning

**BUT** there is a need for…

- Better preparation and training
- Implementation of policies and guidelines
- More reliable internet access
- Broader integration
- Focus on people and pedagogy
Would you like to use your own mobile device on placement?

- Answered: 22  Skipped: 9
How confident would you rate your skills in using mobile technology?

Students

- Somewhat confident: 27% (4)
- Confident: 40% (6)
- Neither confident or unconfident: 7% (1)

WPL Educators

- Very confident: 31% (4)
- Somewhat confident: 23% (3)
- Confident: 23% (3)
- Neither confident or unconfident: 23% (3)
What type of mobile devices did you [students] use for your WPL placement?

- Answered: 27    Skipped: 1
Which of the following types of apps did you use for your WPL placement and what for?

- Answered: 15    Skipped: 13

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<th>Skype</th>
<th>Chat</th>
<th>University online platform / Forum</th>
<th>Facebook</th>
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<th>Blog</th>
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0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%
Impact on learning

• “Helps them relate to learning.”
• “Usually guaranteed to find the answer they are looking for and within reasonable time”
• “Increased engagement, immediacy of response, availability of quality resources, ability to create PLN, ability to communicate with range of educators around the world.”

BUT

• “They do still need to engage with the patients, their peers and everyone else and hold a conversation.”
Phase 2 findings

• Research and resources are needed
• Need more specific examples
• Provide more visual summaries and brief tips
• Integrate in curriculum and assessment

However

• Still some scepticism as to whether MT can enhance WPL Or that students, WPEs and/or academics what to learn with MT.
Mobile Technology Capacity Building Framework

• To enhance students’ learning from WPL experiences
• To increase students’ agency
• To help students, academic teachers and WPEs
• To achieve a shared understanding of students’ use of MT in WPL
• No app

Project website & blog

https://wpltech.wordpress.com/
Mobile Technology Capacity Building Framework for WPL
Awareness Raising

• Staying professional and safe
• Considering issues of time and place
Purposeful Planning

- Planning learning activities ahead of time
- Initiating dialogue
Engaging and Acting

• Initiating dialogue
• Networking
• Creating learning opportunities on the go
Sense Making

Deepening reflection

• Debrief with online learning groups
  • Ask questions
• Share and compare experiences
Bibliography


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Franziska Trede
ftrede@csu.edu.au

Project website & blog https://wpltech.wordpress.com/

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