



Workplace Training Policy for Veterinary and Para-Veterinary professional students

South African Veterinary Council

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A. Abbreviations

DT	Distributed Teaching (formal work placement)
DTS	Distributed Teaching Site
EMS	Extra mural studies (informal work placement)
HEI	Higher Education Institution
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
PBL	Problem Based Learning
PjBL	Project Based Learning
SAVC	South African Veterinary Council
SER	Self Evaluation Report
WDTL	Work Directed Theoretical Learning
WIL	Work Integrated Learning
WPL	Workplace Learning

B. Executive summary

Work Integrated Learning (WIL) is comprehensive practical training within organisation/institution/workplace supported by theoretical training leading to a qualification or formal acknowledgement of training. Extra Mural Studies (EMS) is the outsourced practical training provided by an organisation/institution/private practice to a student enrolled in a full time qualification at another recognised institution. Workplace learning includes, *inter alia*, formal off-campus clinical rotation or distributed teaching: this is where mandatory clinical training, although delivered on sites not owned by the institution, and/or through people that are not part of the institution, is seen as part of the core curriculum, and needs to be quality assured as such.

This policy describes the organisational structures that must be in place, and minimum standards that must be met, for effective delivery of WIL to students. It sets out standards to inform a holistic approach to all WIL activities in a veterinary or para-veterinary professional curriculum, but will focus on distributed teaching and its demands in terms of monitoring and management systems.

Where distributed teaching is used, an annual report, based on this policy document, may be requested by the SAVC to demonstrate how the training programme meets all the minimum standards, and complies with the SAVC criteria for registration, regardless of where the teaching takes place.



C. Introduction

The term WIL is used to describe:

- is comprehensive practical training within organisation/institution/workplace supported by theoretical training leading to a qualification or formal acknowledgement of training. The alignment of academic and workplace practices in a process of reciprocal involvement that can benefit students, professions, workplaces and communities.

The term EMS is used to describe:

- outsourced practical training provided by an organisation/institution/private practice to a student enrolled in a full time qualification at another recognised institution.
- These placements include mostly private practice, farm experiences and experiences to meet the required skills of the veterinary profession.

Workplace learning encompasses the following four main curricular modalities¹, with possibilities for many additional hybrid combinations:

1. Work Directed Theoretical Learning (WDTL): classroom-based instruction aligns theory and practice by the use of authentic practical examples or case studies.
2. Problem Based Learning (PBL): simulated real world scenarios for problem-based assignments and projects, are used to enhance problem-solving skills and self-directed learning.
3. Project Based Learning (PjBL): learning through engagement in complex practical projects in a work context, under competent supervision.

Workplace Learning (WPL): placement of students in practical work environments under supervisors that are trained to guide and to assess.

The South African Veterinary Council recognises the value of Workplace learning for training institutions in the development of undergraduate students, and supports a system of practical training that includes distributed teaching.

Purpose: This policy has been developed according to the objects of the SAVC as described by the Veterinary and Para Veterinary Professions Act, Act No 19 of 1982. It describes the minimum standards applicable to the offering of Work Integrated Learning in a Veterinary and or Para-Veterinary professional curriculum for undergraduate students, in order for the programme as a whole to meet all the SAVC criteria for registration.

¹ Good Practice Guide to Work-Integrated Learning of the Council on Higher Education (HE Monitor no.12, August 2011)



D. General principles

- The objectives of the Workplace learning policy in veterinary and para-veterinary programme should be to provide adequate practical experience to develop the necessary Day One competencies, including principles of ethical practice, research mentality, lifelong learning and life skills like communication and decision making.
- All WIL is to be measured against the accepted Day One competencies of the profession.
- The objectives of all distributed teaching is to broaden the scope and effectiveness of the main WIL policy and to contribute to animal production and the community as a whole, to the mutual benefit of all.
- For this to be successful, it will need to be managed effectively.
- For Workplace learning activities to be recognised as part of the core curriculum, and meet the SAVC criteria for registration, it must be quality assured, controlled and monitored to the same standard as formal training on campus, with comparable teaching, guidance, assessment and reporting.
- The Main Indicators for training standards of each profession will be in effect for all mandatory distributed teaching.
- The periodic full visitation by the SAVC will require information on distributed teaching, to be read with the standard Self Evaluation Report of the institution.
- All distributed teaching, whether at satellite campus or other facilities, or Extra mural studies, share the same administrative support by the HEI regarding practical issues like agreements and accommodation.
- The delivery of WIL in core or elective curriculum, optional subjects - hence the academic value of the workplace learning - will dictate the level and form of assessment and the level of control needed.
- Any deviation to the described criteria in this document may be accepted by the SAVC if well motivated.
- In this document, 'he' means either he or she, as does 'him' and 'his'; and 'student' can equally refer to a group of students.

E. Minimum standards

1. Organisation

The Workplace learning policy must be properly integrated, with effective central control to ensure co-ordinated delivery of the teaching programme, and systems need to be in place to ensure the following:

- Stakeholder representation on all structures involved in the evaluation and assessment of the WIL system: contracted supervisors, students, recent alumni, and professional colleagues from the relevant discipline of the WIL activity;
- Coordination of all experiential learning in the institution and alignment of the curricular requirements and types of WIL;
- Administration of the WIL programme: for this a 'WIL Coordinator' or administrative secretariat must be appointed by the institution to provide a single, effective point of contact for all parties involved in WIL and take responsibility for, or facilitate the following:



- Management and coordination of all WIL related activities;
- Planning and coordination of student placements, communication and assessment;
- Addressing all information, training, and communication issues;
- Approval of facilities with adequate infrastructure;
- Approval of supervisors for different levels of instruction;
- Concluding memoranda of agreement between HEI, supervisor and student, and monitoring of mutual compliance;
- Practical issues of student placement, including transport, accommodation, health and security, and number of students in terms of organisational capacity of the site, etc;
- Student access to study areas, ICT and study guidance and support;
- Student preparation, welfare and support, assessment and mentoring;
- Grievance procedures and structures to handle complaints by students and supervisors;
- Development of a manual to govern the implementation of the WIL Policy and provide guidelines for the following:
 - Evaluation of teaching sites and supervisors;
 - Concluding of agreements;
 - Principles of good practice for all experiential learning activities;
 - Placement of students at distributed sites;
 - Preparation of students prior to WIL placements;
 - Student information regarding assignments and assessment;
 - Supervisor training regarding mentoring, teaching, and assessment
 - Supervisor monitoring and evaluation;
 - Use of ICT in learning and assessment;
 - Assessment of students doing WIL and record keeping; and
 - Procedures for internal quality control and quality assurance of the WIL programme.

2. Finances

For the sake of sustainability of the programme, sufficient funding must be available for the program to operate effectively. This may include:

- Administrative support of the Workplace learning programme
- Contracting in of external service providers and facilities; and
- Student accommodation, support, study and ICT needs.

Planning must ensure that there are sufficient places available in total to match the training needs of the student intake, so that stability of provision is ensured.

There must be contingency plans to cover possible shortfalls in WIL placements.

3. Contractual agreements



For all work placements, a Memorandum of Agreement between the HEI, the provider and the student must be concluded to regulate the mutual relationships, and to ensure that standards will be maintained for the duration of the students' training.

Such agreements must set out the expectations, rights and responsibilities on all sides, in terms of all relevant legal, financial and relational issues; and must include the detail of the WIL to be achieved and what will be required for the WIL to be maximally effective

4. Curriculum

In curriculum design, it must be specified how Workplace learning will contribute to the programme.

All Workplace learning units must be aligned to the unit outcomes, as described in the Day One competencies, and be appropriate for the level of the students.

All credit-bearing WIL-modules must be described well and must be indicated in the academic brochures and qualification information of the institution.

Where Workplace learning forms part of the core curriculum, the teaching and formative assessment may be contracted out to duly trained supervisors with academic background².

Where WIL is part of the elective curriculum, the teaching and formative assessment may be contracted out to well trained supervisors.³

All summative academic assessment is done by teaching staff at the HEI, and may be done at distributed sites through means of electronic communication facilities.

For Extra Mural Studies, the supervisor need not be trained in teaching or assessment: he is not required to do formal teaching or assessment⁴, as all formative assessment after EMS will be done by teaching staff at the HEI at the institution, based on the learning evidence produced by the student and the report of the supervisor.

Any teaching given by contracted supervisors must be monitored, and all assessments moderated by teaching staff at the HEI;

5. The teaching and learning environment

Each institution utilising WIL or EMS as part of the necessary training for the registrations of a professional by SAVC is required to submit a policy document on the management, quality control, assessment practices, requirements, etc.

All sites have to comply with standard safety, animal welfare, waste management and bio security regulations.

² Refer 'Distributed Teaching 1 and 2' in Table 1

³ Refer 'Distributed Teaching 3' in Table 1

⁴ Refer 'EMS' in Table 1



The SAVC may inspect clinical sites during a visitation. Such inspections, including travel and per diem costs, will be at the expense of the facility or Institution.

The institution must document the following per facility:

- Owner
- Name of facility or farm
- SAVC or other applicable registration number
- Address
- Contact person and contact numbers, e-mail addresses and website links
- Type of facility: Clinic/farm/laboratory/ abattoir etc
- Type of WIL offered: clinical practice/ husbandry/ laboratory procedures/food hygiene etc
- Curriculum covered: core/ elective/ EMS
- The availability of teaching materials
- Number of students in one year and average time spent there by one student

SAVC visitation teams must have access to written records of at the annual review process instituted by the institution to review the student experience at the learning site, and to the steps taken to deal with issues of concern.

F. Reporting to the SA Veterinary Council and visitations

For the SAVC to be satisfied that the programme as a whole meets all the SAVC criteria for registration and Day One competencies, it may request to see the information documented as per this policy.

SAVC visitations:

The visitation team meetings should include representatives of contracted supervisors and support staff involved with WIL.

The Distributed Teaching Sites where core curriculum is taught and with formal assessment, may be recognised as part of the institution's structure during official visitations, and a random sample of such DTS's may be inspected. For the sake of time, such inspections may be delegated to local experts that are drawn from a list of suitably qualified nominees and completed before the visit, or done by video conferencing technology.

Where problems are identified at a distributed site of such nature as to impact on the quality of the training being given at that site, the SAVC may ask a more detailed report or choose to visit the site even before the next visitation. Should a site, based on objective assessment criteria, not conform to teaching quality, the site will be given a maximum of six months to rectify the deficiencies, or be reconsidered as a WIL site.

[Council approved: 20 July 2022]
[VC/STANDARDS/WIL POLICY]