New Pedagogical Models Facilitated by Technology: Insights from the UK Work-Based Learning & Sri Lankan Online Learning

Eng. Lalith Liyanage
Final year PhD student Northumbria University

Head of IT Lanka Logistics & Technologies Ltd Ministry of Defence Sri Lanka

MIT LINC 2013
Acknowledgement

My supervisory team:

1. Dr Rebecca Strachan – Associate Dean (Business and Engagement)
2. Dr Roger Penlington – Teaching Fellow
3. Ms Biddy Casselden – Senior Lecturer

from Faculty of Engineering & Environment, Northumbria University, Newcastle upon Tyne, UK
Agenda

1. Introduction (What is Work Based Learning?)
2. Approach/Methodology of Research
3. Case study of Northumbria University
4. Case study of Sri Lankan Online Learning Context
5. Research Findings as a Comparison
6. Original Contribution
7. Recommendations
Work Based Learning

Work Based Learning (WBL) is the term being used to describe the class of university programme that brings together universities and work organisations to create new learning opportunities in workplaces (Boud and Solomon 2001, 4).

WBL is seen as a means by which to support the personal and professional development of students who are already in work, and the focus of the learning and development tends to be on the student’s workplace activities (Brennan and Little 2006, 5).
Aim & Objective of Current Research

Aim –
• to develop recommendations/ a tool kit as a suggested way forward for work-based learning which takes account of needs of all stakeholders

Objectives –
• To identify factors affecting effectiveness of online learning for WBL programmes
• To find out existing challenges and constraints of implementing Online Learning for WBL programmes
Method/Approach

Sri Lankan Study
- Method: Case Study of 17 NODES online programmes
- Data: Online Questionnaire, Interviews
- Who?: Students, Academic staff, Consultants/Experts, Admin/Support staff

UK Study
- Method: Case Study of Northumbria University, UK
  - 4 x MSc & 1 x BSc
- Data: Online Questionnaire, Interviews
- Who?: Students, Academic staff, Admin/Support, Employers, Professional Bodies
WBL at Northumbria University

- One of the leading universities in the UK for WBL delivery
- WBL Framework
- Work Related Learning Services
- LTech – Central Multi-media support unit for online content
Online learning in Sri Lanka

- Distance Education (OUSL, External degrees)
- Web content offerings by some universities
- National Online Distance Education Service (NODES) programmes
1. Employment Status of UK students

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Students' weekly working hours</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0 - 10 hrs</td>
<td>47%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 - 20 hrs</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21 - 30 hrs</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31 - 40 hrs</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41 - 50 hrs</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Above 50</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1. Employment status of NODES students

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Employment Status</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Unemployed</td>
<td>10.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Full-time employed</td>
<td>44.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part-time employed</td>
<td>5.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-employed</td>
<td>40.3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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## 2. Use of ICT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Rank</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>UK</td>
<td>2010</td>
<td>4th</td>
<td>UK</td>
<td>2007</td>
<td>12th</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2012</td>
<td>3rd</td>
<td></td>
<td>2008</td>
<td>10th</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sri Lanka</td>
<td>2010</td>
<td>111th</td>
<td>Sri Lanka</td>
<td>2007</td>
<td>104th</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2012</td>
<td>115th</td>
<td></td>
<td>2008</td>
<td>105th</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### World Literacy Rates 2011

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Rank</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>UK</td>
<td>99.0</td>
<td>10th</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sri Lanka</td>
<td>94.2%</td>
<td>32nd</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2. Use of ICT - UK

"The learning materials could have been more interactive."
- Student

"University provides loads of training on Multi-media but I don’t have time."
- Tutor

"Technology should not drive pedagogy but pedagogy should drive technology"
- Tutor
“Quality of online content depends on strengths of inclusion of multimedia and interactivity. Most content on NODES are flat.” - Tutor

“Most materials violate online instructional principles and underutilize ICT facilities. Much for improvement.” - Reviewer
“Although discussion boards are helpful they cannot replace the classroom atmosphere.” - Student

“I feel isolated due to lack of online interactivity by other students” - Student

“I have only discussion boards because chats cannot be synchronised with everybody” - Tutor
3. Online collaboration-Sri Lanka

“Equitability is one of the key attractions of online learning where all students have the same opportunity to participate and earn marks regardless of whether they are shy or outspoken; have good or poor language skills; are male or female” – Tutor
4. Design of Assessment - UK

“Design of assessments is based on work-based so there is no room for plagiarism.” - Tutor

“Online students could send work done by someone else so we use Turnitin/VC/Skype/telephone to clarify.” - Tutor

“University used video conferencing in assessing my project so I had to demonstrate the project kind of a viva” - Student
4. Design of Assessment-Sri Lanka

“I do not use any online facilities for assessments, ... I mark in the train, at home, etc so I mark on the paper by pen! - Tutor

“Major exams & final thesis assessments should be F2F supervised. - Tutor

“Online activities should be given a reasonable weightage to encourage student interactions.” Consultant
5. Supporting WBL - UK

“We recommend WBL programmes for employers as a way of staff training and CPD activities.” - Professional Body

“The institutions no longer distinguish between F2F or WBL which has same degree of acceptance.” – Support Services

“Employees value investment company is making in them, which has been proven with our low staff turnover and high level of qualified individuals in the company” - Employer
5. Supporting Online learning – Sri Lanka

“Online learning is new to Sri Lanka, yet there is a lot of interest and potential. It is important that university system provides leadership, which is visible sparingly in Sri Lanka.” — Foreign consultant

“It is not only institution’s commitment, but also the Country’s and the Ministry’s.” — Programme Head

“Online degrees offered by dual mode universities should have same level of acceptance provided their quality is accredited” — Tutor

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Original Contribution
The current online course design, development and delivery model

Academic Environment including University

Central Management Team (Programme Leader as Project Manager)

Subject Expert → Instructional Designer → Technical Development Team → Academic Review Team → Learner Support Team (Tutor, Administrator)

Review

Feedback

ICT Network support, tutoring, mentoring

Learners
Suggested Framework

- Learner
- Academic Environment
- Workplace
- External Context

Work-based Learning
Recommended online course design, development and delivery model for WBL

Central Management Team (Programme Leader as Project Manager)

- Subject Expert
- Instructional Designer
- Technical Development Team
- Academic Review Team
- Learner Support Team (Tutors)

- Learners
  - ICT Network support, feedback
  - Accreditation
  - Professional membership upgrade
  - Employer Forums, funding opportunities, mutual marketing
  - External context including Professional Body

- Workplace including Employer and/or Mentor
  - Sponsorships, free study hours, encouragement, work related projects, new knowledge

- Inputs to study plan/curriculum

Academic Environment including University

Review
Conclusions

Quality
- Use of Technology in Learning
- Equality of Online Standards across the Board
- Quality of Online Content

Support
- Tailoring of Learning Contracts
- University Support
- Employer Support
- Professional Body Support

Access
- Use of Virtual Learning Environments (VLEs)
- Student Isolation
- Effectiveness of Delivery Mode
- Accreditation of Prior Learning (APL)
# Recommendations

## Student
- Recognise the importance of WBL
- Self-commitment, dedication and motivation
- Obtain prior commitment for support from employer
- Set up learning contract with employer/university
- Attend induction/pre-project sessions on campus if within reach
- Be proactive with university and peers
- Make full use of VLE
- Reflection on daily work
- Merge theory with practice
- Prior approval of Professional Body for learning contract

## University
- Consideration of staff WBL online time on time table
- Expand online content development technical support to faculties/programmes
- Technically improve access to university resources online
- Improve awareness of university facilities to WBL students
- Rigorous marketing of WBL programmes
- Explore possibility of resource sharing with other programmes & universities
- Preventive measures to avoid plagiarism
- Appreciate students’ online interactions
- Adopt blended learning if necessary
- Establish QA systems
- Define benchmarks of online interactivity/feedback to students for academics
- Development of quality online content
- Staff development
- Maintain academic standards similar to face-to-face context

## Workplace
- Recognise the importance of WBL
- Assess training needs
- Cost benefit analysis between WBL & industrial training
- Prepare learning contracts jointly with employee and university
- Assign a mentor for employee at work to advise, monitor etc
- Support financially, logistically & morally with bonding mechanisms to retain employees
- Establish a formal progress monitoring mechanism
- Maintain regular communications with university & Professional Bodies

## Prof body
- Recognise the importance of WBL
- Streamline approval & accreditation process for WBL
- Provide inputs to learning contracts early for assurance
- Maintain regular communications with university to maintain academic standards and with employers to identify skill gaps
- Establish frameworks to assess enrollments through APL scheme and tailored curricula
- Recognise the role of being the apex controlling body to maintain quality
Recommendations for Sri Lanka

For All stakeholders

✓ Authorities, Professional bodies & employers should be made aware of the importance of WBL

✓ Formulate new policies and / or strengthen existing policies

Institutions

✓ Institutions to provide technical support to academic staff to develop multimedia-rich content

✓ Use of VLEs to compensate for its distant disadvantage

✓ Quality assurance systems in place
Recommendations for Sri Lanka

**Government**

- Recognise the WBL model nationally such that all stakeholders could collaborate in initiating industry-oriented WBL programmes in Sri Lanka

- A strong commitment by the Government to recognize both F2F & WBL credentials being equivalent

- Develop Elementary IT literacy across the country with good bandwidth

- Rigorous marketing by all stakeholders to send the concept across
Thanks for listening
Any Questions
lalith@lltl.lk