

Developing an effective model for delivery and assessment for vocational education and training in community services



Aims:

- To use the workplace as the primary site for learning, skill development and assessment
- To use authentic tasks as a basis for learning
- To encourage peer learning

Identified by Figgis, (2008) as key messages for regeneration of professional VET practice in Australia

Action research



(Kember and Kelly, 1993)

Units involved:

- Develop and implement a community development strategy;
- Undertake research activities;
- Develop, implement and promote effective communication techniques;
- Coordinate the work environment;
- Undertake systems advocacy;
- Develop new networks;
- Implement OH&S policies and procedures.

Student learning process:

Students selected one of 4 industry projects

1 day per week at workplace doing "real" work

2 x ½ days formal learning at TAFE

Broad assessment relating to work project

Positive Findings:

- The experience of incorporating authentic learning as assessment tasks in a peer learning, industry based situation has great benefits to student learning
- Small group dynamic worked
- Student confidence and competence developed as result of "real" work experience

Negative findings:

- Too many teachers were involved in the support and assessment process resulting in difficulties in communication and inconsistency of messages received by students
- Assessment was confusing regarding required content

Lessons from findings:

- Importance of planning, consistency and communication with teachers and students around facilitation and assessments
- Importance of networking with industry
- Importance of surrendering a large level of control
- Importance of peer learning

Keys to success:

- Planning
- Flexibility
- Ability to not personalise difficulties
- Ability to surrender a large degree of power

Reference List:

- Figgis, J. (2008). *Regenerating the Australian landscape of professional VET practice: Practitioner-driven changes to teaching and learning*, Adelaide: Commonwealth of Australia. Retrieved April 17, 2009 from <http://www.ncver.edu.au/publications/2136.html>
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