

Sport, recreation and event management practicum placements: An analysis of student and supervisor expectations and perceptions

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Structured practicum placements or Workplace Integrated Learning (WIL) are a long-standing and integrated component of many university programs. One of the challenges of facilitating appropriate and sustainable WIL experiences, however, is the complex and multi-faceted nature of the relationship between the university/program, student and host agency/supervisor. Of particular importance, is the management of expectations and perceptions between the stakeholders, and there is limited research in this area. This paper presents the findings from the first stage of a research project which used self-completed questionnaires to compare the expectations and perceptions of sport, recreation and event management students and their host agency supervisors on the role of student practicum placements, the role of the practicum placement agency, and the abilities of the students. Overall, there was considerable agreement between the stakeholders, particularly in relation to the valuable learning opportunities WIL provides, and on the attributes, skills and abilities students need to demonstrate while on their placement; but there were significant differences between the groups, as to whether the placement should be voluntary, paid and/or for university credit. Further, the expectations and perceptions students had about the role the agency should play in their future employment did not match up with those of the supervisors in these agencies. Importantly, these findings allow recommendations to be made to those who are involved in this important application of professional practice.

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Abstract Only

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