The placement programme

• Applicable for students for the Bachelor of Applied Management & Graduate Diploma
• Last semester of study
• Work placements throughout the Waikato
• A relevant research project
• Students meet their academic supervisor weekly

What
• Obtain feedback from employers hosting students for the Cooperative Education Project

Why
• Important to understand in employers' eyes how our students were doing

When
• Students on placement for Semester 2, 2015
• Data available in 2016
What we asked

• Organisational Skills
  – Planning/Problem Solving/Creative Thinking/
    Critical Thinking/Time Management

• Technical Skills
  – Knowledge of practice/Accuracy/
    Speed of performance/Adherence to directions provided

• Interpersonal Skills
  – Communication/Co-operation/
    Initiative/Assertiveness/Motivation/Reliability/Punctuality

How

• Questionnaires to 56 employers who
  hosted our students in their final year of
  the two programmes
  – Bachelor of Applied Management(14)
  – Graduate Diploma in Business(42)
    • Primarily English as a second language
    – closed and open-ended questions

Limitations of the survey

• No chance to further clarify with employers
  on their feedback
• Not all employers filled in all the sections
  and in particular the qualitative sections
• Possible confusion with the wording and
  interpretation of the questions
• The survey is looking at perceptions from
  an employers viewpoint.
  – “Are they happy” is not an absolute science
Organisational Skills by Programme

- “Employers: Are they happy?”

- Planning
  - Overall the students met or exceeded expectations, but the Graduate Diploma Students rated less favourably (14% Partly met expectations)

- Problem Solving
  - Surprisingly the employers were very happy with the problem solving skills with the better result given to the Graduate Diploma students

Organisational Skills by Programme

- “Employers: Are they happy?”

- Creative thinking
  - Again surprisingly the employers were very happy with the creative thinking of the students apart from two Grad Dip students who did not meet expectations.

- Critical thinking
  - Similar results as above with most results shown as exceeded or met expectations.

- Time management
  - The BAM students scored very well, but 26% of the Grad Dip students only partly met expectations.
Technical Skills by Programme

• “Employers: Are they happy?”

• Knowledge of practices
  • This is referring to the students’ knowledge of the business or industry with 14% of both cohorts only partly meeting expectations

• Accuracy
  • Good positive results for both cohorts with reasonably even ratings

Technical Skills by Programme

• “Employers: Are they happy?”

• Speed of performance
  • Perhaps a different view of this question from employers, but the Graduate Diploma students were less efficient with 14% partly meeting expectations

• Adherence to directions provided
  • Although 57% and 45% (respectively) of the BAM and Graduate Diploma students exceeded expectations it was concerning to note that 14% and 10% only partly meet expectations
Interpersonal Skills by Programme

- “Employers: Are they happy?”
- Communication
  - This was a BIG issue for especially for the Graduate Diploma students where English is (mostly) a second language.
- Co-operation
  - Positive results for both cohorts
- Initiative
  - Mostly positive but 7% of the BAM students did not meet expectations.

Interpersonal Skills by Programme

- “Employers: Are they happy?”
- Assertiveness
  - Mostly positive, but again the Grad Dip less so with 24% only partly meeting expectations.
- Motivation
  - Great result for BAM students and reasonable results for the Graduate Diploma students
- Reliability & Punctuality
  - Although there are some positive results and many students exceeding expectations, it would seem that many students are not yet “work ready”. 
Qualitative feedback
The students

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bachelor of Applied Management</th>
<th>Graduate Diploma programmes (Primarily English as a second language)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Personal skills positive feedback:</td>
<td>Personal skills positive feedback:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Initiative / Motivation / Enthusiastic / Commitment</td>
<td>In general, not rated as good as the BAM cohort in most areas.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Effort / Time management</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organisational skills</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teamwork / Communication</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improvements needed:</td>
<td>Improvements needed:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More work ready / Product knowledge</td>
<td>Same as BAM students but STRONGER</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication / Motivation / Initiative</td>
<td>Not understand requirement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(In particular students with English as a second language)</td>
<td>Not always communicating</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Confusion</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Qualitative feedback
The Programme

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bachelor of Applied Management</th>
<th>Graduate Diploma programmes (Primarily English as a second language)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Programme improvements</td>
<td>Programme improvements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Align academic requirements and benefit for the business (Needs of business / student / Wintec)</td>
<td>Same as the BAM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More communication between Business and Wintec</td>
<td>Need to vet suitability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visit from academic supervisor</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Host again? 58% Yes (not all employers replied)</td>
<td>44% Yes (35% not answer)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Recommendations

General
- A need for better matching of students to business
- Clear expectations of role of the business and of the student in the placement
- At least one visit from an academic supervisor to the business
- Attempt to match academic requirements and the needs of business
- Introduce online interaction with employers
Recommendations

Graduate Diploma
- Students need to be better prepared (in the semester) before placement
- English language testing/coaching?
- Alternative work placement for C grade students?
  - (As long we meet the graduate profile)

A new survey
- Survey 2017 placement employers (online?)
- Face-to-face in-depth interview with employers