Extensibility – validation of Higher Education learning in employment
Examples and considerations

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Learning Happens

- Intentional and unintentional
- Workplace as a valid centre for learning
- Experiential learning – prior learning
- Planned – work-based learning
- Context sensitive pathways
- Partnership approaches
- Mobility of learning and learner

The following examples are concerned with the assessment and validation of learning gained in workplace settings in the context of Higher Education Awards.
Tripartite Learning Arrangements

Responsive learning pathways

Dynamic Environment

Learner

Employer

Provider

Capacity and Capability

Social and Economic Climate
Circular Relationship

- Design
- Learning Achievement
- Assessment / Validation
- Credit / Award
- Reflection / Redesign
- Learning Outcomes
Learning Pathways

Understand the learner

Recognition of
Prior learning, Skills, Knowledge, Competence

Identify the destination

Depends on changing business model, regulation …

Agree the learning pathway

Incorporate subject matter experts, work-based learning …
Some Examples

- Workplacement in Third Level Programmes
- Partnership with the Irish Naval Service
- Cloud Computing programme
- Postgraduate Certificate in Professional Practice
Workplacement in Third Level Courses

- Learner facilitated within Host organisation
  - Key part of most undergraduate courses
  - Contributes to employability and transferable skills
  - Supports developing relationships with employers
- From an informal to a formal arrangement with agreed learning outcomes, planned assessment and validation and credit-earning
- Of increasing importance at postgraduate level and within Structured Doctoral Education
Irish Naval Service

- Mission: ‘To be the most professional Naval Service in the world by 2016’
How The BSc In Nautical Science works

- Integrated 4 industry specific modules for employees which were completed and supported whilst at sea and assessed by the workplace due to the content of the modules
  - Naval command
  - Leadership and Management
  - Strategic Studies
  - Ocean Governance

- Content of the modules is related to material they are required to know in their day to day activities in the workplace

- Subject to the Academic Quality and procedures of CIT

- Led to further collaboration in terms of Masters and PhD studies
EMC – a long time partner of CIT

Business Model Evolution

- 1987 - 100% Manufacturing, Headcount ≈ 20, Sq ft: 20k
- 1997 - 91% Manufacturing, Headcount ≈ 500, Sq ft: 200k
- 2011 - 37% Manufacturing, Headcount ≈ 2000, Sq ft: 600k

New Directions - New Challenges - New Learning
Cloud Programme Development

1. Learning need
2. Learning in contexts
3. Subject Matter Experts
4. Partnership in delivery
5. Course Development

Partnerships include:
- EMC²
- Microsoft
- VMware
- Cisco
- Brocade
- RSA
- Greenplum
- Source
- Spring
Postgraduate Certificate in Professional Practice

- Developed in collaboration with American Chambers Ireland and the Higher Education Authority
- Responding to the need for experienced as well as qualified workforce
- Designed as work-based learning
- 30 Credits at Masters level
Structure

- Personal Development and Employability
- Organisational Context
- Specialist Module

- Identifying and recording learning and learning events
- Collating and presenting evidence of learning
- Interrogating the events in the context of the LOs
- Reflecting on the learning and the practitioner context
Where to learn? How to assess?

- Contribute to an ethical and professional work culture
- Demonstrate expert use of tools and materials in their chosen medium
- Formulate and solve problems in abstract algebra
- Perform, under supervision, the duties of the Officer of the Watch
- Design a formative assessment strategy for a module that the learner is currently delivering
- Analyze a real world problem and develop a cloud/LAMP based software solution
- Classify atomic and sub-atomic particles and the interactions between them
- Contribute to the preparation and delivery of a team presentation of a project
- Design recursive and non-recursive digital filters
- Explain and apply the concept of Pareto optimality
Considerations

- Significant challenges for HE in planning for the co-creation of knowledge with enterprise/workplace partners
- Work-based learning as a disruptive force in education
- Implications for the design and assessment of learning outcomes

- Does it matter where the learning was acquired?
- Do all parties, student, employer and provider, have confidence in the learning attainment?
- What are the progression pathways?
Conclusions

- Coherent, credible and reliable inclusion of experiential and work-based learning into higher education award pathways
- Confidence in the learning outcomes regardless of the learning setting
- Assessment instruments and methods for ‘non-classroom’ learning
- Importance of the partnerships with employers in providing the context for the learning
Thank you: Any Questions?

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