Developing a Standard for Competence-Based Workplace Learning Programs

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Current Credentialing Standards

• There are currently two standards that serve to guide the development of quality certification and certificate programs:

➢ ASTM 2659:18 - Standard Practice for Certificate Programs

➢ ISO/IEC 17024:12 - Conformity assessment - General requirements for bodies operating certification of persons
Workplace Learning

• Workplace learning is extensively used by many corporations and organizations that lead to in-demand employment opportunities
  ➢ But, there is a lack of standardization among workplace learning programs, which affects the quality of the learning outcomes

• Labor shortages demand more credentialing pathways to quality jobs that are industry validated
  ➢ When workplace learning programs are competency-based and founded on appropriate learning theories, it becomes a fast and efficient pathway to a relevant and productive job
No matter the program, standardization is key to quality.
Utilization Advantages: Industry and Government

- Reskilling and Upskilling
  - Strengthens employee retention, motivation, leadership, and supervisory skills. Employer support of structured employee career path and growth opportunities increases efficiency and reduces mid-level onboarding replacement costs while supporting industry or government program goals.

- Skilled Workforce Pipeline
  - Ability to create personalized learning programs tailored to the learner while emphasizing the skills required provides a steady pipeline of highly skilled talent meeting specific industry or government needs.

- Community Investment
  - Ability to build and implement programs in any location to serve industry or government demand. Focus on increasing profitability and productivity, community and local economic investment. Resulting in a reduction of under-employed or unemployed individuals in the community as a pipeline of skilled local workers are trained and employed.
Academia Perspective

• Post-Secondary Outcomes
• Imbedding credentials into degrees
• Increased program outcomes
• Experiential learning
• Credit v Noncredit

➤ Workforce Development (reskilling and upskilling workers)
➤ Non-traditional talent pipelines

• Prisoner Re-entry Population
• Immigrants
• Seniors
The Research Base for Integrating Learning and Work
Student interest in internships remains high, but participation has not increased over the past decade.


Students who have had paid internships or jobs related to their field of study feel more confident and knowledgeable about career opportunities.

Source: Strada-College Pulse Survey (December 2021), n=3,542.
Predicted boost in one-year post-graduation earnings associated with having a paid internship, controlling for gender, race/ethnicity, and field of study.

Participation in paid internships varies widely by major

Participation in Paid Internship During Undergraduate Education

- Engineering and engineering technology: 56%
- Computer and information sciences: 41%
- Business: 39%
- Biological and physical science, science...: 33%
- Other applied: 28%
- Humanities: 23%
- Social sciences: 22%
- Health care fields: 14%
- General studies and other: 10%
- Education: 10%

After controlling for field of study, access gaps remain

Less likely to have had a paid internship:

- **Women**
  -2 percentage points

- **Latino students**
  -8 percentage points

- **Black Students**
  -13 percentage points

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First-generation seniors are more likely to work over 20 hours a week and less likely to complete an internship.

- **First Generation**: 50% worked 21+ hours per week, 35% held an internship.
- **Continuing Generation**: 33% worked 21+ hours per week, 49% held an internship.

**SOURCE**: 2021 NSSE Career & Workforce Preparation Module

**NOTES**: Base = 55,277 participants at U.S. institutions, n=29,893 seniors. Responses represent seniors only. First-generation defined as neither parent having a bachelor’s degree. *Regardless of work status.
Undergraduates report participating in many types of work-based learning

- Project-based learning: 53% (Four-year Institution: 34%, Two-year Institution: 37%)
- Internship: 34% (Four-year Institution: 16%, Two-year Institution: 13%)
- Undergraduate research: 34% (Four-year Institution: 21%, Two-year Institution: 19%)
- Service learning: 10% (Four-year Institution: 9%, Two-year Institution: 10%)
- Practicum: 5% (Four-year Institution: 6%, Two-year Institution: 4%)
- Apprenticeship: 10% (Four-year Institution: 9%, Two-year Institution: 6%)
- Co-op: 4% (Four-year Institution: 6%, Two-year Institution: 4%)

*micro-internships

Source: National Survey of College Internships, 2022, designed by University of Wisconsin Center for Research on College Workforce Transitions and Strada Education Foundation, administered by College Pulse. Four-year n=2,824, two-year n=2,531.
Emerging Work-Based Learning Models

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<th>Employer - Worker Context</th>
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<td>Co-ops</td>
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<td>Project-based learning</td>
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<td>Micro-internships</td>
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Career Launch / Relaunch

Career Exploration
A Mixed Evidence Base

**Harvard’s College-to-Jobs Matrix**

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<th>Research Strength</th>
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<td>Industry-recognized credentials</td>
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<td>Last-mile bootcamps</td>
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<td>Internships</td>
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<td>Job shadowing</td>
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<td>Subsidized youth employment programs</td>
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Future Directions for Research

1. Practices that drive skills, confidence, connections

2. Quality and impact of new models of work-based learning

3. Deconstructing barriers to access

4. Employer perspectives on work-based learning

5. Others?

Learn more at StradaInsights.org
Standard Practice for Competency-based Workplace Learning Programs
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The soon-to-be-published standard will include:

✓ Scope
✓ Terminology
✓ Significance and Use
✓ Organization Structure and Administration
✓ Personnel
✓ Financial and Other Resources
✓ Public Information and Communications
✓ Information Security, Confidentiality, and Access
✓ Outsourcing
✓ Complaints
✓ Appeals
✓ Management System
✓ Scheme and Program
✓ Program Design
✓ Program Development
✓ Program Implementation
✓ Program Evaluation
✓ Credential Issuance and Use
Questions?
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