PRACTICAL LEARNING TESTIMONIALS

STUDENTS AND INDUSTRY

Faculty of Business, Economics and Law
La Trobe University’s Strategic Plan (World Ready in 2017) and the Faculty Operational Plan support the delivery of learning that engages students in the real world and allows them to link learning achieved at university with real world problems and challenges.
Professional accrediting and non-accrediting bodies also endorse the need for such learning as a way to better prepare students for the work force they will enter upon graduation. The Faculty offers a variety of practical learning opportunities to students designed to give them a competitive edge on the job market. These are classified as Work Integrated Learning (WIL) or Experience Based Learning opportunities (ExBL).

**WHAT IS WORK INTEGRATED LEARNING (WIL)?**

Work Integrated Learning is the integration of educational theory and workplace experience. Simply put, WIL is about placing students in a workplace in order to apply knowledge learned at university in a real workplace.

**WHAT IS EXPERIENCE BASED LEARNING (ExBL)?**

This type of learning allows students to explore theory based concepts in a way that is relevant to real industry problems.

However, experience based learning does not necessarily occur in the workplace. For example simulations, guest lecturing and field visits are scenarios that facilitate experience based learning without being in the workplace.

**STUDY AREAS**

The Faculty of Business, Economics and Law participates in a variety of WIL and ExBL elements.

- Accounting
- Business
- Economics
- Event Management
- Finance
- Human Resources Management
- Law
- Management
- Management Information Systems
- Marketing
- Sport Management
- Tourism and Hospitality Management
EXAMPLES OF WORK INTEGRATED LEARNING

PRACTICUM SUBJECTS
Practicum subjects involve students spending a defined amount of time within a workplace for educational purposes, i.e. students will be expected to complete assessment based on their experience in the workplace and will generally spend between 100–200 hours in the workplace. The Faculty offers a broad range of practicum options to students. Involvement in practicum subjects can be a cost effective method of delivering business solutions.

INDUSTRY PROJECT
An industry project will have a set timeline in which to complete a task. Ultimately, students will utilise skills around planning, organising and managing resources within a practical business setting, working on a project related to the discipline of study. Many organisations are able to introduce new projects and complete existing projects with the added student resource. Time spent on industry projects may vary and is as negotiated between student and host.

INTERNSHIPS
An internship enables a student to be placed in a workplace as a temporary and supervised employee, receiving on the job training within their chosen profession while still attending university. Internship structures vary and may be completed in block mode (5 days per week) over the period of a few weeks or 1–2 days per week over a few months. Depending on the workplace, internships may be paid or unpaid. Internships are a great way to introduce fresh ideas into the team and increasingly result in ongoing employment arrangements between students and industry partners. Students can also use internships to gain academic credit via practicum subjects. As mentioned above, depending on the practicum subject, the hours required are between 100–200.

SERVICE LEARNING
Service learning is a method of teaching that combines formal instruction with a related service in the community. This teaching method integrates meaningful community service with instruction and reflection to enrich the learning experience, teach civic responsibility, and strengthen communities.

Through service learning, university students use what they learn in the classroom to solve real-life problems. They not only learn the practical applications of their studies, they become actively contributing citizens and community members through the service they perform.

Service learning is becoming increasingly popular across Australian universities as it allows students to give back to their local communities whilst also meeting course placement requirements and providing personal and professional development.
EXAMPLES OF EXPERIENCE BASED LEARNING

INDUSTRY RELATED LEARNING
This refers to teaching practices which relate the learning experience of the students to the skills and knowledge of the relevant industry. Industry related learning can occur with or without direct contact with the industry. Examples of industry related experiences with industry contact include guest lectures. Examples of industry related learning without industry contact include the use of case studies.

MENTORING AND SHADOWING
Refers to a personal developmental relationship where a more experienced person in industry helps a less experienced person such as a student. Experience, skills and a desire to help are among the most valuable assets in a mentoring relationship rather than age or title. Mentoring in business organisations can be an informal or formal process. Shadowing is a common form of authentic learning utilised by the School of Law in the Judicial Mentoring Program.

GUEST LECTURES
Normally guest lectures are chosen because they are considered an expert in their field. The student learning experience will be enhanced because the guest lecturer brings added knowledge and a different perspective to the discipline, than what is taught during normal lecture or tutorial time. Guest lecturing is frequently implemented across a range of programs in the Faculty.

SIMULATION LEARNING
Simulations seek to copy a real life work place or work project in terms of its tasks and culture in a simulated exercise where students replicate real world operations and conduct themselves within that environment, only within the university learning environment. The Investment Research Challenge is an example of a simulation within the Finance discipline.

PROBLEM BASED LEARNING
With problem based learning, students may work in teams or as an individual. Thinking laterally and communicating with peers, this approach to learning teaches the students to work through problems together. The problems that are introduced to the students are generally problems they may encounter in the workplace.

STUDY TOURS AND FIELD VISITS
Study tours and field visits allow students to observe and ask questions of professional and industry practitioners in the workplace, i.e. this activity allows students to have an authentic learning experience that links theory with practice. It also provides a link between the student and the profession that often is not available in the class room. Study tours, particularly those conducted overseas allow for a block mode approach while field visits built into the curriculum take place over the period of a semester or more.
INDUSTRY BENEFITS OF WIL AND ExBL

Industry has been calling for university graduates to be more work ready for many years. By participating in WIL or ExBL activities, industry partners can take an active role in the development of well rounded graduates and suitable future employees.

Other benefits for employers include:
- Lifting company profile amongst a targeted student cohort – become an employer of choice
- Promoting employment opportunities to a targeted student cohort
- Recruiting pathway – opportunity to trial a potential employee without obligation
- Introducing new project tasks that have previously not been introduced due to staffing resources
- Providing existing staff with opportunity for professional development via mentoring a student
- Opportunity to bring fresh ideas into the team, offering a different perspective
- Developing pathways with La Trobe University, involvement in the development of university curriculum
- Developing a pool of future recruits
- Cost effective method of delivering project and business solutions
- Completing existing project tasks that have previously not been completed due to staffing resources.

CYNTIA BALOGH

National Program Manager, Women in Global Business (Austrade)
Marketing discipline

Having only started working with La Trobe University via the Marketing discipline in 2012, Austrade is a relatively new addition to the universities growing list of industry partners.

Cynthia Balogh of Austrade made the decision to participate in WIL as it provided her department with the opportunity to work with the higher education system and as a result, foster closer relationships between the business/government sector and the academic sector. Taking on a marketing student via the Marketing Practicum subject also provided a cost effective solution for Austrade to investigate projects.

When asked to comment on the benefits of participating in WIL from the organisations perspective, she says ‘It is advantageous to investigate issues from a more objective perspective, especially that of Generation Y and their unique take on marketing issues. It is also important from a social responsibility perspective and an investment in Australia’s future. Government supports developing workplace ready graduates’.

Cynthia believes the perspective of university graduates is of value to business and government and would recommend participation in WIL programs to other industry partners.
JARROD PATTERSON
Director of Human Resources
Australia/New Zealand (Henkel)

Human Resources discipline
Henkel has been involved in La Trobe University’s WIL program via the Human Resources practicum.

Jarrod Patterson, Director of Human Resources (Australia/New Zealand) believed the flexible work practicum timelines allowed the organisation to provide meaningful projects for the students which benefited both parties. He found the quality and professionalism of the students was also very pleasing.

While there are many employer benefits when participating in WIL, Jarrod commented on the value of an outsider’s perspective. ‘The benefit to Henkel was to be able to get an external and fresh set of eyes to review some HR projects that we had been working on. This provided us with a different angle on some key projects whilst also allowing an additional set of hands to get the projects delivered in our time frame.’

International students who meet subject requirements are also invited to apply for practicum programs. One of the participating students on this particular project was an international student who Henkel have been able to recommend to colleagues in the student’s country of origin.

Due to the flexibility in project selection and the quality of the students, Jarrod would recommend WIL to other industry partners.

DONNA MUSARELLA
Operations Manager Victoria
(AHS Hospitality)

Hospitality and Tourism disciplines
2012 was the first year that AHS Hospitality participated in the WIL program in partnership with La Trobe University. They undertook a program to have 70 students come through and gain hands on experience in the housekeeping field of hotels.

WIL allowed AHS to be able to show students the actual practical elements of the roles that staff undertake. Operations Manager Victoria, Donna Musarella comments ‘The students come with knowledge from what they have learnt in their tutorials and lectures which is beneficial in the processes’.

La Trobe University assisted with the rostering of the students, so staff at AHS knew exactly who was coming on particular days. Donna goes on to say ‘The students all turned up with enthusiasm and a willingness to undertake the roles assigned to gain more knowledge in this area’.

Participating in WIL also allowed the company to promote employment opportunities to the students.

Donna would recommend this program to others, and AHS will definitely continue the partnership with La Trobe in future years.

THE STUDENTS TURNED UP WITH A WILLINGNESS TO GAIN MORE KNOWLEDGE IN THIS AREA.
**KYM ORTENBURG**

**Founder (The Gertrude Traders Association)**

**Event Management discipline**

Kym Ortenburg, Founder of the Gertrude Traders Association had the opportunity recently to work with students from the Events Management discipline at La Trobe University. Students ran a fundraising event for the Gertrude Street Projection Festival, an annual event for the Traders Association.

Students worked in three committees for the Fundraiser event:
1. Finance, sponsorship and fundraising
2. Operations, legal and food and beverage
3. Marketing, staging and entertainment

Kym was encouraged to participate in WIL due to the fact that students already had formal lectures and teaching in the skills required to successfully plan and manage an event.

When asked to comment on the benefits of working with students via the WIL program, Kym commented ‘The Gertrude Street Projection Festival is committed to engaging young, enthusiastic committed volunteers. The WIL program acted as an incubator for training event planners and effectively solved the issue of who would plan and manage a fundraiser for community based art projections in the Gertrude Street Projection Festival. They came with fresh ideas and assisted our pool of over stretched volunteers’.

Kym found the students to be committed, skilled and enthusiastic. She would recommend involvement of other industry partners in the WIL program.

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**GAIL BAKER**

**Director of Studies (ALTEC)**

**Management discipline**

Although 2012 was the first year that Gail Baker became involved in the WIL program at La Trobe, she was well aware of the benefits of work placements having previously been involved in work experience placements for secondary students. Gail understands the value for both the workplace and the student so was very pleased for ALTEC to become associated with WIL.

To date, Gail has only worked with the Management discipline at La Trobe however, would be happy in the future to work with students from other disciplines and has already started to consider other project ideas.

Gail has worked in education for many years and understands and appreciates the importance of programs such as WIL. The organisation had a project in mind and the offer of a student to assist in working the project was perfect.

From Gail’s perspective, there are many benefits to organisations when they get involved in WIL programs. She says ‘Any organisation would benefit from participating in WIL with the introduction of fresh ideas, enthusiasm and talent as the students are really motivated and willing to participate. We had a project sitting waiting to be started and WIL was the impetus to get it started. Our student Jessica has grabbed the project and run with it... she has been an absolute delight with her positivity and ideas’.

The Director of Studies (ALTEC) would definitely recommend any industry partner to participate in WIL. She comments ‘It’s not only a great experience for students but the organisation also benefits enormously. We will be extremely pleased to take WIL students in future’.
**JIM HOY**

Senior Manager, Commercial Services (VACC)

**Marketing discipline**

Victorian Automobile Chamber of Commerce, (VACC) embraced the La Trobe University Practicum initiative in 2012 says Jim Hoy, Senior Manager, Commercial Services.

With today’s changing marketplace and media landscape, VACC viewed the Practicum as an excellent opportunity to gain fresh insights and ideas from final year students.

VACC’s project this year was marketing based. The organisation had a team of two students who were briefed on a project. This team attended VACC’s office one day a week for a number of weeks during the semester period of late July to early October. Showing initiative, the team worked independently on their project. They worked together to problem-solve, identify business risks and expose marketing opportunities.

At the completion of the project, VACC was provided with a copy of the team’s report. Jim commented that the report ‘highlighted some very interesting points that VACC will consider as it moves into the practical implementation stage of the new business initiative’. An encouraging outcome for the students involved in the project.

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**OLIVIER DAVID**

Event Organiser and Committee Member (Salami Festa)

**Event Management discipline**

The inaugural Salami Festa was run for the first time in Melbourne in 2012. The event proved to be a huge success with the event attracting more than four times the amount of estimated attendees.

Event organisers received assistance on the day from an enthusiastic group of Event Management students who were enrolled in the Sustainable Community Events subject. One of the student projects was to attend and critique an existing event. Event organiser Olivier was encouraged to participate in the WIL program after meeting with the group of students who were very enthusiastic about being involved in the event.

Olivier felt the involvement of students was beneficial and their contribution both on the day and after the event (via a report outlining recommendations for the event in future years) was very valuable. He says ‘As it was the first time the event was held, it was a good chance to get some feedback on how it was run and recommendations for future years’.

The event organiser would not hesitate to recommend involvement in WIL to other industry partners; ‘It was a very successful partnership for us and I am sure it would be for other industries’.
Maxwell Gratton
Operations Manager, Special Projects and Discipline (Football Federation Victoria)

Sport Management discipline
The Football Federation Victoria (FFV) has offered student placement opportunities for many years and have worked with a range of universities. In 2012 the organisation took on two students from La Trobe University as interns, one of whom extended his internship to an official WIL placement.

Being a State Sporting Association, the FFV has mainly had contact with students in Business (Sport Management) and Exercise Science and Human Movement.

Maxwell Gratton, Operations Manager (Special Projects and Discipline) has found work placement students are self motivated and eager to learn about current business practices in sport. Having these students join an already dedicated team proves to be beneficial to all involved. They receive on the job training in a variety of areas, such as professional writing and administration to reviewing policies and assisting in alternative dispute resolution.

Maxwell believes that the FFV benefits from having a fresh set of eyes. The organisation encourages placement students to offer feedback or seek clarification on any matters that may interest them.

He goes on to say ‘having the benefit of students who possess a current knowledge of the Australian sporting context through their own research, education and participation in sport, cannot be underestimated. Those who have an understanding about recent trends in sport as well as the qualitative and quantitative data to reinforce their understandings prove to be especially helpful’.

Maxwell enjoys assisting in the learning process of undergraduate students and stays in contact with those who have completed placements with FFV. Participating in WIL also gives employees in non-managerial roles an opportunity to guide and assist others as a foundation for their own future management ambitions.

The FFV has benefited from the inexpensive expertise of students on placement as well as an opportunity to review work place standards and practices in light of the needs of a new generation of potential employees.
STUDENT BENEFITS OF WIL AND ExBL

Feedback from industry indicates that graduates with exposure to industry via WIL or ExBL practices are more aware of workplace culture and expectations. Not only does involvement in WIL and experience based learning make students more employable, it also helps them to make decisions about future career options.

It is a proven fact – just getting a degree is not enough anymore, employers want people who can add value to their organisations. WIL provides the opportunity for students to differentiate themselves and to demonstrate the potential value they can add to a prospective employer’s organisation.

Other benefits for students include:

- Expanding industry networks
- Increasing chances of finding employment quickly after graduation
- Depending on the industry, securing a part-time or casual job to complement studies, e.g. Hospitality and Tourism students who complete placement as part of their studies may be offered ongoing casual work with their host organisation
- Developing soft skills such as interpersonal writing and communication, team work, leadership and time management
- Developing professional skills in a chosen field under the guidance of a mentor
- Personal development – build confidence through working with a range of people from varying levels of seniority
- Enhancing resumes, developing portfolio
- Evidencing the practical application of the theory learnt during course
- Gaining clarity about future career direction, i.e. students who are exposed to industry practice either via experience based learning often find their chosen industries are different to expectations
- The opportunity to work on ‘real’ industry standard projects.

JUST GETTING A DEGREE IS NOT ENOUGH ANYMORE, EMPLOYERS WANT PEOPLE WHO CAN ADD VALUE TO THEIR ORGANISATIONS.
Daniel Thomas Evans

Bachelor of Business (Sport Management)

Daniel Evans studied the Bachelor of Business (Sport Management) at La Trobe University.

One of the things he most enjoyed about his time at La Trobe was the industry placement. Daniel says ‘One of the best things is the placement of a student within an organisation as a subject. Students gain valuable experience and learn the skills and attributes needed to be successful in a full time job’.

Daniel was lucky enough to secure a placement at AFL Victoria through the subject Sports Practicum. This placement gave him an excellent hands on approach and introduced him to the dynamics of the sporting industry at the community level. It also provided a fantastic insight as to how a national sporting organisation such as the AFL operates. Daniel also participated in the 2012 Ride to Conquer Cancer as part of another subject called Volunteer Management. He found the opportunity to work as a volunteer very rewarding.

Daniel found the practical learning opportunities provided by La Trobe better helped to understand the course theory. He states ‘My placement at AFL Victoria was imperative. You learn skills and develop key attributes in the workplace that you wouldn’t necessarily gain in the classroom. You gain hands on experience during placement that allows you to put the theory into action in nearly all the activities that you do. The skills that you learn are vital in assisting graduates to gain employment once they finish their studies’.

In the process of looking for full time work, Daniel hopes to gain either part-time or full-time work in the sporting industry or a sporting club to continue to develop key skills so that when he does finish his degree, he can apply for jobs with confidence due to the experience behind him.

When asked if his WIL experience will assist with securing future employment, Daniel says ‘Absolutely. The experiences that you gain from placement at an organisation are unrivalled’. He felt the experience provided a fantastic opportunity to network and potentially source his first graduate job in the industry.

Daniel would recommend involvement in WIL to all other students at La Trobe. ‘It is hands on, real workplace experience that you cannot get in the classroom. There are deadlines to meet and specific times that placement starts. It’s a real job.’

The most positive aspect for Daniel was the fact that he had the chance to gain placement in a sport and certain area (community football) that he is passionate about. The ability to work in the development sector with a particular focus on community sport was a highlight. Other positive aspects included the variety of activities undertaken while also learning about the administrative side of how AFL Victoria operates.

In five years’ time Daniel hopes to be in a managers role in the game development sector of a national sporting organisation. He believes that his experiences through placement and other roles to date will assist him in finding employment soon after graduating.

Walking to the MCG, Melbourne
Grigoria Kritsotelis

Bachelor of Business (Marketing)

Grigoria compliments La Trobe University for the learning environment it provides to students. She says ‘There is a friendly atmosphere at La Trobe; when you are grabbing a coffee at any of the Agora cafés you may happen to run into a lecturer who will have a quick chat with you’. The environment along with the many and diverse opportunities offered at La Trobe are Grigoria’s most enjoyable experiences. She likes to get involved with the La Trobe community and enjoys the availability of any support services she may need.

Recently involved in the Marketing Practicum, Grigoria was paired with a fellow student and they were allocated to a company. The pair was required to complete a research assignment about a marketing and promotional plan which the company will hopefully implement at the completion of the project.

‘This experience has been unlike any other that I have experienced at La Trobe University... throughout my university journey I have found that the theoretical element of the course has been abundant and dense however, I have felt that although competent in theories I have been unable to apply them to any industry related experiences. This was until I applied to take part in the Marketing Practicum’. She goes on to say ‘the amount we have learnt has been a defining element in understanding the theories we are applying’.

Furthermore, Grigoria feels that many of her key competencies will be derived from her WIL experience and will be fundamental in assisting her to secure future employment. She views the industry experience as a point of differentiation from many other marketing graduates and feels it may be the defining element for an employer.

Grigoria would recommend this experience to those who are interested in the well-being of their future and who want to gain as much as possible from their degree as they can. She believes however, that placement is not for the faint hearted and says ‘this learning experience is for the conscientious student who has the will to learn and to work hard in order to achieve his/her goals’.

The most positive aspect of Grigoria’s WIL experience was the ability to make crucial decisions for a company that may impact the success of the team’s recommendations (if implemented) in the future.

The ‘real’ nature of the project made every minute of research, reading, analysing and reporting worthwhile.

Grigoria currently owns her own jewellery business and would love to continue growing her business. She feels that the best way to enhance the business is to have experience working for a company in the marketing department. She plans to gain at least 3–5 years industry experience so that she can learn the business environment well enough to apply some of that knowledge to her own business. In saying that, if an opportunity arises that sends Grigoria on a different path she is willing and open to that possibility also!
SALLY HILLER

Bachelor of Business (Event Management)

Sally has enjoyed many aspects of her time at La Trobe University; the friends she met along the way, the subject variety and quality, and the supportive and knowledgeable staff.

Within her time at La Trobe, Sally was provided with many practical learning opportunities as part of her studies including field visits, guest lectures and a substantial industry project within the Event Planning subject where students were required to design, implement and evaluate a new community event for a local council.

Sally believes this style of learning assisted her to better understand the course theory. She states ‘This format encourages you to really consider the theory and how to apply it and also offers a safe place to make mistakes and learn from them. Being able to apply theories and concepts to real life situations provides a practical learning experience that cements the learning’.

After finishing her course, Sally worked as the events coordinator/administrator at Leadership Victoria. Sally feels her WIL experiences did assist her in securing her job. ‘In the job interview I was able to talk about the events experience that I’d gained and the success of that. It also gave me experience in leading a project team and offered a real insight into the project management process. These are key skills in the industry that I was able to discuss and demonstrate because of my WIL experience’ she says.

Given the emphasis industry places on students having practical experience prior to entering the workforce and how difficult this can be for many students to obtain, Sally would encourage all students to pursue WIL opportunities to give them a head start in their careers.

The most positive aspect of Sally’s WIL experience was staging a fundraising event for a local Traders Association where the Festival Director praised the event as being the best fundraiser they’d ever had.

In five years time Sally hopes to be an Events Manager.
**STEPHANIE GASCON**

**Exchange Student**

An exchange student from Mexico, Stephanie is enrolled in International Business subjects at La Trobe University. She enjoys the multicultural diversity and likes to learn from other students who come from all around the world.

As part of her study experience, Stephanie enrolled in the Human Resources Practicum where she completed placement with an international company named Henkel that produces cosmetics, adhesives and laundry products. She worked on a project in the HR department and helped the managers within this area to propose solutions to improve the existing processes within the department.

Stephanie felt the Practicum helped her to apply the knowledge learnt in university, as well as gaining more experience and learning new practical skills that can’t be learnt in a classroom.

The practical experience gained while on placement at Henkel will give Stephanie additional items to include in her résumé. She believes this will make it ‘easier to find a good job, due to all the qualifications and experiences I had during the program and during my academic life’.

Stephanie strongly recommends other students to undertake WIL if the opportunity arises due to all the experience acquired in a completely different environment by working with professionals. She rightly states ‘besides that, nowadays there is a lot of competition within the labor market’.

In five years Stephanie hopes to be a trading department manager of an international company so she can travel to many countries doing business with other international companies.
NATASHA RUS

Bachelor of Business (Marketing)

Natasha has undertaken the Marketing Practicum as part of her enrolment in the Bachelor of Business (Marketing). She feels that participating in the subject provided the opportunity to put a lot of her course theory into practice and better understand how elements of the theory taught can be turned into useful tools for a project in real life.

Natasha believes that her placement will definitely give her the competitive advantage required by graduates to secure their first job. She says ‘The workforce is super competitive and graduates need to stand out from the pack; in doing practicum I feel this will define me further as a plausible member of a new team or company. Having done the practicum, I can now say I have experience in the field as a junior consultant and that is an invaluable achievement to have listed on any CV’.

After undertaking the practicum, Natasha would strongly recommend other students take on placement if given the chance. She feels that gaining experience in the field is a beneficial opportunity, particularly when you have the support of La Trobe and the practicum staff to assist you along the way. Realistically, Natasha felt the work load was increased and the tasks were more difficult than a normal subject however, the benefits received from such a program far surpassed all this. She says ‘Graduate students who have completed Work Integrated Learning will have the upper hand in the long run’.

Natasha worked closely with her mentor and put forward ideas that were welcomed and explored further. She goes on to say ‘This has been a gratifying experience that has made me believe in myself and that I can actually put the theory I have learnt to good use’.

In five years time Natasha would like to be completing her fifth year at Leo Burnett (a famous advertising agency), with a promotion under her belt!

Student in the workplace

THIS HAS BEEN A GRATIFYING EXPERIENCE THAT HAS MADE ME BELIEVE IN MYSELF AND THAT I CAN ACTUALLY PUT THE THEORY I HAVE LEARNT TO GOOD USE.
**SAGA TORTELA**

**Bachelor of Business**  
(Entry Management/Marketing)

Saga enjoys the large variety of activities and opportunities that La Trobe offers. Through the Food and Beverage subject, Saga had the opportunity to gain work experience by working at Sofitel on Collins where she managed to get employment in the conference and events department. She is still working there on a casual basis alongside her studies.

Working in the industry has definitely assisted Saga to link theory with practice. She says ‘I find that working within conference and events operations has helped me better understand the course theory as my work relates to event management and I get to participate in setting up and for a wide range of events and get to see different aspects of what is involved in preparing for an event’.

Saga credits the WIL experience provided to her via her studies to be responsible for securing ongoing casual employment with luxury hotel brand The Sofitel. Furthermore, she is really enjoying her time working within the Sofitel events department so it is likely she will stay at Sofitel throughout her degree. She is provided with flexibility and shifts that work around her studies and visa restrictions.

Of the opportunity to undertake WIL she says ‘I would truly recommend it... I considered the WIL experience at Sofitel as another great opportunity for me to gain insight in other aspects of hospitality and the more you get out there and see and experience things, the more you prepare yourself for your career after university so it’s very beneficial’.

The course Saga is undertaking (Bachelor of Business (Marketing/Event Management) provides a broad range of possible career outcomes. She is not sure exactly where she’ll end up working but is looking forward to a fulfilling career in either the events or marketing fields.

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**Food and Beverage studies**

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**THE MORE YOU GET OUT THERE AND EXPERIENCE THINGS, THE MORE YOU CAN PREPARE YOURSELF FOR YOUR CAREER AFTER UNIVERSITY.**
Practical Learning

STUDENT TESTIMONIALS

TOM FRANCAVILLA

Bachelor of Business (Sport Management)

One of the things Tom most enjoyed about his time at La Trobe University was the opportunity to gain practical experience outside the classroom with AFL Victoria. The experience provided him with insight into how a large organisation operates and motivated him to potentially gain employment after his studies (with AFL Victoria).

Tom participated in practical learning opportunities in his course via the Sport Volunteer Management and Sport Practicum Subjects. He states ‘Without experiences such as these, most of the theory we have been learning through the years would be meaningless. This has given me a great opportunity to actually use the theoretical knowledge I have gained in a practical setting’.

Tom has no doubt that his placement experience with AFL Victoria will assist his future career endeavors. Aside from being a great addition on Tom’s résumé, it has also provided him with the opportunity to develop experience with processes and tasks that he normally wouldn’t have had the chance to undertake.

Having had such a positive placement experience, it’s hardly surprising that Tom would highly recommend the opportunity to other students. He goes on to say ‘Apart from the fact it gets you out of the classroom and actually into a workplace, it provides a great insight into the industry that you will eventually end up in. You can only learn so much from the classroom before you need to step out and trial yourself in a practical setting’.

Undertaking placement has also allowed Tom to develop his industry networks. He has had the opportunity to attend many industry events and has met lots of new people which will no doubt prove to be useful in his future job efforts.

After his experience of working with the community via his placement with AFL Victoria, Tom hopes to continue to work with the sporting industry and the community at a grass roots level. A development or inclusion role would be perfect as he enjoys working with young people.

IT GETS YOU OUT OF THE CLASSROOM AND ACTUALLY INTO A WORKPLACE, IT PROVIDES A GREAT INSIGHT INTO THE INDUSTRY.

Etihad Stadium, Melbourne
SHELLY GRAVIEL

Bachelor of Business (Event Management/Marketing)

Shelly praises La Trobe staff for their involvement in helping students to achieve their potential and obtain work experience. Through her studies, Shelly had a leadership role in planning and implementing a new community event for local council and then undertook an internship with the Smith Family.

Shelly says of her WIL experience, ‘These activities helped me to better understand industry expectations and allowed me to work on abilities and aspects that I need to develop further in order to succeed in the future. The course also allowed me to narrow down the sector of work I would prefer to work within’.

Shelly feels that her WIL experience will assist her in securing future employment as she now possess industry relevant skills and practical experience. She feels the hands on experience will attract future employers and assist students to clarify their interest in working in their discipline area in the future.

Shelly aims to work for a well established and successful event management firm in the future. Eventually she would like to be her own boss and have her own Event management firm.

THESE ACTIVITIES HELPED ME TO BETTER UNDERSTAND INDUSTRY EXPECTATIONS AND ALLOWED ME TO WORK ON ABILITIES AND ASPECTS THAT I NEED TO DEVELOP FURTHER.
Program bookings and enquiries

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