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POLICY NAME	**Work-Integrated Learning Policy**	
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LEGEND	**Formerly known as the Experiential Learning and Practical Learning Policy**	
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RELATED POLICIES	**IIE001: Quality Assurance and Enhancement Policy** **IIE005: Qualification Design and Programme Review Policy** **IIE009: Assessment Strategy and Policy** **IIE010: Qualification Completion, Credit Accumulation and Transfer, Articulation and Recognition of Prior Learning Policy** **IIE015: Student Conduct and Discipline Policy** **IIE019: Community Engagement and Citizenship**	

[1] S20: 2009-06-30 Item 8.2 (whole policy review)
[2] S31: 2012-11-13 Item 8.4 (whole policy review)
[3] S42: 2016-08-25 Item 7.2.3 (whole policy review)
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[6] S61-2022-11-03 item 8.2.2
[7] S63:2023-09-07 item 8.2.2.1 (amendment to sec 12(1))
[8] S67: 2024-11-07 Item 8.2.1
[9] S68:2025 -04-16 Item 10.2.2 (whole policy review); IIE 006 Policy Annexures will reside in individual arrangements in module contents. WIL arrangements and documentation will reside in specific modules.

	Policy **IIE022: Teaching and Learning Strategy** **IIE026: Student Support and Professional Development Policy** **IIE029: Distance Education Policy** **IIE030: The IIE Internationalisation Policy** **IIE031: Governance Policy** **IIE032: Personal Information, Intellectual Property and Cyber Security Policy** **IIE033: Policy on the Integration of Artificial Intelligence Teaching and Learning Practices**
POLICY ANNEXURES	**Faculty and Discipline-Specific Visions**
RELATED PROCEDURES	**None**
RELATED DOCUMENTS FOR SCHOOL-BASED WORK INTEGRATED LEARNING	• **The Minimum Requirements for Teacher Education Qualifications (2015)** • **The Minimum Requirements for Programmes Leading to Qualifications in Higher Education for Early Childhood Development Educators (2017)** • **Specific institutional support documents**

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GLOSSARY AND ROLES

Experiential learning	Experiential learning is the process of gaining knowledge and skills through active engagement in real-world experiences, followed by reflection on these experiences. In essence, it is "learning by doing" and then understanding what was learned from that doing.
Graduate Attributes	Graduate attributes are the qualities, skills and understandings that the institution aims to develop in its students by the time that they graduate. These attributes go beyond qualification and discipline-specific knowledge and skills and encompass broader skills and personal qualities that prepare graduates for success in their careers and lives.
Graduate employability	Graduate employability refers to the extent to which graduates possess the knowledge, skills and attributes that make them attractive to employers in the labour market. In essence graduate employability relates to graduates' ability to secure and thrive in meaningful employment after completing their studies.
Higher Education Qualifications Sub-Framework (HEQSF)	The HEQSF is a sub-framework of the broader NQF, which encompasses all levels of education and training in South Africa. It is a policy instrument that standardizes and regulates higher education qualifications in South Africa, promoting quality and facilitating student mobility.
Industry	An industry is a group of businesses that produce similar goods or services. Tertiary education institutions have a vital role to play in providing skilled labour to various industries. Our institution collaborates with these external industries through partnerships, internships and research collaborations to ensure that our graduates possess the necessary skills for the workforce. External industries influence our institution by shaping curricula and research priorities to meet their evolving needs.
Initial Teacher Education (ITE)	Initial Teacher Education (ITE) is the formal education and practical preparation required to qualify as a teacher or earn an education qualification. This education encompasses both theoretical, conceptual and knowledge and practical experience, aligned with national standards.
Internship	An internship is a short-term work experience offered by an organization to provide students with practical skills and exposure to a specific industry.

Placement	A work placement is a structured period where students work within organizations to gain practical experience and apply their academic learning in a real-world setting.
Portfolio	A portfolio (of work) is a curated collection of students' best work samples, showcasing their skills, experience and accomplishments in a specific field.
Presentation	A presentation is a structured way to deliver information to an audience. The primary purpose of a presentation is to share ideas and arguments that relate to the development of work-readiness skills within the context of clear learning objectives and planned learning activities.
Project	A WIL project is a structured activity undertaken by students within a workplace or simulated environment. Projects have defined learning objectives, a specific scope, a limited timeframe and a structured approach to completing tasks.
Real-world	Real-world refers to situations, experiences and applications that are practical, authentic and relevant to everyday life or professional settings.
Report	A report is a structured document presenting information about the development of work-readiness skills in a clear and organized manner.
Simulation	A work-integrated learning (WIL) simulation is a controlled and realistic environment that replicates real-world workplace scenarios, allowing students to practice skills and apply knowledge without actual workplace risks.
Supervisor	A workplace supervisor is an individual within an organization who is responsible for overseeing and guiding the work of students within a specific work environment. Supervisors provide direction, support and feedback to ensure that tasks are completed effectively.
The IIE	The Independent Institute of Education.
WIL best practice	Effective work-integrated learning relies on a set of best practices that ensure quality and maximise benefits for all stakeholders. The over-arching best practices include providing structured and meaningful experiences for students; meaningful reflection and assessment; quality assurance (mechanisms for evaluating WIL programmes and ensuring continuous improvement); and effective supervision and mentoring.
WIL principle	WIL principles guide the design and implementation of effective work-integrated learning experiences. The over-arching WIL principles include purposeful integration (linking academic

	learning with relevant work experience); structured learning (providing clear learning outcomes, tasks and assessment); collaboration (fostering partnerships between the institution and industry); reflection (encouraging students to analyse and learn from their experiences); authenticity (simulating or engaging in genuine workplace tasks); and reciprocity (ensuring mutual benefit for students, the institution and employers).
Work-Integrated Learning **(WIL)**	Work-integrated Learning (WIL) is a pedagogical approach that strategically integrates classroom learning with real-world experiences. It is a structured and purposeful educational strategy designed to bridge the gap between theory and practice to prepare students for the future world of work. Consequently, WIL fosters deeper understanding and skills development. WIL is carefully designed to align with specific learning outcomes, defined tasks and opportunities for reflection. .
Workplace	A workplace is any location, physical or virtual, where individuals perform work-related activities.

1 INTRODUCTION

(1) Work-Integrated Learning (WIL) is a cornerstone of The Independent Institute of Education's (The IIE) commitment to developing work-ready graduates.

(2) This Policy:
   a) provides the overarching framework for all WIL activities, encompassing a range of approaches from simulated workplace experiences to real-world placements.
   b) articulates the core principles, definitions, requirements, and responsibilities associated with WIL, ensuring that these experiences are purposeful, organized, supervised, and assessed.
   c) aims to equip students with the essential skills and competencies needed to thrive in their chosen professions and contribute meaningfully to society, by bridging the gap between theory and practice.
   d) serves as a guide for all stakeholders involved in the WIL process, including curriculum designers, students, WIL coordinators, lecturers, and workplace mentors.

2 THE IIE'S GRADUATE ATTRIBUTES

(1) **Innovative Co-creators** who seek ethical and meaningful solutions and promote transformative knowledge that addresses challenges faced by individuals and society.

(2) **Holistic Thinkers** who adopt eco-systemic perspectives on global issues and local contexts and view challenges and solutions critically and comprehensively.

(3) **Intellectually Curious** individuals who are self-reflective with a tolerance for ambiguity and the intellectual curiosity to explore new ways of thinking, knowing, being and understanding.

(4) **Versatile Communicators** who can both collaborate effectively within a team and work independently, with well-developed negotiation and networking skills.

(5) **Advocates** who skillfully and mindfully challenge the status quo and champion meaningful solutions through principled leadership.

(6) **Engaged Citizens** who promote social cohesion, diversity, equity, and inclusion, leading with purpose, influence, and integrity within their respective spheres of influence.

(7) **Resilient Navigators** who approach learning, transformational and personal challenges with unwavering perseverance and a willingness to adapt.

(8) **Empowered Individuals** who are self-directed life-long learners who seek opportunities for growth and continually expand their knowledge and skills in pursuit of personal and professional success.

3 PURPOSE

(1) Work-integrated learning (WIL) recognises the critical importance of bridging the gap between theoretical learning and practical application in the workplace.

(2) WIL centres on strategically integrating meaningful work experiences into the curriculum to enhance student learning, develop essential professional skills, and improve graduate employability.

(3) It is a structured and intentional approach to connecting academic knowledge with real-world practice.

(4) It is essential that WIL opportunities protect the rights and safety of students, provide quality feedback from real-world contexts to students, and are effectively assessed by the institution.

(5) WIL provides students with the opportunity to apply their theoretical knowledge in a practical setting, deepening their understanding and reinforcing their learning. It makes learning more relevant and meaningful.

(6) It allows students to showcase their learning to future employers.

(7) WIL fosters stronger relationships between educational institutions and industry partners, leading to collaborative research opportunities, curriculum development and talent pipelines.

(8) WIL is not just a valuable addition to a student's education; it is a strategic priority that can transform the learning experience and improve graduate outcomes.

(9) Our institution can create a more relevant, engaging, and effective system that prepares students for success in the 21st-century workforce and contributes to economic growth and development. It is an investment in the future of both students and the community.

4 WIL PRINCIPLES

4.1 WIL as a Crucial Part of The IIE's Teaching and Learning Strategy

(1) Work-Integrated Learning (WIL) is central to The IIE's teaching strategy, integrating practical application throughout the curriculum.

(2) It prepares work-ready graduates by connecting classroom learning with real-world experiences, fostering essential skills and aligning with industry needs.

(3) WIL enhances learning, develops key graduate attributes, and ensures students are ready for professional success.

(4) WIL is included in qualifications and all modes of delivery. WIL is actioned equitably across the contact and distance modes of delivery.

4.2 WIL - Bridging Theory and Practice, Preparing Students for the World of Work

(1) WIL acts as a crucial bridge between the theoretical knowledge gained in academic settings and the practical skills required in the professional world.

(2) WIL is about learning through doing.

(3) By engaging in real-world experiences, students apply their classroom knowledge, develop essential workplace competencies, and gain valuable insights into their chosen field.

(4) This hands-on approach prepares them to seamlessly transition from academia to the demands and expectations of the working world, making them more competitive and successful in their working lives.

4.3 WIL Activities are Typically Credit-Bearing

(1) WIL activities are formally recognised as part of a student's academic programme.

(2) Successful completion of these activities earns students' credits that count towards their qualification.

(3) This emphasises that WIL is not just an optional extra, but an integral and assessed component of the learning experience and is essential for graduation.

4.4 WIL Promoting the Development of Critical Thinking, Problem-Solving, Teamwork, Communication, and Global Competencies

(1) WIL is not only about gaining practical experience. It is a powerful tool for developing essential skills that employers and communities highly value.

(2) WIL actively fosters critical thinking by challenging students to analyse complex situations and make informed decisions.

(3) It enhances problem-solving abilities by requiring students to identify and address real-world challenges.

(4) Teamwork and collaboration skills are honed through group projects and workplace interactions.

(5) Communication skills are refined as students learn to effectively convey ideas to diverse audiences.

(6) WIL cultivates global competencies by exposing students to different perspectives and intercultural interactions, preparing them to thrive in a globalised world.

(7) In summary, WIL provides a platform for students to practice and master these crucial skills, making them well-rounded and highly employable graduates.

4.5 WIL Outcomes Aligned with Qualification Exit-Level Outcomes

(1) The skills, knowledge, and abilities students are expected to demonstrate upon completing their qualification (exit-level outcomes) are directly linked to what they do in their Work-Integrated Learning (WIL) experiences.

(2) WIL is not a separate activity. It is designed to help students achieve specific qualification outcomes.

(3) The WIL activities provide opportunities for students to practice and demonstrate the competencies they need to graduate and be successful in their chosen field.

(4) This alignment ensures that WIL is relevant, purposeful and contributes directly to the overall value and credibility of the qualification.

4.6 Diverse Forms of WIL, Including but not Limited to, Simulations, Projects and Work Placements

(1) WIL is not a one-size-fits-all activity. It embraces a diverse range of approaches to suit different qualifications and learning objectives.

(2) Simulations provide a safe and controlled environment for students to practice applying their knowledge.

(3) Projects offer opportunities for in-depth exploration of real-world problems, often in collaboration with industry partners.

(4) Work placements immerse students in actual workplace settings, allowing them to gain firsthand experience and develop professional skills. Work placements are generally introduced later in the qualification after foundational skills are developed. The IIE assists with securing placements where required.

(5) By accommodating various forms, this WIL policy ensures flexibility and maximizes the effectiveness of WIL across different disciplines.

4.7 Assessment of WIL Includes Evaluating the Student's Actions, Tools Used, and the Final Product

(1) WIL assessment goes beyond simply judging the final output.

(2) It takes a holistic approach, evaluating how a student achieved that output. This means assessing the student's actions – their approach to the task, their problem-solving strategies, their work ethic, and their collaboration skills.

(3) Assessment also considers the tools they used – the resources, techniques, and technologies they employed.

(4) The final product itself, whether it is a report, a presentation, or a portfolio of work, is evaluated based on its quality, completeness, and demonstration of learning.

(5) This comprehensive assessment provides a more nuanced understanding of the student's performance and learning journey.

5 FACULTY-SPECIFIC PRINCIPLES AND PRACTICES

(1) Although the WIL approach is primarily informed by the specific qualification in which the WIL modules reside, the principles and best practices outlined below serve as a foundation to guide and inform the approach followed in each module.

5.1 Faculty of Commerce

(1) This Faculty focus relates to simulations and work placements.

(2) The specific WIL principles actioned by Commerce include:
   a) Ensure experiential learning opportunities mimic real-world business opportunities or challenges.
   b) Blend practical engagement with academic oversight to reinforce theoretical learning and reflective practice.
   c) Foster critical thinking, problem-solving, and innovation through structured learning experiences.

(3) The best practices implemented by Commerce include:
   a) Business Simulations: Develop and integrate technology-driven simulations (where appropriate) that mimic real market conditions and business challenges, allowing students to make strategic decisions in a risk-free environment.
   b) Simulated Projects: Construct simulated real-world scenarios that require students to apply learnings from curriculum to operationalise business activities or develop viable business solutions.
   c) Case studies: Integrate real-world business challenges and decision-making

scenarios to expose students to diverse industries, business models, and management practices.

d) Entrepreneurial Incubators: Facilitate student-run ventures under faculty and industry mentorship to enhance real-world business acumen.

e) Internships and Industry Placements: Establish strong partnerships with corporate entities to provide structured internships that align with learning outcomes.

f) Brand Challenge Projects: Participating in interdisciplinary teams, students collaborate with businesses and NGOs to develop measurable, innovative, and context-specific strategies related to the discipline of study.

5.2 Faculty of Education

(1) This Faculty focus relates to Work Integrated Learning experiences in Teacher Education.

(2) The specific WIL principles actioned by Education include:

a) Consolidate theoretical and content knowledge through praxis.

b) Develop professional teaching competencies through immersive experiences.

c) Ensure alignment and integration between content knowledge, pedagogical content knowledge and praxis.

d) Promote reflective practice and continuous professional development.

(3) The best practices implemented by Education include:

a) Structured Work Integrated Learning Experience placements: Partner with registered schools in the community to offer guided, phase-specific teaching experiences aligned with the requirements of MRTEQ.

b) Structured Work Integrated Learning Experiences at schools categorised across various quintiles for enhanced learning and teaching experiences and opportunities.

c) Pair Pre-service Teachers with trained and experienced mentors in structured Co-Teaching and Mentorship Programmes for guided apprenticeship opportunities.

d) Action Research Projects: Encourage students to evaluate teaching strategies and implement suggested actions in real classroom settings.

5.3 Faculty of Finance and Accounting

(1) This Faculty focus relates to applied financial analysis and auditing.

(2) The specific WIL principles actioned by Finance and Accounting include:

a) Integration of theoretical accounting and financial knowledge with practical application

b) Prioritise real-world financial problem-solving skills.

c) Foster analytical thinking and ethical decision-making in financial contexts.

d) Ensure WIL aligns with industry regulations and compliance requirements.

(3) The best practices implemented by Finance and Accounting include:

a) Corporate Finance and Auditing Internships: Partner with financial institutions and

auditing firms to provide hands-on experience in financial reporting and compliance.

b) Live Market Simulations: Use stock market simulators and trading platforms for experiential learning.

c) Corporate simulated experience designed to mirror real-world financial management and auditing processes.

d) Forensic Accounting Case Studies: Integrate real-world case studies of financial fraud investigations.

5.4 Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences

(1) This Faculty focus relates to brand challenges and industry collaborations.

(2) The specific WIL principles actioned by Humanities and Social Sciences include:

a) Ensure the application of social theories in real-world contexts.

b) Foster creativity, analytical skills, and interdisciplinary problem-solving.

c) Promote industry and community engagement in social impact projects.

(3) The best practices implemented by Humanities and Social Sciences include:

a) Brand Challenge Projects: Participating in interdisciplinary teams, students collaborate with businesses and NGOs to develop measurable, innovative, and context specific strategies.

b) Practicums: Where applicable, supported by the institution, students are required to participate in mandated practicums as per the guidelines outlined by the respective professional body

c) Simulations: Students operate within a carefully constructed simulated work environment in order to apply learnings from curriculum into a presentable portfolio of work.

5.5 Faculty of Information Communications Technology

(1) This Faculty focus relates to industry-linked projects and hackathons.

(2) The specific WIL principles actioned by ICT include:

a) Promote hands-on application of skills in disciplinary areas such as coding, software development, system and business analysis, network analysis and design, game design and development, and architectural technology.

b) Ensure the application of domain-specific knowledge in real-world contexts

c) Foster collaboration between academia and tech industries.

d) Promote the development of team-based approaches to develop solutions as members of project teams.

e) Encourage problem-solving through the development of solutions for real-world challenges.

(3) The best practices implemented by ICT include:

a) Capstone Projects with Industry Involvement: Participating in project teams, students collaborate with businesses or NGOs to develop IT solutions for industry-

specific problems.

b) Simulated Projects: Students operate within a carefully constructed simulated real-world scenario that requires them to apply learnings from the curriculum to develop viable solutions.
c) Hackathons and Coding Sprints: Organise intensive programming events where students work on real-time challenges.
d) Internships in Tech Firms and Startups: Provide exposure to software development cycles and emerging technologies.

5.6 Faculty of Law

(1) This Faculty focus relates to simulations, law clinics and community engagement.

(2) The specific WIL principles actioned by Law include:
a) Ensure experiential learning opportunities mimic real-world legal environments.
b) Blend practical engagement with academic oversight to reinforce theoretical learning and reflective practice.
c) Provide students with opportunities to engage in meaningful legal work that benefits communities.
d) Foster critical thinking, problem-solving, and innovation through real-life learning experiences.

(3) The best practices implemented by Law include:
a) Moot Courts, Mock Trials and other real-world scenarios: Provide simulated legal environments where students develop communication, client, advocacy and litigation skills.
b) Law Clinics: Require students to attend and participate in a mandatory number of hours at a law clinic affiliated to the brand at which they are studying to handle real cases under faculty supervision.
c) Pro Bono Work & Community Engagement: Require law students to contribute to social justice initiatives as part of their academic program.

5.7 Faculty of Engineering, Science and Health

5.7.1 Engineering

(1) This discipline focus relates to industry-based projects and practical training.

(2) The specific WIL principles actioned by Engineering include:
a) Develop technical competencies through hands-on application.
b) Foster innovation and problem-solving within real engineering challenges.
c) Align training with industry safety, sustainability, and efficiency standards.
d) Promote experiential learning through direct community engagement.

(3) The best practices implemented by Engineering include:
a) Co-Op Programmes with Industry: Facilitate long-term placements where students work on actual engineering projects under professional guidance.

b) Fabrication Labs and Prototyping: Provide access to facilities where students can design, build, and test prototypes.
c) Multidisciplinary Capstone Projects: Encourage collaboration with professionals on solving real-world engineering problems.
d) Community Engagement: Require engineering students to contribute to community-based projects.

5.7.2 Public Health

(1) This discipline focus relates to community-based internships and policy research.

(2) The specific WIL principles actioned by Public Health include:
a) Promote experiential learning through direct community engagement.
b) Align learning with public health policies and evidence-based practice.
c) Encourage interdisciplinary approaches to health challenges.

(3) The best practices implemented by Public Health include:
a) Internships in Healthcare and NGOs: Partner with healthcare institutions, government agencies, and community health organizations for hands-on learning.
b) Field-Based Research and Epidemiology Projects: Engage students in applied research to address public health concerns.
c) Public Health Policy Simulations: Allow students to analyse and develop health policies based on real-world data.

5.7.3 Water Management

(1) This discipline focus relates to sustainability-focused experiential learning.

(2) The specific WIL principles actioned by Water Management include:
a) Integrate environmental and sustainability considerations into learning.
b) Promote technical and policy-related problem-solving in water resource management.
c) Encourage collaboration with local and international water conservation initiatives.

(3) The best practices implemented by Water Management include:
a) Fieldwork and Ecosystem Health Assessments: Provide practical experience in analysing water quality and ecosystem health.
b) Industry Partnerships for Infrastructure Projects: Engage students in real-world projects involving water treatment, conservation, and management.
c) Policy and Advocacy Simulations: Encourage students to develop and present water sustainability policies in collaboration with industry experts.

6 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

There are several key stakeholders in WIL:

(1) The curriculum designer ensures WIL aligns with policy and any professional requirements, and that all relevant information is included in modules.

(2) The WIL Coordinator oversees WIL implementation on a campus or for a group of students.

(3) In some disciplines, an additional supervisor is necessary. This supervisor provides supervision during work placements or community initiatives.

(4) A lecturer guides, mentors, assesses and monitors students' WIL progress.

(5) The student is required to actively engage in WIL activities, attend sessions or work placements, meet deadlines, and complete assessments.