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Developing employability: an evaluation of the World of Work Training and Internship Programmes at the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg

by

LESLEY EMANUEL

A thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

of

THE UNIVERSITY OF THE WITWATERSRAND

Johannesburg,

September 2011

DECLARATION

This thesis is submitted to the Faculty of Humanities, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, in fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

I declare that this research is my own work. It has not been submitted before for any other degree or examination in any other university.

……...

Lesley Emanuel, September 2011

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ABSTRACT

Human Sciences' training is consistently criticized for a lack of application to the world of work. Industry is skeptical about the value of human science training in terms of direct economic or political benefit and the result is often unemployment, or precarious career prospects for Humanities and Social Sciences students. The case is worse for those Humanities and Social Science students who will graduate from academic programmes that are not specifically oriented to meet the needs of an industry or profession.

The World of Work Training and Internship Programmes at the Graduate School (now the Graduate Centre) at the University of the Witwatersrand aimed to address this problem through a non-academic intervention. Although the integration of internships into academic programmes is often positioned in the available literature as the ideal in order to optimize learning, the World of Work Programmes were unique in that they were designed as an "add-on" intervention to address the development of Humanities students' employability, *after* completion of their postgraduate degrees. Literature on employability does not does address employability or the employability skills development of those who do not have a professional outcome 'built in' to their academic learning process, let alone the needs and challenges of *postgraduate* Humanities and Social Science students in particular.

The World of Work Programmes consisted of two components. The duration of the Training Programme, which took place at the University, was approximately one month. Thereafter, internships (three months) were arranged for participants at various relevant organisations. Interns were closely monitored and mentored by World of Work staff and by a representative from the host organisation. The World of Work Training and Internship Programmes started in 2001 and the last programmes occurred in 2008.

The purpose of this doctoral research is to evaluate the World of Work Training and Internship Programmes and their contribution to the development of employability.

The evaluation is focused on two key years of the programmes, 2005 and 2006. It includes consideration of the challenges postgraduate Humanities students encounter as they make the transition from academia to the workplace, and how the World of Work Programmes help them manage any difficulties they may have. It also investigates pedagogical approaches for increasing these students' employability, and how the postgraduate Humanities student's transition into an organisation impacts on his/her employability development.

One of the key findings from the World of Work Programmes' evaluation was that the multiple roles of mentorship are crucial for students' successful transitions into workplaces. The unique partnership in the World of Work Programmes' of the University-based mentor

with a workplace supervisor proved to be a compelling subject for further exploration in the final chapter.

In 2005, the practise of weblogging was introduced into the World of Work Programmes' curriculum. There were various aims motivating the introduction of this learning tool, including facilitating learning through reflection, while at the same time improving awareness of, and attitudes towards Humanities and Social Science postgraduate students. We hoped, in this way, to market the potential of Humanities students and their relevance in the workplace. Findings related to these objectives, and also unexpected results from this e-learning project such as the development of a community of practice and how the weblogs provided a sense of Humanities students "in action", has prompted its inclusion in the final chapter as a significant contribution – especially since there is no literature available on the capacity of weblogs to assist with the development and demonstration of employability specifically.

An evaluation of any possible contributions to employability development as a result of such innovations in the World of Work Programmes may be useful for the pedagogical and curricular design of similar programmes.

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The National Research Foundation funded this research. I have also received support in the form of facilities, and a postgraduate merit award from the Humanities Graduate Centre at the University of the Witwatersrand. The research would have been impossible without this support. The efficient, friendly and helpful administrative staff members at the Graduate Centre were supportive in kind – thank you. In addition, the Graduate Centre invited me to write parts of the research at the Wits Rural Facility. They were productive times for me and I thank the Graduate Centre for those opportunities.

I am grateful to the postgraduate students who participated in the World of Work Programmes and therefore also participated in this research.

In 2006, Sofia Kostelac and Beth Shirley assisted me with administrative aspects of the research, and Nefeli Sfetsios assisted with the World of Work Programmes administration. I believe their skills, behaviours and attitudes while they worked with me attest to the employability of Wits Humanities postgraduates. Thank you also to Corrin Durrheim for help with transcribing, and with filing and organising the appendices.

Professor Carolyn Hamilton gave her insight and suggestions in the early stages of the project. I'm grateful for her input and for recruiting me to work on the World of Work Programmes in the first place.

The late Dr Penny Krige inspired and encouraged me. She gave me a very clear starting point, and despite her many obligations made time to share her thoughts and expertise with me.

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First Eunice Matumo, and then Sikhangezile Tshabalala came to my family during the time of this PhD. They cared for us and took on responsibilities beyond their job descriptions. I'm deeply grateful.

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endlessly sympathetic about my procrastinations and frustrations. Thank you. Just as we share everything, I share this achievement with you.

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I am deeply appreciative of my family's support throughout this work. My father gave me a place to stay. Francesco and Grazia Masselli allowed me to use their farm as a writing retreat. My brother Matthew collected, printed, delivered, and more. He quietly 'made it happen', which is his way.

My husband, daughter and son accepted my lack of sleep and attention to their lives with goodwill and patience. Thank you Sandro, Maia and Giacomo for your emotional generosity at all times.

Jean Power was the coordinator of the Graduate Centre's World of Work Programmes at Wits University. Every white space in the pages that follow represents how often I looked up from my work to remember and miss her. I believe we were an extraordinary team because of her dedication, humour and generous spirit.

Most acknowledgements for doctoral work begin with a mention of the academic supervisor involved. I choose to leave this to the last because my thanks to my supervisor, Prof Susan van Zyl, (Director of the Graduate Centre, Wits University) will last the longest. I have been inspired at *every* stage of the research process by your commitment to my work, your energy, availability, consistency, interest and professionalism - despite your considerable teaching load, your other supervision commitments and administrative responsibilities. For sharing your intellect so generously and with enviable clarity, for your friendship and good humour... at the end, all I can say with heartfelt conviction is "Buy a donkey".

Dedicated to the memory of

Jean Power

(World of Work Programmes' Coordinator, 2004 – 2008)

PREFACE

In February 2002 I approached the Human Resources manager of a leading insurance company with the request for his company to host internships. At first the manager was enthusiastic, but then he quickly retracted his commitment to participate when I explained that the candidates were postgraduates from the Humanities. The manager explained that qualifications from the Humanities and Social Science have little value in the insurance industry specifically and the world of work generally. He cited the joke about 'over-educated' English or History majors being best suited for work in low-paying "MacJobs" (as in MacDonald's, the fast food outlet): the graduate with a Science degree asks, "Why does it work?" The graduate with an Engineering degree asks, "How does it work?" The graduate with an Accounting degree asks, "How much will it cost?" The graduate with a Humanities degree asks, "Do you want fries with that?"

My motivation for this research comes from my commitment to change the perception that Humanities students, by virtue of our academic training, are not crucial to the world of work, and are therefore not as employable as people with professional, vocational degrees. This has been a long-term personal - and admittedly audacious - goal. Fortunately, in 2001 I had the opportunity to work in a programme with the same goal: the World of Work Programmes at Wits University. I was always moved by how intensely my fellow Humanities students, participating in the Programmes, wanted to make successful transitions into the world of work. Humanities students *know* that they need help with this move – and they *want* assistance.

These issues for the Humanities have been raised and discussed for decades, and yet the World of Work Programmes was the first practical, short-term solution developed for Humanities postgraduate students - in South Africa at least. This alone has made it worthy of evaluation.

Unfortunately, the World of Work Programmes was discontinued after 2008 primarily because of a lack of funding. Wits University, like many others, finds it difficult to raise funding for positions that are not seen to be part of the University's core business, namely tertiary teaching and/or research. For example the levels of time, energy and dedication that were necessary, and that the Coordinator Jean Power gave to the Programmes went well beyond the remuneration the University could offer her. This meant it was not possible to replace her immediately after her death.

This thesis is my attempt to share what we learned about the World of Work Programmes. It has my hope that it will contribute to the possible re-introduction of the World of Work Programmes at Wits University, or the development of any other intervention that similarly aims to help the workplace, universities, and Humanities students make the most of themselves in the world of work.

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CHAPTER 1 The Humanities and the World of Work

Today's global economy depends upon the creation and application of new knowledge, on educated people and their ideas, and on knowledge institutions such as universities. Other forms of Higher Education have managed to negotiate world of work demands, by increasing specialization and professionalisation in content and pedagogical approach, but a particular problem confronts Humanities Higher Education. Niebuhr (1993) points out that, according to the broad policy framework established by the Minister of National Education and within which tertiary institutions function in South Africa today, the Humanities are labelled 'general-focused' degrees, as opposed to those that are 'career-focused'. It is this characteristic that makes the Humanities a particularly interesting case in terms of transitions into the world of work.

Humanities and Social Sciences denote specific disciplines in the liberal arts, with the Humanities at the heart of liberal education. 'The Humanities and Social Sciences' is a broad term and the exact definition differs from country to country. The Humanities, Social Sciences and Education are located together in one Faculty at the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, South Africa. For coherence and simplicity I will use the term 'Humanities' throughout, to refer to all liberal arts disciplines within the Humanities, Social Sciences and Education.

At the heart of each of these disciplines is the mission of the Humanities,

> the ability to express oneself clearly and accurately; the skill of critical evaluation, both of ideas and actions; the courage to make choices based on shared values and priorities; the opportunity to conduct an intensive conversation with the traditions, present and past, that help make us who we are, and above all who we will be; and as a result, the ability to understand and make sense of other people and their cultures. (Lease, 1996)

But how broadly shared is this description of the role of the Humanities? The economic trends towards globalisation and the increased use of technology have influenced the general tendency towards prioritising vocational education and emphasising the instrumental value of education. On this basis it could be argued that Humanities education is therefore often marginalized. Experts agree that despite the fact that Humanities graduates make a substantial contribution to many commercial activities, they are not seen as core contributors to wealth creation. There is also the long history within humanistic discourse itself affirming the importance of preserving a certain disinterestedness – a wish to shield the study of the Humanities from the conditions of the marketplace. It can be argued that this compromises the Humanities' position as a vital part of the

twenty-first-century, and the chances of meaningful support from the public and from political structures.

The South African Context: Higher education, the Humanities and the world of work

A concise sketch of the political climate that has affected the development of South African Higher Education will be useful to consider the Humanities in that context.

On 26 April 1994, South Africans of all races voted for the end of apartheid and the beginning of South Africa's transition to democracy. In the decade following, the country has achieved many successes, including greater political stability and greater economic freedom. More South Africans now receive education. South Africa's democratically elected government has, since 1994, set out to achieve 'a better life for all' by focusing on, for example, economic development. It appears that the demands on Higher Education in South Africa have also been affected by the comprehensive transformation: Higher Education is explicitly expected to support the process of societal change outlined in the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP).

This explains why the South African public Higher Education system has had to reconsider its own policies and transformation to tackle this task. The government's support for planning and funding to assist with the transformation of the public Higher Education system are indicated in the White Paper on Higher Education Transformation (Department of Education, 1997), and in the National Plan for Higher Education (Department of Education, 2001). The general purposes that Higher Education is expected to fulfill are also set out in the White Paper of 1997, including that it should:

> ... address the development needs of society and provide the labour market, in a knowledge-driven and knowledge-dependent society, with the ever-changing high-level competencies and expertise necessary to sustain high levels of economic growth... (Department of Education, 1997)

From the mid 1990's South African education policy makers and university managements seemed to acknowledge that a new response was required to deal with the pressures of globalization and democratization. But, Ludlow notes, there were two distinct camps favouring different approaches to the Higher Education curriculum reconstruction that would ultimately address the objectives of Higher Education described in the White Paper of 1997: on the one hand, proponents of the conventional utilitarian view that stressed relevance in the instrumentalist

paradigm, and on the other hand the traditional view, preferring to focus on the development of the intrinsic values of a liberal arts education.

It is possible that the problem of the differences of opinion inside the Higher Education arena were compounded by the fact that public confidence in Higher Education was low when the 1997 White Paper policies and their goals were written.

Jansen (2004) explains that the reservations about the potential of public Higher Education to contribute to transformation were the result of a number of factors. First, there was a deep distrust of possible remnants of apartheid education in the Higher Education system after 1994. Then there were concerns about the quality of output and institutions.

The South African Ministry of Education in the National Plan for Higher Education (Department of Education, 2001) also refers to a perception that the value of Higher Education (generally) for employment purposes is declining, evident from the fact that there seems to be a growing demand for the short courses usually offered in the private Higher Education sector, which are in turn linked to qualifications that are employment-oriented. Although this seems to be happening especially in the information technology industry, it indicates a trend towards student preferences for Higher Education that will address workplace readiness and improve chances of employment. On this basis it could be argued that if enrolments at private Higher Education institutions continue to increase, universities like the University of the Witwatersrand will have to compete for new students on the basis of factors such as programme contribution to employability development.

After South Africa's first years of democracy, the effects of globalisation and democratization have significantly reshaped the South African Higher Education system in ways that suggest the Humanities in South Africa must align with the global realities in Higher Education provision, including employability and workplace preparedness. An example of this has been the reaction to the Higher Education Act of 1997, which reaffirmed one of the recommendations of the South African National Commission on Higher Education in calling for greater differentiation of academic programmes. South African universities responded by changing programme structures and offering modularized courses. For the first time (in the 1990's) traditionally contact universities started to offer various kinds of distance education. (Jansen, 2004) These are examples of serious attempts to become more relevant and to respond to perceived market demands, with results that have led to improved access and major enrolment increases at historically white universities in the last decade.

Post apartheid changes in Higher Education's student distribution meant that there was radical expansion in historically white universities between 1990 and 1994, and especially in the late 1990's. (Simkins, 2002)

In 2001, 50% of university enrolments in South Africa were in the Humanities, while sciences, engineering and technology, and business, commerce and management sciences had 26% and 24% enrolments respectively – so, technological and science fields were heavily under-represented in the early 1990's to 2000. (Simkins, 2002) Moleke (2005) believes that the reason for the high Humanities' enrolment is due to the fact that their disciplines have the least stringent entry requirements. A lack of career guidance, and limited access to reliable labour market information to help the new tertiary student make informed decisions about his or her choice of study field are also a factor. Moleke notes that

> Members of this group find themselves later having to change fields of study as the realities of opportunities and constraints in the labour market become clear. Many do this only after spending 3-4 years completing their first degree. Those who cannot afford to continue with their studies are faced with the harsh realities of unemployment and underemployment. (2005)

Moleke's (2003) study tracked the job-hunting progress of 2 672 graduates who obtained their first degrees between 1990 and 1998. The type of qualifications held by graduates was also highlighted: graduates from the Humanities had the highest unemployment rate, at almost 47%. Graduates in medical science had the highest success rate in finding employment (79%) followed by engineering graduates (77%).

One reading of these statistics for the Humanities in South Africa is that we have too many graduates, who should not have followed that course of study in the first place, with skills that are not in demand in South Africa, and therefore with high unemployment rates (relative to graduates from other fields). Market congestion may lead many Humanities' graduates to end up in jobs offering considerably less than they bargained for. Moleke's (2005) survey tells us that 48,6% of graduates from 1990 and 1998 would choose a different academic path if given another chance; most of these were from the Humanities and arts (63%) and education (69,7%). This interpretation of the statistics would be a worrying indicator of the value Humanities graduates – *clients,* in the language of the new managerialism in universities - place on their Higher Education. (Jansen, 2004) It appears to be a grim picture. The National Plan for Higher Education (Department of Education, 2001) responded with a plan to change the balance of enrolments in the different faculties of South African universities between 1993 and 1999. Enrolments therefore

shifted from 57% to 49% in the Humanities, 19% to 26% in business and commerce, and 24% to 25% in science, engineering and technology respectively.

Perhaps an alternative response can be suggested: to engage seriously with the problems the Humanities face and the world of work's relative devaluation of the Humanities, and to try to address this in a proactive and effective way. A stronger focus on science, engineering and technology appears necessary in South Africa, to correct the imbalances of student numbers and manpower in those fields. This, however, should not diminish the importance of contributions to the world of work from the Humanities.

Allen (1999) believes the challenges of an emerging economy that is 'knowledge based' will require the skills of knowledge application that stem from a Humanities education. The argument convincingly applies to South Africa where the Humanities play an important role, as the White Paper of 1997 states, in career-oriented training in a range of fields such as education, law, private and public sector management, social development and the arts. The Humanities also play an important role in developing a critical civil society through enhancing our understanding of social and human development, including social transformation. (Department of Education, 1997) It is possible to argue that graduates from the Humanities have the capacity to provide crucial contributions by linking knowledge with development work. This role cannot, however, be played out in a scenario where Humanities graduates cannot get jobs and/or are perceived to be unemployable.

The unemployment figures for people holding degrees (undergraduate and/or postgraduate) was 2.1% in 1995 and 4.6% in 1999. It was at 9% in 2006. (Simkins, 2002) It has already been established that the Humanities would take up most of the 9%; this is still the lowest percentage among the country's educational sector - less than that of school-leavers, for example. So why should we be concerned? Simkins (2002) says that in a skills-short country this pattern is not surprising, but warns that if economic performance is poor in the coming decade, rates of graduate unemployment may rise. Bhorat (2004) confirms that unemployment among university graduates has been increasing, proportionally, more than in any other education sector, since 1995. Bhorat (2004) is also concerned about the fact that African graduates form the bulk of unemployed graduates. Since the value and legitimacy of Higher Education in South Africa must also be judged by the extent to which it facilitates access and opportunities for all South Africans, this research must investigate if, and where the system fails the new graduate. A logical starting point is directly after the completion of the degree, at the "job search".

Duff and Fryer (2004) distinguish between three forms of job search: formal search (newspapers and/or employment agencies); word-of-mouth (assistance from relatives and friends, i.e. social networks); and place-to-place (direct contact of job searchers by enquiring at actual worksites).

The Wits Counselling and Careers Unit conducted a study of Bachelor of Arts graduates from Wits University (from 1986 to 1989) and their interface with the job market. A major finding was that the majority of employed BA graduates had found their jobs through "word-of-mouth" or networking. (Edey and Molin, 1993)

Edey and Molin's study at the Wits Counselling and Careers Unit took place during a time when access to Higher Education was still difficult for black students, but it seems unlikely that this limited access could be the only reason for black BA graduates' difficulties in getting jobs. Moleke (2003) found, from a follow-up postal survey of 2672 South African university graduates, that 70% of white graduates found employment immediately, compared with 57.8% of Africans, 57% of coloured and 52% of Asians. Moleke's study took place between 1990 and 1998 during which time she said

> ... it is of concern to see that race, gender, and institution play a role in employment prospects. Even taking into consideration the differences in fields studied, African and coloured graduates seem to have fewer prospects when compared to their white and Asian counterparts even where they have similar qualifications (studied in the same fields of study). (Moleke, 2003)

In 1993, Edey and Molin predicted that

> the nature of the dominant network will shift as more blacks own and run businesses, and that, in future, several important networks might develop and operate simultaneously. (1993)

Clearly the notion of the old school tie and the exclusive social networks of the eighties are redundant due to their limited capacity to cater for the increased numbers of graduates. Typically, the networks of the eighties could also only provide a limited set of information about jobs.

A significant factor to be considered is that more relevant networks will need to cross-localities and social boundaries for the job seeker to locate his or her employer. These social networks will have to be diverse and access will have to be through new channels, including technological routes. Time magazine reports that 12% of employers (geographical locations and industries not stated) say that they consult social-networking sites like *Facebook.com* for help with their hiring process. (Time magazine, August 20, 2007).

Ultimately, of course, jobs should be filled on merit rather than on "who you know". Duff and Fryer (quoting Montgomery, 1991; Calvó-Armengol and Jackson, 2004) point out that in developed countries at least, just under half of workers get their jobs through the impersonal, strictly market channels of applications and agencies. (2004)

However, a crucial consideration is that this is not happening in South Africa because employers underrate and students underemphasize the Humanities degree. (Participants at the Symposium and Workshop on the Employability of South African BA Graduates, 1993) van Aardt (1993), referring to a survey conducted by the National Manpower Commission in 1991, observes that although there is a demand for skilled labour in South Africa, there is not one Humanities-related occupation in which there is on aggregate a short supply. In a closing address at the Symposium and Workshop on the Employability of South African BA Graduates in 1993, McDonald spoke on behalf of Unilever, then one of the largest employers of graduates in South Africa. He indicated that a demand for accounting skills and knowledge about information systems precluded his organisation's hiring of BA graduates. McDonald was at least a little more specific than the employer respondents in Lickindorf's feasibility study on the Employability of South African BA Graduates. Lickindorf reports that many employers did not want to employ BA graduates because they "saw no use for them". (1993)

More recently, South African Deputy President Mlambo-Ngcuka has defined the problem as graduates emerging from university with a poor quality of skills. (Zake, 2006) A study by the Joint Initiative for Priority Skills Acquisition in South Africa reports that employers are finding graduates unprepared for the workplace, with the content of their degrees and diplomas irrelevant to business needs. (Zake, 2006)

For McDonald's organisation (Unilever), the type of degree is irrelevant. He emphasises that

> a degree is no longer a ticket to employment. (1993)

Godsell explains further,

> As a consequence of both the continuous nature of learning, and the new demands of work, a degree no longer offers any confident promise of employment – appropriate or other. (1993)

Employers acknowledge that a degree may indicate intellectual capacity, but they also value leadership ability, initiative, social skills, teamwork and self-reliance and recognise that these are not necessarily developed during the attainment of a degree. (McDonald, 1993) More recently,

Ntuli quotes van Vuuren, director of quality compliance at the Graduate Institute of Management and Technology, saying that, "new graduates were "handicapped" by tertiary education that placed too little emphasis on practical learning and application." (Ntuli, 2007) In addition, employers see a Humanities degree as highly variable between individuals (depending on the choice of major) and universities. (Panel Discussion, 1993) Moleke says,

> In the case of individuals whose qualifications do not reflect the acquisition of specific professional skills, especially those who hold general bachelor's degrees, their qualifications serve only as a signal of their potential to employers. In many cases, they take longer to realise employment and when they do their entry level jobs do not necessarily require the years of schooling they possess. (2005)

From this it is evident that Higher Education in these areas is undervalued in the employment process and employers therefore increasingly rely on informal or social networks to source employees.

Participants at the Symposium and Workshop on the Employability of South African BA Graduates said that,

> BA graduates themselves underrate their BA – perhaps because they are taught not to think highly of themselves. (1993).

Smith (Executive Director of the Institute for Personnel Management) said in a panel interview at the same conference,

> A key problem is that students don't have the vocabulary to express their skills to the world of business. (Panel Discussion, 1993)

Duff and Fryer (2004) note that when job seekers are

> unable to provide employers with a credible signal of their quality,

they revert to social networks to gain access to the labour market with the help of referrals from friends and relatives.

Crucially, this problem is exacerbated for the postgraduate student. Usually working alone (besides contact with the academic supervisor) to write a dissertation or thesis, the postgraduate student has probably already started to establish an identity shaped by a particular disciplinary area and the academic community more generally. As a postgraduate, he or she is therefore more immersed in the academic world than the graduate, and is possibly even more estranged from

both social networks that could facilitate workplace opportunities, and the workplace discourse used to emphasise relevant skills that she or he may have.

Against this background, the researcher has realised that it is clearly important to further investigate how social networks either constrain or facilitate access to information in the labour market for students from the Humanities. *Postgraduate* Humanities students would present a particularly interesting case for an investigation into the power of social networks for job searches, and other issues relating to the world of work in South Africa. Issues such as the consequences (during job-searches) of previous or current unequal social structures, the perceived quality of the tertiary institution that students attended and the development – or not - of transferable skills for the workplace can be exacerbated by virtue of the fact that postgraduates will have been at the university longer.

Employment and skills development in Gauteng, South Africa

South Africa was the highest ranked country of all Sub-Saharan African countries, according to the World Economic Forum's Global Competitiveness Report in 2006, in terms of its provision of high levels of economic prosperity to its citizens. (World Economic Forum, 2006) The report describes South Africa in these terms:

> The country does particularly well in a number of areas typically reserved for rich, innovation-driven economies. Its economic sophistication is reflected in high ranks for the innovation sub-index (29), as well as for property rights, private institutions, goods and financial market efficiency, business sophistication and innovation. Its main weaknesses concern those areas which are fundamental for achieving sustained growth, namely strong institutions, adequate infrastructure, a supportive macroeconomic environment, and good basic health and education. (World Economic Forum, 2006)

Reflecting on this report, the Premier for the South African province of Gauteng at the time, Mbhazima Shilowa suggested that one of the ways to address these "main weaknesses" would be for our education system to

> …produce people with relevant skills who will be become easily employable, who are entrepreneurial and smart. (Shilowa, 2006)

His suggestion is probably motivated by the fact that

> the number of jobs ads per month in Gauteng newspapers increased from 47 thousand centimeters per month in 2002 to 67 thousand centimeter per month for the last twelve

> months. This is an increase of 42,5% over the last few years. (Schüssler and Standard Bank, 2006)

From this it is evident that Gauteng has an abundance of jobs that need to be filled. Two of South Africa's capitals are in this province (Tswane and Johannesburg) and it is the economic hub of Africa. Here education levels are generally higher than the national average, and there is a concentration of Higher Education institutions. In 2006 Gauteng experienced positive development, but Shilowa observed that,

> despite the best endeavours by labour, business and government, the SETA's [Sector Education and Training Authorities] have not responded adequately to the challenge of skills development. (Shilowa, 2006)

Wits University and the world of work

There is general consensus that Higher Education plays a key role in providing the high level skills and generating the knowledge needed to address challenges facing Africa. It would seem this role is also complex and multi-faceted, as is evident in one of the major Higher Education institutions in Gauteng, the University of the Witwatersrand. The University has positioned itself through its vision and aims to address the needs of the province and country it serves. The University's Vice-Chancellor Prof. Loyiso Nongxa has said that

> Wits location in Johannesburg places it at the transition point of our connection with the rest of the world, the rest of the continent and the rest of the country. That in itself is an essential part of who we are. (12 February 2005)

The University of the Witwatersrand (Wits) has a well-established reputation for a high quality of teaching, and research. The strategic plan of the University, titled "Wits 2010 - A University to call our own" describes Wits as an "engaged" and "emerging" university, which aims to be

> ...critically responsive to society's expectations that Higher Education should become a key driver of development for people, communities, social institutions and democracy. Vice-Chancellor Prof. Nongxa, (12 February 2005)

The strategic plan includes various development orientated training and research activities to benefit both South Africa and Africa, through collaboration with academics and postgraduate students from other African countries.

The International Education Association of South Africa (IEASA), quoting provisional Department of Education statistics, says that the number of foreign students at South Africa's 23 public universities grew from 12, 600 in 1994 to nearly 54, 000 in 2006, with about a quarter of international students studying at postgraduate level. (IEASA, 2007) In 2006, more than 8% of students at the University of the Witwatersrand were international students, most of whom were from Zimbabwe, followed by students from Namibia, Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland. (IEASA, 2007)

According to research by the British Council, one of the reasons international students choose to study in South Africa is the perception that a qualification obtained from a South African university improves employability. (IEASA, 2007) IEASA suggest that international students are more likely to remain on the continent where they have received Higher Education, and therefore that accommodating international students, and meeting their expectations – including that their qualifications should improve their employability - will contribute to the continent's human resource development and an African Renaissance. (IEASA, 2007) This in turn should help to address the "brain drain" of approximately 20, 000 qualified people leaving Africa every year, resulting in the loss of a third of the continent's professionals. (IEASA, 2007)

Since 1999 Wits University's strategic planning documents have committed the University to focus on postgraduate study. Each of the five Faculties (Commerce, Law and Management; Engineering and the Built Environment; Health Sciences; Science; Humanities) offers study choices at the postgraduate levels of Honours, Masters and PhD. Postgraduate students can study either full time or part time (depending on the particular degree) and by coursework, or through a research only based programme.

Wits University's available resources to facilitate students' transitions into the workplace

The University's response to an audit criterion for efficient arrangements for the quality assurance, development and monitoring of postgraduate education does not however, mention how Wits assists postgraduates with their transitions into the workplace. (Senate of the University of the Witwatersrand, 2006) Wits' Head of Academic Planning has explained that

> There are no specific policy requirements of the different schools in the faculties to facilitate graduate employability or employment, although there are a number of initiatives in practice, and experiential learning is regarded as important. (Scott, Unpublished report)

To explore the initiatives available at Wits University to aid postgraduate students' transitions into the workplace, we have to revert to the research on graduates - that is, students who have a first-degree qualification.

The 'Student Pathways Study' was based on data from seven Higher Education institutions: the University of the Witwatersrand, the University of Stellenbosch, the University of Fort Hare, the University of Limpopo, the University of the Western Cape, Tswane University of Technology, and Cape Peninsula University of Technology. The study was motivated by the fact that South Africa has one of the lowest rates for graduates in the world, and had the objective to investigate influences on students' routes into and through Higher Education, and then into the labour market. Scott, an independent researcher, was responsible for the Wits University study, which was based on data from the 2000 to 2002 group of Wits University non-completers or graduates. The report is referred to extensively here, as it provides a contextual explanation of attempts to address the employability of students at Wits University.

Scott interviewed the Head of Academic Planning at Wits University, who listed the factors affecting South African graduates' employability as being directly affected by the level of skill attained from the university from which students graduate. The requirement for jobs as compared to the need to be entrepreneurial is also a consideration, as is the interface between education training fields and the work requirements of the economy. (Unpublished report)

A degree from Wits University is perceived by recruiters as having more prestige than a degree from a previously disadvantaged institution. Scott (Unpublished report) found that this was because of the University's well-established reputation. While there is no research investigating why employers may favour Wits graduates, it could suggest good news for Wits University's Humanities postgraduates seeking work; but perhaps it also suggests that it may be prudent to take a circumspect view of the nature of a market ready to decide upon the employability of a graduate based on his or her university, rather than the degree itself, would be.

Many recruiting companies have equity requirements. These should advantage especially high achieving black students, but data from Scott's 'Student Pathways Study' reveals that Africans took longer than other races to find employment after graduation from Wits University: 49% of Africans found employment within three months as compared to 85% of Whites; 77% of Africans had found employment within one year, as compared to 98% of Whites. (Scott, Unpublished report) Scott's statistics refer to a 2000 to 2002 group of Wits University non-completers or graduates from various disciplines; it is possible to magnify the situation for postgraduates from

the Humanities who have chosen to specialize in an area not directed towards an identifiable occupation. (Unpublished report)

Wits University has a Careers and Counselling Development Unit (CCDU), which is a resource for students needing assistance such as career testing, information and guidance. The CCDU unit is linked to the South African Graduate Recruitment Association (SAGRA) and uses their policies as a guide for recruitment practice. The CCDU also offer a matching service to students and employers seeking part-time, non-professional workers – for typical student jobs such as au-pair work and waitrons. More formally, the CCDU maintains relationships with organisations and businesses that are potential employers. CCDU focus on Wits graduates from all faculties and would not differentiate between graduates and postgraduates. They do not offer any specialized employability development or job-search facilities for postgraduates specifically.

Scott says that the CCDU events and processes to facilitate this are

> fairly well resourced, and (allow) mutual perceptions between the university and the business world to be kept up to date. (Unpublished report)

So for example, CCDU would arrange for employers to come onto campus to recruit. Unfortunately the data also doesn't differentiate between graduates and postgraduates, so we do not know if potential employer visits to campus are useful opportunities for employment for postgraduates from the Humanities, or even for postgraduates generally.

Service learning at Wits University

Scott's report provides a summary of the history of service learning at Wits University in the medical and engineering degrees. Service learning is a rapidly growing field. It refers to a pedagogy wherein students learn and develop through organized community service in the continuum of work-based learning experiences (e.g. apprenticeships, internships, clerkships, job shadowing, work-study programmes, field experience, student teaching, community-service learning, and client-based projects.)

In terms of service learning, it would appear that the Commerce, Law and Management Faculty at Wits University have well-established practices for assisting students with their employability skills development and employment after graduation. For example the Business Students' Association promotes and develops students' understandings of the world of work. The faculty

regularly invites sessional lecturers who talk to students about the world of business, and maintains relationships with professional bodies and companies. (Scott, Unpublished report)

Service learning in the Humanities at Wits University

There are many service learning initiatives at Wits University to expose students to a wide range of meaningful workplace experiences. In terms of the Humanities however, Scott says

> There are no faculty based initiatives in the Humanities to support students' career choices and assist them into the labour market after graduation, other than referral to the Careers and Counselling Development Unit. (Scott, Unpublished report)

At the time of writing this, Scott was unaware of the World of Work Training and Internship Programmes at the Graduate Centre, which were designed for Humanities postgraduates and occurred every year from 2001 to 2008. These Programmes were a focused attempt to address the development of employability skills for Humanities postgraduates and thus to improve their chances of employment, going significantly further than occasional interventions from schools in the Humanities, where specialists might address and interact with students. The Programmes were therefore not impinged by Scott's observation that

> With general Arts degrees, the potential employment field is too broad to usefully formulate events of this nature. (Scott, Unpublished report)

It can be argued that Scott's omission is in itself symptomatic of a general perception: that since the Humanities have never been explicitly linked with the business world, it is unlikely to expect service learning practices within the Humanities. After all, the core criticism is that

> Many current studies of the humanities display a marked preoccupation with arguing theoretical issues reinforces the widespread belief that the Humanities provide social benefits that are long-term and intangible and that are therefore difficult for the market to value. Supporters of the Humanities agree that their students are committed to scholarly traditions based on erudite, creative reflectivity—the critical skills of studying, thinking, writing and then thinking again, the insistence on analysis and synthesis of issues viewed in the long term rather than according to the immediately measurable market benefits of research and education. (Working Group on the Future of the Humanities, 2001)

But these may not be the skills that employers require immediately, or are too difficult to assess during a recruitment process. As Allen puts it, despite the lip service from employers that the skills and abilities associated with an education in the Humanities are valued and remunerative in the workplace,

> Arts graduates end up driving taxis or making capuccinos if they can find jobs at all. (1998)

While Humanities scholars continue to debate whether the role of Humanities programmes lies in the development of employability skills, the world of work will continue to respond indulgently and without expectation for real evidence of how Humanities students could contribute in the workplace. It is possible that a service learning initiative such as the World of Work Training and Internship Programmes is a practical way of proving, in business-speak, that a degree in the Humanities is a competitive qualification for the new knowledge economy.

The Humanities Graduate Centre at Wits University

As part of the University's attempt to promote postgraduate study, the Faculty of Humanities established the Graduate School for the Humanities and Social Sciences to profile postgraduate study in the Faculty. The name of Graduate School changed to the Humanities Graduate Centre in 2009. It caters for the needs of postgraduate students registered in the following schools:

Wits School of Arts: Arts, Culture and Heritage Management Digital Arts Dramatic Art Fine Art History of Art Music Television **School of Education**: Adult Education Applied English Language Studies Education Specialised Education **School of Human and Community Development:** Psychology Social Work Speech Pathology and Audiology Specialised Education	**School of Literature and Language Studies:** African Languages African Literature English French German Italian Linguistics Media Studies Portuguese SA Sign Language Spanish Translating and Interpreting Studies **School of Social Sciences**: History International Relations Philosophy Political Studies Social Anthropology Sociology

Humanities and Social Sciences denote specific disciplines in the liberal arts, with the Humanities at the heart of liberal education. 'The Humanities and Social Sciences' is a broad term and the exact definition differs from country to country. The Humanities, Social Sciences and Education are located together in one Faculty at the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, South Africa. As indicated earlier, the term 'Humanities' is used throughout this research, to refer to all liberal arts disciplines within the Humanities, Social Sciences and Education at Wits University. Political Science will thus rate as one of the Humanities disciplines, but Business Administration (classified in some OECD countries among the Humanities and Social Sciences) will not. Exceptions will occur when the distinction between Humanities as more classically liberal arts (and therefore more non-vocational) and the Social Sciences is of particular importance.

The Faculty of Humanities at Wits University therefore incorporates Social Sciences and Education. It is important to emphasise this at this point, and the fact that the term postgraduate is used to refer to students who have minimally completed their Honours degrees (i.e. have been at the University for four years, three of which culminate in a Bachelor's degree, and the fourth culminating in an Honours degree) in any of the faculty's schools. These students were the participants in the World of Work Programmes, which is discussed in the next section.

The Humanities Graduate Centre facilitates a social, intellectual and cultural environment for postgraduate students to interact, share ideas, problem-solve, hypothesize and connect with others in the university environment. The Centre has a history of acknowledging the need for, and trying to assist postgraduate students' transitions into the workplace. This history, and the development of the World of Work Programmes as an initiative to try to address this need, is discussed in Appendix 1 (Input Evaluation: History and Development of the World of Work Programmes at Wits University).

The World of Work Programmes

Clearly, providing students with the authentic learning experiences (where students participate in the actual work of a professional community, engaging directly in the target community itself to acquire these skills) (Radinsky et al, 1998) is an ongoing challenge for all universities. It led to the Humanities Graduate Centre at the University of the Witwatersrand in Johannesburg to investigate the option of an intervention that would engage students in planned learning

experiences that integrate knowledge and theory, with practical application and skill development in a professional setting.

Internships provide such 'real-world' experiences for students. Inkster and Ross effectively describe an internship as a

> ...three-way partnership between the educational institution, the student intern, and the organisation where the interns take on the challenges of a program of systematic experiential learning. (1995)

This also describes the internship component of a programme that was launched in 2001 at the Humanities Graduate Centre. The aim of this programme was to assist Humanities postgraduates to make their transitions into the workplace. The programmes' core objective was

> … to provide postgraduate students with some of the appropriate, relevant workplace skills and abilities, and to expose them to others through practical experience at host organisations. It focuses on helping students become familiar with business practice and improves a student's chances of being employed by developing an awareness of the priorities which underpin successful business practice in today's competitive global economy. *Internship Programme brochure, Graduate School for the Humanities and Social Sciences, University of the Witwatersrand, (2003)*

Besides assisting students to realise the reality of the world of work, it was also hoped that the reputation of the internship programme would grow, and that employers would gain an improved pool of student applicants who had been 'trialled', and from which they could recruit for fulltime employment. (Patterson, 1999)

In 2001 the design of the programmes consisted of two components – a training and an internship period. The training component was a four-week on-campus course, followed by 14-weeks of internship. This model was to be repeated for all subsequent years and appeared to be the first of its kind for this particular group of students in South Africa.

A major shift occurred in 2002, when the programmes moved from dependence on academic staff input and from being an academic credit-bearing programme, to a stand-alone intervention with emphasis on the development of professionalism and employability. Other than this major shift, full details relating to the history of the programmes is available in Appendix 1 (Input Evaluation: History and Development of the World of Work Programmes at Wits University).

The last World of Work Programmes occurred in 2008. The programmes were discontinued due to a lack of funding.

I will refer to the World of Work Training and Internship Programmes as the WoW Programmes from this point onwards.

Aims and rationale for an evaluation of the World of Work Training and Internship Programmes at Wits University

This study comprises a detailed examination of the WoW Programmes. These programmes are an opportunity to investigate whether a work-based learning intervention can enhance the employability of the Humanities postgraduate.

The WoW Programmes are unique. The researcher has not found evidence of any other programme with a similar pedagogical approach and with a curriculum designed specifically for Humanities postgraduates. The researcher's involvement in the programmes – for a period of eight years - has prompted an interest in the complex influences and factors that impact on Humanities postgraduates' successful transitions into the world of work.

Research purpose and questions

The purpose of this research is to evaluate the WoW Programmes at Wits University, to consider whether these work-based learning interventions can assist postgraduate Humanities students make successful transitions into the workplace, and to suggest possible ways in which they and, by implication, other similar programmes could be changed. The following research questions are therefore pertinent:

- How do the WoW Programmes at Wits University work?
- Is there an identifiable pedagogy for increasing South African postgraduate Humanities students' employability?
- In what ways might the WoW Programmes be changed and improved?
- To what extent do the WoW Programmes meet students' and employers' needs?
- What challenges do students encounter as they make the transition from academia to the workplace, and how do the WoW Programmes help them manage any difficulties they may have?
- To what extent do the WoW Programmes aid in developing Humanities postgraduate students' employability?
- How does the postgraduate Humanities students' transition into an organisation impact on his/her employability development, if at all?

Overview of chapters

Appendix 1 (Input Evaluation: History and Development of the World of Work Programmes at Wits University) focuses on the early years of the WoW Programmes. In the absence of other similar programmes for the purposes of comparison, the major design changes, decisions and development from 2001 to 2004 are the only available markers to position the WoW Programmes of 2005 and 2006.

Relevant bodies of literature such as organizational newcomer socialization, employability and programme evaluation are discussed in the literature review in Chapter 2.

The methodological approach for the collection of data and the programme evaluation is explained in Chapter 3.

Chapters 4 and 5 present and analyse data within the various activity stages of the programmes, from respondents who participated in the programmes in 2005 and 2006. (Data from five Humanities postgraduate students, who participated in the WoW Programmes in 2005, will be presented in Chapter 4. In Chapter 5, data from five students from the 2006 group will be presented.) These years form the basis of the programme evaluation as they are regarded as key moments in the history of the programme. Innovations such as e-learning tools were first introduced in 2005 and were further developed in 2006. As a result of these tools, we observed the development of communities of practice for the first time in 2005 and 2006. Another crucial aspect, which first surfaced in 2005 and manifested in 2006, was that the course designers needed to respond and react to external labour market and internal staffing structures that had a direct influence on the capacity and management of the programmes, especially in terms of the selection processes.

Chapter 6, based on the analyses of the programme data, presents the findings of the programme evaluation. The researcher's involvement in the World of Work Programmes even after the evaluation years 2005 and 2006 means that these two key evaluation years are flanked by the development years leading up to them (Appendix 1), and by subsequent years that may reveal the components that have survived. Chapter 6 therefore also includes information on the WoW Programmes in 2007 and 2008, the last years of the programmes.

The final Chapter 7 – the Conclusion – includes commentary on the WoW Programmes' crucial findings, and some reflections on the research process.

CHAPTER 2 Literature Review

In this chapter I situate this thesis theoretically and methodologically by identifying the main theoretical frameworks that guide the study.

The first body of work concerns the current prevalent approaches to employability. Recently there have been attempts to describe, understand and theorise the contributions, constraints, and in some cases marrying of employability development and learning for the world of work context, and there is a fast growing literature base. This thesis does not claim to interrogate all aspects of the notion of employability development in Higher Education; rather, the account focuses on the tensions that have dominated the field in terms of definitions and tools of investigation.

The second major body of work is that of programme evaluation. My approach is to provide detail on the journey I have undertaken in investigating programme evaluation generally, since it is a vast field of study. My 'arrival' and final decision to use the model upon which the methodological approaches in this research are based is then explained.

The third is that of newcomer socialization. Although this body of literature does not relate to interns in particular, it is crucial in this research as interns are "newcomers" when entering the workplace, and, especially in the case of the WoW Programmes, usually have minimal or no experience of workplaces at all.

The fourth major framework pertains to e-learning. Within this framework I refer to literature that highlights the particular characteristics of weblogs as a learning tool, since these became a significant feature of the WoW Programmes from 2005. In addition, theory relating to communities of practice is presented, as this development occurred as a result of the weblogs.

The starting point for this thesis, which occurred even before engaging with the theoretical frameworks, was to first consider the current trends, the status quo, and the relationship between Higher Education and the world of work.

Higher Education and the World of Work

In terms of a general perspective this research has been informed by familiarizing myself with Higher Education's social and public value. Commentary by the specialists in this area has helped

me to understand the "bigger" picture – the issues and dilemmas that the Humanities face globally, both historically and currently. This work is important for this research because it contextualises the aims of the WoW Programmes. Teichler (1998) is especially helpful in this area, as he explains the changes that occurred from the 1960's, when governments prioritised education and training as agents of socio-economic change and development based on the belief that high levels of economic growth, with significant improvements in living standards, occurred. In relation, Teichler observes that this issue lost momentum in the 1980's but the pendulum swung back during the 1990's, and the value of Higher Education is again on the agenda. The current emphasis on Higher Education's role in enhancing national economic competitiveness within a global knowledge-driven economy (Teichler, 1998) is relevant to any Higher Education project relating to employability development.

The theme of evaluating the role of Higher Education was evident at the 1998 World Conference on Higher Education (UNESCO). At this conference the World Declaration on Higher Education was adopted and a consensus reached on the importance of Higher Education and its future direction. This declaration suggests that the institutions of Higher Education must interpret their role vis-à-vis the world of work differently. In 2007 however, Teichler drew attention to the fact that there is still a gap in the research investigating the relationships between Higher Education and the world of work, despite the public debate that surrounds the issue. (2007)

The point of consensus in this public debate that is especially important in terms of this thesis is that Higher Education must be well-informed of expectations from the outside world and must take a proactive role to respond to the need to prepare students for future job tasks, new employment patterns and contributions to innovation in society. On the basis of this intellectual context it is clear that the Higher Education agenda must accommodate a variety of new pressures, including the need to address the potential and challenges inherent in the articulation between Higher Education and the world of work – especially in the case of the Humanities.

Defending the Humanities: the traditional, utilitarian and social humanist views

There is considerable current debate about the future of the Humanities, and how Humanities educators can demonstrate why abilities in, and knowledge of, the Humanities are relevant to the contemporary world.

According to Chambers (2001), three positions can be identified within this debate: traditional, utilitarian and social humanism. Within these, Miller (1983) outlines the following ideologies: traditional knowledge based teaching, utilitarian teaching for enquiry and decision-making, and humanistic teaching for social transformation. Each of these discourses in the educational domain influence Humanities education. The following is a brief presentation of some of the main tenets of these ideological stances, which critically position this investigation and are the points of departure for the theoretical stance of this thesis.

In the traditional view of education the emphasis is on knowledge creation. It is motivated by social hope, that the younger members of society will use this new knowledge for effective citizenship to benefit society in the future. This view does not however address how the Humanities are relevant to many students whose primary interest in education is, understandably, in relation to their own employability.

In addition, there is a lack of published work with regard to the needs and challenges of Humanities students at the postgraduate level. Cryer (1998) observes that (in the United Kingdom at least) there has been a plethora of transferable skills development programmes and research studies to assist university graduates make successful transitions into the workplace. But he points out that these are almost entirely for students with undergraduate degrees. Cryer (1998) also found that postgraduate students were unable to identify their specialist skills on their own and therefore suggests that universities prepare their postgraduates for the job market. Sir Ron Dearing's (1997) National Committee of Inquiry on Higher Education (The Dearing Review) in the United Kingdom supports this proposal.

The utilitarian view advocates that education should provide the advanced training necessary in an industrially and technologically sophisticated world. A possible threat for the Humanities is expressed in a 2001 report of the Working Group on the Future of the Humanities, presented to the Board of the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada, which suggests that Humanities subjects may become relegated to a 'second division' whose role it is to provide a service for the subjects primarily involved in the production of wealth. Brydon (2006) suggests that a contributing factor may be that the Humanities have a 'public relations' problem in conveying the value of the work that they have always done. While Axelrod (1999) agrees that less 'relevant' fields are especially vulnerable when market values prevail and points out that there appears to be a precarious balance between being receptive to market needs, and capitulating to those needs, his suggestion is that the utilitarian goal of preparing students for the

job market can and should be considered of equal importance to the intrinsic goals of the Humanities.

In my opinion it would be easy to assign a market value to the Humanities if one were to work within the paradigm of utilitarianism, since market value would determine the price to be attached to an instrumental - a "means to an end" – value. But because intrinsic values cannot be categorised by market value they cannot, by their nature, be commoditized. If a bottom line is required in the utilitarian perspective, it is this: the products of a Humanities education are economic agency and engaged citizenship. It appears that the labour market clearly has room for, and rewards, a very broad and diverse range of skills. While this range varies according to the most currently popular definition of employability, it can be argued that economic agency – the ability to understand and negotiate the economy, to be able to probe issues beyond immediate needs relating to employment or unemployment – is a constant requirement. The humanistic requirement of engaged citizenship, which has to do with the ability to recognise, interpret and critique the socio-political system is, however, equally important.

In contrast to the utilitarian, economic view of the human as consumer and worker, the humanistic view is that knowledge is dynamic and should develop within a personal, practical dimension for individual development towards the actualization of a person's fullest physical, emotional and spiritual potential. Humanism in education has meant greater emphasis on emotional health, on self-identity, and on social relationships, (Broudy, 1973) but critics appear to be concerned that the emphasis on the individual may compromise the importance of acknowledging and addressing broader societal needs. An interpretation of humanism that is augmented with a social emphasis – social humanism – in a university educational context seems to argue for this need for balance by merging traditional guiding principles emphasising critical thinking, with commitment to assisting students develop to their fullest potential, and to contribute meaningfully to society. In terms of the social humanist position, therefore, individual growth is conceived as being valuable for self and others.

The broad objective of the 'Improving Teaching and Learning Resources' project by the South African Council on Higher Education's Quality Committee (CHE Quality Committee, 2003) is to provide Higher Education institutions with resources for the improvement of teaching and learning. The quintessence of many of the strategies proposed in the draft is essentially humanistic, with some tension apparent when the resources incorporate both humanistic and commercial goals. This tension extends into (and to some degree, prompts) the question of the value of developing Higher Education's students' employability at all; the same question is

therefore valid for a group that can be said to be representative of Higher Education in South Africa: Humanities postgraduates at Wits University.

The point of familiarizing myself with these three understandings of the relationships between Higher Education and the world of work generally was to ensure a thorough connection to my area of study, including developing awareness of the most important broad-ranging issues and their relevance to this particular investigation. In addition I had to access the specific, national intellectual context for Humanities Higher Education in South Africa, so as to position the research in relation to other work occurring in South Africa.

Humanities Higher Education in South Africa

Jansen's work (2004) has been a useful resource to contextualise Humanities Higher Education in South Africa, and to consider the impact of the consequences of political change since 1994 on Higher Education. More specific research - in terms of employment for Humanities students in South Africa – has included Edey and Molin's (1993) findings on the importance of networking for achieving employment, which are supported by commentary from participants at a Symposium and Workshop on the Employability of South African BA Graduates in 1993. South African employers' negative perceptions of the Humanities degree was also raised at this Symposium and Workshop. Taken together, Edey and Molin's (1993) research and the Symposium and Workshop are especially valuable resources for this research, focusing as they do on the Humanities and employment in South Africa. They are therefore closely located to this thesis, which accounts for their value even though they are dated resources.

Unfortunately, like Moleke's (2003) study on the job-hunting progress of 2 672 South African graduates between 1990 and 1998, Edey and Molin's (1993) research and the Symposium and Workshop on the Employability of South African BA Graduates (1993) is confined to highlighting the particular employment dilemmas faced by *first*-degree Humanities students, not postgraduate degree holders.

Scott's 'Student Pathways Study' (Unpublished report), comprising data from seven Higher Education institutions in South Africa, is another example of a resource for this thesis that is useful only as an indicator of employment trends in South Africa. Scott's 'Student Pathways Study' (Unpublished report) contextual explanation of attempts to address the employability of students at Wits University, but also only focuses on first-degree graduates, not postgraduate

students. An interesting area in which both Scott (Unpublished report) and Moleke (2003) agree is that black students generally take longer than other races to find employment after graduation. This leads the researcher to pay particular attention to the question of who is admitted to the WoW Programmes. This literature has been necessary for this confirmation, or both the WoW Programmes themselves – and then any evaluation of it – would be meaningless.

A study by the Joint Initiative for Priority Skills Acquisition (JIPSA) confirms that South African employers are not satisfied with the relevance and range of skills graduates bring to the workplace. There has therefore been considerable legislative and policy development to encourage transdisciplinary linkages between work and education. These include the collaboration between the Departments of Education and Labour, which led to the implementation of the South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA) Act (1995) and the National Qualifications Framework. In addition, the design of the Skills Development Act (1998) enables the accreditation, at Higher Education levels, of work-based educational interventions. This body of literature has been essential; legislation and policy reveal trends, priorities and responses to issues. A colloquium on the theme of Building Relationships between Higher Education and the Private and Public Sectors, facilitated by the Council on Higher Education (CHE) in South Africa (2002) is valuable for its contextual relevance and is important because of its contribution on the issue of building partnerships between Higher Education and the public and private sectors.

Despite these developments, Winberg (in Winberg et al, 2006) points out that South African Higher Education institutions have paid little attention to researching both work integrated programmes and the current theories on work-based learning. A further gap in the literature and in research opportunities, according to Winberg (2006) is the lack of evaluative research to trace the impact of work-integrated learning programmes. Finally Winberg makes the crucial point that

> There are thus few examples of major research projects in work-integrated teaching and learning. (2006)

Employment data of Wits University's Humanities postgraduates

Wits University does not have a formal or central system in place for tracking student progress into the labour market. The Alumni Office maintains some information, but this is not reliable as it is based on voluntary interaction by alumni. On the same basis, the alumni-student association maintains a database of curriculum vitae documents, as a resource for companies looking for

graduates for employment. The particular schools that do monitor where their students have entered the workplace are usually motivated to do so for future possible fundraising opportunities, not, for example, as a data resource to assess the success of the school's programmes in terms of employability development. Scott points out that where tracking does occur, it focuses on initial placements only - and that tracking systems for the Humanities do not exist. (Unpublished report)

The absence of employment-related data suggests that on the whole Wits University, like other Higher Education institutions, tends to see graduation as the end point of its responsibility towards its students. However, the role of universities in establishing databases to capture employment information raises questions relating to the limitations of the institution that cannot be addressed in this thesis.

Employability

Both components (training and internship) of the WoW Programmes and their theoretical bases can be framed by the literature on employability, the value of learning about employability, and more especially how it can be developed either in the classroom and/or in the workplace. For these discussions I have referred extensively to the Learning and Employability Series, as it offers a wide range of perspectives on the employability of graduates. The series, edited by Mantz Yorke, is published in the United Kingdom by the Learning and Teaching Support Network (LTSN) and the Enhancing Student Employability Co-ordination Team (ESECT). It has been reviewed by leaders in the field of employability, all with extensive experience; they include Peter Knight, Lee Harvey, Brenda Little and Kate Purcell.

These experts agree that the literature presents no consensus view of the term 'employability'. The concept of 'employability' derives not from a discipline (other than, broadly perhaps, human resources development), and it must be understood that the types of skills that workers need cannot be readily predicted, and are subject to on-going change because of rapid changes in the world of work.

As Tamkin and Hillage (1999) (within the context of the United Kingdom) explain it,

> Employability is a concept that has joined the mainstream of individual, human resources and national policy vocabulary. It has been summoned as the means by which individuals can cope with changing employment conditions, organisations can maintain their ability to adapt and succeed and the nation can enhance its competitiveness.

Brown et al (2003) offer a definition of employability as being the relative chances of finding and maintaining different kinds of employment. Hillage et al (1999) extend this by emphasising the issue of satisfaction, including in their understanding of employability an ability to gain and retain *fulfilling* work.

Brown et al (2003) are concerned about the way employability is typically defined in official statements because it focuses on individual characteristics and ignores what Brown et al call the 'duality of employability', where employability exists in two dimensions: the absolute and the relative. The absolute dimension refers to the increasing importance of knowledge, skills and the commitment of employees as sources of efficiency, innovation and productivity. Employability as a relative concept is influenced by the availability of jobs in the market and is therefore about the relative chances of finding and maintaining employment; it is therefore possible to be employable but not be in employment. From the array of definitions available, I orientate this thesis towards Brown et al's (2003) explanations since it is essential to be aware of the availability of work while discussing employability. This was especially necessary in the WoW Programmes from 2005 when we became increasingly aware of organisations' reluctance to host our students as interns if they were not South Africans. This meant that work was less available to some groups of our students than it was to others.

After noting earlier how employability is neglected by Higher Education in South Africa, it goes without saying that there is no research available that considers the needs and challenges of postgraduate Humanities students in particular. There is also a gap in the literature on the research of the employability and employability skills development of those who do not have a professional outcome 'built in' to their academic learning process. Atkins (1999) suggests that with research identifying that

> graduates in the next century are likely to be knowledge workers and symbolic analysts, service providers, members of learning organizations, and managers of their own careers,

there is an opportunity to begin to

> cluster a combination of subject-specific skills and knowledge, generic intellectual skills, generic process skills, competencies and personal attributes. (Atkins, 1999)

Atkins' observation suggests opportunities for Humanities students, especially postgraduate Humanities students who should be experienced critical thinkers, more mature, focused and committed, better at self-organisation and research, and more independent and able to generate original thought.

Employers and employability: a question of skills

It is safe to say that employers want entry-level employees to possess an array of basic, higher-order, and affective employability skills. Since the 1980's, skills sets have been formulated by various authors based mainly in the United States for various industries and at various levels, e.g. Busse (1992), Carnevale et al (1988), Lankard (1990), Poole (1985) and Sherer and Eadie (1987). These researchers generally agree on what these skills are, e.g. self-reliance, adaptability, flexibility, and creativity - but organise and rank them differently. For example, Poole (1985) groups 76 skills in nine categories. Skills and abilities are cited within the general categories of basic skills, pre-employment skills, and work maturity traits in Sherer and Eadie's (1987) study of the characteristics and skills that employers want their employees and prospective employees to possess.

A skill set more specifically relevant to this research is derived from the Dearing Report (a UK Report of the National Committee of Inquiry into Higher Education, 1997). Its relevance here stems partly from the fact that the South African Council on Higher Education (CHE) (2003) consistently refers to recommendations and commentary in the Dearing Report.

The Dearing Report into Higher Education (1997) recognises the problem of adequately defining employability; despite this, the report suggests an 'emerging consensus' that the skills required for employability should include intellectual skills such as critical thinking and the application of theory, and the new core or key skills (such as the ability to work in a team and communicate effectively). Personal attributes that are recognised as being crucial for employability include self-reliance, adaptability, flexibility, and creativity. (Dearing Report, 1997)

These generic skills have been variously described as 'graduate attributes', 'graduate qualities', 'employability skills', 'core skills', 'key competencies', or 'transferable skills'. The Australian Council of Educational Research (ACER) review (2001) refers to *skills* as the ability to perform a specific task, while the notion of *competency* refers to an observable behaviour at a specific level which can then be assessed as performance. The Employability Skills Framework (Australian Chamber of Commerce Industry and the Business Council of Australia, 2002) refers to skills - not competencies - to describe the learned capacity of the individual.

It has been important to locate both myself as researcher, and the WoW Programmes as the object being evaluated, within this skills and/or competencies debate. Holmes' (1995b) analysis of the understandings and applications of skills and critical competencies has been especially helpful. For example, Holmes (1995b) is critical of the dominant approach of the 'skills agenda' in

debates on how universities can best help undergraduates prepare for employment after graduating. For example, where the Dearing Report (1997) emphasises 'key skills', Holmes points out that despite considerable time, effort and money being spent on the skills approach, its conceptual validity and practical value have yet to be demonstrated. (1995, personal communication, 18 November 2005, London)

Holmes (1995a) is also critical of attempts to define, analyse and assess competence. He rejects defining competence as an 'ability' and the notion of competence according to a standard of performance required. Holmes suggests that a better alternative to asking 'What is competence?', should be, 'What are we doing when we say someone is competent?' and that we

> should consider the social processes involved in the decisions and actions in which attributions of competence may play a part. (1995a)

In distinguishing between competence and performance, Holmes (1992) emphasises that competence

> …is not a *thing* but a *concept* which states a *relationship*.

This relationship, Holmes points out, must be the perceived relationship between anticipated or expected performance that will occur in the future and the past or current performance requirement. (Holmes, 1992) Competence therefore is a judgement on past performance that infers future performance.

The Reference Group of the (Australian Chamber of Commerce Industry and the Business Council of Australia, 2002) recognised a need to differentiate between technical skills, job specific skills and the more general skills and personal attributes related to employment, and therefore developed the following working terminology and definition for the development of their Employability Skills Framework:

> *Employability skills* are defined as skills required not only to gain employment, but also to progress within an enterprise so as to achieve one's potential and contribute successfully to enterprise strategic directions.

In this Employability Skills Framework, elements are the facets of the skill that employers identified as important. The mix and priority of these elements would vary from job to job. Crebert et al refer to Clanchy and Ballard (1995), Eraut (1994), Oates (1992) and Tennant (1999) who point out that the notion of transferability has been a contentious issue in the literature for a number of years, with most of the debate revolving about whether or not skills learned in one

context can be transferred into another context which might be so different that a completely new approach to learning may be required. (2004)

Tamkin and Hillage (1999) suggest another area that must still be investigated is employers' roles in terms of developing the employability skills of postgraduate students. They point out that we know little about the role of employers in enhancing the employability of their staff. There is no evidence in the literature that the questions that Tamkin and Hillage posed in 1999: 'What do employers do about employability?' and 'What motivates them to do what they do?' have been answered. They questions should be addressed in relation to the evaluation of the WoW Programmes, especially in the Process Evaluation in Chapter 6.

Employability skills in contemporary workplaces

Another important question determining the literature reviewed for this thesis has been to ask what the context-specific influences on the valuing of a Humanities postgraduate students' employability skill, or sets of skills are. Gardner shows that generally college students continue to have strength in their content or academic skill base but lack

> competencies to handle successfully the principal complex issues of work: interpersonal communication, teamwork, applied problem solving, time management, setting priorities, and taking initiative. (1998)

Gardner (1998) also (see previous section) highlights the problem that employers, academics and others involved in curriculum design and delivery have attached different meanings to the same list of skills. The academic environment obviously differs contextually from the work environment, so how one adjusts critical thinking skills to relate to a new environment becomes a key attribute for new graduates, according to Gardner. (1998) This is a critical observation when considering the particular challenges for Humanities postgraduate students who are certainly expected to have acquired critical thinking skills, but not workplace specific skills during their academic training. Do the advanced critical thinking skills of postgraduates from non-professional degrees include the ability to transform aspects of critical thinking to such workplace needs? Another related gap in the research that must be addressed specifically for postgraduate students is the question of whether they are equipped, through postgraduate study in particular, to convert an existing skill set and adapt it for application in another context.

Holmes (1995) suggests that postgraduate students should articulate their claims to be able to do the kinds of activities that are conventionally expected by employers of those who are highly educated. For students this involves the ability to justify any claim made to particular skills by indicating the performances and activities through which they have been developed and/or exhibited. Holmes emphasises the importance of the language students use to communicate skills, saying this enhances (employment) prospects and demonstrates accountability during employment. (1995) Holmes also suggests that dictating skills sets required for employment is problematic; instead students should be helped to use the skills language to be able to articulate what they can do.

Towards a model for employability skills

Despite the questions around skills, it would seem logical to incorporate a generic frame of employability skills as a starting point to structure the discussion of any possible impact the WoW Programmes may have on its beneficiaries. I have therefore explored some of the available skills sets, and frameworks that contain skills sets.

One of the best-known examples of these is a research project to investigate the employability skills needs of Australian industry (including small, medium and large-sized enterprises) in detail, conducted by the Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry and the Business Council of Australia. (2002) Their report includes a framework summarising the main employability traits that most international sources agree upon. Another strength of this framework – in terms of a discussion of the employability of Humanities postgraduates without formal working experience - is that the employability skills identified are relevant to entry-level employees.

Some of the personal attributes, skills and elements that make up this Employability Skills Framework include communication; teamwork; problem-solving; initiative and enterprise; planning and organizing; self-management; learning; and technology. In addition, the Employability Skills Framework includes the following personal attributes: loyalty; commitment; honesty and integrity; enthusiasm; reliability; personal presentation; commonsense; positive self-esteem; sense of humour; balanced attitude to work and home life; ability to deal with pressure; motivation; and adaptability. (Australian Chamber of Commerce Industry and the Business Council of Australia, 2002)

However, Holmes (1995) reservations about skills sets such as this cannot be ignored. The Employability Skills Framework was ultimately not ideal for application in this research because

it is not adequately responsive to the particular, specific changes or contexts that occurred in the WoW Programmes. Instead, the work of theorists who favour broader aspects of employability for reference points seemed more relevant for the WoW Programmes' evaluation, as they suggested the opportunity for greater flexibility and a degree of discovery when used for the identification of employability development.

Hillage and Pollard (1998) propose four general, but key aspects of employability that are useful for the analyses of the data of the 2005 and 2006 WoW Programmes. The first of these, a person's 'employability assets' consists of their knowledge, skills and attitudes. The second, 'deployment' includes career management skills, including job search skills. The third, 'presentation', is concerned with 'job getting skills', for example CV writing, work experience and interview techniques. Hillage and Pollard (1998) suggest that 'employability assets' will depend on each individual's personal circumstances (for example family support) and external factors (such as the levels of opportunity for foreign students within the South African labour market).

Models that contribute to defining 'Employability'

The USEM account of employability developed by Yorke and Knight (2004) is probably the best known and respected model currently available. It is also useful for its contribution to the discussions around what the term 'employability' actually means (please see the earlier section "Employability' in this chapter). As a model, USEM is an acronym for four inter-related components of employability: **U**nderstanding, **S**kills, **E**fficacy beliefs and **M**etacognition. Yorke and Knight (2004) explain that it has been motivated by

> an attempt to put thinking about employability on a more scientific basis, partly because of the need to appeal to academic staff on their own terms by referring to research evidence and theory… (Yorke and Knight, 2004)

While the USEM model forms part of a large body of research based, scholarly work on employability, its emphasis on meeting the needs of academic staff is not a major priority for the design and development of the WoW Programmes, which made an early shift away from being an academic programme.

Dacre Pool and Sewell (2007) have developed a new theoretical and practical framework, 'The Key to Employability' model. Their model has two main advantages. Firstly, it effectively

encompasses the essential conceptual issues of employability. Secondly, it attempts to address the task of defining employability, visually and relatively simply – and therefore clarifies the concept of employability for a wide and varied audience. It therefore also, like Yorke and Knight's (2004) model, contributes to the discussion on defining employability (please see the earlier section "Employability' in this chapter). Considering that stakeholders of the WoW Programmes extend beyond academia, and includes even any person who has some interest in the WoW Programmes' participants' weblogs, 'The Key to Employability' model may be relevant for use in the Product Evaluation (Chapter 6) of this thesis.

Programme Evaluation

The concept of programme evaluation can include a wide variety of methods to evaluate many aspects of programmes in various ways. This realization prompted the decision to start an investigation of the literature on programme evaluation by tracking its development. A useful resource for this process was Alkin's (2004) collections of essays by leading evaluation theorists, and his framework "The Evaluation Theory Tree" which provide an examination of current evaluation theories. Alkin traces the evolution of programme evaluation within his framework, thus illustrating the differences and similarities between many approaches to evaluation practice.

My intention was to explore, in broad strokes, developments in the field over the last 50 years. While this process was by no means comprehensive, it did ensure that major issues – such as summative and formative assessment in programme evaluation – were considered and addressed, to inform the process of decision-making about the final programme evaluation approach and framework to be used in the case of the WoW Programmes.

It was clear that the choice for the type of evaluation undertaken in the context of the WoW Programmes had to be informed by the doctoral research questions and by what was deemed important to learn about the programmes, so that it would be possible to understand, verify or increase the impact of the intervention on Humanities postgraduates. But taking the range of approaches into account, it was necessary to methodically assess the various types according to the needs of an evaluation of the WoW Programmes. Questions that related to the "best fit" of any evaluation approach for a particular programme, as generated by Nevo (1983) and Alkin (1975), were helpful as a starting point to sift through the variety of approaches. By using their

classification of approaches I hoped to find a relevant model - that would of course be based on the approach that had proved most relevant for the WoW Programmes.

The WoW Programmes have objectives relating to the development of employability that, if systematically monitored and evaluated, should provide insights into the programmes that may be helpful in the future design of similar programmes. The programmes also satisfy Nevo's (1983) basic requirements for an object suitable for evaluation in a university context, as

> ... the clear identification and delineation of the evaluation object is an important part of the development of any evaluation design.

To determine which evaluation approach would be most relevant and effective, I started with the question: is it important to summatively assess, or is formative evaluation more valuable for the WoW Programmes? Nevo (1983) credits Scriven (1967) as being the first to suggest the distinction between formative evaluation and summative evaluation in programme evaluation in particular. Formative evaluation is a practice to improve a still-under-development instructional programme, while a summative evaluation occurs retrospectively and is used mainly for accountability and continuation. The evaluation of the WoW Programmes will be primarily formative, with findings informing current and future programmes. However, some evaluation types from the summative paradigm may also be used in the evaluation; Reeves and Hedberg (2003) and Smith and Ragan (1993) advocate integrated models that combine both formative and summative approaches to examine programme effectiveness, efficiency, and usability in an ongoing process. This approach fits comfortably with my role as participant-researcher in the evaluation.

To further orientate myself to the classification and organisation of different types of programme evaluation, I also considered the selection of approaches for programme evaluation according to the four general classes of educational evaluation models described by Alkin (1975). My subsequent decision to focus on goal-inquiry models, one of Alkin's classes, was motivated by the fact that broad goals for the WoW Programmes had already been established before the research began. The ways in which goals are taken into account therefore became an important criterion in the process of selecting the approach to programme evaluation.

Effective programme evaluation depends upon the existence of clear, specific, and measurable goals, but Patton (1997) observed that this often leads to complex goals clarification processes. It appears that this was a problem with evaluations in the past, especially when programme evaluation methods were chosen largely on the basis of achieving complete scientific accuracy,

reliability and validity. This approach often generated extensive data from which very carefully chosen conclusions were drawn. Generalizations and recommendations were avoided. As a result, evaluation reports tended to reiterate the obvious. More recently (especially as a result of Patton's development of utilization-focused evaluation), evaluation has focused on utility, relevance and practicality at least as much as scientific validity.

Recognizing that different stakeholders may have different goals, Chen (1990) made the identification and clarification of goals not just an antecedent, but an object of evaluation itself. Peled and Spiro (1998) advocated a 'goal-focused evaluation', which identifies both a programme's 'declared' and 'operative' goals as a means of refocusing programmes and re-channeling resources.

The next step in the task to find the most appropriate programme evaluation approach for the WoW Programmes involved looking at each of the goal-inquiry models according to Nevo's (1983) ten questions relating to the definition, purpose, objects of evaluation, aspects and dimensions of those objects, criteria for judgment, client or audience requirements, steps and procedures required, methods of inquiry, practitioner and standards of judgment. So, for example, Tyler's Goal-Attainment Model, with its focus on the achievement of behavioural objectives was rejected, for reasons best explained here by Potter:

During the early 1970's, these assumptions were increasingly challenged, both by those who criticized the pre-specification of objectives (here Potter refers to Scriven [1971], Eisner [1969] and Stenhouse [1975]), as well as by those who viewed emphasis on objectives as limiting, and serving to maintain a narrow and "context-free" perspective on the complexities of curriculum development and educational process." (Potter, n.d)

'Process Theory-Based Evaluation' often focuses on participants' status based on a measure or set of measures both before and after the programme, neglecting what happens to participants during the programme. While this outcome-focused approach can be useful for demonstrating that a programme "worked" or "didn't work," it is not helpful in eliciting information about why and how an outcome was achieved (or not achieved). In my view, to understand why the WoW Programmes worked or did not work, the evaluation had to be informed by an understanding of what happened *during* the intervention. This is known as a theory-driven approach to evaluation, or discovering the "black box" of the intervention (Chen and Rossi, 1983; Weiss, 1972). Literature relating to the theory-driven approach will therefore be important for the programme evaluation in this thesis.

Theory-driven evaluation as an approach to programme evaluation

In the case of the WoW Programmes, the theory-driven approach suggests that in undertaking the evaluation at any of the three stages of the revised CIPP Model (Input, Process and Product), it is important to take the program specific theories of employability into account.

The debate on the role that program specific theory should play in programme evaluation appears to turn on the extent to which the evaluators may become too closely aligned to the programme to be able to evaluate it objectively.

In his description of recent applications of theory-driven program evaluation, Donaldson (2003) mentions how applications of theory-driven evaluation are regularly discussed at the annual American Evaluation Association conferences, that an interest group exists with substantial membership, and that the literature of published theory-driven evaluations is expansive. Donaldson prefaces these examples with the observation that

> theory-driven evaluation seems to have gained momentum in recent years and is now considered the 'state-of-the-art' in many program areas. (2003)

Stufflebeam is however critical of what he terms the "now fashionable advocacy of 'theory-based evaluation'", describing it as a situation

> … wherein one assumes that the complexity of variables and interactions involved in running a project in the complicated, sometimes chaotic conditions of the real world can be worked out and used a priori to determine the pertinent evaluation questions and variables …. (2004)

The different positions held by Stufflebeam and the various supporters of theory-driven evaluation became evident during the process of researching the feasibility of Stufflebeam's CIPP Model for use as an evaluation framework for the WoW Programmes (please see next section, with details on literature pertaining to the CIPP Model). At the same time it was obviously important to consider theory-based evaluation carefully, as it is generally agreed that theory-based evaluation is the culmination of three decades worth of work in programme evaluation. Donaldson (2009) says that

> the overwhelming majority of evaluators today seem to argue that theory does, and should, play important roles in modern program evaluation.

To support his point, Donaldson (2009) lists important contributors in the area of programme evaluation, citing Alkin, (2004), Chen (2004), Christie (2003), Donaldson (2003, 2007),

Donaldson and Lipsey (2006), Fetterman (2003), Mark (2003), Rossi, Lipsey and Freeman (2004), Shadish, Cook, and Campbell (2004), and Weiss (2004) as examples of supporters of theory-driven evaluation.

The process of investigating whether these different views – being from supporters of theory-driven evaluation on the one hand, and Stufflebeam on the other – could *both* be used for the benefit of the WoW Programmes' evaluation, is discussed in the section titled "Reconciling theory-based evaluation with Stufflebeam's CIPP Model". At this point therefore I return to literature that pertains to theory-driven evaluation specifically.

In the 1980's, Chen and Rossi explained that the theory-driven approach, which arose from a discussion of the limitations of 'Process Theory-Based Evaluation', assumes that there is a theory implicit in every programme. This is sometimes referred to as 'program theory'.

To date, theory-driven evaluation still focuses on theories of the particular programme, which are, according to Chen (2005), primarily those that are relevant to the rendering of programme operations into long-term outcomes.

Donaldson (forthcoming) asserts that practically, effective program theory assists with the framing of key evaluation questions and contributes to insightful, sensitive and responsive evaluation design. Donaldson also points out that program theory has become so entrenched in general evaluation practice that clients and stakeholders expect evaluators to know how to develop and use it effectively.

The theory-driven approach involves identifying the key service components and expected programme outcomes, and working with programmes to make explicit the underlying assumptions about how these service components will lead to the desired outcomes. These services, outcomes, and the hypothesized links between them are the basis for developing a programme model or theory. This program theory, in rejecting, according to Donaldson (2007), the notion of "one-size-fits-all" in evaluation practice, becomes the framework to guide the development, implementation, and interpretation of the evaluation.

In the context of the WoW Programmes, this description of the role of program theory in theory-based evaluation may imply that the WoW Programmes' theory was developed in close collaboration with programme administrators, host organisations, subject experts (guest lecturers), and participants. Not all theory-based evaluations, however, rely extensively on this collaborative process. (Chen and Rossi, 1983) Another consideration, still within the context of

the WoW Programmes, and based on an observation from Chen and Rossi (1980), is that developing program theory provides a way to capture the comprehensive nature of the WoW Programmes and also allows for some flexibility by outlining the likely developmental sequence of programme changes.

House (1980) points out that evaluation approaches such as the development of program theory become the foundations of models, which are typically idealized. In reality, the actual evaluation will be shaped by a variety of contingencies, impacting on it and changing it even when it may have started as a particular type. Having considered various approaches to programme evaluation, and deciding to align the WoW Programmes' evaluation with the theory-driven approach, my next step was to review the literature available to find a model that would be congruent with, or complemented by, the theory-driven approach.

Classic evaluation models - that could successfully be aligned with the theory-driven approach - incorporate three basic paradigms: business decision support models; accreditation (quality assurance) models; and instructional design models. (Schankman, 2004) The problem with these models (for application in this research) is that - with their emphasis on accountability and return on investments - they stem from, and are primarily located in business, non-governmental and government contexts, rather than Higher Education contexts.

A model for programme evaluation that is both based on the theory-driven approach and is applicable in a Higher Education context is Stufflebeam's CIPP model.

The CIPP Model

The CIPP model (with the acronym indicating Contex, Input, Product, and Process), which was designed by Stufflebeam in 1984, was considered to be a possible model for the programme evaluation of the WoW Programmes, as it appeared to offer an efficient way to evaluate programmes occurring in *both* educational and world of work contexts. While Daniel Stufflebeam is recognised as the author of the CIPP model, several leading researchers in the field of educational programme evaluation in the USA have engaged with the CIPP model to further develop it; for example, Stake et al (1973) focused on decision making within the CIPP model. Stufflebeam has also attempted to relate the CIPP model with Scriven's Countenance Model. (Burrows, 2008)

The CIPP framework was initially developed as a means of linking evaluation with programme decision-making. The model suggests four different aspects of evaluation – context, input, process and product evaluation - wherein decision-making occurs. Stufflebeam's emphasis on decision-makers in the evaluation process is understood in the WoW Programmes' evaluation according to Patton's definition of evaluation:

Programme evaluation is the systematic collection of information about the activities, characteristics, and outcome of programmes for use by specific people to reduce uncertainties, improve effectiveness, and make decisions with regard to what those programmes are doing and affecting. (1986)

This model was chosen for two primary reasons: firstly the model places emphasis on guiding planning, programming, and implementation efforts, and secondly the model emphasizes that the most important purpose for evaluation is improvement. (Stufflebeam, 2002) In the first case, the CIPP Model is a *practical* tool in a programme evaluation. In the second case, the 'improvement' idea is the goal of the model.

While the four stages of evaluation provide a sound and practical framework for a structured analysis of a programme, they also leave enough flexibility for adaptations. This second reason is especially important for the WoW Programmes' evaluation, and adaptation is supported by Stufflebeam and Webster's (1983) caution that no one model is best for all evaluations of educational programmes, and their encouragement to take situational characteristics into account.

Reconciling theory-based evaluation with Stufflebeam's CIPP Model

After a review of the literature, it was clear that the theory-driven evaluation approach would be effective in terms of the WoW Programmes' evaluation. It was also apparent that Stufflebeam's CIPP Model would be an effective framework for the evaluation.

Stufflebeam (2001), along with Scriven (2004), does not, however, recommend theory-driven evaluation. It was clearly necessary to investigate Stufflebeam's reservations, and the theory-driven evaluation advocates' responses to his criticisms.

Donaldson suggests that Stufflebeam's (2001) oft-quoted criticism of theory-based evaluation, being that,

> there really is not much to recommend theory-based evaluation, since doing it right is usually not feasible and since failed or misrepresented attempts can be highly counterproductive. (2001)

is based on a belief that well-developed social science theory is necessary for successful theory driven programme evaluation. Donaldson suggests that this position indicates uncertainty on Stufflebeam's part about the nature of program theory used in theory-driven evaluation, as advocates of theory-based evaluation apply program theory to small and specific theories of social programs or interventions. (2001) Chen, (2005) while considering the primary criticisms of theory-based evaluation raised by Stufflebeam (2001), agrees with Donaldson (2001) that Stufflebeam's criticisms misinterpret program theory.

In terms of the WoW Programmes, the decision to conduct a theory-based evaluation while *also* using Stufflebeam's model for evaluation (despite his criticism of it), is simply because aspects of each appear to fit the evaluation needs of the WoW Programmes. The way in which program theory is positioned in Donaldson's (2001) definition of theory-driven evaluation, as the process through which program components are believed to influence outcomes, and the conditions under which these processes are believed to operate, suggests that there is potential for a theory-based evaluation approach to *complement* Stufflebeam's model as an evaluatory framework. In addition, Donaldson (2000) makes the point about the variety of sources of information used to develop program theory, including implicit theories that may stem from people immediately involved in the programme. This supports my role as evaluator of the WoW Programmes while taking into account my other roles as teacher, designer and mentor in the WoW Programmes.

Wholey et al (2004) reconcile a framework such as the CIPP Model and theory-driven evaluation by positioning Stufflebeam's (2001) reservations within context, and by suggesting that the two seemingly disparate approaches could work together if balance is achieved between the emphasis on theory-driven evaluation and the model that is drawn from the aims of the particular programme.

It thus became apparent that Stufflebeam's model, even once modified, could work as a framework for evaluating the WoW Programmes, while at the same time considering, as per a theory-based evaluation, what happened to participants *during* the WoW Programmes, and therefore *why and how* any outcomes were achieved (or not achieved). Thus the CIPP model was used as an evaluation framework, and simultaneously the evaluation aimed to be informed by an understanding of what happened during the intervention.

Newcomer organisational socialization theory

Socialization theory incorporates research on the impact of organisations on individual development, on how newcomers develop a sense of identity, competence, and relationships with colleagues and a mentor that are mutually developmental. For participants in the WoW Programmes, internships were an opportunity to become socialized and acculturated in an organisational climate.

Despite the advantages of internships to both individuals and employers there is minimal research on internships as a means for learning, recruiting, and doing work. Scholars have therefore called for more research on internships. (Saks and Ashforth, 1997) Of the research that does exist on internships, there is no published work addressing any possible socialization issues for postgraduate students in particular. Instead, the trend is a focus on undergraduates with less prior experience and lower responsibility and pay.

Though the work on newcomer socialization addresses how people adapt to new work roles (Saks and Ashforth, 1997) in regular jobs over longer periods (e.g., 6-24 months), all individuals joining an organisation must learn the ropes, or, rather, the underlying culture that includes the values, norms, and mores of an organisation from the start. Although they are referring to employees and not interns, Bauer et al comment that successful socialization that results in a "lasting impact on the behaviors and attitudes of employees" (1998) is also relevant for interns entering an organisation. Though organisations may provide different experiences and socialization processes for newcomer employees and interns, the needs of both - such as connecting to the environment, accessing and using support appropriately, and providing people with the ability to gain the knowledge needed to be successful in the organisation will be undeniably similar. (Schein and Schein, 1978)

The body of literature on newcomer socialization is essential because of the premise that through an effective socialization process, interns will begin to develop and refine their own individual professional identities within the organisation and profession, and to develop employability skills that will remain, even as these identities continue to change in the span of their careers. Schein and Schein provide a well known and often quoted description of this as being the process of

> ...breaking in and joining up, of learning the ropes, of figuring out how to get along and how to make it. (1978)

Newcomer organisational socialization and internship stages

There are several stage models of organisational socialization; each describes evolving perceptual transition experiences of newcomers as they adjust to a new job or organisation. Most of these models describe basic stages beginning with anticipatory socialization, adjustment, and ending with role management (Feldman, 1976) and adaptation (Louis, 1980). For example, a model developed by Sweitzer and King (2004) has five stages of an internship: anticipation, disillusionment, confrontation, competence, and culmination. The National Society for Experiential Education (in Inkster and Ross, 1995) suggest that there are six key stages relating to activities. Socialization tactics and stages occur within these "activity stages". I have mapped the identifying characteristics of The National Society for Experiential Education's six stages and their relationships with socialization tactics and stages in 'Table 1: Organisational socialization: a brief review of perspectives'.

On the basis of this literature, the idea of activity stages may have implications for questions of method, which are presented in the next chapter.

Six stages of internships, National Society for Experiential Education, (1995)	***Socialization Tactics*: Schein's five tasks (1978)**	***Socialization Stages*: Wanous' four steps (1992)**	***Socialization Content*: Chao et al: six key learning dimensions (1994)**
Stage 1 - Arranging and anticipating an internship: characterised by "intern excitement", high motivation, idealistic expectations, some self-doubt.	Dealing with resistance to change.	*Anticipatory socialization;* Confront the reality of the new job - newcomers adjust their expectations to the reality of the job.	Performance proficiency, involving the tasks, skills, and abilities needed to perform the job; The people domain, or the development of successful working relationships; Politics, information about the work relationships and the power structures within the organisation; Language, the technical language and jargon unique to one's profession; Organisational goals and values, the mission of the organisation; and History, the organisation's traditions, customs, and stories.
Stage 2 - Orientation and establishing identity: characterised by new learning, information, and finding an identity in the workplace.	Learning how to work: coping with too much or too little organisation and too little job definition.	*Role management* (Feldman, 1976); Achieve role clarity - newcomers learn and negotiate the expectations and requirements of their role in the organisation.	
Stage 3 - Reconciling expectations with reality: e.g. differences between work and university become clear.	Accepting the reality of the human organisation.		
Stage 4 - Productivity and independence: increased learning and productivity on site, and interns become more confident and self-aware.	Dealing with the boss and deciphering the reward system: learning how to get ahead and locating one's place in the organisation and developing an identity.	*Adjustment* ; Locating one's place in the - newcomers learn how their work contributes to the work of the organisation.	
Stage 5 – Closure: characterized by personal assessment and gauging contribution to the organisation, privately or explicitly.		*Adaptation* (Louis, 1980); Assessing success - newcomers assess the value of their contributions to the organisation.	
Stage 6 - Re-entry and practical application: characterized by gauging the value of the internship in future job searches and career planning.			

Table 1: Organisational socialization: a brief review of perspectives

Pratt and Rock (2002) explain that socialization *tactics* emphasize the organisation's role in the process, while socialization *stages* flag important periods of acculturation and assimilation for the organisational newcomer. Schein's (1978) five tasks for successful socialization fit into the "socialization tactics" paradigm, and Wanous' (1992) four-step process are in the "socialization stages" paradigm.

Korte (2007) is critical of Schein (1978) and Wanous' (1992) positioning of the socialization process as a unidirectional learning process whereby the newcomer is positioned as a relatively passive recipient, learning to fit in. Korte draws attention to the importance of reciprocal interactions between the newcomer and colleagues, and primacy of relationship building. Korte suggests that moving successfully through the stages of an internship may depend on assistance from others in the work environment. Newcomers in an environment often succeed or fail depending on the social support that they receive upon entering the organisation. (Amey, 1990) Korte (2007) and Amey (1990) reinforce the importance of socialization tactics in a programme evaluation of this kind, to reveal why and how interns' interactions with colleagues, peers and supervisors may ultimately develop the employability skills and appropriate behaviours that align with the aspects of employability raised by Hillage and Pollard (1998) and Dacre Pool and Sewell (2007) - discussed in a previous section titled 'Towards a model for employability skills' in this chapter.

Ashford and Black (1996) suggest that the more proactive individuals are within the entry process, whether it is formal or informal, "the more successful they [will] be in their adaptation to the organisation". Being proactive may entail attitudinal dimensions such as willingness to establish relationships, and learn. Chao et al (1994) have developed six key learning dimensions that characterize the socialization process. For a successful transition into an organisation, an intern would need to acquire information on the organisation's performance proficiency, language, people, politics, organisational goals and values, and history. (Chao et al, 1994) The work of Chao et al (1994) fits into the "socialization content" paradigm as it concentrates on what is learned during socialization (Pratt and Rock, 2002) and is included with other main perspectives on organisational socialization in Table 1: Organisational socialization: a brief review of perspectives.

Together, tactic, stage, and content theories appear to raise several important issues in socialization that also relate to internships. Table 1 (Organisational socialization: a brief review of

perspectives) shows that the unifying issue evident in the theory available is the importance of making a successful transition into an unfamiliar environment.

Current socialization theories do not, however, help to understand the significance (if any) of prior identity such as 'Humanities postgraduate student' in particular upon entry into the organisation. (Pratt and Rock, 2002) identify another gap in the body of work on socialization:

> besides the focus on individual outcomes, the role of the individual in the *process* of socialization remains relatively unexplored.

In addition, no published work is available on the individual's employability development during the process of socialization.

Work-based learning

My understanding of work-based learning started with Gray's (1999) examination of the various definitions of work-based learning, and how work-based learning differs from traditional forms of classroom teaching. Gray's emphasis of two important elements of work-based learning - action learning and virtual learning – were of particular interest as the WoW Programmes incorporated both these approaches to learning; besides the clear alignment with action learning, the two years of the WoW Programmes that form the basis of this evaluation also included "virtual learning" by weblogs. Gray's (1999) analyses of the contributions action and virtual learning can offer to learning in the workplace was therefore useful.

Gray refers to Raelin (2000) who posits that work-based learning is centred around reflection on work practices. Here, Gray and Raelin's (2000) work intersects with Moon's (2004) work on the importance of reflective learning activity and the development of employability (mentioned in the section "E-Learning") in this chapter. Another interesting intersection is that between action learning, which Gray positions as a basic tenet of work-based learning, and the development of communities of practice: Gray (1999) refers to Revans (1982) as describing action learning as "a social process: people learn from and with each other, and a learning community comes into being".

For Boud and Solomon (2002), working and learning, while being different, are also coincident and complementary. This view is crucial to the mission of the WoW Programmes, as is Boud and Solomon's statement that

> The academy and the workplace need to operate together to ensure that they are not sending contradictory messages. (2002)

Little (1997) discusses four broad categories of curricular frameworks for work based learning, reflecting the control and design of the curriculum, and the status of the learner. Little (1997) also points out the work-based learning need for negotiation about learning between the individual learner, the employer and the higher education institution. Little's (1997) observation frames a practical aspect of the WoW Programmes, being the "contract" developed between the student, the host organisation and the University. It also usefully raises the question of mentorship in the workplace.

Mentorship

There are a variety of project reports and examples from government funded development programmes in the United Kingdom, from the 1990s onwards, that detail examples of mentoring and placement tutoring. One such example is the University of Surrey, which has a long tradition of year-long work placements. Every department at the University of Surrey has a professional training tutor who, with the support of an administrator, finds placements for students – although some students choose to seek out their own. The tutor visits every employer and draws up a contract with them, and the student is supported throughout the placement.

Brennan and Little (1996) mention development work funded by the Leeds Metropolitan University, for a mentoring model aimed at supporting university students' learning in the workplace. Brennan and Little (1996) make special mention of a process model of mentoring developed at Leeds Metropolitan University. This model was based on three key mentoring functions, being educative, supportive, and managerial roles. Brennan and Little's (1996) explanation and adaptation of the three key functions (from Hawkins and Shohet, 1989) are helpful for a closer understanding of the dynamics that occurred in the relationships between WoW interns and their workplace supervisors; it also raises the question of how the University mentor compensated for any shortfall (if it occurred) from the workplace supervisor in one or more of the three roles (educative, supportive and managerial).

Summerfield's (2002) discussion of the "supportive" role of the mentor was informative as it was necessary to consider the balance required from the University mentor in terms of providing counselling and confidentiality while taking organisational needs into account. Summerfield's

(2002) explanation of "transformational" mentoring – necessary when the intern faces a difficult task and requires additional emotional support - is particularly helpful in this regard.

Martin's work (2009) has been useful to consider various models of mentoring in work-based education in Australia. Martin (2009) found that co-mentorship - the combined mentoring activities by both academic and workplace supervisors – had a significant impact on students' satisfaction with their work placements. This finding underpinned the decision to consider, in the process evaluation of the WoW Programmes, how well co-mentorship worked in the WoW internship component.

Bernstein's (2000) description of two forms of pedagogical approaches to mentoring - visible and invisible – added another dimension to Brennan & Little's (1996) adaptation of the three key functions (from Hawkins and Shohet, 1989) of mentoring. Bernstein's (2000) "visible" (being an explicit manner of transmission) and "invisible" (being an implicit manner or transmission) pedagogical approaches formed the basis of an investigation into the impact on WoW interns' socialization into their host organisations.

Eraut et al (2004) were consulted for their practical definitions of different styles and approaches to mentorship, including 'buddy' style mentoring, career mentoring, 'de-centred' or unofficial mentoring (whereby the intern may ask a range of colleagues for help), and person-centred mentoring (a long term relationship with one mentor). In addition, Eraut et al's (2004) five aspects of a positive mentor-mentee relationship that would impact on the socialization of a newcomer into the workplace were used for the evaluation of WoW interns' socialization processes. These five aspects included the amount of time mentee and mentor had together, the degree of interest and trust, feedback and questioning. Whether the mentor asks questions that will facilitate learning raises the issue of reflective learning in the mentorship process. Klassen and Clutterbuck (2002) support the mentor's role in promoting reflection, while Day (1999) observes that reflective learning is neglected in the mentor-mentee relationship, possibly to the detriment of the teaching and learning that should occur during the mentoring process.

Emotional Intelligence (EI)

The concept of emotional intelligence evolved from Howard Gardner's 1983 work on multiple intelligences. Gardner, a psychologist and professor of neuroscience from Harvard University, refers to both interpersonal intelligence (the capacity to understand the intentions, motivations

and desires of other people) and intrapersonal intelligence (the ability to introspect and self-reflect). Salovey and Mayer developed an EI (Emotional Intelligence) model in 1990, and this was followed by the development that put emotional intelligence "on the map" and poularised the concept: Daniel Goleman's bestselling book on the subject, in 1995.

Goleman's model presented the various competencies and skills of emotional intelligence's that impact on leadership. His model outlines four main EI constructs:

- Self-awareness – the ability to read one's emotions and recognize their impact while using intuition to guide decisions.
- Self-management – involves controlling one's emotions and impulses and adapting to changing circumstances.
- Social awareness – the ability to sense, understand, and react to others' emotions while comprehending social networks.
- Relationship management – the ability to inspire, influence, and develop others while managing conflict. (Goleman, 1995)

Each construct is accompanied by a set of emotional competencies that Goleman posits can be developed. (1995)

The commercialisation of the idea of EI that followed Goleman's bestselling book may have contributed to questions about EI's use as a legitimate business tool. In addition, the idea that EI is a type of intelligence has been challenged. For e xample, Locke (2005) has been critical of the concept of emotional intelligence, questioning whether the association with "intelligence" is accurate. Other concerns about the concept of EI focus on the reliability of the many tests in the marketplace, with common questions about issues such as their construction and legal defensibility.

Neverthless, EI became a corporate buzzword in the 1990's, with organisations' recognition of the necessity of EI development for all their employees. Drawing on my own experience, South African organisations have, however, focused more specifically on incorporating EI into leadership development programmes and talent management strategies. The current economic climate and reductions in training budgets has contributed to EI interventions being reserved mainly for the upper levels of management within large corporations and multinationals. The popularity of EI is not, however, waning. This could be attributed to the emphasis on intrapersonal intelligence, or the development of self awareness; while the importance of common sense combined with insight, maturity, and courtesy in the workplace is irrefutable, it is

worth considering that organisations have not, until recently, actively promoted ways for employees to *reflect* on their performances in these areas.

Communities of Practice

One of the obvious ways in which an individual's emotional intelligence would manifest in the workplace would be within the context of a team, group or within a community. The term *community of practice* is accredited to Etienne Wenger. Communities of practice are

groups of people who share a concern, a set of problems, or a passion about a topic, and who deepen their knowledge and expertise by interacting on an ongoing basis. (Wenger, 2002)

Lave and Wenger's earliest publication (1991) looked at interactions between novices and experts, and at how newcomers create a professional identity. By 1998, their focus was on personal growth and the trajectory of individuals' participation within a group in the workplace (i.e. peripheral versus core participation). In 2002, Wenger, McDermott and Snyder investigated the structure and developmental stages of communities of practice, and also considered how communities of practice could benefit organisations.

Wenger points out five activities that are crucial to establishing and maintaining a community of practice. These are

> ***Events*** that bring the community together
> ***Connectivity*** through various contexts and media
> ***Membership*** that is neither so extended that its focus is diluted or that it splinters (though the latter can be part of the evolution of a community of practice and a social learning system) nor so confined that there is no need for exchange.
> ***Learning projects*** that explore or fill in gaps in the knowledge and practice of a community increase the commitment of participating members.
> ***Artifacts*** produced, gathered and maintained so that they are accessible and useful traces of the community's activities allow for reflection upon the evolution of the community of practice. (Wenger, 2002)

Each and all of these activities can be identified in the development of the community of practice in the WoW Programmes, reinforcing the necessity to investigate it thoroughly with reference to Wenger's work.

Members of a community of practice must not only share interests and competencies – they must also, according to Wenger (2004) be involved in the same practice, and be exposed to informal learning and immediate experiences. This closely describes some of the elements that the WoW

Programmes' participants would experience. Two additional aspects, in my opinion, should be raised in a discussion on communities of practice, but are not available in the literature.

The first is the issue of *benefit.* Members of a community of practice will not participate actively unless they can perceive some personal benefit. In the WoW Programmes, the benefit would have been the potential of the community of practice to assist with the successful transition from the University to the workplace. Put simply, a transition implies change, and it is generally accepted that change is perceived as challenging. The possibility existed that a community of practice in the WoW Programmes would assist with this "difficult" transition by facilitating support, networks, problem-solving, and the exchange of knowledge and information.

Le Maistre and Paré (2004) use activity theory for the basis of comparisons between school and work, (which they position as radically different activity systems) and for explaining the difficult transition between them. Interestingly, Lave and Wenger's 1991 findings were important for Le Maistre and Paré (2004), who point out that each workplace has its own geography, political structure, and culture, so that the knowledge of the organisation must be acquired for each particular organization or worksite - or, more accurately, in each particular organization or worksite. Communities of practice would assist in the acquisition of this knowledge – not only "in-house", or within industries, but in the case of WoW participants, as interns entering various worlds of work for the first time.

The second issue that is not addressed in the literature concerns the difficulties of entering communities, and the practical tools that facilitate entry. I believe that communities of practice in the workplace facilitate learning and sustain knowledge development, but only if they are easily accessible, reliable, and if "ownership" is shared.

E-learning

An e-learning intervention, introduced to the WoW Programmes in 2005, became a major facet of the programmes' design. We intended to use the weblogs in 2005 as a marketing tool to present interns as employable, by making their knowledge – demonstrated through their weblog post reflections first on their experiences in the Training Programme, and then during their internships – visible in the public sphere. (The need for marketing students' employability was based on our awareness that it was becoming more difficult to facilitate internship placements for all students, especially students who were not South African or from the SADEC region.) Our motivation was

based on a 'hunch', as no research has been conducted on weblogging as a vehicle to achieve this in particular, then or now.

The general advantages of weblogging are well researched and supported, with the tool regarded as a "middle space" between both fully online and traditional classrooms that tend to be instructor-centered or dependent. (Oravec, 2002) The fact that weblogs are a separate, student-owned space (Veronikas and Shaughnessy, 2004) within the traditional course supported our intention for WoW participants to be more proactive about facilitating their own transitions into the workplace in 2005.

It became clear as the weblogging project in the WoW Programmes unfolded that the weblogs were valuable opportunities for reflection for meaningful learning. The literature on learning through reflection is crucial for this research because of the significant role of reflection in professional or complex activities, particularly where situations are relatively unpredictable - as they may become when students are in the process of transition from the university to the workplace. (Schön, 1989)

A programme that has as its main goal the enhancing of employability must select e-learning tools aligned to those goals. Moon appears to be the only commentator on the value of reflective learning activity and the development of employability. However, neither Moon nor any other researcher discusses the capacity of weblogs in particular to facilitate learning about employability (and thereby to develop employability), through reflection. Nevertheless, Moon's perspective on reflective learning is especially appealing because, in the context of the WoW Programmes, it takes into account that our participants, as postgraduates, have substantial prior learning:

> Reflection is involved in meaningful learning where learners are seeking to make sense of new material for themselves, linking it to what they know already and, if necessary, modifying their prior knowledge and understandings to accommodate the new ideas. (Moon, 2004)

Moon does state that "learning journals" are becoming more common in non-vocational programmes where they may serve a variety of purposes besides being a vehicle to support reflective activity, e.g. to improve student writing, to increase creativity, to enhance problem-solving skills, for personal development purposes, to link theory (in the curriculum) to practice, and so on. Moon suggests that one of the most interesting purposes that links directly to many employment situations is the use of journals to accompany project work. The journal provides a location for planning, the collection of ideas, notes on progress, contacts, and reflection on any or

all of these. But the journal assignment has value-added potential when the student also assesses his or her emotional responses to the engagement and self-management of the project work. When this happens, Moon (2004) says that the "short-term 'fill-ups' of skills" has been transcended and employability as a lifelong capability, in advance of the events associated with major employment, can be said to have been achieved.

Weblogs' contribution to the development of a Community of Practice

Moon's (2004) work on learning and reflection proves that the WoW weblogs, as closely aligned to 'journal writing' as they are, have a strong theoretical basis. Their e-learning characteristics may be able to extend Moon's claims about the value of 'learning journals' because weblogs enable a community of practice, by virtue of the fact that bloggers can respond to each other through the 'comments' facility at the weblogs. Unlike traditional journals, the weblogs provide an opportunity for collaboration to generate a common, shared understanding of events and allowed for an action orientation for dealing with similar events in the future. Thus reframing a journal writing assignment in an e-learning format was one of the ways we facilitated mutual knowledge construction for WoW participants as they developed their employability, and has necessitated a review of the literature on communities of practice.

The notion of "practice" that is critical in the theories on communities of practice is especially interesting and important in the WoW Programmes. Sharp (1997) points out that the community of practice focuses on learning that emerges only though working, or actually practicing one's craft. In this respect the notion of a community of practice was effectively aligned with the project of the WoW Programmes – being to assist students with their shift from academia to the workplace – as it encouraged students to communicate with each other about their work experiences. The community of practice that developed in the context of the WoW Programmes had, as its members, 'workers' – not students.

Weblogs as an innovative e-learning tool

Oravec's (2002) observation that the potential for multiple dimensions in weblogs allows for the development of students' "unique voices", empowering them, and encouraging them to become more critically analytical in their thinking proved accurate in this research. Having access to how

the student reflected on his or her experience of the world of work has also been valuable for accessing implicit assumptions in the WoW Programmes.

However this is unchartered territory as a methodological approach for evaluating the development of employability by a programme. Weblogs were not well known as learning resources when we initiated them as assignments in 2005. Blood (2000) reports that weblogs were first named in December 1997, and that in 1998 there were only a handful of sites of the type. There were 23 weblogs on the Internet at the beginning of 1999, but rapid growth meant that by July 1999 there were hundreds more. In 1999 various free services were launched, all of them designed to enable individuals to publish their own weblogs quickly and easily. These services were the catalyst for the weblog explosion. However, discussions of the potential of weblogs as an e-learning tool in Higher Education only started in 2003. At a conference entitled 'What Is Harvard's Digital Identity?' at the Berkman Center for Internet and Society at Harvard Law School in November 2002, Provost Steven Hyman challenged delegates (assembled deans, faculty members and administrators) to take advantage of the Internet to break down the “silo mentality”, and to build intellectual bridges that would facilitate the flow of information and ideas between the University's disparate schools and centres. The 'Weblogs at Harvard Law' project commenced after this conference - in 2003 only, and well after the first weblogs were created.

By comparison, the prevalence of weblogs in South Africa was negligible even by 2005. World Wide Worx, an independent research company, reports that only 7.4% of South Africans had Internet access in 2005. The slow growth of Internet users in South Africa was attributed to the high cost of bandwidth in the country. (Internet World Stats Usage and Population Statistics) In December 2006 there were 4941 weblogs in South Africa, with only 600 active. By August 2007, the number of weblogs increased to 25 136, but only 2 953 were active. (Active blogs were defined as having been updated in the month prior to the end of the counting period.) (Goldstuck, 2009)

Goldstuck (MD of World Wide Worx) points to some isolated occurrences of weblogging in Higher Education in South Africa and says that,

> As far as I know, blogging was happening actively at Rhodes University at the time [2005], at least in their New Media or Journalism departments. (Personal email correspondence, 20 July 2009)

According to a weblog post from The Morningside Post at Columbia University, few universities in the United States were using weblogs as a form of e-learning in 2005, and

> None of them [Ivy League universities in the USA - Harvard, Princeton, Yale, Stanford] have got the students, faculty and alumni collaborating on an institutionally endorsed blog. (2006)

Since 2006, a number of universities around the world have commenced with the use of blogging tools including, for example, the University of Iowa, Rice University, Stanford University and RMIT University in Melbourne. Despite this, there is still little research on weblogs to showcase employability in particular, or on how to assess a weblog author's employability development.

Using weblogs to reveal learning and knowledge

While McGee (2002) refers to knowledge work as an invisible craft that is difficult to recognise and measure, Efimova (2004) argues that it is possible to see the usually hidden activities of knowledge workers in their weblogs. This is because, like Moon's (2004) traditional journal entries, they

> can provide tangible evidence of mental processes. They make thoughts visible and concrete, giving a way to interact with, elaborate on, and expand ideas. (Kerka 1996)

The possibility that weblogs could make many of usually hidden knowledge work activities visible in a public space was exciting, but it was important to able to determine whether this actually occurred. Bartlett-Bragg's (2003) work identifying stages of weblog development that can be evaluated as evidence of effective knowledge work proved useful in the analysis of the data for the Process Evaluation of the WoW Programmes. Although Bartlett-Bragg (2003) did not design her five-stage process specifically for an assessment of evidence of employability development, it has been possible to use it in this way in this thesis, even in conjunction with socialization theories.

Critical markers within each of Bartlett-Bragg's (2003) stages for possible application in the WoW Programmes' evaluation are that in the first stage (establishment), students' recall and record learning events. As this is a selective process, it may be valuable since it could indicate the areas of learning that students have found significant. Two characteristics at the second stage, which Bartlett-Bragg calls the introspective stage, have the potential to further reinforce the value of this model for the Process Evaluation. Bartlett-Bragg's says that it is at this time that students start to pay attention to their emotions, and evaluate the experience. Bartlett-Bragg also notes a shift away from consciously writing for the lecturer – which could otherwise compromise the validity of this affective evaluation by students. Independent views, unprompted by formalized

questions, develop in the fourth stage (reflective dialogue) according to Bartlett-Bragg who suggests that blogging at this point is self-directed, with the student taking full responsibility for content. (2003) At this stage therefore, the data could contain reflections on the processes of the WoW Programmes that are not motivated by a sense of authority, nor influenced by the cyber presence of guest lecturers or WoW Programmes' staff. Bartlett-Bragg's (2003) identification of the construction of knowledge artefacts at the fifth stage has implications for the WoW Programmes Process Evaluation, since this stage marks a point where there may be access to students' reflections on the knowledge learned.

This explanation of Bartlett-Bragg's (2003) five-stage process for assessing weblogs, and its potential relevance for the WoW Programmes' evaluation, demonstrates an important point that must be made about the literature review in this chapter and the content of Chapter 3, being the methodological approach to the programme evaluation: this is that the nature of programme evaluation in itself has necessitated a close relationship between the literature reviewed and the explanation of the method used for the investigation. Many of the frameworks discussed in this literature review will therefore be expanded upon in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 3 Methodology

The World of Work Programmes were intricately connected to political, social, historical, and personal issues, all of which added layers of complexity to the task of evaluating if, how and why the Programmes developed the employability of postgraduate Humanities students at the University of the Witwatersrand. The researcher therefore investigated the WoW Programmes as objects in depth, using a variety of data gathering methods to produce evidence that could, in turn, be used to evaluate the programmes and thus answer the research questions.

The evaluation of the WoW Programmes is centered on qualitative data from ten informants. Five of the respondents participated in the programmes in 2005, and five participated in 2006. Their interviews and their workplace supervisors' interviews are available in the appendices.

While the research focuses on these ten participants, and on any impact that the structure and content of the programmes had on their employability, these insights will be combined with secondary sources to make broader claims about contemporary trends, developments and findings in the area of employability skills development in Higher Education.

The range of the data for the WoW Programmes is not, however, limited to the ten participants and their various interviews. I have been able to draw on my observations, interactions, weblogs, the WoW online discussion forum, conversations, assignements, email correspondence, documents produced as a result of work performed during internships, and so on. They have been collected from not only the students themselves, but also from guest lecturers, academics, the WoW Programme Coordinator, Human Resources and recruitment personnel, and workplace supervisors at both potential and participating host organisations. These (direct and indirect) data sources constitute a rich and varied body of information that I have had access to over the eight years of my close involvement in, and experience with the WoW Programmes.

Positioning the research: The qualitative research approach

A qualitative method is best positioned to adapt to constantly changing programme contexts and has therefore been used as the primary method for the analysis of the data in this research. Although the programme evaluation focuses on the years of the WoW Programmes 2005 and

2006, it has been important to describe and consider the development of the programmes since 2001. Decisions for changes to the structure and content of the programmes are discussed in Appendix 1 (Input Evaluation: History and Development of the World of Work Programmes at Wits University). This document provides a history of the template of the WoW Programmes, and its development reveals how practical, theoretical and contextual influences impacted on the programmes' design and the achievement of its objectives. The qualitative research approach is exploratory and descriptive as well as contextual (Burns and Grove, 1993; Cresswell, 1994) and therefore allows for analysis that can refer back to previous experiences and learning during the development of the programmes. In addition, Sofaer says that

> qualitative methods can indeed help to identify patterns and configurations among variables and to make distinctions. Thus, qualitative research not only serves the desire to describe; it also helps move inquiry toward more meaningful explanations. (1999)

Qualitative analysis for programme evaluation

It can be argued that qualitative research is particularly relevant to the challenges of conducting programme evaluation. (Polit and Hungler, 1995) This is because the qualitative research characteristics of describing, understanding and explaining, for example, the relationships, patterns and configurations among factors, or the contexts in which activities occur, also accommodates unique or unexpected events or situations. Sofaer believes that

> One of the great advantages of qualitative methods is that they enhance the capacity not only to describe events but to understand how and why the "same" events are often interpreted in a different, sometimes even conflicting manner, by different stakeholders. (1999)

The relevance of qualitative analysis for the evaluation of the WoW Programmes hinges on the flexibility available to give voice to participants who are rarely heard in discussions on employability. In addition, qualitative analysis allows for the description of the different and specific characteristics of each participant in their different and specific roles, in their own "territory" and using their own language. (Sofaer, 1999)

These methods help to acknowledge that issues around employability and initial transitions into the world of work are highly dynamic and complex. By being flexible, opportunistic and heuristic, qualitative methods provide techniques to probe the motives that lead to behaviours. (Parker and Kozel, 2007)

Practical application of qualitative analysis

In the qualitative research paradigm, a variety of data analysis procedures are commonly used. (Polit and Hungler, 1995) All qualitative data analysis methods however involve coding data into themes, then categories, to form conclusions. (Jasper, 1994) The researcher highlighted important features with respect to the evaluation of the WoW Programmes as an employability development intervention by using data analysis approaches such as comparison, organisation, category and subcategory units of meaning and coding. (De Vos, 1998) Data analysis was inductive, as the research sought to investigate individual perceptions, not prove a preconceived theory. The themes were, therefore, generated from the data, rather than predetermined. Within these themes, each individual's view was captured and analysed, with data presented in a logical sequence in relation to the research questions addressed in the study.

Qualitative analysis and the researcher

Polit and Hungler (1995) describe qualitative research as the systematic collection and analysis of narrative data, which is primarily participative, by using procedures in which the control imposed by the researcher is minimal. Cresswell (1994) however suggests the qualitative interview method minimises the distance between the researcher and the research participants. Although Cresswell (1994) points out that this may allow for a better understanding of their experiences, this does raise the concern of objectivity, which can be addressed simultaneously with another possible concern: that of possible perceptions of the evaluator of this research as being an advocate for the programme, especially while using participatory evaluation methods. According to Burns and Grove (1993) the researcher is involved as a participant, observer and interviewer in qualitative research. The respondent is therefore regarded as a self-interpreting person and is viewed by the researcher as the only reliable source of information to answer the researcher's questions. The respondents interpret the experience for the researcher and the researcher aims in turn to interpret the explanations provided by the respondents.

This issue of objectivity does suggest a need for close examination of the intuitive dimension of my research question, which indicates that I move from an open-ended exploration of participants' experience of employability, to an anticipation of the WoW Programmes actually facilitating employability. The research starts with an intuition that has informed the methodology, for instance the design of questions posed to participants during interviews and the subsequent interpretation of their responses. However, I did not aim to prove or to disprove this intuition, but rather to use it as a means to explore Humanities postgraduates' employability and

to remain open to the unexpected and the irregular, so that interpretations could arise inductively from the data to inform and challenge any theoretical bases.

The combination of methods in this research was tailored according to the research questions and the context for the research. These methods include case study research and the thematic content analysis of weblogs and interviews. Before a discussion of these methods however, it is necessary to discuss the ways in which the programme evaluation was approached and formulated.

The research format

Research methodology texts indicate that a focused, exploratory-descriptive case study format should be used for the presentation, description and exploration of the WoW Programmes' data. (Yin, 1984) Case studies emphasize detailed contextual analysis of a limited number of events or conditions, and their relationships. The cases in this research are the experiences of transitions into their workplaces of ten participants in the WoW Programmes. The circumstances of each respondent differed in terms of their political, social, historical, and personal situations. These conditions were taken into account for their possible impact on students' responses to the WoW Programmes, and on their subsequent transitions into the workplace.

As researcher my roles have been both as participant and as an observer/researcher. I participated in the process of designing the WoW Programmes from 2002 to 2006, and in 2005 and 2006 specifically my role was as mentor to participants during their internships. Punch points out

> Participant observation differs from direct or non-participant observation in that the role of the researcher changes from detached observer of the situation, to both participant in and observer of the situation. (2005)

The nature of my involvement leads to a claim for the participatory action aspect of this research, even if only according to a loose definition of participatory action research. For example, there appears to be relative uniformity in the view that participatory action research mostly has, as a purpose, the finding of solutions to concrete problems. There is also agreement that this is important for the replication elsewhere of general theoretical knowledge in the field.
However, this research has not employed the participatory action research requirement for collaborative activity, and so is excluded in terms of the popular definition from Kemmis and McTaggart, where participatory action research is

> collective, self-reflective enquiry undertaken by participants in social situations in order improve the rationality and justice of their own social... practices. (1988)

While the research considers the development of the WoW Programmes within the four moments of action research, namely reflection, planning, action and observation, the research has not followed each moment in a spiral or cycle. (Kemmis and McTaggart, 1988).

Aspects of action research were incorporated in the research methods in so far as participatory action research was conducted with a view to change, and all programme evaluations implicate elements of the possibility of change. The elements that this research had in common with the classic action research paradigm were largely based on the researcher's own participative role as staff member in the programmes' cycles of planning, action, reflection and documentation. However, the researcher did not independently initiate any of the repeating cycles in the programme that would be typical of action research, for the purposes of the research.

Programme evaluation

Theory-based evaluation has been used for the past two decades as an evaluation model to determine how a programme will work under certain conditions to solve identified problems. (Chen, 2005) One of the most important functions of a theory-based evaluation is to provide a basis for generating and prioritizing evaluation questions (Weiss, 1995). This may involve starting with the WoW Programmes' outline or brief, which has explicitly stated goals and a description of the programme services. After initial examination of these documents, a tentative programme theory can be developed. Feedback from "key informants" (in the case of this research, Humanities postgraduates) who have knowledge about the programmes can be used to verify and modify the theory. Questions must not, however, focus solely on over-arching programme goals - a more sensitive set of analyses must be conducted. For example, a key questions to emerge from the programme theory may be: "Do workplace supervisors receive adequate support and acknowledgement from their organisation's for their mentorship role of interns?" The documentation of individual goals is an essential component of the programmes' evaluations, as it allows for the opportunity to address the question of "what works for whom" based on the individualized goals set by participants.

According to Green and McAllister (1998) the benefits of using a theory-based, participatory evaluation approach include:

- Providing a format for participants – in this case host organisations and interns - to share their assumptions about how and why a programme is supposed to work;
- Development of evaluations that more accurately reflect actual programme processes and intended outcomes;
- Providing a framework for sharing information with programmes for continuous programme improvement and for dissemination of evaluation findings.

In addition to these benefits, it is possible that theory-based evaluations can further our understanding of how work-based learning programmes function, at a broader level. By definition, theory-based evaluations focus directly on understanding the mechanisms underlying programme functioning and thus can address complex conceptual questions about the nature and effectiveness of interventions. Finally, Weiss (1995) suggests that, because theory-based evaluations focus on explanation of programme effects (rather than just documentation) an increased use of this method may lead to an improved ability to integrate evaluation results into a larger body of theoretical and programme knowledge.

Particular considerations for an evaluation of the World of Work Programmes

To know if the WoW Programmes successfully prepared postgraduates for their careers, the unique features of the programmes necessitated an alternative theory-based evaluation approach that marries Higher Educational *and* industry specific programme evaluation practices. Herein lies the challenge of this particular programme evaluation, because, as Patton puts it,

> The profession of evaluation remains very much split along these lines [academic evaluation versus a service/stakeholder orientation to evaluation], but with new twists and perhaps, deeper antagonisms. (1997)

An evaluation of the WoW Programmes presents an opportunity for an evaluation model that will take into account such a 'split' by exploring any strengths, weaknesses and differences in Higher Education *and* industry programme evaluation approaches, and then by using the best practices available in both approaches. Routine surveys of university courses or programmes are often implemented to measure aspects such as teaching methods or learning outcomes, investigated within the core areas of pedagogy and curriculum evaluation. In the case of the WoW Programmes some extenuating factors had to be considered at these starting points, leading to an interesting variation on conventional Higher Education evaluation practice. The selection and design of an evaluation process for the WoW Programmes necessitated a problem solving approach, for

- the design of effective pedagogy according to University *and* workplace characteristics;
- the development, implementation and evaluation of curricula intended for use with students about to make transitions into 'unknown' environments (the workplace);
- the evaluation of postgraduate students abilities to apply not only their specialized knowledge itself, but the concomitant effects and benefits of postgraduate study.

To accomplish this, the point of view put forward in this research is that while students are the primary beneficiaries in the WoW Programmes, employers' perspectives should also be considered in an evaluation of a programme designed to address the critical skills sets needed for strategic and value-added work in the 21st century. Frean quotes Bill Rammell, the universities minister in the United Kingdom, as saying that

> There is a common interest between students and employers here because we know that students have concerns about the extent to which their courses increase their employability. (2008)

It also appears that both camps, workplace and academia, agree in principle on the importance of considering employers' views on workplace preparation during curriculum development in Higher Education. For example Stumpf raises this point while talking about Post Apartheid Challenges for Higher Education in South Africa,

> First - all HE [Higher Education] institutions will have to develop ways to ensure the continuous evaluation and adaptation of their learning programmes to incorporate changing social and economic realities. In doing so they will have to develop partnerships and co-operation agreements with structures in business/industry and in civil society through which they can constantly re-interpret the suitability of their academic offerings. For many universities specifically this represents a new challenge and demands a decisive change in moving towards a more ‘client-based’ approach in the provision of HE learning programmes. (2001)

It can be argued however that the reality, when academic staff members are at the drawing board of curriculum design, is that employer views are often neglected in favour of Higher Education's goals to foster research and scholarship. This is a global issue; for example, Frean (2008) reports that in the United Kingdom, the gulf between industry and Higher Education in terms of the preparation of students for the world of work is clearly acknowledged - and is therefore being addressed through proposed legislation. Government plans in the United Kingdom to forge stronger links between Higher Education and the workplace include proposals for universities to work with local employers to ensure that students are offered internships, shadowing schemes and sandwich courses, and initiatives for businesses to work with universities to design new vocational degree courses.

Initiatives such as these will raise interesting opportunities to look at the ways in which the complexities of the differences in the two contexts – workplace and university – will be negotiated in an alliance. In the meantime, this researcher believes the WoW Programmes can be seen as a prototype for such initiatives because its two codependent components – training and internship – occur in the different sites, University and workplace respectively.

Implicit in Stumpf's (2001) recommendation is the observation of differences in evaluation approaches and processes in academic and industry contexts. In terms of the subject of this research, there is no question that the WoW Programmes' evaluation occurs within the field of educational evaluation, and is therefore an educational programme evaluation. Exploring the differences in evaluation in the two contexts is however useful both to position educational evaluation, and because these differences raise issues that pertain to the WoW Programmes' evaluation in particular.

Higher education programme evaluation versus workplace programme evaluation

One of the ways of identifying the differences in Higher Education programme evaluation and workplace programme evaluation is to consider the role definitions and challenges for programme evaluators themselves in these different contexts. Within the academic context, evaluations usually emerge from internal processes, conducted by academic staff who may be directly involved in the programme. On the other hand are individuals who are not directly employed by the programme under evaluation and typically contracted by workplaces for the evaluation process only. They are referred to by Schankman (2004) as 'external evaluators'. Shadish and Epstein (1987) also use the label 'service evaluators' for programme evaluators who provide a service that relevant stakeholders want, which will include addressing stakeholders' needs, programme improvement, and assisting with programme decisions.

Schankman (2004) points out that internal programme evaluators in Higher Education in particular face different challenges from evaluators who are evaluating workplace programmes. For example, one of these challenges for Higher Education programme evaluators is that their students are not expected to demonstrate continuous improvement in the same domain or task. (Schankman, 2004) Another challenge is that students are difficult to keep track of after they have completed their course(s), and particularly after they have graduated from the university. This makes it difficult for evaluators to gauge the impact of learning, as the university is itself not

usually the primary beneficiary of the student's new learning (except in the case of training postgraduate students to be academics).

Patton (1997) refers to Shadish and Epstein (1987) who confirm that views of evaluation do indeed contrast in the different contexts of Higher Education and workplace. According to Shadish and Epstein,

> The general discrepancy between service oriented and academically oriented evaluators seems warranted on both theoretical and empirical grounds. (in Patton, 1997)

For example, evaluators of academic programmes, who tend to be located at the university in the first place, emphasize the

> research purposes of evaluation, traditional standards of methodological rigor, summative outcome studies, and contributions to social science theory. (Patton, 1997)

It would appear that in the last instance - "contributions to social science theory" - Patton is referring to the valuing – by academic evaluators – of the outcomes of the evaluation to the academic discipline. This consideration, in the Higher Education evaluative exercise of a programme's contribution to a body of knowledge is confirmed by Codd during his discussion of the epistemological traditions underpinning evaluation theory:

> In educational evaluation, theories of knowledge have an important bearing on what is evaluated and on the activity of evaluation itself. (Codd 1988)

Planning the programme evaluation for the World of Work Programmes

A key consideration in the planning of the programme evaluation was the purpose of the evaluation and what I, as researcher, wanted to be able to decide as a result of the evaluation. To answer this I returned to the core research questions (available in Chapter 1, 'Research purpose and questions').

It was clear that the kinds of information needed to answer these questions would need to reveal the process of the WoW Programmes (its inputs, activities and outputs), as well as input from the students who experienced the programmes. I therefore considered three major types of evaluations: goal-based evaluations, process-based evaluations and outcomes-based evaluation.

Goal-based evaluations assess the extent to which programmes meet predetermined goals or objectives. Process-based evaluations attempt to fully understand the mechanics of a programme, and how it produces the results that it does. Both of these models are useful approaches within the

context of the WoW Programmes, as they both apply well to long-standing programmes that have undergone some change over the years. Both models are also useful for accurately portraying how a programme works (for possible replication elsewhere).

An outcomes focus in a programme evaluation is useful to indicate the potential in, and benefits from participation in the programme. Outcomes are usually in terms of enhanced learning (knowledge, perceptions/attitudes or skills) or conditions, e.g. resilience or self-reliance. An early survey of the WoW Programmes' research data indicated that there were four levels of evaluation information that could be gathered, including respondents'

1. changes in skills (applied learning to enhance behaviours),
2. reactions and feelings,
3. learning (enhanced attitudes, perceptions or knowledge), and
4. effectiveness (improved performance because of enhanced behaviours).

The general steps to accomplish an outcomes-based evaluation include identifying the major outcomes within these levels, to verify the programme. In the context of the WoW Programmes, this involved asking "What is being addressed through the Training Programme?" and then for each activity, asking "*Why* is that particular aspect of the workplace being addressed?" The answer to this "Why?" question would, I believed, be an outcome that would typically occur during the internship phase, that could be examined with and against existing research on employability indicators currently recognised in the workplace.

The decision to use the three types of evaluations - goal-based, process-based, and outcomes-based evaluations - in the programme evaluation of the WoW Programmes was further motivated by the idea that used together they could enable a theory-driven approach to evaluation. Chen and Rossi (1980) suggest that there is an underlying theory in every programme, which, when revealed, further facilitates the evaluation process and analysis of the programme.

Selecting an evaluation framework for the World of Work Programmes

After the decision that goal-based, process-based, and outcomes-based evaluations should be foundational to the WoW Programmes' evaluation, some particular distinctions pertaining to an evaluation of the WoW Programmes had to be taken into account. Various sources agree that fundamental aspects of programme evaluation in Higher Education and in the workplace differ. For example, the role of the evaluator, and the perceived general applications of the outcomes of

the evaluations differ in Higher Education programme evaluations, and in workplace programme evaluations. Since the programme evaluation of the WoW Programmes occurs in these two different sites (university and workplace), the selection of an evaluation framework had to be flexible enough to account for and incorporate such differences.

I surveyed the relevant literature for models for programme evaluation. My intention was to base the programme evaluation of the WoW Programmes on a proven model, where goal, process and outcomes based evaluation are accommodated while taking the importance of context into account.

The CIPP Model

For the evaluation of the WoW Programmes I have chosen to modify the classic CIPP programme evaluation model, originally developed by Daniel Stufflebeam and colleagues in the 1960's. The acronym CIPP stands for the core concepts of the model: context, inputs, processes, and products.

The choice is motivated by the fact that the model recognizes essential types of issues encountered in education, planning, programming, implementing, and recycling (Wentling, 1980). *Context evaluation* reflects the environment, identifies needs, and forms goals and objectives. *Input evaluation* assesses the competing ways to achieve the goals specified in the context evaluation. *Process evaluation* reviews how the programme operates. *Product evaluation* focuses on programme results, connecting outcomes with the other findings from the earlier areas of evaluation. Since the model's inception, Stufflebeam has added the additional concepts of impact, effectiveness, sustainability, and transportability. (Stufflebeam, 2001; Stufflebeam, 2003)

While the basic structure and conceptual foundations of Stufflebeam's CIPP model provided a sound starting point, it was clear that Stufflebeam's model had to be modified to match the special purpose of evaluating the WoW Programmes.

The two components of the WoW Programmes had to be considered separately, as they occur in two contexts: the university (the training component of the WoW Programmes), and the workplace (the internship component of the WoW Programmes). The implication is that both components could theoretically be run through all the elements that make up the CIPP model

separately. Practically, however, this will occur in different ways across different parts of the CIPP model.

Explanation for the CIPP programme evaluation model application

The *Input Evaluation* of the WoW Programmes can be found as Appendix 1 (Input Evaluation: History and Development of the World of Work Programmes at Wits University). Both Chapters 4 and 5 are concerned with the *Process Evaluations* of specific years (2005 and 2006). The final, concluding chapters addresses *Product Evaluation* by discussing the impact, effectiveness, sustainability, and transportability of the WoW Programmes.

Input evaluation in Appendix 1 (History and Development of the World of Work Programmes at Wits University)

In the conventional application of the CIPP model, Input Evaluation involves surveying similar programmes for comparative purposes. A review of the literature and an extensive web search has established that there are no programmes - in South Africa or internationally - similar to the WoW Programmes, specifically for Humanities postgraduate students and consisting of the two components of training and internships. For this reason, I have chosen to modify Stufflebeam's Input Evaluation approach (1971; 2001; 2003), and I will instead refer to the prior WoW Programmes (2001-2004) to measure the WoW Programmes in 2005 and 2006. In Appendix 1 (Input Evaluation: History and Development of the World of Work Programmes at Wits University), key changes in the development of the components of the WoW Programmes and lessons learned from the programme each year are detailed for each year from 2001 to 2002. The main intention of this Input Evaluation is for it to be able to assist the consideration of possible ways of planning and organising the WoW Programmes in according to the needs of participants and host organisations or future employers.

Process evaluations in Chapters 4 and 5

To define process evaluation, Stufflebeam (in Kellaghan et al, 2003) says that the process evaluation should contrast activities with the plan, and that

> In essence, a process evaluation is an ongoing check on a plan's implementation plus documentation of the process.

For the process stage of the WoW Programmes' evaluation, programme activities and interventions will be analysed. Drawing on Stufflebeam's (1988) strategies for process evaluation, the aim in Chapters 4 and 5 will be to detect or predict strengths and defects in the procedural design of the WoW Programmes and its implementation during 2005 and 2006. As the basis and evidence for the discussion of the Programmes strengths and weaknesses, I will use the data collected from the WoW Programmes' participants' in 2005 (in Chapter 4) and 2006 (Chapter 5) to access and analyse participants' reactions to the programmes' activities.

Product evaluation in Chapter 6

In Chapter 6 the WoW Programmes' impact on the participants, Humanities postgraduate students at Wits University, will be evaluated.

Evaluative dimensions used in the programme evaluation model application

A crucial modification of the CIPP model, applying to each of the above stages, is that the particular view of each stage – input, process and product - will be analysed within two evaluative dimensions representing central concerns in educational programme evaluation: pedagogy, and curriculum design.

Issues relating to pedagogy will encompass the methodologies used to facilitate learning. The investigation of curriculum design will look at the use of existing technologies that complement the curriculum, and the efficacy of the curriculum design in terms of addressing learning needs.

Curriculum as evaluative criterion

It is generally accepted that a curriculum is a planned sequence of learning experiences, and that curriculum design maps out an intellectual 'journey' for students by presenting a series of experiences that will result in students learning what the curriculum designers have intended them to learn.

Typically these experiences will include attendance at lectures and classes, work in small groups, private study, preparing work for assessment and so on. (Teaching and Learning Support Office) According to Huggett et al (n.d.), effective curriculum design also involves ensuring that the curriculum is accessible and inclusive, i.e. that students with disabilities, and from all backgrounds, can participate in it with an equal chance of success. Once access and inclusivity are assured, the design of the curriculum should facilitate, as Huggett et al (n.d.) suggest, a "rational conversation" between learner and coursework in Higher Education, allowing us to hear

> [the] students' experience, on any given campus, of any given course. (n.d.)

This is a reminder that an evaluation of curriculum design should consist primarily of students' voices, but Maher and Graves (2007) also point out that curriculum interventions in themselves must enable students to make clear connections between their education and work, and help them recognise the relevance/value of their studies.

Maher and Graves (2007) refer to a current expectation (expressed by, for example, the Pedagogy for Employability Group, 2004) for institutional learning and teaching strategies to address employability through curricula. McNair (2003) posits however that this can only occur if the relevance of employability is made explicit in the curriculum, and Yorke and Knight (2004) agree that any links with employability must always be made overtly in the Higher Education curriculum, for the students' benefit. The task of "remembering employability development" is somewhat easier in the case of the WoW Programmes, since developing participants' employability is a core aim. Employability skills development should therefore be explicit in the curriculum design of the WoW Programmes.

It is useful at this point to revisit briefly the fundamental structure of the WoW Programmes, and to look at the construction of training component and internship component that makes up its curriculum. Work-based learning (Cannon and Newble, 2000) and work-related learning (WRL) are strategies most commonly associated with enhancing employability. The WoW Programmes encompass both. Boud and Solomon define WBL as being

> the term being used to describe a class of university programmes that bring together universities and work organisations to create new learning opportunities in work places. (2000)

This definition applies to the WoW Internship Programme, and the task in the Process Evaluation will be to assess whether the design of it positively impacts student employability and facilitates

the skills essential for success at work. (Little and Harvey, 2006) Work-related learning (WRL) makes

> graduates ready and able to make the transition from education to the workplace. (Hillset et al, 2003)

The World of Work Training Programme fits within this paradigm, and the ways in which it achieves

> learning outcomes achieved through activities which are based in, or derive from, the context of work or the workplace... (Hills et al, 2003)

will be analyzed in the Process Evaluation. While Higher Education programmes that include some work-based and work-related learning aspects do exist, the fact that these are integral to the WoW Programmes is significant and sets it apart.

Maher and Graves (2007) say that

> a necessary first step for HE providers in addressing employability is to establish what it is that makes students employable and how this can be developed, and then to audit their curricula to evaluate how this can be achieved.

Knight and Yorke (2004) have developed a list of employability attributes (relating to personal qualities, core skills and process skills) that can be used to analyze how curriculum design facilitates the development of employability. These will be used in the Process Evaluation to determine if the WoW Programmes' curriculum design facilitates the development of employability. A further consideration from Huggett et al (n.d.) however, is that

> curricula are as distinct as learners, and more differentiated than ever before in the history of education, in terms of guiding framework, applications and practices, and enrollments.

As the aims, intended learning outcomes, syllabus, learning and teaching methods, and assessment that make up the WoW Programmes' curriculum design are both distinct and differentiated, the application of the Process Evaluation tool necessitates openly formulated narratives to allow for a certain amount of flexibility.

Pedagogy as evaluative criterion

One of the key conclusions that can be drawn from Harvey's (2003) work is that

> Employability is not something distinct from learning and pedagogy but grows out of good learning.

An effective evaluation must therefore focus on pedagogy for employability during learning opportunities at the levels of both the teaching encounter and the internship (for the WoW Programmes, 2005 and 2006).

Harvey (2003) supports Knight and Yorke's (2004) development of a tool based on the claim that 'highly employable people need understanding, skills of various kinds, efficacy beliefs, and metacognitive fluency" — USEM. (Knight and Yorke, 2004) Harvey (2003) believes that this view of employability prioritises pedagogy, and Maher and Graves (2007) also believe it is a useful starting point for identifying what is important in enhancing student employability. Knight and Yorke (2004) state that their model aims to increase the 'scientific' aspect of employability thinking within Higher Education.

The USEM tool, which I intend to use for the Process Evaluation of the pedagogical aspects of the WoW Programmes, does not emphasise mechanistic outcomes-oriented curricula. Instead, Knight and Yorke believe that

> Learning outcomes tend to look after themselves when learners engage with worthwhile content through a variety of well-conceived learning, teaching and assessment processes that provide occasions for metacognition and consideration of self-theories. (Knight and Yorke, 2000)

Since Harvey et al position employability as a process, rather than as a product of education (Harvey et al, 2002 and Lees, 2002), with the belief that

> employability is about how individuals engage with opportunities, and reflect and articulate their skills and experiences. (Harvey et al, 2002)

the four components of the USEM model will be used generically in the Process Evaluation. The analysis of the pedagogical practices in the WoW Programmes will be informed by the four broad interlocking constructs to assess the contribution to participants'

- Understanding (of disciplinary material and, more generally, of 'how the world works'),
- Skilful practices in context (whether the practices are discipline-related or more generic),
- Efficacy beliefs (under which are subsumed a range of personal qualities and attributes),
- Metacognition (including the capacity for reflection, and that of self-regulation).

  Maher and Graves (2007)

In addition, and while looking at aspects such as teaching and mentorship activities, an analysis of a pedagogy for employability must investigate areas such as whether students are engaged in active learning, and if they are being reminded, where appropriate, of the potential for making claims to employability through their work. Yorke and Knight (2004) suggest three broad questions that should frame the analysis. These are to question if pedagogical practices contribute to participants' employability by

- fostering a continuing willingness to learn;
- developing a range of employability-related capabilities and attributes; and
- promoting confidence in reflecting on and articulating these capabilities and attributes in a range of recruitment situations. (Yorke and Knight, 2004)

A final reminder from Harvey is that embedding employability development in learning processes is complex and will be influenced by factors other than course organisation and curriculum design:

> The pedagogical processes and reflection on and articulation of learning are essential elements that are mediated by subject discipline and external factors, not least the extra-curricular experience of graduates and, ultimately, the recruitment practices of employers. (Harvey, 2003)

Procedure for the Process Evaluation of the World of Work Programmes

There have been four steps inherent in the procedure towards the Process Evaluations in Chapters 4 and 5. Figure 1 is a summary of the procedure undertaken for the evaluation of the WoW Programmes.

Step 1: Defining the activity stages of the World of Work Programmes

To conduct a Process Evaluation of the WoW Programmes, the programmes have been divided into the following broad activity stages:

- Selection
- Training
- Transition
- Internship

These activity stages are organized chronologically for both the 2005 and 2006 WoW Programmes, encompassing both the training and the internship component. They then contain specific activities pertaining to the 'stage'.

The Input Evaluation (Appendix 1) reveals the broad segments of the WoW Programmes. Divisions between activities have either occurred naturally, or as a result of the programme design. The transitionary period is an example of the latter. We did not predict, at the onset of the WoW Programmes, that this would constitute a distinct phase of development for the students, until we started hearing and learning from the students themselves how this time in the programme was distinguishable from any other activities.

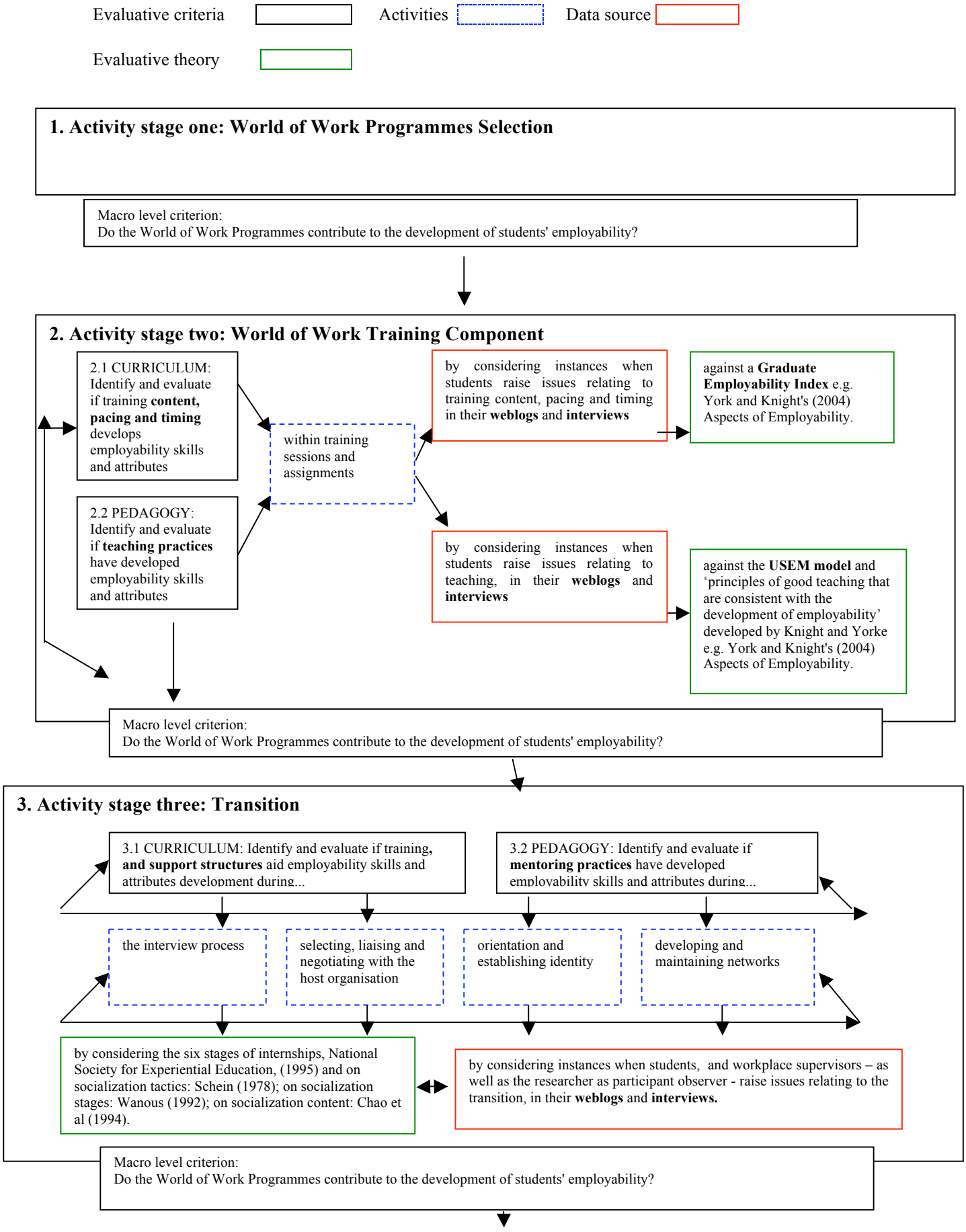
Defining 'Selection' as an activity stage on its own is warranted because of the complexities of that process. These complexities stem from external factors, such as financial constraints and staffing limitations. The complexities forced specific criteria for selection that will be used in the evaluation.

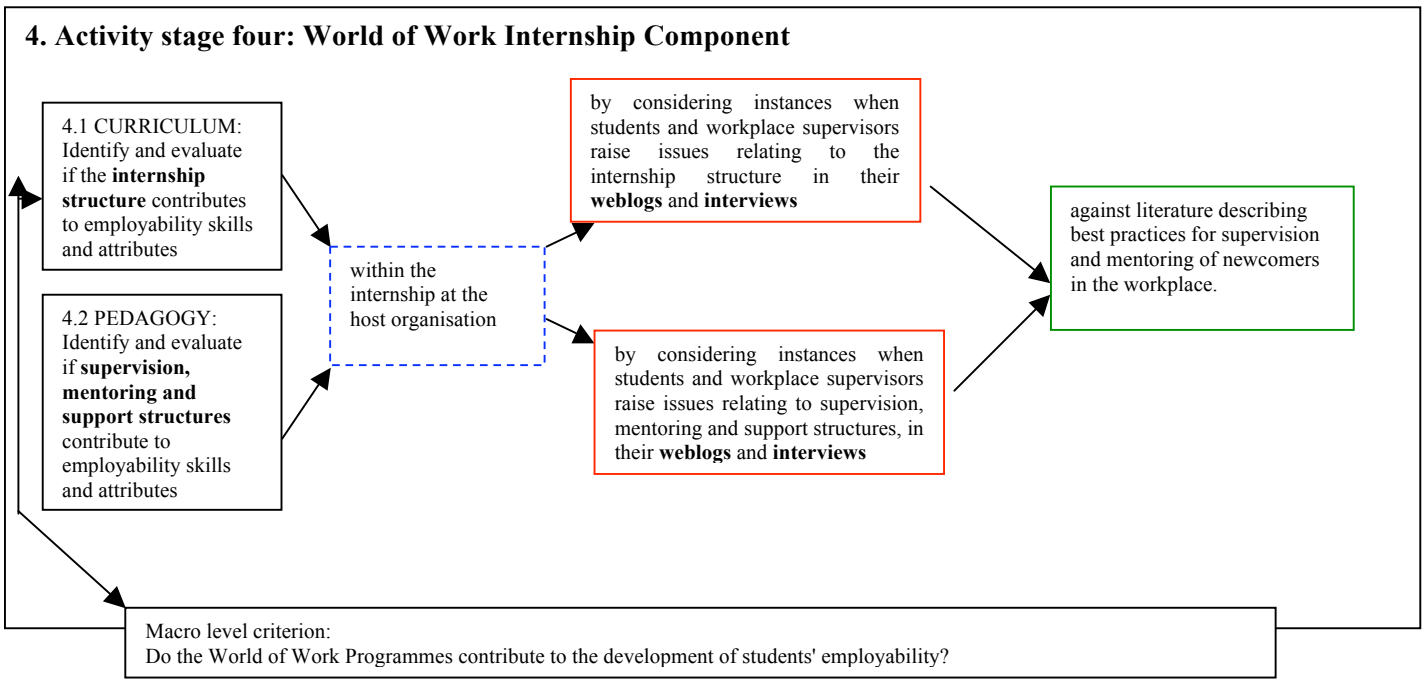
The training and internship activity stages are the most obviously occurring activity stages, as they are fundamental to the design of the WoW Programmes.

Step 2: Defining the main activities within each cluster

Within each activity stage, I have isolated those moments where participants, usually while reflecting on their experience, indicate important activities that represented critical shifts, either positive or negative, towards or away from the development of their employability. The converse applies: participants may have raised opportunities for employability development that the programmes did not address or include. I refer to these activities as “critical moments”. The participants therefore dictate the important activities that warrant evaluation. The broad sources for these critical moments include observations and reflections from workplace supervisors, this researcher, and students themselves.

Figure 1: Summary of Procedure for the World of Work Programmes' Evaluation





Step 3: Developing criteria

Criteria for each activity has been derived from students themselves, mentors, the programme organizer's experiences, and/or from the Input Evaluation of the programmes from 2001 to 2004 – or, where relevant, from the literature. A framing question for the development of criteria has been applied consistently: From the perspective of programme beneficiaries, what can we learn about what worked, or did not work, during the programme's operations, which will help improve the development of employability?

At the macro level therefore, the criterion is essentially the issue of employability, and whether or not the WoW Programmes at Wits University help postgraduate Humanities students to develop it. Responses to this question are based on the areas of the curriculum design and pedagogy of the WoW Programmes. In terms of 'curriculum', the evaluative activity looks at how the programmes were designed and conceptualized, and in terms of 'pedagogy', how the content was actually taught and implemented. Pedagogy, and curriculum design constitute the criteria for evaluation at the micro level, as Figure 2 illustrates:

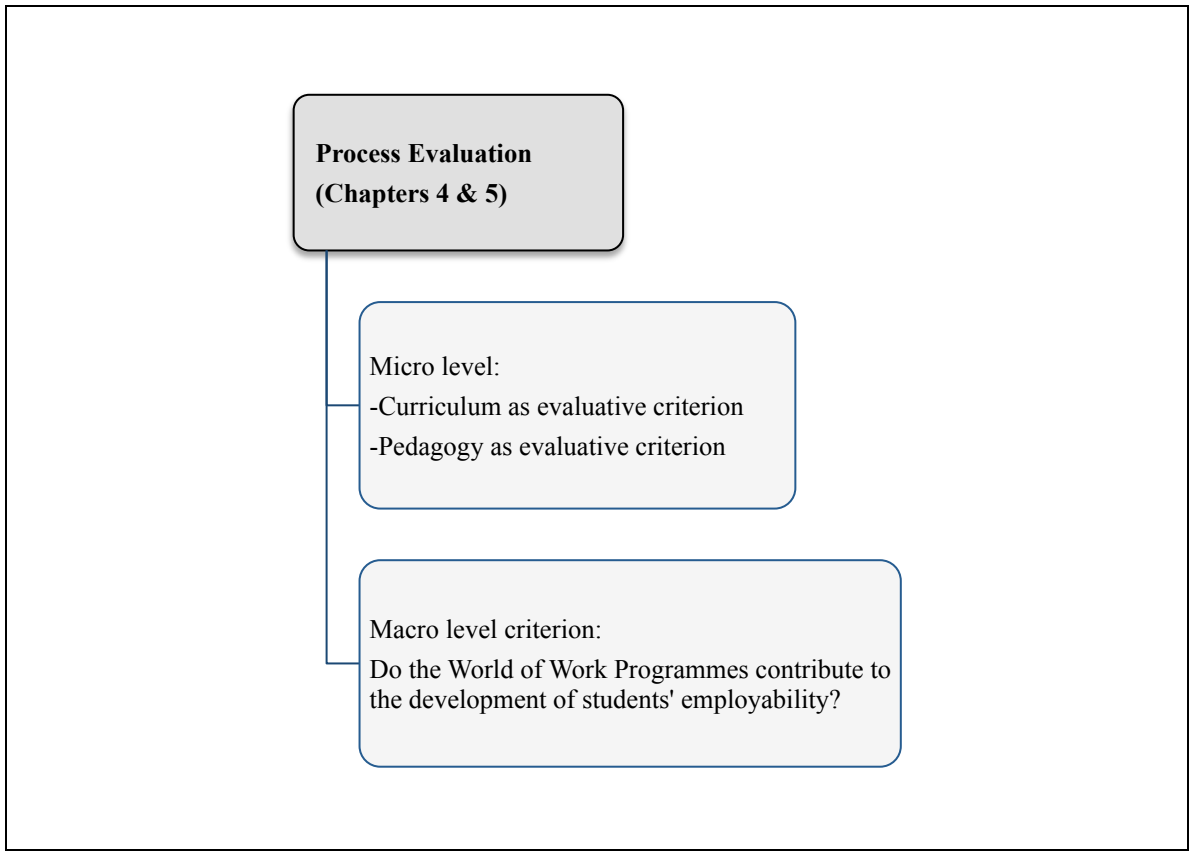


Figure 2: Criteria for evaluation

Step 4: Data for the evaluation of the World of Work Programmes in 2005

The data collection tools – primarily interviews and weblogs - allow me, as evaluator, the opportunity to develop an accurate profile of the programme processes.

Data collection instruments

Interviews and weblogs were used to investigate how Humanities postgraduate students regarded their employability development, and how this was affected by an intervention such as the WoW Training and Internship Programmes.

Interviews as a research tool

It was hoped that the interview would be a method for gaining insights into the nature of the internship experiences as a means of facilitating employability development for Humanities

postgraduates, including aspects such as its advantages and disadvantages, its major components, the roles played by the workplace supervisors, and the understanding of the nature of the content of the supporting Training Programme. Interviews were chosen as a data collection method because they allow for the flexibility necessary to access such a range of insights, and because of their potential to enable the gathering of rich data. (Seidman, 1996) Semi-structured, in-depth, face-to-face interviews were therefore conducted for the collection of data, which was recorded on audio-tape and later transcribed. The interviewing style adopted was open and conversational.

I had a dual role in the WoW Programmes in 2005 and 2006. While I was researching the Programmes for this doctoral thesis, I was also involved in mentoring students once they joined their host organisations as interns. This meant that I conducted site visits and communicated regularly with the interns and their supervisors. I was available to work with the workplace supervisor and intern, to discuss any problems that may have occurred in the intern's transition into that workplace. The mentoring visits were also a platform to conduct the interviews and thus collect data for this research. In turn, the interview questions were an effective opportunity to raise any issues that I needed to address in my role as mentor.

Group interviews

I experimented with group interviewing, even though in both 2005 and 2006, the "group" interviewed consisted of only two interns. I will therefore use the general term and approach of group interviewing to describe this data collection approach, rather than focus groups (which, if the structure and process is adhered to stringently, should consist of 6-12 participants).

I was aware of the varying degrees of camaraderie and group bonding that occurred amongst participants in the WoW Training Programmes. I was interested to know if this sense of fellowship could aid the transition out of the University and into the workplace, if interns placed in the same organisation would help each other develop their employability skills more effectively than the intern placed in an organisation on his/her own. Denzin and Lincoln (1998) suggest that group interviewing can raise this as another level of data gathering for a perspective on the research problem, and Frey and Fontana, quoted in Morgan (1985), say that

> Social investigation can be enhanced by employing the group interview technique… [since it] will provide data on group interaction, on realities as defined in a group context, and on interpretations of events that reflect group input.

Personal and private issues such as financial concerns (e.g. the process of negotiating and/or finalizing arrangements pertaining to stipend payments with the host organisation) were not raised during group interviews. This made it possible for the group interviews to also then be an opportunity to see what would happen when the workplace supervisor joined the group. In the case of GL and FN, one interview included the workplace supervisor, while the other did not. (I made alternative arrangements to see the interns one-on-one, and I also saw GL and then FN by themselves for 15 minutes after the group interview. GL and FN were able to discuss personal and private issues during these times.)

Designing the interviews for programme evaluation

I intended to use the face-to-face interviews to gather before-and-after data relating to the students' transitions into the workplace. Conducting the interviews at specific intervals would, I hoped, provide data for a comparative analysis of the stages of this transition. Subsequent interviews were opportunities to return to the respondents to see if, how and why the situation had changed, for more discussion, and at times verification.

The interviews were issue-oriented, with semi-structured questions, but I did use a series of general questions (available in Appendix 2). The goal in this process was to gain an understanding of the outcomes interns and workplace supervisors viewed as most important, and what steps they believed were important in facilitating these outcomes. For example, questions for interns at the exit interview included "How have you changed since being in the programme?" and "What are the most important things that this programme has done for you"? Questions directed at workplace supervisors included "What kinds of changes have you seen in the intern?" and "What are the most important things the programme does to help support the internship process?" Responses to these questions will be organised around the key evaluative dimensions of organisation, curriculum design and pedagogy, and will be discussed as part of the Process Evaluations in Chapters 4 and 5.

Although the interview questions were semi-structured, the researcher consciously tried to ground them in concrete work-related routines and incidents occurring at the intern's work site. The interview questions were also general enough to allow the discussion to then move towards the specifics of daily working life. An example of this is in UL's second interview. (Appendix 3.2, Interview, 27 July 2005, p 87) Her response to the question "What challenges face you as an

intern at this stage?" led to a description of her reactions to being assigned mundane tasks such as booking a car and collecting a plane ticket, to her frustration with the lack of recognition from the workplace of her higher qualification. This then led to UL describing the difficulty of being both assertive and courteous and her description of communication as a "huge challenge". (Appendix 3.2, Interview, 27 July 2005, p 87)

While open, general questions often successfully reveal information, the interviews also included questions that related to the area of practical intelligence or tacit knowledge, e.g.

- How would you describe your practical competence within this workplace?
- How would you describe your understanding of this workplace?
- How useful is your knowledge and intellectual ability proving to be in this workplace?
- How do you rate your ability to apply knowledge acquired during your postgraduate degree, in this workplace?

The first set of questions generally dealt with the intern's orientation into, and expectations of the workplace. Responses to these questions should provide information for the evaluative dimension of the programme evaluation dealing with the organisation of the programmes.

The second set of questions for both intern and workplace supervisor dealt with the intern's employability skills development. Responses to these questions should reveal aspects of the pedagogical dimension (the actual teaching and implementation) of the programmes.

For workplace supervisors, issues of mentorship readiness and support were also explored and the third set of questions at the final, or exit stage dealt with support issues and development. These will be useful to provide information on curriculum design, another evaluative dimension of the WoW Programmes' evaluation.

Weblogs as qualitative research tools

One of the course requirements in the WoW Programmes in 2005 and 2006 was for participants to set up and maintain their own weblogs. Weblogs (blogs) are frequently updated documents on the Internet. They are often associated with traditional diaries or journals, as the content is typically subjective and includes experiences, insights and commentaries. Entries are usually in date order and are primarily textual, although images are also used. The tone is usually reactive, punchy, conversational, knowing and free-associative. (Boxer, 2008) Where blogs differ from

traditional diaries or journals is in their inclusion of links to other blogs, web pages, and other media related to the topic, and the interactive format of blogs, as readers can leave comments.

Blogs are implicitly tools for reflection and journaling, but the WoW Programme designers initially intended to extend them as marketing tools, to present programme participants as employable by making their reflections of their experiences in the WoW Programmes visible to future employers in the public sphere. We soon realised, however, that besides using weblogs as an e-learning tool to facilitate situated and reflective learning, and besides their marketing value, they also constituted a valid research tool in its own right. In setting up the weblog project, and only subsequently considering its potential for data collection, I am guided by Clarke's caveat when using the Internet as a medium for qualitative research:

> The approach and medium chosen should suit the research goals and be sensitive to the target group and context. Thereafter the research should be planned to exploit the functionality of the chosen medium and minimise its limitation. (Clarke)

Time-stamped, replicable, open to scrutiny in real-time, and coded according to structural properties, it was clear that the weblogs in the WoW Programmes could lend themselves to a range of research questions and a qualitative analytical approach. A blog is essentially a non-invasive, non-threatening observation instrument, easily maintained over a period of time, which also made it an ideal research tool to access participants' insights into the complex process of making the transition from the university to the world of work.

Host organisations and the established business professionals who participated in the World of Work Training and Internship Programmes in 2005 and 2006 were encouraged to interact with students through their blogs. The vision was for the WoW Programmes' mentor at Wits University, and the workplace-based supervisor to monitor and mentor the intern together. This had the potential to reveal the points of debate and interest between workplace and university – which in turn could have revealed priorities and disparities between postgraduate students and employers. In other words, blogs as an e-learning tool in the WoW Programmes had the potential to be triangulated hypertext conversations between postgraduate students, the business community and the University, and therefore offered the researcher access to the experiences and applications of learning from the WoW Programmes in real world situations.

Another advantage reinforcing weblogs as a valuable research tool is that there are no financial costs for participants setting up and maintaining a blog (besides being online); it is also a tool that participants can master fairly quickly and easily. As researcher, using the weblogs for data

collection meant that I had access to respondents twenty-four hours a day regardless of their locations.

In the context of the WoW Programmes, the weblogs could be viewed as "progress files" or portfolios of participants' personal knowledge management. In 1997, the Dearing Report on Higher Education in the United Kingdom called for progress files, consisting of an institutionally maintained record of a student's progress, as well as a more personal record of achievement (developed in the process of personal development planning). (Dearing, 1997) Personal development planning is a crucial aspect of employability development. It appeared that if weblogs could be developed as progress files or portfolios with students reflecting on areas such as their personal development planning, I would be able to access qualitative data on their employability development. Using the weblogs as a research tool meant that I also had access to the ways in which students thoughts and learning evolved. Efimova and Fiedler have commented about this characteristic of weblogs:

> Finally, we propose that the public nature of weblogs provides researchers with unique opportunities for observing usually invisible trails of developing ideas and connections with others, and for getting insights about interplays between individual and community in this process. (Efimova and Fiedler)

The value of a research tool must also be dependent on whether approaches can be devised or are available to analyse data such as any evidence of new learning and reflection in the weblogs. I chose the pedagogical approach outlined by Bartlett-Bragg (December 2003) who suggests a five-stage process be applied when positioning weblogs as a reflective tool: establishment, introspection, reflective monologues, reflective dialogue, and knowledge artifacts.

Electronic media as research tools for analysing developing communities of practice

In February 2006, the course designers realised that participants needed ongoing support for the practise of weblogging, especially in terms of using weblogs as a career management tool, and for the development of their writing styles. We were also looking for a way in which to help participants develop a community of practice so that learning and information could be shared amongst WoW Programmes' participants. This led me to think about whether the development of a community of practice in the WoW Programmes context would be important for investigation in this research.

At this stage the weblogs were already initiating and enabling a community of practice to a degree. The fact that peers are able to read and respond to each other in the weblog format certainly qualifies as collaborative activity. A weblog is however a personal space "belonging" to a single author, and is therefore not as much of a collaborative tool as other available communications technology.

The WoW Programmes' staff involvement with the weblogs – using them for monitoring and assessment purposes in 2005 and 2006 - would, we realised, further disable the potential for the weblogs as a virtual space for a community of practice. In his review of the literature on communities of practice, Sharp notes that imposed formalities in communications among group members can inhibit the informal exchanges that learning depends on. (Sharp)

Lave and Wenger (1991) point out that it is not necessary for members to be co-present for the community of practice to occur and function, nor does the group need to be well defined or identifiable. Socially visible boundaries are also unnecessary. The course designers therefore looked again at Internet-mediated communication technologies and opted for an electronic mailing list and an Internet forum at YahooGroups, exclusively for the participants in the WoW Programmes. YahooGroups makes it possible to set up free email list(servs). These use list-processing software and distribute email to all subscribed users on a list. We named the forum *Blogthinking*.

Discussion lists as a research tool

Most YahooGroups have a single moderator who ensures that posters (active participants in the group) maintain the official rules or a code of conduct. When the discussion list *Blogthinking* was established in February 2006, all participants were given automatic moderator-status. This was a deliberate attempt to encourage unpremeditated communication and thus to reveal responses to the shared and enhanced understandings and expansions of professional knowledge, as facilitated by the WoW Programmes, and that as researcher I would not otherwise be privy to. The discussion forum as a research tool therefore had the potential to effectively capture participants' candid responses to the programmes because, as Sharp puts it,

> Interaction in virtual spaces can come to share many of the characteristics of "real" interaction - people discuss, argue, fight, reconcile, amuse, and offend just as much and perhaps more in a virtual community. In mailing lists one sees examples of attempts to control behavior by correction, by suggestion, by appealing to the rules of the group, by attempting to keep posters on topic, and so on. (Sharp)

Data analysis

Thematic content analysis was used for the research technique, to analyse all data collected. A purpose of thematic content analysis is to identify underlying themes for making replicable and valid inferences from the data to relevant contexts.

Considering the large volume of data available and collected in this research, thematic content analysis was the most suitable choice because there is general consensus that one of its advantages includes enabling researchers to sift through large volumes of data with relative ease in a systematic fashion.

A crucial aspect confirming the choice of thematic content analysis for this research was that it allows the researcher to discover and describe the focus of individual, group, institutional, or social attention. (Weber, 1990) It also interacts with other methods of data collection well, so that a conclusion reached through thematic content analysis can be corroborated using other methods of data collection.

The first standard analysis technique used was a process called data immersion. (Cresswell 1994) I familiarized myself with the data by revisiting it many times, and then analyzed the data in three stages.

Stage 1 – 'Vertical analysis'

In this first 'vertical analysis' I looked at each interview individually. A very basic definition to explain the vertical process was that I worked through the interviews in a straight (up and down) manner. I looked for themes - minimally, similarities and differences – in the interviews. (Notes from a workshop by Prof Susan van Zyl, "How to do Thematic Content Analysis", 22 August 2007)

I also considered how or if the central idea in each phrase, paragraph or statement in the transcribed interviews and weblogs "spoke to" my research questions. I reduced the data by removing participants' responses that were not relevant according to my research questions.

Stage 2 – 'Vertical analysis'

During this phase I continued to examine the data for themes. While I was still actively referring to the research questions and the explicit and implicit elements in the research title itself, I was looking for data that would give me access to the texture of the respondent's experience. (Notes from a workshop by Prof Susan van Zyl, "How to do Thematic Content Analysis", 22 August 2007)

Phenomenological inquiry hones in on the experience and involves four basic steps: bracketing, intuiting, analysing and describing. As I considered the data I consciously tried to identify and then prevent, or "bracket out" any preconceived beliefs and opinions I may have had about that particular content. I also tried to be intuitive and open to the meanings assigned to the phenomenon by the respondents. Next, I started categorising and making sense of the central ideas in the data – the analysis stage. At this point I was able to start identifying themes, which I saw as consisting of subject matter that triangulated with the research title, questions and the literature review. This process led to the describing stage, when I believed I had an understanding of, and was able to define the phenomenon. (Polit and Hungler, 1995) So for example I began to recognize common threads weaving through the weblogs and interview transcripts.

Stage 3 - Horizontal analysis

Useful key words to explain horizontal analysis are that it involves analysis *laterally*, or *across* the interviews. (Notes from a workshop by Prof Susan van Zyl, "How to do Thematic Content Analysis", 22 August 2007) During this first horizontal stage of analysis, I started looking for consistency of themes across all the transcribed interviews and the weblogs. For the first time, I started examining potential relationships between themes I had discovered, and the themes in the theory and information from the reviewed literature. I used a purposive sampling technique, highlighting any common patterns that emerged for their potential to capture the core experiences and central, shared aspects of the programme program. This process was equally valuable for assisting with identifying the range of differences. (Glasser and Strauss, 1967)

Stage 4 - Horizontal analysis

This stage involved the detailed discussion of the data, available in Chapters 4 and 5.

Selection of participants

The population of this research is Humanities postgraduate students from Wits University who participated in the 2005 and 2006 World of Work Training and Internship Programmes.

Selecting the five respondents from the 2005 group

In 2005 there were 16 participants in the WoW Training programme. Thirteen proceeded to the internship component. I aimed to conduct three site visits - at the beginning of the internship, midway, and at the end - with each of the interns and interviewed them during these visits.

I collected audio material and transcribed data from over 20 interviews from the 13 interns. This research however includes in-depth analysis of five of the 2005 interns only. The rationale for my choice of the five participants from the group of 13 was based on various factors. The sample had to allow for comparison of any differences between the sectors e.g. the public and private sectors, professional associations, and government. I therefore selected students in diverse internship situations, since collecting data from subjects located in different workplaces was part of the selection strategy to maximise the ability to differentiate between individual, local workplace and organisational factors affecting the development of employability.

I also had to ensure the group of respondents was balanced in terms of gender, and diverse in terms of nationality and area of postgraduate study. After the selection stage of participants for the 2005 WoW Programmes, I had access to information regarding the demographics of the participants who had been accepted for participation in the programmes: age, gender, nationality, race, previous work experience, work aspirations and academic disciplines. I used this information to target certain individuals who would represent a range of Humanities postgraduate students from Wits University.

It was important to consider the possible benefits of students completing their internships at the same host organisation, as opposed to singly. In 2005, two students were placed at the same host organisation for their internships. They were included in the data collection exercise, and their interviews conducted simultaneously in a group discussion setting, for the opportunity to investigate whether peer support enables the development of employability.

While the WoW Programmes were designed primarily for people who had never worked in formal workplaces before, we decided to admit five participants in 2005 who did have substantial

experience, as a trial. GL, one of the respondents chosen for the sample, is representative of this group.

Another factor influencing my decision for the choice of the five individuals was based on their ability and willingness to express themselves. After conducting and recording at least one interview each with all the participants, I had a good sense of how unrestrained, forthcoming and open each of the respondents were, and I chose the most communicative as key informants. Punch states that empirical work in anthropology and sociology has often depended on key informant interviewing, and quotes Nonnecke and Preece (2001) to define a key informant as being

> an individual in whom one invests a disproportionate amount of time because that individual appears to be particularly well informed, articulate, approachable or available. (Punch, 2005)

However, to evaluate the programmes effectively, it was important to also select participants who I intuitively thought would make an easy transition into the world of work, as well as individuals who would find the process more challenging - and participants who I suspected would experience entry into the workplace as particularly difficult. I hoped that by targeting certain individuals according to these factors the research would further represent the range of Humanities postgraduate students from Wits University.

Selecting the five respondents from the 2006 group

The choice of respondents was forced in 2006 by the Graduate Centre's decision that only five students would be guaranteed placements as interns in host organisations after the WoW Training Programme.

In addition to being South African or from the SADEC region, eligible postgraduate Humanities students had to go through a rigorous selection process before being admitted to this scholarship-based Internship Programme. This included careful telephonic reference checking, and a panel interview with the WoW Programmes' Coordinator, the Director of the Humanities Graduate Centre and this researcher. Another prerequisite for participation during this year was that applicants should have only minimal previous work experience. This group therefore represented a higher caliber of Humanities postgraduate students from Wits University. Although there were closer matches in terms of participant traits and abilities in this group of respondents, it happened

that there was greater difference in socio-economic status in this group than had been evident in the 2005 group.

In 2006 I interviewed the five scholarship students during site visits only, and I therefore did not have to select respondents' audiotapes and transcripts for analysis as I did in 2005.

Arrangements in the thesis for access to the data

I assigned an alias for each of the ten respondents who participated in the research. The data from each respondent was grouped together in the appendices. Each collection was then assigned a number, e.g. Appendix 3.1. I then numbered the various data within the collection. So for the respondent with the pseudonym UL:

- Appendix 3.1 – A 'vertical analysis' based on data from UL
- Appendix 3.2 – UL's interviews
- Appendix 3.3 – UL's workplace supervisor's interviews
- Appendix 3.4 - UL's documents (e.g. email correspondence)
- Appendix 3.5 - UL's coded weblog

The arrangement was then repeated for the next collection of data from a particular respondent, labelled Appendix 4.1 and so on.

The issue of confidentiality in the students' weblogs has been addressed by removing any identifying information from the weblogs, while retaining their general content.

Apart from the appendices, I have collected the respondents' weblogs in their original format as they appear on the Internet, for the examiners only. This has meant that participants' identities were made available to examiners – but only temporarily, and for the examination of this thesis only. I have dealt with the ethical issue of maintaining confidentiality by committing to removing the document containing the actual weblogs on completion of the examination process for this research.

Ethical considerations

I adhered to the outline for ethical conduct issued by the Human Research Ethics Committee (Non-Medical) at the University of the Witwatersrand. This included: (a) that participation in the study be voluntary; (b) that each participant sign an informed consent for the researcher to conduct the interview, or use their journal; (c) that each participant be provided with the

opportunity to withdraw at any time; and finally (d) that the participant's anonymity, confidentiality and privacy be maintained at all times. Approval for the study was obtained from the Human Research Ethics Committee (Non-Medical) and I received an ethical clearance certificate for the research.

CHAPTER 4 Process Evaluation of the World of Work Programmes, 2005

This chapter marks the start of the Process Evaluation of the WoW Programmes, providing an assessment of it during 2005, relative to the set of evaluation criteria established in Chapter 3 (which also includes discussion on the evaluation approach, the sources for the programme information and the procedures used to collect it.)

While Chapter 3 is a road map of the evaluation process adopted for this research, the *Process Evaluation* that follows in this chapter documents and analyzes the development and actual implementation of the WoW Programmes, assessing whether strategies were implemented as planned and whether expected outputs were actually produced. Chen emphasises that in programme evaluation,

> how a program achieved its goals is as important as whether it achieved them. (2005)

The Process Evaluation here involves the analysis of data from five participants in the WoW Programmes in 2005, to investigate whether or not the Programmes achieved its goals, and how, if at all, this occurred.

As explained in the section 'The research format' in Chapter 3, I occupied dual roles as researcher: both as participant (assisting with design from 2002 to 2006, and mentoring participants in 2005 and 2006) and as an observer/researcher. There has meant that the evaluation is not entirely participant-dependant, with my own direct accounts and observations. My input as researcher, according to these dual roles, should however be distinguished from the students' perceptions of the Programmes here at the outset. It is also possible to propose that my dual roles may add value to the evaluation, alongside the different political, social, historical, and personal situations of each 2005 respondent.

Chapter 5 is also a Process Evaluation for the programmes as they occurred in 2006. It is important to emphasise that both of these Process Evaluationss (Chapters 4 and 5) are contingent on the Input Evaluation of the WoW Programmes in Appendix 1 (Input Evaluation: History and Development of the World of Work Programmes at Wits University).

Oshaug believes that input evaluation ensures a

> critical look at the adequacy and appropriateness of the resources available to carry out the programme. (Oshaug)

Appendix 1 (Input Evaluation: History and Development of the World of Work Programmes at Wits University) addresses this, but cannot claim to be a typical approach to input evaluation. The WoW Programmes' Input Evaluation had to be modified because there are no programmes with similar objectives and challenges that could be used for comparative purposes, as per a conventional input evaluation. The Input Evaluation is, therefore, mainly a historical account of the development and various aspects of the WoW Programmes from 2001 to 2006. Its value is for reference while questioning whether the strategy of the WoW Programmes is defensible and feasible for meeting the assessed needs of the targeted beneficiaries.

After revisiting the CIPP Model, which has been the starting point for the overall approach to the programme evaluation, this chapter briefly summarises the key features of the WoW Programmes in 2005 (the details for the key changes manifested in these programmes during this year are available in Appendix 1 (Input Evaluation: History and Development of the World of Work Programmes at Wits University). Once this background has been revisited, (and after a discussion of the impact that the distinctive characteristics that the WoW Programmes may have on the planning and execution of an evaluation) the actual Process Evaluation of the WoW Programmes in 2005 follows.

The over-arching approach to evaluating the World of Work Programmes: the CIPP Model

The aim in the evaluation of the WoW Programmes is to successfully achieve a balance between the different academic and workplace perspectives on programme evaluation, while using them to ensure a rigorous investigation. Such a 'fused' programme evaluation strategies may be useful for addressing both processes and outcomes, and should also allow for multiple perspectives and the use of a mixed methodology approach. Most importantly, a holistic approach of this kind will also make it possible to take the unique characteristics of the WoW Programmes as they occur in two different contexts into account.

For the WoW Programmes' evaluation, a modified version of an educational evaluation model known as the CIPP Model - or Context, Input, Process, Product evaluation approach - as

developed by Stufflebeam, will be used. While Chapter 3 introduces Stufflebeam's model, a formal definition of evaluation underlying the model is quoted here because it summarizes the key ideas in the model:

> Evaluation is the process of delineating, obtaining, providing, and applying descriptive and judgmental information about the merit and worth of some object's goals, design, implementation, and outcomes to guide improvement decisions, provide accountability reports, inform institutionalizations/dissemination decisions, and improve understanding of the involved phenomena. (Stufflebeam, 2003)

On the basis of this definition, advantages of using CIPP include comprehensiveness, flexibility, integration and decision-orientation, while providing a systematic way of looking at many different aspects of a programme. To benefit from these advantages it is necessary to modify the CIPP Model so that it 'fits' the unique characteristics of, and requirements for a WoW Programmes' evaluation in particular. Since the CIPP Model is essentially a basic open system model incorporating the core elements of input, process, and output, it is easily adapted. Figure 3 summarises the way in which the model has been used to frame the investigation of the WoW Programmes in the research:

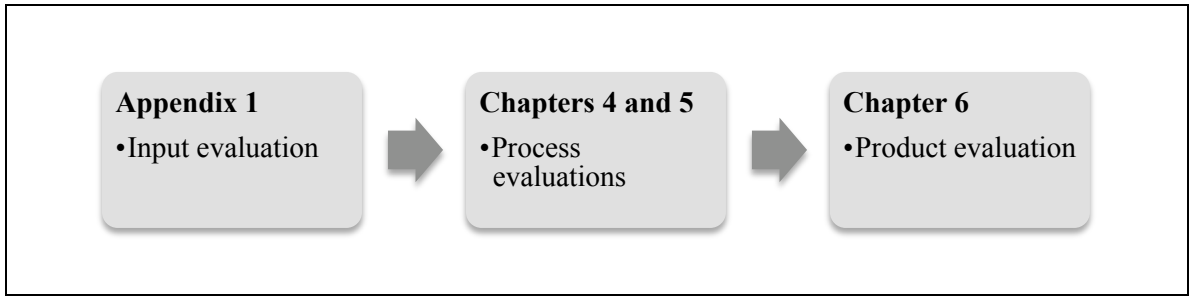


Figure 3: Over-arching approach to evaluation in the research, based on Stufflebeam's CIPP Model (2003)

Characteristics of the World of Work Programmes influencing the evaluative procedure

There are four aspects of the WoW Training and Internship Programmes that need to be taken into account when considering an approach to evaluation:

The range of participants' skills

One of the objectives of Higher Education programme evaluation relates to how the programme contributes to students' career preparation. Humanities programmes do not have 'professional standard' exams to guide or inform the development of an ideal curriculum for workplace practice. The range of skills gained after postgraduate study will vary amongst the participants who join the WoW Programmes after their postgraduate study in any Humanities discipline. The Humanities is a diverse field, and the task of developing one curriculum to prepare students for the workplace cannot realistically take into account and encompass the particular specialized outcomes of every discipline within the Humanities for application in the workplace. So, while the WoW Programmes cannot address the particular needs of a specific profession (and are not designed to do so), the evaluation of them should take into account that it should be possible for it to prepare students for the *general* needs of the world of work. (This also explains the very general title used: the "World of Work Programmes".)

The range of guest lecturers' pedagogical approaches

Besides the fact that training programme sessions (with the exception of field visits) took place on campus, they were also in some sense still familiar – in terms of, for example, structure and length of sessions – to conventional lecture sessions at a university.

However, guest lecturers who facilitated and presented the training programme sessions represented a range of private and government organisations and the content of the sessions focused on the information and skills needed for transition into, and success in the workplace. The Programmes' organisers did not give guest lecturers any input or direction regarding the design, or any approach to learning to adopt. This suggests that there may be a range of pedagogical approaches to learning that must be taken into account in the programme evaluation.

Learning occurred in two significantly different environments

Both components of the WoW Programmes focused primarily upon the early stages of a young adult's working life, specifically as he or she leaves formal training and prepares to move into the world of work. After the training programme, the internship component of the WoW Programmes constituted a physical shift from the University to the workplace. This should have ensured that the frames of reference and knowledge presented during training would have been manifested in real, concrete ways during the internship in 'other' remote (to the University) contexts.

The WoW Programmes, with its two components of training (learning at the University) and internships (application of learning outside the University) therefore offered a unique opportunity to evaluate learning transfer within, and outside of the University.

The World of Work Programmes were not subject to normal ongoing university evaluative procedures

While the training component did have a curriculum, the University did not assess it in a curriculum-standard manner, and it did not have any of the built-in assessments associated with the conventional curricula. Responsibility for the WoW Programmes, and therefore for any evaluation, remained with the University however (even though the components occurred in different sites, were not for academic credit, and involved non-University staff e.g. workplace supervisors).

Key features of the World of Work Programmes, 2005

The key features of the 2005 WoW Programmes – and their implications in terms of the Process Evaluation - can be summarized as follows:

- There was an emphasis on the importance of the Training Programme as a stand-alone component. The Process Evaluation therefore needs to investigate if the Training Programme could in fact function separately and effectively from the Internship Programme.
- The Training Programme included strategies to help participants find their own internships or facilitate their transition into the workplace independently of the Programmes' staff. The

Process Evaluation therefore needs to investigate if these initiatives were in fact helpful for participants to find their first placement in the corporate environment independently.

- Only South African citizens (or people from the SADEC region) – who had also achieved satisfactory results in all Training Programme assignments - would be considered for the Internship Programme. The Process Evaluation therefore needs to investigate the impact and consequences, if any, of these selection criteria.
- Weblogging was introduced as an assessment procedure (to determine which participants could proceed to the Internship Programme), replacing the internship journal assignment of previous years and fulfilling some of the purposes of the 360° performance appraisals. The Process Evaluation therefore needs to investigate if weblogging was an effective assignment, and if using the weblogs for assessment was useful.

These key features suggest that evaluating the WoW Programmes in 2005 is strongly dependent on questioning how effective the selection process proved to be, and the extent to which the training component and the internship component worked effectively as separate, but compatible components. In addition, they raise the question of whether the strategies introduced during the Training Programme helped participants to arrange their own first transitions into the workplace independently, and whether weblogging was an effective assessment tool and assignment.

Respondents 2005

My voice as participant, educator, researcher of the programme and of my own research process, counselor, mentor, theorist, and consultant is present in the evaluation. In addition the Process Evaluation stems from data from five respondents. At this point therefore it is prudent to profile the student respondents:

1. **UL** was a 28-year-old South African woman with a Masters Degree in Media Studies from the School of Dramatic Arts at Wits University, and had had no formal work experience prior to her internship in 2005. She attended interviews at four different host organisations and was accepted for an internship at all four organisations. She chose to complete her internship in one of the departments of the South African national public service broadcaster. A 'vertical analysis' of this student is available as Appendix 3.1. Three transcribed interviews relating to her experiences of the WoW training, the interviews she attended for an internship, and her actual internship are available as Appendix 3.2. There are also 3 transcribed interviews of

UL's workplace supervisor's experiences of UL as an intern (Appendix 3.3) and a copy of an email correspondence between that workplace supervisor and her colleagues, in which she clarifies UL's role, responsibilities and stipulates how staff should delegate work to UL (Appendix 3.4). UL's coded weblog is Appendix 3.5.

2. **JN** was a 28-year-old Zimbabwean man, and had completed a Masters degree in Forced Migration at Wits University in February 2005. JN was temporarily employed at the Humanities Graduate Centre at Wits University from September to November 2004, the year before he participated in the WoW Programmes. Here he had had reception duties, including answering calls, events planning, sorting applications and filing. The 'vertical analysis' of this student is available as Appendix 4.1. Three transcribed interviews are available as Appendix 4.2. JN's workplace supervisor was interviewed once only, and this transcribed interview is attached as Appendix 4.3. JN's coded weblog is Appendix 4.4.
3. **GL** was a 31-year-old Kenyan national with a Masters degree in Tourism from Wits University, and had substantial work experience. GL was accepted by two of the three potential host organisations where she had interviews. She opted to complete her WoW internship at an international non-governmental organisation addressing development issues. She accepted an offer of full-time employment by her host organisation after her internship period. A 'vertical analysis' on this respondent is available as Appendix 5.1. Transcribed interviews about her entry into the organisation as an intern are attached as Appendix 5.2. GL's supervisor's interview is at Appendix 5.3. GL's coded weblog is Appendix 5.4.
4. **FN** was a 26-year-old South African man who had not had any formal work experience prior to his participation in the WoW Programmes. He had an Honours degree in Development Studies from Wits University. He had one interview and a subsequent offer to complete an internship, with GL, at an international non-governmental organisation addressing development issues. A 'vertical analysis' on this respondent is available as Appendix 6.1. One transcribed interview about his internship experiences is available as Appendix 6.2 and his second interview (with his workplace supervisor and GL) is available as Appendix 6.3. FN's coded weblog is Appendix 6.4.
5. **GP** was a 29-year-old South African man with an Honours degree in International Relations from Wits University, had had minimal workplace experience before his internship. He attended two interviews for internship positions and was accepted by a non-governmental organisation. There were two interviews conducted to gauge his experiences as an intern – these transcribed interviews are available as Appendix 7.2, after a 'vertical analysis' of the

respondent, at Appendix 7.1. Three transcribed interviews with GP's workplace supervisor are available as Appendix 7.3. GP's coded weblog is Appendix 7.4.

To summarise: three of the respondents selected for the Process Evaluation were South African, and four from this group were under 30 years old. There were two women and three men in the group. In this group, only one (GL) had extensive work experience before the WoW Programmes.

As far as the rest of the group of participants is concerned, there was an equal gender balance: eight women and eight men participated in 2005. (Appendix 1, Table 7: Demographics of participants, 2001-2006, p 17) Most of the participants were between the ages of 25 and 30 years old, and more than 50% of the participants were from countries other than South Africa (Appendix 1, Table 7: Demographics of participants, 2001-2006 p.17). The Humanities fields represented by the entire group were Anthropology, Development Studies, Dramatic Art, Forced Migration, Heritage Studies, International Relations, Journalism, Media Studies, Political Studies, Psychology, Sociology and Tourism. (Appendix 1, Table 7: Demographics of participants, 2001-2006, p 18) Five of the participants' most recent qualifications in these areas were at Honours level, nine had their Masters in Arts, and two had completed their doctorates.

Factors influencing the selection of the five respondents from the 2005 group

Data (interviews and weblogs) from five respondents from the group of participants in the 2005 WoW Programmes have been used for this Process Evaluation. An explanation and rationale for the selection of these five respondents is available in Chapter 3.

It should suffice to reiterate here that the selection of respondents was motivated by the following factors:

- respondents in diverse internship situations (so as to be able to differentiate between individual, local workplace and organisational factors affecting the development of employability);
- instances where respondents were placed at the same host organisation for their internships (so as to be able to analyse the impact of peer support on the development of employability);
- respondents who would reflect diversity in terms of gender, nationality and area of postgraduate study (so as to include respondents who would represent a range of Humanities postgraduate students from Wits University);

- respondents who were communicative, open and forthcoming about their experiences as participants on the WoW Programmes.

I thus avoided "creaming," which, according to Chen (2005), is the deliberate admission to the evaluation process of only those students expected to meet with success in a programme.

1. Activity Stage One: Selection of Programme Participants in 2005

As explained in the "Procedure for the Process Evaluation of the WoW Programmes", (Chapter 3), the Process Evaluations are organised around four broad activity stages: Selection, Training, Transition and Internship.

The evaluation of the selection stage for the 2005 participants is based on my experience as a course designer of this activity stage in that year. Students did not comment on this process explicitly. Nevertheless, the task is to consider if the selection process aided students' ultimate transitions into the workplace or not.

Standard entrance criteria carried over from previous years included that candidates for the 2005 WoW Training Programme had to have completed a postgraduate degree(s) in the Faculty of Humanities (which includes Social Sciences) from Wits University, with sound academic results. Ideally, applicants should only have had minimal practical experience of the workplace. A new criterion implemented in 2005 was that candidates from other countries, universities and with degrees in other fields would be considered *after* students who met the standard criteria. The inclusion of this criterion was motivated by the difficulties we predicted in sourcing host organisations for all students, especially for those from other countries. In 2004 we started to encounter resistance from potential host organisations towards offering internships to participants who were not South African or from the SADEC region. (SADEC is an acronym for the 'Southern African Development and Economic Community' and refers to nine African nations in Southern Africa who have signed a mutual trade and co-operation agreement.)

Table 7 (in Appendix 1, Input Evaluation: History and Development of the World of Work Programmes at Wits University, p.17) details the demographics of participants in 2005: while the majority of participants were South African, we saw for the first time a significant increase in participants from countries such as the Democratic Republic of Congo, Kenya, Lesotho, Nigeria and Zimbabwe. It could be argued that reluctance to host interns who were not South African or from the SADEC region was in fact a positive indication of host organisations' long-term

intentions to invest in interns, with a view to offering permanent employment after the internship period. Although we were explicit that students should not expect permanent employment after the internship, and we assured host organisations that this would not be required, many host organisations seemed to view the internships as opportunities to access future employees. The study permits held by participants who were not South African or from the SADEC region were acceptable for the internship period, but not for subsequent possible employment. Most host organisations viewed the prospect of obtaining work permits as an unpredictable bureaucratic exercise, to be avoided.

Considering that each student would have unique skills and qualifications, interests and career goals, the fact that the pool of established and new host organisations had narrowed made the sourcing of internships for each participant in 2005 an especially difficult task. Previously the Programme Coordinator had aimed to secure at least two, preferably three interviews per individual at different host organisations. Besides simulating a job-search process, attending a few interviews was empowering, improved interviewing skills and exposed participants to the decision-making processes encountered in career development. In 2005 however, we realised that it would be highly unlikely to secure even one interview for participants who were not South African or from the SADEC region, let alone three.

Despite the problems of the labour intensive task of sourcing internships for students who were neither South African nor from the SADEC region, all but one of the participants from the WoW Programmes in 2005 proceeded from the Training to the Internship Programme i.e. twelve internship placements were secured. As it turned out, this positive outcome was due to the Programme Coordinator working beyond the parameters of a part-time position.

Nevertheless we realised in 2005 that we would have to continue to try to address the Programme Coordinator's workload imbalance, which had been so adversely affected by host organisation's preferences for South African (or SADEC region) interns, and the corresponding increase in participants who were neither South African, nor from the SADEC region.

1.1 Entrance criteria for the World of Work Internship Programme, 2005

By 2005, the fact that potential participants in the internship component had to have participated in the WoW Training Programme to be considered for the Internship Programme was well

established. This requirement was applied without exception. Two new and critical entrance criteria in this year, indicating a significant structural change to the Programmes, were that

1. South African citizens (or applicants from the SADEC region) would qualify for the Internship Programme before non-South African citizens. Conditional status was granted to candidates from other countries, universities and with degrees in other fields, and they were informed that they would be considered for the WoW Internship Programme *after* students who were South African citizens (or from the SADEC region).
2. All applicants for internships had to have achieved satisfactory results in all assignments completed during the WoW Training Programme.

The first criterion forced us to adjust the entrance criteria according to external influences, namely host organisations' clear preference for interns who were South African or from the SADEC region at least.

In spite of the long-standing criteria that applicants had to have minimal work experience, exceptions were made in 2005. The respondent GL is an example of such an exception: she had previous work experience. Her entry to the WoW Programmes was based on the fact that her previous work experience was not directly aligned to her postgraduate study. GL had made a conscious decision to move her career away from her previous clerical work in an airline, and she hoped to find work in a non-governmental organisation in tourism or social development. We believed that we could help her with this career change. In addition, GL presented as an articulate, professional individual, with excellent writing and verbal skills. We considered that her influence in the group could benefit the other participants, who had no working experience.

In 2005 we sensed a need to raise the standard of intern we were able to offer to host organisations. We felt that more than ever host organisations were being forced to 'downsize' and outsource staff, which meant that the caliber of our interns had to be competitive. Provisional arrangements were therefore put in place for exceptional cases, where candidates who met all entrance criteria *and* were South African or from the SADEC region, would be considered conditionally only for entry to the Internship Programme at the first application stage i.e. upon entry to the Training Programme. This applied especially to students who had weak verbal and writing skills, or if the Programme Coordinator intuitively felt they would not be prepared for a transition into a formal workplace environment even after attending the Training Programme. Their final acceptance into the Internship Programme was to be confirmed after the Training

Programme, during which these candidates had to have shown performance that would suggest they were ready for and could indeed manage the transition into the workplace.

While it was easy enough to practically apply the criterion of screening applicants' nationalities for the selection process, the second criterion was more demanding. It required staff to devise and develop assignments and approaches to evaluating participants. This was only the second time in the history of the WoW programmes that formal evaluation of participants occurred. It had always been a feature of the WoW Programmes that participants received intensive, one-on-one feedback about their performance. But the 2005 WoW Training Programme was different in that participants had to prove performance through various assignments, in order to qualify for the next component, the Internship Programme. The last time that participants had been graded on assignments in a similar manner had been in the first instance of the Programme, in 2001. Appendix 1 (Input Evaluation: History and Development of the World of Work Programmes at Wits University) explains in detail how and why this form of assessment was rejected for subsequent years, as it depended on staff in the academic context to apply it when the emphasis should have been on the workplace.

A crucial caveat that was explained to applicants in 2005, which also impacted on the Programmes' structure, was that acceptance into the WoW Programmes did not imply a guaranteed placement in a host organisation. Even if an individual was South African or from the SADEC region, and had in addition performed well in all assignments, we could not guarantee an internship placement. In previous years we had confidently guaranteed, in promotional material and in information sessions about the Programmes, that all participants would be placed in a host organisation for an internship. We could not offer any assurances of this in 2005 as we felt the impact of external influences such as the economic climate and general employment trends as they manifested in host organisations.

In spite of these new conditions in the selection process, the record of applicants who proceeded to the internship component was good. After 24 first applications, 19 people met the most basic criteria (being that applicants had to be postgraduate students from the Humanities at Wits University). Three individuals were advised to withdraw their applications because they would not have completed their postgraduate courses by the start of the WoW Programmes. There were therefore 16 participants in the WoW Programmes in 2005. Two participants chose not to apply for the internship component. One participant's application for the Internship Programme was turned down because of his poor performance during the Training Programme (failure to hand in assignments, and frequent unexplained absence from the training sessions). Thirteen of the

students therefore continued to the Internship Programme. We were able to secure internships for twelve of the students. The remaining participant was not considered by potential host organisations because he was over the age of 50 years, had prior work experience and was not South African; we were therefore unable to assist him with an internship placement.

The only explanation for the successful rate of internship placements in 2005 is that the WoW Programme staff was committed to finding placements for participants. "Cold calls" to host organisations, rigorous following-up on any leads or possibilities for placements and a consistently persistent approach accounted for the twelve placement opportunities. While this would seem to undermine the point of the new criteria that were applied in 2005 for the selection process, these were still important. They effectively made it clear to participants that internships were hard to come by, and helped staff to manage applicants' expectations more realistically. Staff were relieved that the guarantee for internships arranged by the WoW programmes was removed, so that participants such as the individual over the age of 50 years who had prior work experience and was not South African did not hold the WoW Programmes accountable for not being able to secure an internship placement.

1.2 Students' initial expectations during selection for the World of Work Training and Internship Programme, 2005

Although there was no data in the interviews and weblogs regarding respondents' expectations of the WoW Programmes when they first applied to participate, students were required to write a letter addressed to the staff of the Programmes, explaining why they wanted to participate in the WoW Programmes. From these letters, it is apparent that the main and general reasons for choosing the WoW Programmes were an interest in the world of work, an appreciation of the fact that the Programmes stated (at the Programmes' website) that the general thrust in terms of content would be an orientation to the workplace, and an anticipation of good career opportunities after completion.

These three main expectations - an interest in the workplace, realization that one would need an orientation to the world of work, and the expectation for the WoW Programmes to help facilitate good career opportunities – seemed to apply as much to candidates from other countries, and even to candidates with some prior work experience, as it did to those who met the standard criteria. As course designers, we felt confident that we would be able to meet the first two expectations. They were dependent on the caliber of the WoW Training programme mainly, and we knew from

previous years that the WoW Training Programme successfully introduced participants to the core issues, demands and challenges of the workplace. We found the last expectation stressful, however. As explained earlier, the economic climate and competition for jobs in the workplace made our work of placing students in internships much more difficult. We were therefore somewhat anxious as students' expectations for us to secure placements became more and more evident. Some students also had completely unrealistic expectations, and we quickly learned that we had to hear and deal with student expectations of what they hoped to gain at the end of the WoW Programmes, as early as possible. For example GP's dream, he told us, was to become a member of the "Scorpions" - then an elite and armed South African task force. As we discussed the possibility of this, it became clear to us that GP had not based this ambition on any concrete information. He had not researched the admission criteria to the "Scorpions", nor a typical career path leading to it. GP had a fantastical "James Bond" type notion of what it would be to join the "Scorpions". We felt we had to counsel GP away from this, and we urged him to consider more realistic alternatives.

In the case of GL there were at least three areas that should have disqualified her for participation in the WoW Programmes. GL was neither South African, nor from the SADEC region; she had prior, full-time, formal work experience and she could be considered as a mature student compared to other candidates. She was accepted onto the WoW programmes because her professional demeanor and experience suggested that she would be an asset to the group. Also, GL's expectations appeared to be realistic and the Programmes' staff believed that most of these could be met. For example, GL said that she wanted to

> ...acquire more experience in the area of research and development… (GL's motivation letter to join the 2005 WoW Programmes, 4 December 2004)

In her application, GL appeared to have a clear goal in terms of her career development and mentioned that she hoped

> ... to pursue tourism research in a work environment. It is my desire to work for an NGO or a research based organisation. (GL's motivation letter to join the 2005 WoW Programmes, 4 December 2004)

At this point the WoW Programmes' staff had already made contact with, and had liaised with various prospective host organisations, alerting them that interns would be available within in the next few months. We felt relatively confident that we could match GL with an NGO that would provide her with opportunities to become involved in research and development. Her application to participate in the WoW Programmes was therefore approved.

Just over two months later, however, GL expressed an expectation for the WoW Programmes to realise a specific work placement for her. In an email to the WoW Programmes' Coordinator, GL asked if

> ...your office is able to organise for students to get into internship programmes in their home countries. I am particularly interested in a research-based organisation back home in Kenya that specializes in social research. (GL's email to WoW Programmes Coordinator, 12 February 2005)

We contacted the organisation in Kenya GL had referred us to. We were not able to arrange an internship with this organisation on her behalf. The incident points to a possible argument for the WoW Programmes to pay greater attention to all of students' expectations - even mature and experienced students - as early as possible during the selection process. There is the danger that expectations that cannot be met at this early stage could tend to overwhelm, confuse and dishearten students in the early days of the Programmes – and thus impact on their long-term performances in the Programmes. Darlaston-Jones et al (2003) agree and add that, regardless of the fact that the educational programme may meet or exceed world best practice criteria, if the student has different expectations, he or she will experience dissatisfaction.

Using the language of consumerism within the Higher Education context, Darlaston-Jones et al observe that students are more mindful of disparities between their expectations of service delivery and the reality of that service. (2003) Darlaston-Jones et al (2003) refer to Nelson (2002) to point out that students are viewing themselves as consumers and are demanding value for money in their education, despite the growing body of literature that suggests students are not well informed about the nature of the course they have chosen and future employment opportunities derived from it. (Darlaston-Jones et al, 2003)

1.3 Overview: Process evaluation of Activity Stage One, the Selection of Programme Participants in 2005

The procedure for the selection of participants for the WoW Programmes affords an introduction to the complexities of establishing entry criteria for a particular group of students, while taking issues such as the Programme Coordinator's ability to meet the needs of the group into account (especially in terms of the longer-term task of finding internship placements).

A key issue in the process evaluation of Activity Stage One is the impact of external organisations. Our experience as course designers was that we were obliged to keep in mind the

host organisations' needs and demands when developing the selection criteria. In this regard the course designers 'felt' the pressure of an external influence more than any other university programme would. In my view it would be difficult to avoid taking this influence into account when selecting participants. This is because while the students themselves are the 'primary' clients – or benefactors – of the WoW programmes, it can be argued that the host organisations are, in a sense, the 'secondary' clients, since they eventually accommodate our interns. We still have the problem however, that the needs and demands of the 'secondary' clients appear to take precedence in this selection procedure over the 'primary' clients.

A critical look at the practical limitations of the selection procedure raises the fact that after the consideration of the criteria for admission, the course designers relied on intuition to assess potential participants. It can be argued that this intuition would have been informed by experience, but I still felt uncomfortable about taking an apparent professional demeanor into account when accepting an otherwise unlikely candidate - as in the case of GL. The testing of seemingly subjective areas such as attitude measurement would enhance the Programme's selection process. This would also imitate a typical recruitment process, such as one would encounter when applying for a job in the corporate environment.

Participants did not comment on the selection process for the WoW Programmes 2005. This is another practical limitation in terms of the process evaluation. Future similar evaluations for this or similar programmes should develop specific tools to assess how applicants feel about the selection process. As it turned out, I believe that students simply did not comment about this procedure because they have become resigned to, and accept such selection processes as being part of the bureaucratic make-up of a large organisation such as a university.

The description and evaluation of Activity Stage Four, the Internship Programme, will raise the fact that organisations only sometimes arrange formal learning opportunities for new employees to acquire knowledge about their new workplace. In the case of the 2005 WoW interns, no such induction programmes were arranged by the host organisations. We knew that host organisations were unlikely to invest the time and money required for such an intervention on interns, who had not yet proved their worth and were seen as transient anyway.

The selection process of programme participants in 2005, with careful briefings about the programme and detailed explanations so that participants could clarify their expectations, could be positioned as an example of an induction process in itself. So even though host organisations did not make this formal learning intervention available to interns at a much later activity stage, it

can be argued that the participants would have had a taste of the process of induction and integration one might find in the workplace, in Activity Stage One of the WoW Programmes.

The process of induction and integration is the first of one of the five ways that Eraut et al (2002) believes that situated learning occurs. This process evaluation of the first activity stage also confirms that *preparing* to learn about work (through the selection process) may have started in the WoW Programmes selection procedure, but that ways of positioning the entrance criteria more explicitly to potential participants would have been helpful to assist those candidates to manage their expectations of the WoW Programmes' role in facilitating their entry into the workplace.

2. Activity Stage Two: World of Work Training Component

In practise it is often the case that curriculum, in terms of its timing of the coverage of the particular kinds of material, and in particular kinds of ways, sometimes overlaps closely with questions of pedagogy. Discussions relating to curriculum and pedagogy are therefore combined at the Training Programme activity stage and certain elements of the Training Programme will be regarded as falling between curriculum and pedagogy. Mindmapping, for example, crosses between a form of pedagogy and a way of doing curriculum.

The evaluation of the curriculum will be according to students' commentary on the content presented - for example, that that is noteworthy for being either absent or present in the Training Programme. Curriculum design will include looking at issues raised by participants such as their perceived relevance of training component subjects or topics to the world of work.

The evaluation of the pedagogy of this training stage will be based on my experience (as a course designer) and will include looking at the implementation and roles of various approaches to learning such as technology, e-learning, and mindmapping.

2.1 Curriculum content

Here the evaluation procedure will involve looking at the value accorded to, and the nature of the students' responses (in the interviews and weblogs data) to the content, which I have categorized into three clusters: the soft skills cluster, hard skills cluster, and information sessions / course content cluster. (Please see Table 2: Training Programme Topics 2005, p 107)

In the workplace, "hard skills" are regarded as the technical or administrative procedures related to an organisation's core business. These skills are typically easy to observe, quantify and measure. By contrast, "soft skills" (also called "people skills") are typically hard to observe, quantify and measure. They have to do with how people relate to each other: communicating, listening, engaging in dialogue, giving feedback, cooperating as a team member, solving problems, contributing in meetings and resolving conflict. Bereiter and Scardamalia (2006) offer an interesting positioning of a different conceptual framework of soft skills, suggesting that soft skills may be regarded as situated practices as ways of acting that come about as one moves from peripheral to full participation in a community of practice. (Lave and Wenger, 1991)

Table 2: Training Programme Topics 2005

Information sessions / Course content	*Hard skills*	*Soft skills*
Black economic empowerment	Blogging for business	Corporate creativity
"Making the most of your internship" (previous interns' perspective)	Business presentation skills	Emotional Intelligence
Corporate citizenship	Business writing skills	Stress management
Corporate governance	Finance	Teams and teamwork
Humanities and social sciences in the world of work	Interviews: role-plays and workshop	
Employment Equity	Mindmapping	
Entrepreneurship/Intrapreneurship		
Future initiatives in South Africa		
HIV/AIDS and the workplace		
Johannesburg Stock Exchange (field trip)		
Leadership and mentorship		
Brands and branding		
Marketing		
NEPAD		
Pioneers of Change		
Project and Programme Management (field trip)		
Remuneration		
The evolution of customer service		
What is a business? / Understanding business		
World Competitiveness Report		

2.2 Overview: participants' general perceptions of the Training Programme

This, and the following sections are based on the five respondents' general perceptions of the content of WoW Training Programmes in 2005. In terms of the general content of the WoW Training Programmes, most of the respondents valued the soft and hard skills clusters as well as to the information sessions / course content cluster. In terms of soft skills, respondents raised a need for input on time management skills, and some challenges relating to establishing effective relationships with workplace supervisors. This section will therefore include their responses to time management, and their responses to their workplace supervisors' different management and mentoring styles.

A high percentage of participants recognised the opportunities offered during the internship placement for both soft and hard skills development, with one commenting,

> I have been able to refine myself and my special qualities and what it is that I can offer, and what it is that is a bit beyond me. (Appendix 3.2, UL Interview, 25 August 2005, p 73)

During her internship UL said that she was referring to the training, but added that

> I am also at the same time constructing my own realities. (Appendix 3.2, UL Interview, 27 July 2005, p 82)

UL recalled a WoW Training Programme lecturer's comment that working after hours was futile in terms of constructing employability. UL said that that assertion was not relevant in the industry she was working in. This suggests that just as UL had discovered that working outside of standard working hours was important in her industry, she had also learned that the guest lecturers from the WoW Training Programme could not always be considered absolute authorities about the workplace, and that she should rely to an extent on own experiences. UL found that the WoW Training Programme session on academic versus business writing was most valuable for her; she implied that the session had real application for her transition into the workplace when she related an incident when her workplace supervisor had urged her to write in a less academic, more accessible style. (Appendix 3.2)

FN, reflecting on the impact that his inappropriate choice of resources had on his time management skills during the first phase of his internship, said that he realised that he had taken some of the training for granted. He pointed out specifically the training's emphasis on the advantages of technology in the workplace (for example weblogs), as an area he should have remembered to apply to his current tasks. (Appendix 6.2, Interview, 2 August 2005) Both GP

(Appendix 7.2, Interview, 26 August 2005) and FN (Appendix 6.2, Interview, 2 August 2005) found the soft skills session on Emotional intelligence in the workplace beneficial. FN related a conflict situation with a colleague in the host organisation and said that he had applied what he had learned about Emotional intelligence to resolve the situation successfully. (Appendix 6.2, Interview, 2 August 2005) This then would be a straightforward example of the WoW Training Programme's application in a real world context, with positive results that, it can be argued, are evidence of FN's employability.

GL was critical of the hard skills training that she had been exposed to in the Training Programme. In an interview she said that she wished the WoW Training had included input on basic office skills such as minute taking. GL said she did not know how to take minutes. (Appendix 5.2, Interview) Her inference was that she felt she had jeopardized her position and impressions of her employability because she did not volunteer for the task of minute taking during her internship.

The issue here is not whether course designers should include minute taking as a hard skill in the Training Programme or not. Rather, course designers should look at including content in the curriculum that will assist participants to learn independently. Minute taking is a fairly basic hard skill, and it should be relatively straightforward for students to learn how to do this task by reading an article or two on the subject on the Internet. The WoW Training Programme needed to have enabled students to learn independently and acquire skills through such alternative means. The soft skills session on creativity in the workplace, which included input on problem-solving, obviously did not help to prompt GL to take the initiative and acquire the new skill she needed.

Clearly course designers need to solicit and respond to students' criticisms of omissions in the Training Programme proactively. A standard question sheet about hard skill omissions in the Training Programme would suffice. In theory this feedback could then be relayed back to the guest lecturers.

In practice however it was difficult for us to ask guest lecturers to revise the content of their presentations. We were always conscious of the fact that guest lecturers' motives for participation in the Training programme was usually philanthropic. Guest lecturers were not paid for their contributions. We did try to create business-related advantages for guest lecturers. For example, we gave exposure to the organisations the guest lecturers represented at our website, and facilitated networking between them whenever possible. But the fact remained that we were indebted to the guest lecturers, for their time and expertise. This meant that we did not feel we

could stipulate or demand areas of specific content of their sessions and we could only give input and guidelines when guest lecturers asked for this. While I believe that the guest lecturer of the soft skills session on creativity would have welcomed the example of GL's problem and would have addressed it in the Training Programme the following year while discussing problem-solving, we had to accept that we could not deliver critical feedback to all the guest lecturers.

As course designers our limited ability and opportunities to give feedback to guest lecturers did not, however, appear to impact negatively on participants' general perceptions of the Training Programme. Fortunately there were many guest lecturers in the 2005 Training Programme who had conducted sessions for the Training Programme in past years. These guest lecturers were familiar with participants' typical profiles as well as the aims and objectives of the WoW Programmes, and their sessions with students were therefore honed to address these. We also collated a document with details of all the 2005 participants, including their academic and personal backgrounds, their career aspirations and their expectations of the WoW Programmes. This was circulated to all the guest lecturers. We hoped that it would assist guest lecturers with their understanding of participants' expectations.

In addition we encouraged guest lecturers to visit students' weblogs. We believed that if guest lecturers read students' reactions and opinions to their training sessions their understanding of the participants would be enhanced. While I maintain that student weblogs have the potential to increase awareness of the students' needs in terms of content and the delivery of that content, guest lecturers in 2005 did not visit the weblogs to gauge reactions to the sessions. The reason for this is that weblogs were still relatively unfamiliar as Internet phenomena in South Africa in 2005 and, during my informal discussions with them, most guest lecturers had not even heard of the term "weblog".

It was crucial for the course designers to develop and maintain relationships with guest lecturers so as to secure their long-term involvement. We knew that the content and delivery of training improved when guest lecturers became familiar with the Training Programme. We also knew that guest lecturers enjoyed contact with the students themselves, and were often motivated to participate because of this. We therefore put in place arrangements such as a roster for students to meet and greet guest lecturers on their arrival. We encouraged students to engage with guest lecturers during the sessions and to ask questions. The most successful training sessions, according to both guest lecturers and students were therefore predominantly discussions. It seemed that students most appreciated charismatic presenters and lively interactions, where there was some spontaneity and various workplace issues could be raised. It also seemed that guest

lecturers most appreciated sessions where they could ad lib to a degree and draw on their range of expert experience, as opposed to delivering a standard and prepared presentation.

2.2.1 Soft skills

There appears to be a variety of ways to group soft skills – also known as generic, transverse, life or high skills – in the literature available. Cryer (1998) refers to four categories of self-reliant skills, team skills, generalist skills and specialist skills. Knight and Yorke (2004) refer to personal qualities (self-confidence, independence, adaptability, initiative, willingness to learn), core skills (information retrieval, self-management, creativity) and process skills (problem-solving). In the competitive world of work, employers appear to take disciplinary understanding and skills developed as a consequence of participation in Higher Education for granted, but as Brown et al (2003) confirm, their demand for the variety of groupings of soft skills is consistent and clear.

As course designers our approach was to cluster the various non-technical, intangible, personality-specific skills that determine personal strengths together and label the category 'EQ' – or Emotional Intelligence. The Training Programme included a session on emotional intelligence. The other three soft skills sessions could have been included within the Emotional intelligence session. We had learned, however, from previous WoW programmes that participants needed dedicated sessions on corporate creativity, stress management and teams and teamwork.

In the WoW Programmes the objective with regard to soft skills was for participants to be able, firstly, to understand and appreciate the need for soft skills in the workplace. Secondly they needed to recognise their existing soft skills, or their need to develop those skills. Finally we saw the need for participants to be able to articulate their acquisition of soft skills to potential employers so as to increase their marketability.

In terms of the second objective we found that students were not aware of, or did not recognise the soft skills that they may have developed simply by virtue of their postgraduate study. Some of the soft skills that postgraduate students will have acquired during their research processes includes the ability to work independently, accept supervision, respond to criticism appropriately and simply persevere with their work. In fact, the skills which students should develop naturally as an integral part of their postgraduate degree work go far beyond those which are likely to be developed by first degree graduates. We found that our students did not see these acquired skills as assets and therefore were not able to articulate them either to us or to interviewers at potential

host organisations. It was therefore crucial for us to raise student awareness of the diverse skills they would have acquired during the course of their postgraduate registration. As Cryer (1998) puts it,

> The aim should be to help students to recognise, individualise and internalise the fullness and richness of and the potential for their skills and to make credible cases to support their claims for having acquired certain skills.

My general impression of postgraduate Humanities students was, to put it baldly, that they simply did not feel good about themselves relative to the job market. They were not inclined to assert themselves and their soft skills when so many had already encountered, or at least been made aware of, the workplace's ambivalence to people with Humanities degrees. Our challenge was therefore to raise awareness of existing soft skills, while we also had to acknowledge that the corporate world tends to relegate Humanities students to the back of the potential employee queue.

2.2.1.1 Emotional Intelligence

We knew that emotional intelligence was an issue that needed to be addressed, at least in the WoW Training Programme, as far back as 2002 (please see Appendix 1, Input Evaluation: History and Development of the World of Work Programmes at Wits University). Our belief was intuitive and was informed by our awareness of employers' valuing of emotional intelligence. Reinforcing that employers do in fact place a high value on emotional intelligence in the workplace, Manring (2004) quotes Clark et al:

> Skills such as motivation, empathy, and team building can work synergistically with intelligence and technical skills to produce the highest level of performance within organisations. For this reason, business organisations are seeking more emotionally intelligent employees and trying to teach these skills to current employees. (Manring, 2004, quoting Clark et al, 2003)

Goleman (1995) argues that people of 'high IQ' often fail while those of 'lower IQ' are very successful at work because of the abilities he terms emotional intelligence. His basic premise is that academic talent alone is not a good predictor of success at work. Goleman's explanation of emotional intelligence hinges on intrapersonal intelligence, and interpersonal intelligence (1995). Intrapersonal intelligence involves three dimensions – self-awareness, emotion management, and self-motivation, while interpersonal intelligence requires relationship management and emotional

coaching. These dimensions are complex and understandably rather obscure, and each dimension is a weighty subject on its own.

A primary goal in 2005 was therefore to introduce participants to the concept of emotional intelligence. Then we wanted students to think about and apply the concepts of emotional intelligence to their internship placements. Areas we hoped they would consider were their interactions with their supervisors, peers and customers (both internal and external). We also hoped that students would reflect on emotional intelligence in the situations around them, e.g. between colleagues. Another goal was to have students take a long-term view and consider how emotional intelligence might be applied to their careers after the internships.

We had already experimented with ways to introduce emotional intelligence into the WoW Programmes. In 2003 a conflict developed between participants that further confirmed the need for us to address emotional intelligence, and informed our approach in 2005. Immediately after the conflict situation in 2003 we applied an emotional intelligence assessment with a subsequent feedback session for a few of the students involved. Besides that the exercise was expensive (we purchased the assessment), we found that it did not help us to achieve our goals for integrating emotional intelligence into the curriculum. The only real benefit was that we – the WoW Staff – confirmed what we already suspected about the students' emotional intelligences, while the students did not appear to benefit.

While there is detailed information relating to this intervention available in the Input Evaluation in Appendix 1 (Input Evaluation: History and Development of the World of Work Programmes at Wits University), specifically in the section *Monitoring and mentoring students, and assessing their performance as interns in 2003*, it should suffice to say here that we thought an emotional intelligence assessment (questionnaire) designed by Johannesburg-based specialists Dr. Jopie van Rooyen and Partners would help the students involved in the conflict in 2003 to better understand the conflict itself and their roles in it. It was sheer coincidence that Dr. Jopie van Rooyen and Partners arranged for participants in the assessment to receive feedback from a 2003 WoW workplace supervisor (who already had the experience and qualification to conduct the feedback).

I surveyed the five students who participated in the assessment after the exercise. Their learning appeared to be limited to the conflict situation only; they had not learned more about themselves personally or within a group dynamic beyond the circumstances of that conflict. ZT, who was the source of the conflict in the 2003 group, did not improve or develop his emotional intelligence. In fact, even though he was employed by his host organisation after his internship, I received

disturbing feedback from his employer (who had also been ZT's workplace supervisor when he was an intern) three years after his participation in the WoW Programmes:

- ZT had caused 'endless' trouble since joining [host organisation]. [Workplace supervisor] had had to intervene at least a dozen times to resolve conflict between ZT and another staff member. ZT had threatened this staff member with legal action. [Workplace supervisor] said that ZT had also had very bad incidents with *every* member of staff.
- [Workplace supervisor] described ZT as being highly productive with very large areas of responsibility. However, his interpersonal skills were a major problem. [Workplace supervisor] mentioned egotistical behaviour, an inability to listen, defensiveness and reactive behaviours. [Workplace supervisor] said these problems would "hold ZT back".
- [Workplace supervisor] mentioned that he had also had discussions with ZT about his emotional intelligence or lack thereof, and that some of these interactions had led to them "swearing at each other". (Field notes, 6 June 2006: telephone conversation with [workplace supervisor / CEO] at [host organisation], re Intern 2003)

The fact that the emotional intelligence assessment and the feedback session in 2003 did not seem to impact on ZT's behaviour in the long-term indicated that we had to think of more effective ways for participants to develop their own emotional intelligence. As one of the participants in the emotional intelligence assessments and feedback sessions in 2003 put it:

> I think it would be complemented by a session in which the feedback could be used to begin thinking about ways in which you can approach growth areas, or advance/increase area of strength. (Intern's response to emotional intelligence assessment, July 2003)

Emotional intelligence involves interpersonal, emotional and psychological skills, which are not commonly made explicit or discussed as skills. This makes it difficult to teach in a conventional format such as lecturing. We realized that the WoW Programmes would need to incorporate real ways for students to encounter and grapple with emotional intelligence, by for example working in groups during the training component and getting involved in organisations during their internships. Our overarching approach was therefore to avoid limiting emotional intelligence to a lecture only, on how we should get along well with others. This should not undermine the value of the session on the subject during the Training Programme: while he was in the workplace as an intern, FN referred back to the soft skills training session on emotional intelligence as proving to be valuable. He raised the impact that this input from the Training Programme had had on him in two separate interviews:

> How to handle one's emotions in a working environment; how to handle stress… sometimes you are missing a deadline and you are not even halfway with your work. It always helped me a lot. I always reflected, "Ok, now I do not need to panic, let me see what I can do with the remaining time." I have learnt a lot. (Appendix 6.2, FN Interview, 3 October 2005, p 141)

Further evidence of FN applying what he had learned about emotional intelligence on the Training Programme during his internship, within the dimensions of both personal competence (self-awareness and self-regulation) and social competence (social skills) (Goleman, 1998), is clear in this extract from an earlier interview:

> Yes, I remember a presentation on emotional intelligence, last week I went through a crisis which I related to GL, one of the secretaries seems to have a negative attitude towards me but I suspended myself, I would rather not act irrationally and in an intelligent manner. I suspended and continued as if nothing had happened and I found some time and talked to her just to see how to address this thing in a quite manner, which is not going to ruin future relations. But I kept quiet about it and two days later, the situation corrected itself without me intervening. I found that had I acted in a certain way, it was going to be a bad three months of working together, since we are on the same floor and our offices are next to each other. Acting in an intelligent manner is quite easy because human nature comes up, but the (emotional intelligence training session) came to my mind quickly: no need to act in a very unintelligent way, just need to be quiet and relaxed and you will see an opportunity to address the issue. This fortunately, self-corrected itself. (Appendix 6.2, FN Interview, 2 August 2005, p 155)

Although the concept was introduced in a dedicated session as part of the training component, and was successful as such, we considered ways to facilitate ongoing learning thereafter. At the same time we wanted to find an effective way of exhibiting our students' emotional intelligence development to employers as we were well aware of the extent to which employers valued emotional intelligence in the workplace.

The internships themselves seemed obvious opportunities for students to explore and develop their emotional intelligence in real contexts. However Manring (2004) says that there is no published work in the education pedagogical literature and business school education literature investigating the affects (if any) of academic service-learning on the fostering of students' emotional intelligence. Despite this she points out that academic service-learning and students' emotional intelligence are complementary, connected and naturally belong together as a way of promoting holistic student development that is both cognitive and emotional (Manring, 2004).

Manring and colleagues investigated if academic service-learning could be used to foster emotional intelligence among undergraduate students in a business school context (2004). After

students experienced a service-learning intervention, she found that a significant degree of learning about emotional intelligence occurred, and believes that

> a preview of vulnerability, along with increased awareness of different people in different life circumstances, and a glimpse of an "other-centered" self-definition – along with faculty-facilitated self-reflective processes," during the service-learning intervention was key in helping students increase their emotionally intelligent skills and behaviour. (Manring, 2004)

As course designers we had already incorporated journal writing in the WoW Programmes since 2002, so for "faculty-facilitated self-reflective processes" we turned again to reflective writing, this time as a means to promote the development of emotional intelligence. According to Moon (referring to Elbow 1973, and Selfe and Arbabi, 1986) we were on the right track, as Moon suggests that reflective – or personally expressive – writing may be more effective than academic or more objective writing as a medium for learning and problem solving (2004). Moon (2004) also reminds us that in the Humanities, where interpretation is often emphasised, reflective writing is an accepted form. I would therefore add to Manring's (2004) assertion that

> Academic service-learning provides a real-life context for stimulating students' emotional intelligence

by suggesting that reflective writing may have assisted development of emotional intelligence, through its process of

> reorganising knowledge and emotional orientations in order to achieve further insights. (Moon, 2004)

The weblogs in 2005 were in fact more demanding and effective in terms of reflective writing and emotional intelligence development than the paper-based journals that participants maintained from 2002 to 2004, because of the facility for peers and the public to read and comment on each of the weblog posts. 2005 Participants had to manage their emotions more thoughtfully when interacting with others in the e-learning environment because their interactions were visible in the public domain. In addition students were aware (after having been reminded of the consequences of tone, in the business writing skills workshop during the Training Programme) that their writing or comments could be taken the wrong way, since there were no non-verbal gestures to soften or qualify messages. As part of the writing process, students were repeatedly advised to pause before posting a weblog message, and to think about the response it would most likely elicit. This then impacted on real-time interactions, as UL expressed in a weblog post written during her articipation in the Training Programme, after she had attended the emotional intelligence session:

> *Each time we put ourselves together as a team our emotional intelligence is tested to the limits. I will be the one to admit that this afternoon I had to stop myself several times before making a subjective statement driven by emotion and a bit of exhaustion. (UL's Weblog, 'The Transition', 11 April 2005)*

UL's observation about the need for self-regulation reflects positively on her development of competence in this area. It can be argued that the process of writing reflectively about emotional intelligence improves and develops the practice of expressing and managing one's emotions. This aspect of the dimension of personal competence that is, according to Goleman (1998), part of emotional intelligence

> come[s] into play with academic service-learning. (Manring, 2004)

According to Goleman (1998), social competence includes social skills, the ability to build rapport with others, manage relationships and networks, build and lead teams. Here I would also include, as a subset of managing relationships, the ability to communicate assertively. GP reported in an interview conducted during his internship that he grappled with this specifically, when he tried to find the balance between being proactive, contributing to others' work processes, and prioritising his own work:

> ... when someone says to me, "But you were told not to do that for this guy", then I find myself in a problem, because now I'm creating a bond with this guy we are close. (Appendix 7.2, GP Interview, 26 August 2005, p 173)

This example of GP tackling an issue relating to emotional intelligence raises shows that his learning about emotional intelligence did not end after the Training Programme's one session on emotional intelligence. He continued to tackle his own emotional intelligence issues and reflect on them - evidence that as course designers we achieved our goal of getting students to think about and apply the concepts of emotional intelligence to their internship placements.

Resolving a quandary that hinges on sound emotional intelligence is not the point. Claiming mastery of emotional intelligence would be problematic – emotional intelligence is a lifelong learning area. What is important is evidence of students grappling with issues related to their emotional intelligence, and being able to express such incidents, as in the case of UL reflecting on the balance, during her internship, between being cooperative versus prioritising and maintaining focus on her work priorities:

> What do you do if you get there and people are asking you to make coffee?" And it might not be making coffee in the literal sense of "Make coffee!" it could be, "Go get my suit

> from the dry cleaners because I am busy." It's work related in a way, it's just the limits basically. I think it's a lot of structural things that you get used to and what I found lately, the most important thing is that you have to be nice.… (Appendix 3.2, UL Interview, 27 July 2005, p 80)

Perhaps the most emotionally intelligent response to colleagues' demands, from both UL and GP, should have been a more assertive one (e.g. saying "no" and then explaining why they could not, or should not be doing that task). However the fact that they both suggested alternative approaches points to creative problem-solving that is in itself emotionally intelligent. UL's solution was to be "nice" to resolve any conflict. (Appendix 3.2, UL Interview, 27 July 2005, p 81) In GP 's case, he reconciled the dilemma by noting that employees at his host organisation did after all "work on a reciprocal basis" (Appendix 7.2, GP Interview, 26 August 2005, p 173) thus showing that the emotional intelligence training had assisted with his ability to

> reorganis(e) knowledge and emotional orientations in order to achieve further insights. (Moon, 2004)

A strong feature in the application of emotional intelligence in the WoW Programmes, starting with the session during the Training Programme, was the ways in which the weblogs foregrounded emotional intelligence development for each participant. This pioneering aspect resolved some of the major challenges with regard to introducing emotional intelligence into the WoW Programmes' curriculum. The weblogs were a channel for students to use well beyond their initial introduction to emotional intelligence during the Training Programme session, to articulate their personal discoveries and developments relating to emotional intelligence. The weblogs could therefore be described as a learning record or portfolio of personal emotional intelligence development. Although Bartlett-Brag (December 2003) does not mention the opportunities that exist in her model to identify emotional intelligence in student blogs, her five stages of integration of a blog into a learning environment is compatible with facilitating and learning emotional intelligence. Application of at least three of the stages – introspection, reflective monologues, and reflective dialogue – allows us to both access and assess emotional intelligence. [Bartlett-Bragg's (2003) model is discussed in more detail later in this chapter.] An added bonus to what one could call postgraduates' 'EQ on the Web' was the opportunity for participants to receive commentary from peers, and in turn to give feedback at others' weblogs. For the first time postgraduate students had a way of showcasing their emotional intelligence – and therefore their employability – to potential host organisations or employers.

2.2.1.2 Time management skills

The WoW staff coined a phrase to describe the middle of the Training Programme: the "second week slump". We observed, halfway through the training component, that students were often late for the first training session of the day and participation during the discussions deteriorated, with students appearing subdued. We had also noted this pattern in the WoW Training Programme in previous years. Our response in 2005 was to try to schedule the sessions we knew would be lively and interactive during the "second week slump".

This effort did not make a marked difference, however. When we discussed the problem with students informally, they told us that they were fatigued. On the one hand this reinforced our requirements during the selection stage: that students should not participate in the Programmes if they were still busy with their postgraduate studies or had other work commitments. On the other hand, we wondered why students were feeling fatigued if they were not also trying to study and/or work.

When we probed further, participants reported that they found the full (08h30 – 17h00) day of training tiring. They found it difficult to complete personal tasks during the only "free" time available to them, the lunch hour. This raised some concerns for us. We had created a context for the training sessions with the aim of simulating a working environment, but it was clear that the orientation and adjustment to the new professional codes we were positioning, including a full workday, was exhausting for students. The result was poor or reduced performance from participants. This in itself became a source of stress, which aggravated tiredness, resulting in a catch-22 type situation. Although the WoW staff could not realistically control the amount or sources of stress, awareness of participants' perceptions of the balance between time and work in academic and workplace settings can strengthen our effectiveness as educators.

We suspected an inherent difference between the ways students perceive time, and the ways organisations perceive time. There is an absence of literature available on this subject, and so the discussion must start in general terms. Campbell and Neill (1994) refer to two concepts of time. Personal time includes private, domestic and occupational time. The workplace revolves around institutional time. Both have different values. Personal time is holistic and is measured subjectively, while institutional time represents differences in managerial ideology and is concerned with individuals as employees, measuring time according to established time frames. What this means is that students will each have a different perception of the personal time available to them, and will have different approaches to managing their personal time since they

have autonomy in managing their personal time. Personal time and institutional time are structured differently.

I asked a senior executive in the banking industry who had, in her career, supervised interns for her opinion on any differences between student and organisational perceptions of time:

> Students are accountable only to themselves. They work for good grades or just to pass. Sure, they have deadlines to hand in essays, but it's up to them how much effort they put into the work. In the workplace, effort is also measured according to outcomes, but you can't fail or hand in inferior work because you are getting *paid* for it. So an employer *owns* an employee's time, because the employer is paying for it. (Personal correspondence, 20 November 2009)

Returning to the training room in 2005, we realised that we had to find ways to assist students adjust to "institutional time". We acknowledged that, as postgraduates, our students would probably already have had experience of juggling multiple and complex tasks, managing large projects e.g. thesis writing, data collection, and taking care of non-academic demands such as family, work and finances. In fact, the Pedagogy for Employability Group (2004) point out that

> It is important that students realise that all the juggling they do is itself valuable in employability terms. (2004)

But postgraduates also have a lack of structure (e.g. no classes to 'frame' the week), and we saw in the "second week slump" of the Training Programme that they were unused to the rigid time frames (08h30 – 17h00) that underpin traditional workplaces. Not all organisations have inflexible time frames, however. GP completed his internship at a host organisation that had a less traditional approach to time and work. During his internship GP reported that he was in fact managing his time effectively within the organisation's flexible arrangement:

> *The environment allows for me to learn the job through trial and error and how I do the job is entirely up to me, I have to be disciplined in terms of reporting back and finishing my tasks on time. I set my own time frame and there are no set deadlines for me to finish my tasks. Above everything else I must say that I am enjoying my job at the [host organisation]. (GP's Weblog, 25 August 2005)*

GP's workplace supervisor also confirmed that she was happy with GP's time keeping and delivery of work. (Appendix 7.3, GP's Workplace Supervisor, Interview, 7 October 2005)

The limitations of simulating the 08h30-17h00 workdays during the Training Programme, along with other standard professional conventions such as the dress code, were that not all organisations fit this mould. But we believed that *most* do. Our solution was therefore not to adjust the simulation in the training room, but to commit to introducing a time management

training session in future WoW Training Programmes, with input on practical tools that students could use to deal with their time management during their transitions into the workplace. While reinforcing that time management is an essential employability skill (which would fall under Yorke and Knight's [2004] core skill of self management), The Pedagogy for Employability Group (2004) suggest that one such practical tool would be to provide a weekly time sheet requiring students to reflect on what they have learned about how they organise their time.

In the absence of a training session on time management in the WoW Training Programme in 2005, students at least had recourse to some related training. For example the soft skills training session on emotional intelligence both equipped FN to recognize his problems with managing time, and enabled him to reflect on this issue:

> I wasted a lot of time which could have been saved had I relied on electronic devices... To each and every person, you should look at your resources and put a time limit, which will be reasonable for you and also for people because sometimes they think you are new but we want to see how he is progressing. I think that, for example, is what they were checking with me. The work that I did on the last two days was more than 400% greater than what I did in the past 11 days, and I saw that I should have used this. (Appendix 6.2, FN Interview, 3 October 2005, p 141)

In this case, the Training Programme would have contributed to FN's personal qualities and enhanced the areas of self-awareness, reflectiveness as well as helping to develop FN's "Malleable self-theory". (Yorke and Knight, 2004)

2.3 Curriculum design and pedagogy

In examining the intersections between curriculum and pedagogy, it is important to point out that from the start of our design process of the training component we acknowledged a reciprocal relationship between the extent to which a range of pedagogic affordances could be built into the design of the curriculum. In other words, the greater the affordance in the design, the greater the potential for pedagogic quality. This was important because we planned for a range of guest lecturers, each with different educational backgrounds, workplace cultures, professional development and business orientations, and therefore, we assumed, with different pedagogical approaches.

While we had no straightforward formula to guide us in curriculum development, we set out to

> ensure that each element - intentions, teaching, assessment, content – [were] considered and that the links between the elements [were] thoughtfully made. (Cannon and Newble, 2000)

Our intentions with regard to curriculum design were therefore to

- include content that was relevant to contemporary business issues and employability development;
- encourage students to question the theoretical content and its practical relevance;
- stimulate students' analytical thought;
- engage and inspire students' minds;
- encourage high levels of interaction between students.

To determine whether these general aims were achieved, the evaluation must look at how the curriculum and pedagogy were intentionally designed to develop knowledge, abilities, and ultimately, employability.

2.3.1 Mindmaps

The mind mapping exercise is discussed first in this section because it was a response to an overarching concern that we, as course designers, had with regard to the curriculum design. We felt a need for some cohesion. We were conscious of the fact that the training component consisted of disparate topics and subject areas. Then, to add to the effect of what may have seemed a mixed bag of topics, we had different guest lecturers with their varied pedagogical approaches, for each session.

We saw mind mapping as a solution to this general challenge. By confining the content of the training component to a single piece of paper – even if only by using keywords in the mind map – we hoped that participants would benefit by being able to see the entire picture at once and perhaps stimulate additional associations.

A mind map is a form of an outline with ideas and pictures radiating out from a central concept. (Buzan and Buzan, 2006) I was responsible for positioning and helping students to implement this skill in the WoW Training Programme in 2005. The pedagogical approach used to do so was synergetic, I believe, with the pedagogical approaches that other lecturers for the WoW Training Programme in 2005 would have used. The following discussion starts with an explanation of how

the mind map exercise was applied, simply to provide detailed context for it. Thereafter I look more closely at the pedagogy of the tool.

The central concept for the WoW Training Programme mind map in 2005 was the 'World of Work' itself, abbreviated to 'WoW'. Students had complete freedom to express any issue relating to the workplace, although the training topics (please see Table 2: Training Programme Topics 2005, p 107) were positioned as obvious "hooks" for development of the mind map. Guest lecturers were also invited to use the mind map to develop their topic and/or link it to other pertinent areas in the world of work. The mind map covered the length of one wall in the main seminar room where most of the training sessions for the WoW Training Programme were held. Development of the mind map started in the first week of the WoW Training Programme, and it was a permanent fixture in the room for the duration of the Training Programme.

It is possible for me to detail the practicalities of introducing the mind mapping technique, and the pedagogical motives behind the exercise here, because I was directly responsible for this teaching activity. In so doing, I hope the detail will represent the pedagogical motives behind at least some of the guest lecturers' teaching activities, because a) all lecturers on the WoW Programmes will have had an intuitive understanding of teaching activities that would stimulate learning to benefit employability, simply by virtue of their exposure to workplaces; and b) the fact that guest lecturers responded favourably to the mind maps in the training room, and chose to use them, indicates a like-mindedness in terms of pedagogical endeavours.

Guest lecturers were not located at the University, but in the workplace. They "dropped in" to facilitate a training session on the topic wherein they specialized. I suggest that guest lecturers, due to their longer-term exposure to workplace dynamics, would have at least an intuitive understanding of what makes an employee imminently more employable, which would be more than an academic lecturer located in a university context might have. The Pedagogy for Employability Group (2004) assert that

> Academics do not always take the opportunity to make plain to their students the parallel between the academic task and workplace tasks, and students too may not fully appreciate the connection.

Some guest lecturers said that the mind map quickly oriented them to what the students had learned from other guest lecturers. It signaled what students' major concerns were and was an effective connecting thread between the seemingly disparate topics. In this way, the mind map proved to be an effective tool for guest lecturers.

At the beginning of the WoW Training Programme, I gave a brief introduction to mind maps by outlining the basic principles and showing some examples from Buzan and Buzan (2006). I then asked the students to divide into groups of three or four participants. Each group was provided with a very large sheet of paper, a handful of coloured markers, and a number of small post-it notes. Brainstorming is a critical component of creating a mind map so the groups were asked to brainstorm as their first step. The topics students worked with were questions related to their initial transitions into the workplace, such as 'what will the world of work expect of me?'

The next step was for each small group to construct a mind map. I found that mind maps were generally not familiar to most students. Consequently, when groups were encouraged to incorporate colour and drawings as organisational aids and prompts, some groups needed to be re-directed away from elaborate drawings toward more substance. This is an informal method of continuous feedback. (Huba and Freed, 2000) Although the mind map exercise was not graded and lacked formal mechanisms to ensure participation of all group members, moving from group to group during the exercise allowed me as the facilitator to observe the extent of participation and to get the more passive group members to be more active.

Finally, the small group mind maps were assimilated into the large mind map that covered the entire wall of the training room (approximately 6m x 3m), similar to the mindmap generated in the programme in 2004 (Please see Appendix 1, Fig. 6, p.50).

After this set-up session, time was allocated during each day of training for development of the group mind map. This was a useful opportunity for students to conceptualize major themes in the world of work, together. The mind map was therefore a very useful tool in the classroom situation in terms of maintaining the context of the overall discussion (developing employability for the workplace) while also representing very clearly the chain of elements that the group followed from session to session. For example, the soft skills session on creativity led to a student noting the devices that the guest lecturer had suggested for problem-solving; ‘SMART’ goals and ‘SCAMPER’ (an acronym for active verbs that can be used to generate ideas for problem solving: Substitute, Combine, Adapt, Modify, Put to other uses, Eliminate, Rearrange). (Please see Appendix 1, Fig. 9: Detail from group mindmap, World of Work Training Programme 2005, p.53.) The information session on social change led students to reflect on the notion of “responsible social citizens” initiating change, and even on John Lennon’s phrase “Imagine all the people...”. Perhaps the best example of students seeing relationships between seemingly disparate topics was evident in the mind map after the information session on the Humanities in the world of work. Participants recorded the variety of backgrounds informing the heritage of the

WoW 2005 group of participants: “Xhosa, Pedi, Sotho, French, Swahili, Kikuyu, Afrikaans, Basotho...” and so on.

The students then added a link from this to the heading “Black Economic Empowerment”, another of the information sessions in the 2005 Training Programme. Here the students raised questions: “Am I black enough?” and “How to empower all levels of ‘disadvantaged’ society?” (Please see Appendix 1, Fig. 8: Detail from group mindmap, World of Work Training Programme 2005, p. 53.)

After describing the process, the question now arises: what were the pedagogical implications of mind mapping? The pedagogical importance of working on the mind maps in small groups facilitated a deeper analysis of the topic through brainstorming and allowed opportunities for students to voice their ideas to peers, support their ideas with evidence from the training programme content, listen to other points of view, and gain confidence. (Meyers and Jones, 1993)

The creation of a mind map in both small and larger groups is an active and collaborative learning exercise. And because a mind map captures a specific topic in a nonlinear fashion and incorporates graphics and colours, this exercise can connect with learners whose style is not as well served by traditional linear, text-based materials. It would have helped students to 'put the pieces together':

> *This is my message to all WoW participants: 'Put all the fragments together.' These fragments, by themselves, are insignificant. It requires a mind to put all of them together to amount to a greater good. All that one has learnt may soon be undermined or even lost by neglect of intellectual creativity. Put all the piecies together so you may have a broader picture. (FN's Weblog, ‘Put the P-i-e-c-i-e-s together’, 14 July 2006)*

During his internship, GP’s supervisor was impressed with what she termed GP’s “unique skill”:

> ... he tends to pull a lot of the ideas from people together, which is quite an impressive skill. When you’ve got a handful of people with sort of the same ideas, but different thoughts, he’s got quite an ability of putting it together. Sort of summarizing it all up. (Appendix 7.3, GP’s Workplace Supervisor, Interview, 7 October 2005, p 184)

GP’s internship work involved liaising with people in different areas of the organisation’s work. He had to assimilate these different aspects of the organisation according to the organisation’s core function, for a communications brief. He relayed that

> I was able to actually make it effective in terms of bringing all the programme areas together, because now we are able to coordinate all the departments. (Appendix 5.2, GP Interview, 7 October 2005, p 177)

Just as in a mind mapping exercise, GL had to categorize and make associations for this internship task. The mind mapping exercise in the training component would have helped to prepare him to make connections and links between seemingly disparate subjects.

Another crucially important pedagogical benefit of the mind map was that it encouraged reflective thought by requiring students to assimilate new learning, and to relate that to what they already knew. The mind mapping exercise had the real potential to promote and develop students' creativity, their ability to think critically about information and ideas, and their metacognitive ability (that is, participants' abilities to think about their own thinking).

Mind mapping as a shared activity not only facilitated shared learning but possibly started the process of cultivating a learning community in the classroom. From this, and as they consistently engaged in reflective discourse to develop the mind map, students started to create a 'community of practice'.

A basic explanation of what is meant by a community of practice should suffice at this stage, since it was only later in the WoW Programmes (when students started using communications technology to maintain contact with each other from their different work sites) that we saw more distinctive features of a community of practice emerging. A community of practice typically consists of a small group of people who have similar concerns, interests and learning aspirations relating to their work. The premise behind the idea of a community of practice is that members can improve their performance, learning and understanding by supporting one another.

The beginnings of a community of practice in the very early stages of the WoW Training Programme in 2005, with the mind mapping exercise as a catalyst, occurred spontaneously. This development was not specifically planned by the course designers.

If only to sample how other students reacted to teaching activities in the 2005 WoW Programmes, and thus to test how representative the selection of 2005 respondents are, it may be interesting to include extracts from weblog posts from 2005 WoW Programmes' participants who were *not* amongst the five respondents selected for the analysis of the 2005 Programmes. In her blogpost titled "Let's mind map" PO wrote

> *I found mind mapping a completely new concept. At first I thought it was foreign and not easy to adapt. After [researcher] finished presenting I had an idea but still felt intimidated. Then I approached GP, [fellow 2005 intern], who was obviously at ease with the concept and he again explained mind mapping to me. Then I asked myself, "Is this really new?" Of course not, I have been mind mapping so have most people. It is only that we did not know that we were.*

Do you remember passing through a strange town in a car trying to locate where you are? One normally scans billboards and names of the shops as well as road directions in that speed. However, after passing through, one will have identified the place as well as having picked those billboards that had misspellings on them. How does this happen? It is called reflective thinking. How do we connect this with mind mapping? Basically it is a recollection of important information without having to write it all down but noting it in one's mind.

A second example and even close to mind mapping is the situation in an exam room. With a question that requires an essay like History, the habit would be; immediately after understanding what the question requires, one takes three to five minutes jotting down ideas that are related haphazardly without judging what to note or what not to note. This is mind mapping to a certain extent.

Mind mapping is a powerful graphic technique helping to unlock the potential of the brain as a result stretching one's ability to recall important matters. It is a great skill to learn in order to help ones memory to remain sharp which is very much essential in the world of work. It can actually be applied in every aspect of life where clear thinking could enhance performance. So, let's begin to mind map. (PO's weblog, 17 April 2005)

PO's realisation that mind mapping was an activity she had actually been doing, and that she was simply unaware of how she was using this skill inadvertently, points to the value of teaching activities that facilitate opportunities for students to use their own experiences at the university to make the connection with employability explicit. (The Pedagogy for Employability Group, 2004)

FD – also not one of the main respondents in this study - attended the WoW Training Programme, but she chose not to participate in the Internship Programme due to family obligations. FD suggested,

A culture of support and co-operation has been built through acknowledging common goals and participating in group projects such as the 'mind map'. (FD's weblog, "Remarkably, everybody is onboard", 16 April 2005)

after she recorded her surprise at the fact that the WoW participants formed a remarkably cohesive and effective group:

Imagine, eighteen strangers, coming from diverse backgrounds and nationalities, working together intensively for two weeks. One would think that there would be personal conflicts between team members, power struggles over leadership would emerge, someone in the group would not pulling their weight or sub-groups would develop. As one of the trainees in the world of work program, I am proud to say that we have built an enthusiastic, co-operative and supportive team. Unbelievably, there has been no significant conflict between individuals, sub-groups have not emerged, leadership is shared amongst the team, everybody is truly friendly and supportive. How have we managed such a remarkable feat? (FD's weblog, 16 April 2005)

2.3.2 Weblogs

The discussion of weblogs here considers the general principles of this e-learning methodology, and aims to give a feel of how it worked in practice. Another section - to follow - looks at the ways in which weblogs were assessed, along with the other two assignments, the business report and oral presentation. The introduction of weblogs was unconventional and innovative, necessitating a more detailed explanation than the other assignments.

Weblogs were preceded by journal-keeping, which was introduced into the WoW Programmes from 2002 as a course requirement and a way for students to frame experiences in a larger context through a formalised process of structured reflection on the relationship between the workplace and academic life. These journals also provided a record of the individual's professional growth and development over the course of the internship.

The introduction of student weblogs, commonly called blogs, was a new development for students participating in the WoW Training and Internship Programmes in 2005 and replaced the journal writing exercise. The WoW Programme designers initially intended to use the weblogs in 2005 as a marketing tool to present programme participants as employable, by making their reflections of their experiences in the WoW Training and Internship Programmes visible to future employers in the public sphere. Since a key factor of the WoW Programmes was the promotion of employability, we knew that our job was not only to present (or arrange for the presentation of) content, but also to teach content in a way that would make the process of students' learning and critically engaging visible. The idea that blogs could enable visibility to people outside the academic arena justified their implementation over the traditional journal keeping we had otherwise been using as an assignment in the Programmes.

We soon realised, however, the potential for weblogs as a powerful e-learning tool to facilitate situated and reflective learning. As students developed their weblogs we realized that they had become effective portfolios that helped participants recognise and record their learning and reflect and validate their learning experiences. We had, we realized, inadvertently facilitated what e-learning experts term 'e-portfolios'. Attwell quotes Wilson's definition of an e-Portfolio:

> An e-portfolio is a repository of information about a particular learner provided by the learner and by other people and organisations, including products in a range of media that the learner has created or helped to create alongside formal documents from authoritative sources, such as transcripts of assessed achievement, which the learner has chosen to retain. (2005)

A weblog, or blog, is a frequently updated document on the web. Blogs are generally understood to be subjective, with no authority other than that lent by their author generally, providing commentary or news on a particular subject. A typical blog combines text, images, and links to other blogs, web pages, and other media related to its topic. The ability for readers to leave comments in an interactive format is an important part of blogs. Most blogs are primarily textual and are part of a wider network of social media.

There is some discussion of the history of weblogs and their development - pertaining to the use of weblogs as a tool in the WoW Programmes - in Appendix 1, Input Evaluation: History and Development of the World of Work Programmes at Wits University (the sections *Development of the World of Work Programmes, 2005 - Key changes, Introducing weblogs in 2005*, specifically). Statistics from World Wide Worx, an independent research company, confirm that South Africa was behind the rest of the world in terms of the numbers of weblogs in 2005. It also seems that the WoW Programmes at Wits University, and the New Media or Journalism departments at Rhodes University were the only South African universities using weblogs in 2005. (Personal email correspondence with Arthur Goldstuck, MD of World Wide Worx, 20 July 2009). Very little was being written or reported on the pedagogical implications of using weblogs in Higher Education at the time, as even the Ivy League universities in the United States were not using weblogging as a form of e-learning. (The Morningside Post at Columbia University, 2006)

This picture changed after 2006. Goldstuck (2009a) said that while blogging appeared to be, for a while at least, a "big internet fad" in South Africa, the number of blogs and media attention around those blogs gained a foothold in mainstream consciousness. The result was an explosion of activity in July and August 2007, and Goldstuck thus correctly predicting that

> By the end of August 2008, blogs will not only be a mainstream component of most online media in South Africa, they will also be a dominant component. (Goldstuck, 2009b)

2.3.2.1 Processes and stages in weblog development

Attwell (2005) has identified seven different functions for an e-portfolio, all of which can be mapped against the different pedagogic processes inherent in the development of the 2005 WoW weblogs.

1. Recognising learning

We found that the students tended to write weblog posts about their newly acquired areas of learning as a result of having attended the training component, more than they wrote opinion pieces or responses to each other. This contrasts with an observation made by Attwell (2005) who warns that we must not assume that students immediately and easily recognise learning. He suggests that students frequently lack the skills to recognise their own learning. The WoW students seemed to recognise their own learning consistently and easily, even when a new area of learning was 'frightening':

> *It was frightening to hear that all those big words I have become accustomed to in my academic research have no place in the business world! (GL's Weblog, 18 April 2005)*

In our experience, students' recognition of new knowledge was usually and typically presented as 'before and after' type scenarios. We did not, as course designers, call for this format and students seemed to use it spontaneously. For example FN, while writing about dress codes and professionalism, said that

> *Previously I used to think that to be professionally dressed is equivalent to putting on formal clothes. I harbored that perception until I attended a session organised by the Wits WoW programmes facilitated by [guest lecturer]. (FN's Weblog, 18 April 2005)*

AC (not a key informant, but a participant in the 2005 WoW Programmes) used a weblog post to continue a discussion that had started in the seminar room.

> *Being loyal to a company/employer has raised some interesting statements within the seminar sessions. (AC's Weblog, 16 April 2005)*

It is apparent that AC realized that a significant point had been made and he wished to explore it further. This is a crucial step in the process of recognising learning – that is, recognising that some issues or topics need more examination and exploration. AC chose to explore the subject further by sharing his reflections on it – I have emphasized the key phrases in the same weblog post indicating this, here:

> ***Personally**, it means working hard at one's job… **The most important element to me** is the passion and desire one has for one's job. (AC's weblog, 16 April 2005)*

2. Recording learning

We quickly realized that weblogs are powerful repositories where students can publish their own content, collaborate with each other and also – almost unconsciously – develop an e-portfolio. The students in 2005 used the weblogs to record learning in a variety of ways. The most prevalent way was to summarise what they had learnt from the Training Programme, and reflect on that learning. For example, AC (a participant in the 2005 Programmes, but not a key informant) recorded what had been positioned as employability during the training, and then provided his understanding of the term from this:

> *From my understanding and what I've learnt, employability deals with a variety of issues. There seems to be two major facets: the first impression, and the "working environment" impression. (AC's Weblog, 16 April 2005)*

AC then went on to elaborate on the two major facets, the first being the preparation for workplace entry, or the CV writing and interview phase, and the second being interpersonal skills while at work. Richardson (2004), quoted by Downes (2004) uses a metaphor to describe blogging as

> …the needle that sews together what is now a lot of learning in isolation" and suggests that blogging has the potential to teach learners "how" to learn.

In the same post, AC "sews together" what was presented in the training and his own insights to present a comprehensive and personal understanding of employability. AC raises the importance of passion for work, appropriate attitude and the issue of loyalty. (AC's weblog post, 16 April 2005) These were not specifically emphasised by the guest lecturers and they therefore reflect AC's own grasp of the subject of employability.

The Dearing Report on Higher Education in the United Kingdom (1997) recommended the use of progress files or portfolios for each student, including formal and personal records of achievements. (Moon 2004) The weblogs effectively and efficiently fulfill all these criteria for portfolios. We discussed with students the possibility of providing a link at their weblogs to a Microsoft Word document that would be their curriculum vitae. Students in 2005 did not all use this idea, probably because they were caught up in the most obvious function of the weblogs, being journaling. But the fact remains that weblogs do allow for an efficient presentation of personal records of achievements, such as a curriculum vitae.

Attwell (2005) suggests that peer group interaction be included in portfolios. The weblogs effectively catered for this. Not only did students respond to each others' summaries of the

training (with, for example, opinions and personal impressions), but also to questions raised in the blog posts. For example, JN asked at his weblog

> *How are interns prepared to risk themselves for employment? (JN's Weblog, 18 April 2005)*

and then discussed advice a guest lecturer had given regarding employment within the United Nations. (JN's Weblog, 18 April 2005) JN received four responses from four other participants in the 2005 WoW Programmes. His peers shared similar experiences of applying for work at the United Nations and even sparked a debate about the role of integrity in risk-taking. Interestingly, one of JN's peers added a comment that revealed another facet of what the guest lecturer that JN was referring to had said. So not only had JN recorded his learning from the guest lecturer, but his peers added to that learning too. The weblogs therefore not only allowed for the presentation of learning towards a portfolio, but also the presentation of what others had learned, thus leading the student towards creating new meanings.

3. Reflecting on learning

The opportunities offered by weblogs to promote reflection were the impetus to include them as learning tools in 2005. We had had some success with the hard copy journals students had been required to initiate and maintain in earlier years. We did not want to forego this element of learning. We saw reflecting as possibly being the most important part of the learning process and we wanted to enhance it with the added facility weblogs offered of allowing a much wider audience to comment on students' reflections. Only two people had commented on students' entries in the hard copy journals that had been used in the Programmes up until 2005 – myself, and the course advisor. We hoped that if we opened up the journal entries to more readers we would enable "a process of turning experience into learning" (Boud, 2001) and facilitate reflective learning as

> … an intentional process, where social context and experience are acknowledged, in which learners are active individuals, wholly present, *engaging with others, and open to challenge.* [emphasis added] (Brockbank et al, 2002)

One of the key informants, GP, published a post at his weblog on the nature of learning in the world of work versus the university:

> *The world of work is completely different from the academic world in the sense that some of the things that we have learnt from the academic world are not relevant to the world of*

> *work, so as a student I need to forget most of the things that I learned at university and try and learn what is relevant for the world of work. This does not mean that what we learned from the academic world is not entirely relevant to the world of work, actually what it means is that the theoretical framework that was learnt at school cannot be effectively applied to the world of work, because the world of work requires more practical application in solving problems. the academic world has been focused on the theoretical applications to solving problems, that is why it is not easy to take the knowledge that is acquired from school and use it effectively in the world of work. (GP's Weblog, 18 April 2005)*

GP's weblog post is indicative of the kinds of reflection to be found throughout the weblog postings from the five key informants, and indeed from all the 2005 participants. In this weblog extract as in others from all participants there is evidence of GP standing back from his experience of learning in two different contexts, seeking out connections between the concepts, and contextualizing meaning. (Rosie, 2000)

4. Validating learning

Proof positive of the validity of learning in the weblogs, in the context of the WoW Programmes, would be evidences of employability. To present such evidence, students had to showcase their critical thinking and their ability to express and present views confidently. According to Attwell (2005) validating involves proving – to oneself and to others - that learning has taken place.

Validating learning as a pedagogic process is tied up with an aspect of the curriculum design for the implementation of the weblogs: assessment. The assessment of the weblogs is discussed in a following section in more detail. It should suffice to point out here that students were required to select certain posts for assessment. This selection would have been based on what the students themselves believed proved their employability as per the following four weblog posts that a key informant GL specifically selected for assessment:

- *Weblog post 1*

GL provides a summary of the second week of the training, drawing together at least six different issues relating to the world of work and thereby proving her skills at being able to understand the gist of a body of content. (GL's Weblog, 18 April 2005)

- *Weblog post 2*

GL first makes it clear to the reader that she is keeping abreast of current news and then articulates her own opinion about these – hence her use of the phrase, "…in my view…":

> *I recently came across an article in a local Kenyan daily …. My view on this is that attracting investors to Africa does not promote the continents independence.* ***In my view****, Africa's debts need to be discussed from their source... [emphasis added] (GL's Weblog, 18 April 2005)*

- *Weblog post 3*

GL quotes a guest lecturer on employability. By engaging with this, GL shows her ability to think critically about what the guest lecturer said:

> *I particularly liked what [Guest lecturer] from [organisation] said on employability "its about one being able to continuously improve on themselves and developing new skills". The way I see it, "botox treatments" do not increase employability but can only offer an individual a job! (GL's Weblog, 15 April 2005)*

- *Weblog post 4*

GL selects a weblog post for assessment that shows her ability to understand and present the two opposing sides of an argument and the pros and cons of each position, as she asks (on the issue of interns being 'used' to make tea): *The question that comes to mind is really... to make or not to make?* She then clearly states her position regarding the issue:

> *I am of the strong opinion that as an intern, one should learn how to make a* good cuppa *as it provides for other opportunities such as socializing with other members of that organisation. On the other hand, many interns see this as bullying, and do not buy into the tea pot paradigm. (LE, plse evaluate) (GL's Weblog, 8 April 2005)*

In her selected posts, GL proves her ability to summarise, articulate an informed opinion, engage with an expert, and present an argument. GL - and the other key informants selected for assessment - thereby shows how students used what they had learnt in the Training Programme about the notion of employability to present weblog posts which displayed employability traits and therefore validated their learning about employability.

5. Presenting learning

Another way of understanding the weblogs in the WoW Programmes' context is to consider them as 'learning journals'. In this category of weblogging there is individual ownership of the knowledge published. The content – the learning that is presented - becomes the sole responsibility of the author.

From the outset we had a sense that there would be something inherently democratic about the weblogging process, and that all participants' voices would be represented. We expected that there would be a way of engaging that would be different to what occurs in the classroom – because participants would have had their own time to reflect and edit their contributions. But in fact the blogs still tended to be dominated by the stronger students. We found that there tended to be a correlation between the stronger students and the amount of blogging they did themselves, and the amount of comments they posted at peers' weblogs that put them into the very strong arena. The implications were that as the stronger students tended to dominate the process, we learned more about what they learned from what they presented at their weblogs, while we did not have as clear an understanding of what students who did not participate as enthusiastically at their weblogs had learned.

One of the areas this raises is the issue of text and language. Downes says that

> despite obvious appearances, blogging isn't really about writing at all; that's just the end point of the process, the outcome that occurs more or less naturally if everything else has been done right. Blogging is about, first, reading. But more important, it is about reading what is of interest to you: your culture, your community, your ideas. (2004)

Nevertheless, and perhaps because of the Higher Education context, we assumed that all students would be relatively confident, comfortable or accustomed to expressing themselves in the text format that is the dominant characteristic of weblogs. We must acknowledge however that students may not be 'weaker' or 'stronger' but simply included or excluded according to the dominant mode inherent in the tool. A solution may be to emphasise and explore with students with varied learning styles the opportunities that exist to record competences in many different media at weblogs - including photographs, video and audio - especially as access to bandwidth increases.

6. Planning learning

Where planning is a form of reflection, the weblogs as a learning tool were useful to help students consider what they had already achieved and what they hoped to achieve. Most of the key informants wrote weblog posts with content that showed evidence of them looking back at their learning in the academic environment, and then forwards at their objectives for learning in the world of work. For example, GP wrote

> *I am getting the sense of what the world of work really is like and I am putting to use all the skills that I have learnt from the programme… I am learning a lot about Corporate Citizenship and I hope that I will be able to grow and understand more about the concept, because it is a new concept in the continent and we need to make it known to the people of Africa. (GP's Weblog, 5 August 2005)*

This trend towards reflecting on the planning of learning extended beyond the group of key informants. There was evidence of considering learning in the future amongst many of the other WoW 2005 participants as well. AC – not a key informant but a participant in the 2005 WoW Programmes - reflected that

> *The world of work still seems a daunting environment, but as I progress and learn more through this course, I feel more adept at facing the challenges and developments it might bring. (AC's Weblog, 16 April 2005)*

The Dearing Report on Higher Education in the United Kingdom (1997) raised the necessity for personal development planning as a crucial aspect of employability development. There may be a possibility to extend the rather loose way in which the planning of learning occurred in the weblogs in 2005 (through reflection), to a more rigorous and concrete aspect of the weblogs, in future or similar programmes. For example, students could be assigned the task of compiling a carefully designed personal learning development plan (perhaps with guidance from the workplace supervisor and/or the WoW staff) and posting this at their weblog.

7. Assessing learning

The assessment of learning can be considered in two ways here. Firstly, the ways in which the guest lecturers and potential employers assessed learning should be considered. We had hoped that our guest lecturers would read the students' blogs .We also hoped that prospective employers would watch the students develop as their weblogs developed and would possibly see students engaging with content over which they as employers had some control and expertise themselves.

In this way, we believed, they would see firsthand how Humanities students think through material that may be alien for them.

The reality was that most of the interaction in the weblogs was peer-to-peer, rather than peer-to-mentor. Guest lecturers and potential employers very often simply didn't have the time or want to extend their commitment to this level. This compromised our original goals for the weblogs to market the WoW participants and to showcase their employability. The fact that weblogs were not yet recognised as mainstream communication tools in South Africa in 2005 also probably accounted for their lack of participation. Workplace supervisors in 2005 were not asked for their opinions about weblogs as e-learning tools – but most did not initiate any discussion (during interviews) about the weblogs, nor did they respond to their interns' weblogs online. This is in itself revealing, and it can be argued that any value that the weblogs may have had in this capacity only was undermined because it stayed within the academic realm, with only University staff and WoW Programmes' participants responding to the weblogs.

Nevertheless, Farmer and Bartlett-Bragg believe that

> access to experts and other professionals beyond the boundaries of the classroom environment has been perceived as one of the most valuable aspects of the blog publishing activity. (2005)

Despite our lack of success on this front, we decided to persevere until weblogging became more commonplace in South Africa and we could then judge if the tool served all participants by enabling effective assessment of learning.

Secondly, the weblogs as assessment devices in the curriculum design should also be evaluated. This discussion follows.

2.3.2.2 Using the weblogs for assessment

All three assignments – weblogs, business report and oral presentation - were used as assessment tools in 2005. This was a new development in the curriculum design, necessitated because in 2005 participants had to qualify for the internship component. Assessment had only previously occurred in 2001, when the intervention was driven by academically oriented outcome requirements (the Input Evaluation of this aspect of the 2001 Programme is available in Appendix 1).

Descriptions of the business report, oral presentation, professional behaviour requirements and some of the weblog requirements for assessment purposes are available in the section on the WoW Programmes 2005 in Appendix 1 (Input Evaluation: History and Development of the World of Work Programmes at Wits University). The fundamental differences between the treatments of descriptions of the WoW Programmes in 2005, in Appendix 1 (Input Evaluation: History and Development of the World of Work Programmes at Wits University) and this chapter, are succinctly expressed by Robinson's (2002) explanation of Stufflebeam's evaluation approach. In the Input Evaluation – Appendix 1 – descriptions of the decision-making process detail how decisions were structured. The kinds of questions answered were based on our fundamental question as course designers: "How should we do it?" In the Process Evaluations (Chapters 4 and 5), however, the focus is on how decisions were implemented in the years evaluated, and whether or not we, as course designers, were doing it as planned – and if not, why not.

To evaluate the way we used weblogs for assessment in 2005 it is necessary to start with a discussion of what makes for a good weblog – 'good' implying the efficacy of the technologies inherent in weblogs that support the pedagogic approaches involved, which are the seven processes and stages in weblog development as identified by Attwell. These seven processes and stages are detailed in the section 2.3.2 Weblogs. In summary, they are

1. recognising learning
2. recording learning
3. reflecting on learning
4. validating learning
5. presenting learning
6. planning learning
7. assessing learning (2005)

The weblogs we implemented were effectively also ePortfolios for the students participating in 2005. Attwell (2005) suggests some of the standards by which weblogs as ePortfolios can be evaluated. They should in the first case help to develop learner centred applications and should support learning processes, rather than force students to follow software design driven work and learning processes. In 2005 we booked computer lab time and took students through the process of establishing a weblog, step-by-step. There are various free blogging sites on the Internet. We chose to use www.blogspot.com. Blogspot was preceded by Blogger, the weblog provider that is said to have fueled the blogging revolution, so Blogspot is well established and has a strong user

base. While the features of the software providers are often upgraded, enhanced, or changed, it was easy for students to set up a weblog at this site and it was also easy for students to subscribe to each other's blogs once they became members of the Blogspot community. Students were therefore not overly absorbed or distracted by the technology; they established their weblogs within hours and there was minimal risk of their learning processes being usurped by the technological processes.

Being able to comment on each other's blogs was seen as vital in developing a sense of community amongst the 2005 students. This feature therefore satisfied another of Attwell's (2005) challenges for ePortfolios, being that the technology should recognise the social aspect of learning while also allowing the interaction of communities. Linking to other sites was encouraged and meant that students could negotiate and share learning and content (Attwell, 2005).

Attwell (2005) believes that for the weblogs to be considered effective, they would need to support learning from multiple sources – including the workplace and home as well as the University. The very nature of the World of Work Programmes and the fact that the weblogs assignment was designed for the students to maintain them in different contexts – first the University during the training component and then the workplace during the internship component – meant that the weblogs recognised multiple contexts of learning.

Weblogs certainly have the potential to assist with the scaffolding of learning and knowledge. Attwell says that

> e-Portfolio applications must allow for the revision of previous learning and the reorganisation of personal knowledge bases to take account of new learning which may challenge previously held knowledge and previous knowledge schema. (2005)

There are multiple instances in the weblogs maintained by the 2005 group of students where they compared new knowledge acquired as a result of participating in the training component, with previously held beliefs and knowledge. An example of this from one of the key informants, is

> *Previously I used to think that to be professionally dressed is equivalent to putting on formal clothes. I harbored that perception until I attended a session organised by the Wits WoW programmes facilitated by [guest lecturer]. (FN's Weblog, 18 April 2005)*

The only untested areas of weblogs according to Attwell's areas to qualify their efficacy were in their ability to support multiple media by allowing students to present their learning in different media and in different combinations of media. (2005) The relative short duration of the WoW Programmes – four months for both components – may explain why students did not experiment

more with a variety of media. The fact is that there are various creative and useful facilities in the technology for students to present their learning in diverse ways. Similar or future programmes could encourage this, especially if students maintain their weblogs for a longer period of time than the WoW Programmes. Then Attwell (2005) also says that data should be portable. He is critical of ePortfolios that are 'owned' by the Higher Education institution and not by the student and points out that when students leave university the portfolio stays with that university and they cannot take it with them. (Attwell, 2005) Weblogs resolve this problem. The student 'owns' the weblog and can certainly take it with her or him after university. That said, we knew of no instances where students in 2005 expressed a need to move data from their weblogs to another or to a different digital application, but this is also easily managed if necessary. There is the possibility for example that students could print out their weblogs for personal marketing and give the document to an interviewer, or store the information on disc.

Yet another advantage of the weblogs is that they enable access to qualitative data on students' employability progress and development and are therefore an important and valuable research tool. They are useful for spontaneous course evaluation, and are a window into students' interests and thoughts, as well as both their surface and deep learning. A powerful benefit of the weblogs in the context of the 2005 WoW Programmes is that they fulfilled two crucial functions: as an ongoing assessment tool that simultaneously functioned as a learning tool.

2.3.2.3 Structuring the weblogs for assessment

An assessment form, based on a weblog rubric from the College of Education, San Diego State University, detailing the assessment criteria applied to the weblogs was developed for students. This form is available in Appendix 13.

The weblogs were assessed according to four main criteria:

- The overall use of the blogs (30%)
- Intellectual engagement with key concepts (35%)
- Personal responses to key concepts (25%)
- Writing quality (10%)

Each criterion was weighted with a percentage, which was indicative only, as participants knew that the WoW Training Programme was not an academic course, and did not have the academic marks requirements typical of a university course.

In terms of the *overall use of the blogs*, participants were required, to qualify for the internship component, to develop their blog postings from summaries of training sessions. Besides reflecting critically on course content, students were encouraged to provide hyperlinks to other material, and to make insightful commentary at peers' weblog postings. Within twelve selected weblog postings, students were also required to show their *intellectual engagement with key concepts* by 'demonstrating engagement with the important issues raised through readings and/or training session discussion(s)/ activities.' (Assessment form, available in Appendix 13) Students' *personal responses to key concepts* required their ability to reflect on issues in the world of work. Mastery of the *writing quality* criteria required clear, concise, accurate written communication, also with some flair and originality.

Students started their weblogs within the first week of the WoW Training Programme. During the Training Programme, the following general questions were omnipresent and were used as catalysts for their reflection in the weblogs:

- What do you think and feel about your progress during the Training Programme?
- What did you learn today and how will you apply that learning in the workplace?
- Write about a person or reading that has influenced your thinking about the world of work.

Students selected twelve posts from their ongoing weblogs and indicated with the phrase, "Lesley (Enterprise Centre for Learning and Curriculum Innovations) please assess" that these were to be assessed. Since they were well aware that the key criterion was evidence of employability, their selections were motivated by what they thought best showed their intellectual engagement with key concepts, personal responses to key concepts and writing expertise. Throughout this process, we tried to make the assessment practice as unobtrusive as possible. We did not want to interfere with the fact that students' personal voices began to emerge and their personalities and individual interests began to dictate the direction of their weblog posts. At the same time, we informed students that their weblog writings had to reflect their professional and employable dimensions, and students were aware of the Programmes' expectation for them to deliver accurate and professional writing. Towards the end of the Training Programme, each student's selection was printed out and hard copy of the samples were given to the Director of the Graduate Centre, for a final assessment of whether the weblogs posts portrayed an adequate standard of business writing. The assessment process at this stage therefore did not fragment the process into a number of separate entries, punctuated by marks. Students received the final percentage awarded to their weblogs along with the percentages they had obtained for their other assignments, at the end of

the Training Programme. To maintain the flow of the weblog posts, I commented on students' posts online. I shared resources, pointed out similarities between seemingly disparate projects, and attempted to encourage cognitive engagement. Although I obviously hoped these comments and questions would lead to closer examination of a topic, or a response, students generally did not respond to my comments. Weblogs were, for GP,

> like an informal conversation (Appendix 7.2, GP's Interview, 26 August 2005, p 175)

which also gave him

> ...a lot of autonomy... because the website is yours and you always see, it communicates with you personally. (Appendix 7.2, GP's Interview, 26 August 2005, p 175)

GP's comment points to the possibility that students perceived their recognising, reflecting and presenting learning as being under their control and ownership, and therefore did not feel obliged to respond to me.

One of my general observations as participant (by virtue of my role as one of the course designers) was that aside from, but related to assessment, the notion of *accountability* seemed to be a primary motivating factor amongst students. As students became more familiar with the communication technology in the programmes (the weblogs), these helped to further establish a community of practice amongst participants and they developed a sense of accountability towards one another. And as their process and core skills, and personal qualities developed, students developed a sense of personal accountability. I believe there was a strong awareness amongst all participants in 2005 that success depended on the development of personal employability. Being employable, in turn, would increase the likelihood of the host organisation offering further employment after the internship. This, then, was the real-life assessment of performance on the WoW Programmes.

Feeling 'accountable' also extended in some cases to workplace supervisors. UL suggested that her workplace supervisor felt accountable to the WoW Programme staff, who, UL believed, could question the workplace supervisor on the project's progress. (Appendix 3.2, Interview, 27 July 2005)

2.3.2.4 Criteria for assessing the weblogs

Farmer and Bartlett-Bragg maintain that the use of blogs as an e-learning tool allows for the integration of content, communication and participation. To gauge if weblogging is in fact an improvement on the traditional segregation of these components, which in turn is imposed by a traditional Learning Management System. (Farmer and Bartlett-Bragg, 2005) Bartlett-Bragg (2003) proposes an adaptation of Salmon's (2000) model of supporting computer mediated communication in order to facilitate the effective use of blogs within learning.

To evaluate whether weblogs achieve curriculum relevance and coherence, as well as pedagogical innovativeness and efficacy, Bartlett-Bragg (2003) proposes a five-stage integration of a blog into a learning environment:

1. Establishment
2. Introspection
3. Reflective monologues
4. Reflective dialogue
5. Knowledge artefact.

These are implicit in the rubric used for assessment in 2005, attached as Appendix 13 – Blog Reflection Rubric.

At this activity stage in the WoW Programmes, more than two thirds of the blogs were summaries of the training sessions. Some students used the blog to discuss their problems, and seek a solution. Some students reflected on current events. These blog entries usually fit into Stage Three – Reflective Monologue, or Stage Four – Reflective Dialogue. During the training component only a few students reached Stage Five and created knowledge artefacts.

The following extract from one of UL's weblog entries contains most, if not all the elements of Bartlett-Bragg's (2003) five-stage process of reflection leading to effective computer enhanced learning:

> *Has anyone attempted to pursue an MBA in one month? Believe me, this is what the World of Work Training programme tastes like. My previous blog was based on acknowledging the fact that we are a diverse group of Africans, but the programme itself is diverse. In one day, one is faced with tasks as mind boggling as "mind-mapping," EI (emotional intelligence), Labour Relations Acts and Employability. I must admit, I used to think that once one is employed, one just continues doing what the job description entails and it's an easy ride from there. I was wrong. [Guest lecturer] says, we are supposed to think on our toes all the time. Guys, we are like robots that need to be*

> *reprogrammed, incessantly… We are the philosopher's stone. I called this blog "can you feel it" because ever since that talk by [Guest lecturer], about watching one's thoughts, I keep catching myself mid-sentence, warning myself about is this really what I want to say, can I say it in a more civil way than this, will my group members interpret it the same way? This brings me to the concluding idea. I am silently observing the marriage between the topics that we have discussed in this past week. Before we started, I didn't see the "missing link" from Team Work, the Practical sessions, employability, HIV/AIDS in the workplace to the pride and responsibility that comes with being an African postgraduate moving into the world of work. (UL's Weblog, 11 April 2005)*

A closer analysis of this extract according to Bartlett-Bragg's (2003) five-stage process of reflection reveals

- Stage 1 - Establishment

The student recalls learning events through comments from guest lecturers. This weblogging stage immediately supplements or augments face-to-face teaching.

- Stage 2 - Introspection

Here the student includes the use of emotive terms such as "mind boggling".

- Stage 3 - Reflective monologue

The student starts to unpack the experience by considering her attitude before, and after securing an internship, and by analysing her awareness of her interactions with work colleagues.

- Stage 4 - Reflective dialogue

A deeper reflective process is evident as the intern says she has been "silently observing the marriage between the topics…"

- Stage 5 - Knowledge artefacts

The intern provides guidance to readers: "We are the philosopher's stone," although this stage is usually characterised by giving information or sharing advice, or leads to other information.

The following extract is another example of when students reached Bartlett-Bragg's (2003) Stage Five and created 'knowledge artefacts'. The notion of employability – as opposed to employment – is central in the WoW Programmes. Here AC (not a key informant but a participant in the 2005 WoW Programmes) draws together various threads of the concept, from sessions where lecturers would have been addressing a range of topics. Then he describes the "two major facets". This is

the student's own model and is certainly valuable for the next generation of Programme participants who will be undertaking the transition into the workplace.

> *It has become apparent that there are basic personal commodities that are sought after in the business environment. These skills have been repeated by the different speakers who've offered their advice to us. A knowledge and an understanding and application of these skills is vital to us as future employees to improve our employability. From my understanding and what I've learnt, employability deals with a variety of issues. There seems to be two major facets: the first impression, and the "working environment" impression. The first impression would cover the CV writing and interview phase, and the second aspect would deal with one's interpersonal and situational management skills. One's attitude is key to both phases as they stress a positive, confident approach. Passion for one's work is vital, not only to the company and work environment, but also to one's feelings of self-worth and well-being in the position held. (AC's Weblog, 16 April 2005)*

The same student shows how he processed various lecturers' input and develops opinion through reflective dialogue:

> *It is interesting to note the key issues emphasised by the speakers and to compare them to past notions of what a good employee is. As all facets of human existence, from culture to language are dynamic, so too are business practices and standards, especially as far as employees are concerned. No longer does one establish job security by staying at a company for 40 years. The whole notion of loyalty has changed, in keeping with average shelf-life of an enterprise. What has been stressed is the company's need for vibrant, dynamic/fluid employees and structures to keep abreast with competitors and developments within its "field". Being loyal to a company/employer has raised some interesting statements within the seminar sessions. Is it a devise to enslave the employee to the company, to be subservient to the "boss", no questions asked, thereby consolidating and enriching "their" capitalist machine? I feel loyalty, in today's terminology at least, does not subscribe to those views. Personally, it means working hard at one's job, within and outside its prescription and by performing tasks to the best of one's ability. It means applying yourself to the tasks at hand and by raising concerns and suggestions that could impact positively on the company and therefore yourself and your co-workers. The most important element to me is the passion and desire one has for one's job. How are you to be productive and positive in a job that provides no satisfaction? To be employed to do work that enriches and pleases you is the vital aspect of employment today. It is relative, though to one's personal situation, but one should, ultimately not work for money. The World of work still seems a daunting environment, but as I progress and learn more through this course, I feel more adept at facing the challenges and developments it might bring. (AC's Weblog, 16 April 2005)*

It appears that the weblogs were useful and added value to the WoW Programmes as an e-learning tool, especially when considered in the context of an analysis based on Bartlett-Bragg's (2003) five-stage process of reflection. Putting the weblogs through this kind of analysis indicated, to the WoW Programmes' course designers at least, if participants were moving along and ahead in their employability development and their ability to reflect on that development.

2.3.3 Business report and oral presentation assignment

In the research interviews, respondents did not raise or discuss the business report or oral assignment they were required to complete during the training component. This may have been because the interviewer did not ask students their thoughts on these two assignments specifically. However, students did not mention these at their weblogs either. Students also did not raise or discuss the fact of their being assessed, nor of the course assessment requirements itself, and this therefore did not seem to be significant for them. This suggests that the students accepted the idea of being assessed between the two WoW Programmes' components.

Both the business report and the oral presentation assignments required the students to role-play. At least one of the workplace supervisors in 2005 would have approved of this pedagogical approach: without knowing that this had actually been part of the training approach, GP's workplace supervisor suggested that mock role-playing between bosses and employees during the first week at work would assist students with the transition from university to workplace and improve their employability. (Appendix 7.3, GP's Workplace Supervisor, Interview, 26 October 2005)

In the business report, participants were required to role-play business development consultants responding to various questions posed by Grulke in a January 2005 flash survey at his website:

- In your view what are the top two issues today that keep executives awake at night?
- Think about the next 2 to 5 years. What will be the biggest strategic issues that executives will face?
- In the next 2 to 5 years, what are the competencies that will most differentiate your business? (FutureWorld, 2005)

Our aim was for these questions to prompt participants to synthesise information from the various WoW training sessions, and reflect on the current business environment and the strategic business choices available. In his subsequent results of the 2005 Flash Survey, Grulke consolidated 412 responses from business, government and academia. (FutureWorld, 2005) At least some of his findings were also within reach of the participants on the 2005 WoW Training Programme in that the points and issues had been raised in the Training Programme's content. For example, Grulke found that the issues of corporate governance and compliance issues were crucial current concerns, as were low-cost concerns about China and the rest of Asia. Grulke found that South Africa had, in 2005, some unique concerns relating to the unknown economic impacts of 'regulated diversity' and AIDS.

2.3.3.1 Assessing the business report and oral presentation

There was evidence in the assignments that students were aware of the issues raised by Grulke, which confirmed for us that students were effectively referring to the 2005 information sessions on black economic empowerment, corporate citizenship and governance, future initiatives in South Africa, HIV/AIDS and the workplace and the World Competitiveness Report. While this was positive and we believed pointed to the fact that we were achieving some relevance and coherence within the WoW curriculum, there was also a disappointing finding. There were few problem-solving or creative attempts from students in the assignments, to try to propose any solutions to organisational needs that they may have predicted would arise as a result of these issues.

While the business report assignment tapped into the information sessions, the oral presentation required students to assimilate what they had learned during the hard skills dimension of the Training Programme, specifically the business presentation skills training that they had attended. The content of their presentations also required some reflection on soft skills areas that had been included in the 2005 Training Programme, such as emotional intelligence and stress management. These had been positioned as pivotal for the individual to being perceived as employable. The issue of employability was then the crux of the presentation topic, "To be employed is to be at risk. To be employable is to be secure." (Hawkins, 1999)

One can't help but compare the relative value of the business report and oral presentation as assignments in the WoW Programmes with the weblogs. While the weblogs made it possible for students to record their learning and development over time - and for us as course designers to have access to that development, *and* to be able to assess it in terms of both the individual and the course - the business reports and oral presentations were once-off assignments. If the student was having a bad day on the very day that the oral presentation was due, the quality of that assignment may have been irrefutably affected. There were no 'comebacks' or opportunities to compare performances at different time periods in the business report and oral presentation, as there were in the weblogs. These two assignments therefore appeared rather static and one-dimensional in comparison to the weblogs.

2.3.4 Students' comments on guest lecturers' content and presentation skills

One of the characteristics of the WoW Training and Internship Programmes that needed to be taken into account during the process evaluation was the range of guest lecturers' pedagogical approaches. Guest lecturers represented various private and government organisations. They agreed to conduct their training sessions on a pro bono basis and were not given any direction regarding the design or approach to the training session they had been assigned. While it was hoped that this would result in a range of approaches to learning in the WoW Training component, the respondents did not specifically comment on guest lecturers' pedagogical approaches.

The expression 'chalk and talk' is often used disparagingly to describe traditional, transmission-style pedagogical approaches to education. In the WoW Training Programme in 2005, nearly all guest lecturers used PowerPoint for preparing lecture material. This raises a separate issue: should we apply the same criticisms of non-interactive transmission of information to PowerPoint that could be leveled at the traditional 'chalk-and-talk' lecture? Many guest lecturers dealt with any shortcomings of PowerPoint by creating richer content that incorporated other materials, such as the already established mind map, for the benefit of students. Another consideration is that the prevalence of PowerPoint presentations by guest lecturers in the WoW Training Programmes would have been indicative, for students attending, of the fact that this presentation practice dominates in the workplace, is perceived as professional, and is indeed expected for professional presentations.

Despite this, students did not seem interested in the ways in which guest lecturers presented the information they had to share. The researcher did not ask them explicitly for their input on either guest lecturers' presentation skills or the content of lectures, but the respondents appeared to choose to raise issues relating to content, especially when they were summarizing the lectures and then reflecting on the content at their weblogs. UL was the most prolific (in terms of weblog postings) of the five respondents representing the 2005 WoW participants; her comments on training sessions were typically about the impact of the content on her personally, or how the group responded. So, for example, she commented that the concept of BEE (Black Economic Empowerment) was still unclear for her, after numerous information sessions. She suggested that this was symptomatic of BEE itself, not of her lack of understanding. (UL's weblog, 'Empowerment for who?' 26 April 2005). After attending an information session on Corporate Citizenship UL's commented that she saw opportunities to transfer ideals (e.g. community development) to the corporate world. (UL's weblog, 'Is there any social responsibility', 19 April,

2005). After the hard skills session on business writing, UL realised the differences between academic and business writing styles. (UL's Weblog, 'Academic Training, sad reality or not!', 12 April 2005)

UL's weblog comment on how the group (during the HIV/Aids in the workplace presentation) was extremely forthcoming with opinions reveals that she preferred to focus on areas such as the group interactions and dynamics, rather than the lecturer's pedagogical approaches. (UL's Weblog, 'Talking HIV/Aids, 11 April 2005) Of another workshop she said that

> *I think what added value to this workshop was the fact that the Wits 2005 Interns are a diverse group of individuals from all corners of Africa. (UL's Weblog, 11 April 2005)*

I suggest that UL's focus on the dynamics of the group is a shift away from focusing on the lecturer, and that this points to her negotiating a new and different orientation – that of the workplace. I noticed in 2005 that students' awareness that the WoW training sessions were not 'for marks', but were for an improved understanding of workplace issues also resulted in their focusing on content mainly – with *how* the guest lecturers presented being a secondary consideration, if at all.

Gough (2004) is critical of training models that depend on "outsiders" – as per the guest lecturers who participated in the WoW Training Programmes. He warns against

> 'expert trainers' from outside to instill the appropriate skills into presumably deficit-ridden unworldly research students, on the (itself often justified) assumption that academics are incapable of doing this

and suggests that this would

> ...risk making the provision too minimalist, in the sense of covering the bare minimum of a skill area, just to tick the box that the student had experienced this little episode... (Gough, 2004)

While he refers specifically to "external trainers" imparting knowledge to students engaged in research degrees, Gough is concerned that such individuals would not be familiar with local educational arrangements, and adds the danger of a lack of academic expertise:

> I suggest that a trainer without Higher Education research experience, coming as a consultant, say, from the business or voluntary sectors, will know little about how to integrate specifically into a research degree their otherwise worthy skills expertise. (Gough, 2004)

In contrast to Gough's observations, a comment at UL's weblog raises a different perspective regarding the value – in 2005 or in the future – of guest lecturers from the business sector. I believe that students looked at the guest lecturers as role models. Interestingly, students selected their role models according to whether or not they identified with the guest lecturer's academic background, or current business position. For example, UL mentioned a particular guest lecturer who had a similar academic background to her own, which was a Masters Degree in Media Studies from the School of Dramatic Arts:

> *Back to the job specifics, [guest lecturer] majored in Drama and Theatre and as she presented herself to us, and you all will agree with me, she is an amazing Business presenter, so maybe one's degree does not determine the path s/he is going to follow. (UL's Weblog, 19 April 2005)*

UL was obviously impressed by this guest lecturer. There are other brief but as positive references from the 2005 WoW participants, which confirm that students were already selecting role models in the training component and before entering the workplace. It may also explain why students did not appear to focus on each lecturer's pedagogic approach, focusing instead on the specialized areas that they may have had in common with the guest lecturer. This in itself suggests a shift in students' orientation – albeit it seemingly early, in the training component and before entering the workplace - from classroom to the workplace.

2.4 Overview: Process evaluation of Activity Stage Two, the World of Work Training Component

The phrase "Only time will tell", that the value of something will (only) be established at some time in the future, seems relevant to start an overview of the WoW Training Programme. It was only *after* the Training Programme that students and workplace supervisors really began to evaluate the WoW Training Programme. Any comments, observations and reflections on the

value of the WoW Training Programme typically occurred when students had made the transition into the workplace and were already participating in the host organisations as interns.

There is, at the beginning of the process evaluation of Activity Stage Two, a section for the discussion of participant's perceptions of the Training Programme as a whole. Generally, respondents reported that the soft skills sessions, especially those on time management and emotional intelligence, proved to have the most relevance for their transition into the workplace,

and on their employability. (Please see section *2.2,* 'Overview: participants' general perceptions of the Training Programme')

This process evaluation has focused on the issues and areas that students raised and emphasised as being important aspects of the training component. It's also important to consider possible gaps in the curriculum design. Some of these surfaced when GP's supervisor said there were a few very basic questions that GP and another intern from the WoW Programmes in 2004 asked at the start of their internships. These included how a salary is calculated, structured and paid, and how to interpret a salary slip; how to ask for an increase; how a job description is developed; how medical aid and funeral policies are developed and implemented. GP's supervisor remembered that during her own transition into the workplace she had similar questions – so while she expected the questions, she was surprised that the WoW Training programme had not addressed these basic issues. (Appendix 7.3, GP's Workplace Supervisor's Interview, 26 August 2005)

GP's workplace supervisor implied that she 'filled in these gaps':

> I find more that they are interested in basic skills, particularly in the business world, as oppose to what they actually studied. They rather want to know what time can they leave work. Um, very simple things, but having only just come into the business world, it's like, like things they are actually very unsure of. So more time [in the workplace] is being spent on that. How do you basically behave in a business world. (Appendix 7.3, GP's Workplace Supervisor, Interview, 26 August 2005, p 180)

We cannot assume that all workplace supervisors would address these basic issues, which raises a challenge for the design of the WoW Training Programmes: how to balance a holistic understanding of the workplace with training input on practical basic work oriented issues – that may in fact vary substantially between host organisations, workplaces and industries.

In 2005 only two workplace supervisors raised writing skills as an issue impacting on their interns' performances. Writing skills as an employability trait is therefore not raised and discussed as a major point to be evaluated in the 2005 training component in this process evaluation, because students did not emphasise it. Although only the two supervisors mentioned interns' writing skills, the fact that they did alerted us to pay more attention to this employability trait in future programmes. Chapter 5, the process evaluation of the WoW Programmes in 2006, therefore looks at the evaluation of writing skills more closely.

To detail what happened in 2005: GP's workplace supervisor was disturbed by GP's writing skills. She (the workplace supervisor) appeared to notice this only towards the end of GP's internship and was especially concerned that GP was repeating errors that had already been

pointed out to him. (Appendix 7.3, GP's Workplace Supervisor, Interview, 26 October 2005) JN's workplace supervisor said,

> I think there is room for him to maybe, you know, improve on his writing skills.… Because you see here the main language is English, it's fundamental, that's the line of communication to all parties involved. So that's basically an area that I think that he needs to look at. (Appendix 4.3, JN's Workplace Supervisor, Interview, 13 September 2005, p 129)

Supervisors and employers often view writing skills as crucial for the organisation and as an indicator of an employee's employability. It is therefore very important that the WoW Training programme addresses this hard skill and helps students perform more effectively. That said, it must also be appreciated that training business-writing skills to Humanities postgraduates is a loaded and complex exercise. Humanities postgraduates believe they can write, and that they can write well, as this is a core skill in itself of a Humanities postgraduate degree. As GL succinctly wrote

> *It was frightening to hear that all those big words I have become accustomed to in my academic research have no place in the business world! (GL's Weblog, 18 April 2005)*

3. Activity Stage Three: Transition

The "transition" stage of the process evaluation addresses the WoW Programmes' interventions in 2005 to facilitate participants' moves from the seminar room in which training about the world of work took place, into actual workplaces where they would be undertaking internships. Activity Stage Three therefore looks at how students were

- prepared for the interview process (and recommendations to interviewers)
- exposed to professional etiquette in terms of liaising with the host organisation
- counseled regarding their interview performances
- assisted with their decision-making regarding internship offers
- communicating their employability during the interviews,

and so how they were generally guided in terms of professionalism, and professional business conventions upon their entry into the world of work.

3.1 Curriculum content

Reiterating some observations made about curriculum in Chapter 3: curriculum will be treated in this part of the process evaluation as a planned sequence of learning experiences. However, in the transition stage the objectives of any planned sequences are primarily administrative, with the aim being to secure effective internship placements for participants. Learning experiences that participants may have had as a result of these sequences constitute the discussion of the role of curriculum in the process evaluation.

3.1.1 The interview process

One of the lessons we learned from the 2003 Internship Programme (Appendix 1, Input Evaluation: History and Development of the World of Work Programmes at Wits University) was that interview performance was a key area in which students had to perform well to practically secure an internship. In 2005 we included workshops on both curriculum vitae development and interview skills, and intensive one-on-one role-play sessions relating to interview skills. Preparing students for actual interviews during the transitionary stage involved a deliberate, planned process and this was therefore part of the curriculum design.

A weblog comment from FN confirms that students tend to have fairly laissez-faire approaches to aspects of the job search process when looking for a job independently of an intervention like the WoW Programmes. It was clear, however, that each step of the internship interview process as it was planned and implemented in the WoW Programmes appeared to be crucial for the students' successful transitions into the workplace. Some preparation for the internship interview process actually took place during the training component (evaluated as Activity Stage Two), with the workshops on writing a curriculum vitae and on interview skills. FN was one of the few students who referred to the curriculum vitae and interview skills workshops *during* the training component. He predicted the value that the curriculum vitae and interview skills sessions would have for newcomers into the workplace:

> *...professional CV writing is an indispensable necessity towards a professional career, and it is just one of the things covered in the in the Wits WoW programmes. I think that even if it were the only lesson given in the WoW programmes, we would still be primarily equipped to [do] an efficient job search. (FN's Weblog, 15 April 2005)*

This aspect of the training was therefore crucial preparation for the actual interviews. Well before JN had even attended an arranged interview and just after he had attended the session on

interviewing skills that was part of the Training Programme, he wrote about his anxiety at the prospect of the interview process at his weblog:

> *A job interview is a process that is scary. The process is scary because it has some uncertainty elements. The interviewee would wonder about the questions he / she is going to face, the attitude of the interviewer and the environment the interviewee might be subjected to. But as people prepare for their interviews, it would be imperative to consider few tips and tactics. (JN's Weblog, 17 April 2005)*

The remainder of JN's weblog post on this subject was a summary of these "tips and tactics", or the input on interview skills given by the guest lecturer on the subject. There is no doubt that the training session supported and prepared students for their actual interviews.

Once the WoW staff had consulted with individual students to create a shortlist of their ideal host organisations and internships, the staff set about contacting those organisations and requesting the host organisations to consider Humanities postgraduate students for internships. This was seldom a straightforward task mainly because of a general reluctance from host organisations to impart any resources – especially the time and effort of a workplace supervisor, and a stipend - to Humanities postgraduates in particular (perceptions regarding Humanities postgraduates are discussed in Chapter 1).

When interviews were arranged, however, the focus shifted to preparing students for that process. The steps involved can be regarded as curriculum-oriented activity. The WoW staff stressed that although students were attending an interview for an internship, their preparation process would be the same as it would be for an interview for a full-time job. Students therefore had to prepare for the interview in a similar way. They were required to research the company and, if possible, the nature of the internship that was being offered. The practical point of this exercise was to enable the student to answer questions appropriately. Students were also urged to prepare a list of any questions to ask at the interview so that the employer could see that the student was taking an active interest in the organisation. Practical issues such as knowing where to be, at what time, and the name of the interviewer were also emphasised. We stressed the importance of these seemingly small details, and it obviously worked well: we did not have any negative feedback from either participants or interviewers about students arriving late for interviews, or about any lack of preparation regarding basic information during the interviews. It was significant that the WoW Coordinator in 2005 chose to personally drive most of the students to their interviews. On some occasions, the WoW Coordinator also loaned formal clothing to the interviewees, who did not have clothes of this kind. It became obvious, after even only informal discussions between the researcher and the students, that the WoW Coordinator's personal involvement, combined with

the emphasis on preparation for the interviews, impacted positively on students' levels of confidence before their interviews.

The WoW staff also tried to prepare the interviewer at the host organisation. For example, we recommended certain approaches to the interview. We believed that if these suggestions were implemented, the prospective intern and the interviewer at the host organisation would also then have successfully started the process of developing the Internship Agreement.

We recommended that the interviewer should raise and discuss the following points (purposefully vague and broad to allow a range of responses) with the prospective intern:

- The objectives and parameters of the project(s), to which the intern would be assigned.
- The end products that would result from completion of the projects.
- The components of the intern's role.
- The skills that the intern would develop.
- The ways in which the internship could enhance the intern's understanding of the organisation's structure and processes.
- The intern's existing leadership and management skills, and the possibilities for development of the same during the internship.
- The frequency and style of supervisor/mentor/intern meetings.

One of the WoW staff's tasks after the interviews was to contact the interviewer at the host organisation to request feedback on the student's interview performance. This crucial step provided us with the interviewer's perspective, which we were then able to communicate during the feedback or debriefing session with each student. Interviewers from the host organisations were typically open and forthcoming with feedback and appeared to trust the WoW staff to give the feedback to the interviewees professionally.

It sometimes happened that the feedback about the prospective intern after an interview was difficult, with negative and potentially damaging (if not communicated effectively) commentary from an interviewer. The WoW Coordinator and I (in my role as students' mentor) then discussed the best ways to relay the feedback to the student. We typically arranged the feedback session so that we would both be present with the student, and opted to give the feedback to the student face-to-face. This approach was most effective in that it ensured support between staff members. Also, the student benefitted from both the preparation for the feedback session, and from hearing about his or her interview performance from at least two staff members. Typically, these sessions led to agreement for the student to participate in more role-played interviews at the Wits Careers and Counselling Centre, or with this researcher.

Besides revealing how she referred to the information sessions that were part of the WoW Training programmes during one of her interviews, UL also reinforced the value of the exercise of role-playing interviews when she recommended that her peers on the WoW Programmes should be urged to repeat the mock interviews they had attended during the training component:

> I think maybe we should remind some of the group members who are still going to go to interviews that what we should do is go for more mock interviews this week. And also I know it's hard to remember because the [WoW Training] programme was in April, but now it's June. If they can try to remember exactly what we did in the programme, because we were talking about, for example, towards the end of the interview … ok, I'll go back to the interview. Towards the end of the interview we were talking about stuff like the global monetary economy, how China is improving … and that session we had on the JSE [Johannesburg Stock Exchange, Security], on the Global Stock Exchange. On how South Africa is partnering globally with the other countries in the growth process. So if you don't remember this stuff you are going to be sitting there and thinking "Hmm?" and listening to this person. (UL Interview, 9 June 2005, p 75)

UL said that she felt "empowered" during the transition stage, by being a participant in the WoW Programmes. She compared herself to peers with similar postgraduate qualifications who would also be making the transition, but independently. Because of the sequenced steps and activities towards interview preparation and performance that at this stage in the WoW Programmes, UL believed she could tell peers who had not attended the WoW Programmes and were making their transitions into workplaces independently, that

> There's this gap, there's this elevation where I can say to them "No, this is how it happens, this is what you do, this is how you choose, this is how you apply." (Appendix 3.2, Interview, 9 June 2005, p 74)

3.1.2 Liaising with the host organisation

Neither the respondents selected for the process evaluation nor any of the other participants in the WoW Programme commented on the series of actions or steps taken to liaise with host organisations regarding internship placements offered. It must suffice here for the researcher to assert that this process was in fact part of the curriculum, since it involved awareness raising of business writing skills and professional communication.

Students were unaware of the professional and courteous conventions that exist to communicate acceptance or rejection of a work-related offer, albeit an internship placement. The researcher, as part of the team of staff for the WoW Programmes, was directly involved in helping students who

had attended interviews to communicate effectively with host organisations. Specifically, students were required to write electronic mails to their interviewers, expressing thanks for the interview experience (regardless of whether an internship placement had been offered), and/or whether the student accepted the offer of an internship placement, or not.

3.2 Pedagogy

For the evaluation of the pedagogy involved at this activity stage, it is necessary to take into account again that the characteristics of the stage do not enable clear and conventional applications of pedagogy. The concept of pedagogical approaches will therefore be dealt with 'loosely', which will entail looking at the WoW Programmes' staff approaches that had an impact on students' transitions. With this strategy, issues that occur while, for example, encouraging reflective thought and action, enhancing the relevance of new learning, and providing sufficient opportunities to learn, will inform the pedagogical investigation of the process evaluation at this stage.

3.2.1 The interview process

After having attended the WoW Training Programme, participants attended interviews with representatives from various host organisations, for possible internships.

Returning to the discussion of the nature of the feedback from interviewers (first raised in this chapter while discussing the aspects of the interview process pertaining to curriculum), students did not appear to be aware of how unusual this level and degree of feedback actually was, since they typically did not have experience of formal work interviews, and therefore of the fact that the depth of feedback they were receiving was unusual. This could account for the fact that students did not discuss this aspect of the preparation for their transitions into the workplace at their weblogs or during interviews.

The Input Evaluation (Appendix 1) of the WoW Programmes reveals that incidents of interviewers at host organisations being prepared to share 'difficult' and often seemingly critical feedback on a prospective intern's interview performance happened in the Programmes as early as 2003 (see Appendix 1, Input Evaluation: History and Development of the World of Work Programmes at Wits University, the section 'Lessons learned from the 2003 Internship

Programme'). In 2005 the WoW staff continued to find the depth and quality of feedback from interviewers remarkable. We concluded that some interviewers simply and sincerely seemed to want to assist students to make their transitions into the workplace as effectively as possible. Interviewers therefore appeared to value the opportunity to use the WoW staff as conduits for feedback that would not otherwise be given to an interviewee who had approached the organisation for work independently of a programme such as the WoW Programmes. The pedagogical implications were that the WoW Programmes' staff often needed to use counselling skills to position critical feedback effectively and appropriately to the students.

The depth and quality of feedback from interviewers became one of the most extraordinary features of the transitionary stage and indeed of the Programmes. When it happened that an interviewer was forthcoming with feedback, a sense of partnership between the University and the host organisation (through the WoW staff and the interviewer) for the students' benefits was reinforced.

UL chose the words "excitement" and "confusion" to describe the interview process at the transition stage. (Appendix 3.2, Interview, 9 June 2005, p 74) The "excitement" aspect seemed to stem from the possibility of an internship offer. The "confusion" aspect seemed to stem from having to make a choice in the case of two offers for an internship being made. The WoW staff would have been well aware of any students' "confusion" in the latter situation, since staff would have received feedback from both the interviewer at the host organisation, and the student, after every interview attended. The WoW staff were therefore well informed and available to counsel the student, give guidance and make suggestions regarding the decision making process and the final choice for an internship placement. This pedagogical intervention proved important when, for example, UL experienced some anxiety regarding her decision-making between an internship placement that offered possibilities in terms of her career aspirations, and another placement that offered a more substantial stipend:

> *And it is not funny at all, choosing from different companies, trying to find out if the culture agrees with you. My soul has been sold, you know why, because I realise that while we still sweat to find a company that suits you, the desperation to get there is playing its own role. Talk about the money. I think that all of us are broke, not a good condition for a job search. (UL's Weblog, 6 June 2005)*

The Input Evaluation in Appendix 1 confirms the course designers' awareness, after the programmes in 2003, that students were not using the interviewing process to reflect on their communication of their employability. They typically only referred to knowledge acquired in their formal academic training, and / or in the WoW training settings. It appeared that these were

easily brought to mind, articulated and discussed while participants avoided talking about tacit, personal knowledge and the skills essential for performance at work, in their interviews. Hinchliffe says that

> Ideas of graduate employability are fuelled by a concept of selfhood which places increasing demands on graduates to construct a narrative of employability before they have even got a proper job! (2006)

Hinchcliffe has also observed a current recruitment reality, which requires

> ...a sustained personal narrative in which particular experiences – both academic and non-academic – are shown to have helped form broader life-based aims and to have been in part formed by these broader aims. The aim is to present one's life as pretty much a seamless whole in which all setbacks become experiences which either re-enforce one's aims or appropriately modify them. The strategic-minded graduate had better leave one or two minor loose ends – to be convincing it's a good idea not to present one's life as an entirely seamless pattern. But the overall idea is clear: one must "own" one's whole life as something which exists for the agent in a more or less transparent state: what's not transparent can't be owned and so is best left out altogether." (2006)

Bolstered by the presence of the WoW Coordinator at their interviews, and by the preparation they would have undertaken for the interview, respondents generally seemed to feel that their performances in the interviews were good. It was apparent, however, that there was room for improvement in terms of the ways in which students were articulating the start of the development of their employability, during the interviews. The 2005 WoW participants could not have claimed to have successfully communicated their employability skills to interviewers, according to Hinchliffe's (2006) descriptions of requirements. They also did not reflect on any of the successes and failures of their performances during the interview process at their weblogs. The WoW staff therefore continued, in 2005, the requirement for students to "debrief" after their interviews with the WoW staff, either telephonically or in person. (These debriefing sessions were also a valuable data collection opportunity for this research.) During such a debriefing session, UL pointed out that her understandings of situations and even words used in different contexts was enhanced by her participation in the WoW Programmes:

> Oh yes, yes. I think the word "Relax" says to a person who is not advantaged - because I consider myself advantaged because I have gone through this process, this programme, this training programme … but if I hadn't gone through this programme, if somebody says "Relax" to me, I would think that this person will tell me, will inform me when the interview will start, so now we're just talking about stuff that is useless and that does not pertain. I would not have it in my head that through that relaxed state, I am being assessed. I wouldn't have that notion of assessment within being relaxed. That's why I'm saying that lesson on professionalism from [WoW Programmes Coordinator] comes in

> handy. When somebody says, "Relax," you say, "Relax in a professional way." You tell yourself to relax in a professional way. (Interview, 9 June 2005, p 77)

UL believed that if she had not attended the WoW Programmes, she may have misinterpreted the interviewer's invitation for her to relax. She may then have acted inappropriately. She believed however that the input on professionalism in the training component, prepared her to act appropriately. (Appendix 3.2, Interview, 9 June 2005) This also then helped UL to understand when the interviewer was asking her for information, about her hard skills and about her soft skills acquisition such as emotional intelligence:

> No, the structure of the questions … you are too relaxed … if you're too relaxed you don't feel the categories, you don't feel, he is asking me about Conflict Management, he's asking me about Stress Management, he is asking me about emotional intelligence … and he does. (Appendix 3.2, Interview, 9 June 2005, p 77)

Interestingly, another of UL's interpretations of the internship interview was that it was a kind of examination of the interviewee's ability to recall the content of the WoW Training Programme.

> But I guess also what most of the interviews require is for you to go back to the whole programme to remember things and categories brilliantly, catch your interviewer out all the time, be ahead of him. (Appendix 3.2, Interview, 9 June 2005, p 77)

A final comment from JN clarifies the reason that the interview and curriculum vitae workshop that took place during the training component is mentioned in this section, and not in the second activity stage: most of the students evaluated the workshop when they started attending actual interviews. They remembered and referred back to that particular workshop when its content became real and immediately relevant for them, in their interview situations. Thus JN, after his first interview and at the start of his internship, confirms explicitly that the training, along with the guided approach to preparing students for their internship interviews was a key component for their successful transitions into the workplace:

> I know that I wouldn't be here at all without the coaching. Showing me how to sit, and listen, and answer questions in the interviews. And having my own questions ready to ask. And having [the WoW Coordinator] waiting outside, just to check it was ok. I did the best I could in the interview, because I was prepared for it. (Interview, 26 July 2005, p 117)

3.2.2 Liaising with the host organisation

The fact that the WoW Programmes' staff assisted students with their communication with the host organisation (specifically in terms of post-interview courtesies and acceptance or declining an internship offer) was established in the discussion of the curriculum for this aspect of the transition. It is unfortunate that the data collection process did not include asking respondents' direct questions relating to each step of the internship interview process, such as the liaison with the host organisation. The point was previously made that none of the participants spontaneously commented on the ways that they liaised with the host organisation after the interviews, or the support they received from the WoW staff for this.

Students were required to first send to the WoW staff, by electronic mail, a draft of the letter they planned to send to the host organisation. This correspondence was checked by the staff and where necessary, suggestions were made for improvement before the correspondence was returned to the student. The student then repeated the process with a second draft, and so on. When the correspondence was professional and accurate the student was given the go-ahead to send it to the host organisation.

Through this process of on-line editing, students will have had real, practical opportunities to develop their business-writing skills, with the safety net of the editing skills of the WoW staff. We hoped that this would reinforce the necessity of complying with the professional and courteous conventions that exist in written business communication.

This kind of process, albeit essentially administrative and only a relatively small detail in terms of the overall Programmes, indicates the Programmes' commitment to imparting a holistic understanding of employability training - being training for professionalism in both micro and macro senses of the word. A comment FN made at his weblog reveals that he – and possibly other students - realized the complexities inherent in understanding and practicing professionalism:

> *...professionalism is not a spontaneous phenomenon, it is something to be learned by anyone aspiring to be professional in the workplace. (FN's Weblog, 15 April 2005)*

FN implied that he made this discovery, (which he also labelled a "reality" in the title of his weblog post) early on in the WoW Programmes, when he was attending the Training Programme.

> *Having participated in [the] 2005 programme, I was equipped not only with how to be professional in the workplace, but beginning to conduct my activities in a professional way even before getting a job. (FN's Weblog, 15 April 2005)*

This proves the layering of curriculum design with regard to 'teaching' or exposing students to professionalism; each activity stage is dependent on the one before it and impacts on the activity stage that will come after it.

3.3 Overview: Process evaluation of Activity Stage Three, Transition

The section on Activity Stage Three has provided information on the steps in the WoW Programmes to facilitate and begin the process of the transition from the seminar room at the University, to the workplaces students would encounter during their internship placements.

The process evaluation revolved around two main elements at this stage: the interview process and liaising with the host organisation. After debriefing sessions with interviewers at host organisations and the students themselves, the WoW staff and this researcher observed that participants' generally did not articulate their employability skills during interviews. They did not refer to any personal employability skills development in attempts to market themselves, during the interviews. A possible consequence of this that may need to be considered in the process evaluation of the next stage is that failure or reluctance to articulate personal employability skills may affect the ways new interns facilitate interpersonal relationships that contribute to successful organisational socialization. It may also indicate that students at this stage do not yet have an accurate, appropriate understanding of their employability skills. If employability and the effective communication thereof can be categorised as a social process, then Korte's (2007) observation applies: that individual skills at social processes correlate directly with the degree of success that the individual will have in terms of the organisational socialization process.

Weblog and interview extracts from the respondent UL were mainly referred to for analysis of this stage. This was because UL raised issues relating to the interview process more than any other participant. One of her responses is revealing in that it indicates a range of emotional responses to this stage:

> There's a lot of choices involved, which before the programme we didn't have, we didn't know you could have choices. We always thought, "Ok, if they give you a job, just try to impress people as much as possible, just go in and work." We didn't know that as a person, you can stand there and choose, or feel, "Is this what I want or is it not what I want? What exactly is it that I don't like about this particular company? Or if I like it what strikes me the most?" So we're more in an advantaged position to assess situations, to assess positions, placements. (Appendix 3.2, UL Interview, 9 June 2005, p 74)

UL appeared to be excited at the choices available to her, but also overwhelmed at the decision-making process she realised she would need to embark upon. These responses are significant in developing an understanding of how the transition process prepares students for the workplace and point specifically to students' affective responses during "exposure and osmosis" - one of the five ways in which learning through work occurs, according to Eraut et al (2002).

JN (Appendix 4.2, Interview, 26 July 2005) confirmed that the support from the WoW Coordinator – who volunteered to transport students to and from interviews, and debriefed with students face-to-face after the interviews – was a positive, affirming and valuable part of the transition process. My own observation is that the very close monitoring of how students liaised with the host organisations where they had attended interviews may have appeared overly solicitous, but was successful in terms of scaffolding and positioning practical aspects of professionalism just before students entered the workplace.

There is no doubt that the internship interviews were enhanced by what was often candid input from interviewers at the host organisations. This in turn can be attributed to the WoW staff's effective communication with the representatives of the host organisations (who then invariably became the interviewers), from the first point of contact. We were clear about the WoW Programmes' objectives for learners from the outset and I believe that our open communication set the scene for representatives from the host organisations to cooperate with us, especially with regard to helping students develop their employability by giving them feedback. That feedback informed the intensive coaching and the pedagogical approach that would assist individuals to perform better at their next interview. This is a distinctive and noteworthy aspect of the transition stage, and indeed of the entire WoW Programmes. Put simply, it is highly unlikely that one would find the level and nature of the feedback interviewers were often prepared to share after a student's interviews, in other interview situations.

The best way to understand its atypical curricular and pedagogical approaches is to remember that during this transition stage, staff had more direct one-on-one contact with each student than at any other time. This meant that interventions might have varied from individual to individual. One person may have been advised to attend an intensive training programme to improve oral communication, while another may have been advised to seek counselling to change a negative attitude projected during interviews. Some participants would have improved their business writing through suggestions made only by electronic mail, while others may have needed a face-to-face session with WoW staff, to try to address recurring writing errors. The Input Evaluation in Appendix 1 (Input Evaluation: History and Development of the World of Work Programmes at

Wits University) shows that we were conducting this close, one-on-one coaching as early as 2002 in the Programmes – the case of the intern DL is cited as an example then of how we helped a student realize the impact of his interpersonal behaviours on perceptions of his employability by scheduling regular counselling at the Wits Careers and Counselling Centre for him. (See Appendix 1 (Input Evaluation: History and Development of the World of Work Programmes at Wits University), especially the section 'Monitoring and mentoring students, and assessing their performance as interns in 2002'). A similar example in 2005 was the case of the student ST (a participant in the 2005 WoW Programmes, but not a key informant for this research). He attended two interviews in the process of attempting to find an internship placement. Both interviewers at the two different organisations told us that this student had a particularly arrogant demeanor that came across in the interviews. The WoW staff counseled ST about this and arranged for him to attend mock interviews. We then videotaped the mock interviews. Studying and analysing the taped mock interviews with ST helped to resolve the problem and ST then successfully secured an internship placement.

These kinds of interventions would all have been consequences of the internship search process and its various stages and would have differed from student to student, according to needs. Participants were after all postgraduates who had already specialized in specific and different Humanities' fields. Taking this into account the WoW Programmes' approach was effective in that there was no attempt to adopt a one-size-fits-all approach to prepare these students for their transitions into the workplace.

4. Activity Stage Four: World of Work Internship Component

Activity Stage Four, the WoW internship component, is the final activity stage of the Programmes discussed and analysed in the process evaluation.

There were 12 students who proceeded through all stages of the WoW Programmes in 2005, to this final stage: the Internship Programme. There were nine host organisations participating in 2005, so in some cases there was more than one intern from the WoW Programmes at the same organisation. The internships started at different dates, depending on the length of time it had taken for the WoW Programmes' staff to get agreement from the host organisations to participate in the Programmes by hosting an intern, and then to finalise administrative issues such as the learning contract / agreement (discussed in this section).

A discussion of the WoW Programmes' curriculum and pedagogical approaches to the orientation and establishing of identity or identities in the workplace must refer to the organisational socialization process – specifically, for this process evaluation, to evaluate the experiences of Humanities postgraduate as they adjust to the different context of a new job or organisation. There are several stage models of organisational socialization; each describes evolving experiences of newcomers entering a workplace for the first time. Most of these models describe three basic stages beginning with anticipatory socialization, entry-encounter experiences, and ending with change and mutual acceptance. These are relevant at this WoW Programmes' activity stage as students actually enter the workplace, and will be referred to in the evaluation of the internship component by seeing how well interns negotiate these stages.

The fact that the literature appears to position these events (anticipatory socialization, entry-encounter experiences, and change and mutual acceptance) as relevant to individuals in the workplace only, is a reminder of how different the contexts of Higher Education and workplace are, which in turn may explain the different approaches to the evaluation processes for those contexts. Candy and Crebert (1991) mention a few of the other fundamental differences between Higher Education and the world of work that ultimately impact on evaluation approaches:

Organisational cultures differ between industries and within the same industry, from the culture students will have experienced at the University. In addition, students will be exposed to people with more diverse skills sets, as well as different approaches to work, types of projects, technologies, teamwork and hierarchies in the workplace. An issue such as the conventional eight-hour workday versus the relatively flexible timetable during postgraduate study highlights just one of the major differences that students will experience as they move from the University into the Workplace. Standard evaluation practices in Higher Education do not account for programmes that occur in two such different contexts.

The WoW Programmes' evaluation occurs within the field of educational evaluation. Conducting an educational evaluation while considering workplace specific stage models of organisational socialization is in itself a unique exercise. This is considered in more depth in Chapter 3 (Methodology), which also includes a discussion of how and why programme evaluation differs in the two contexts – workplace and university (see especially the sections 'Particular considerations for an evaluation of the WoW Programmes', and 'Higher Education programme evaluation versus workplace programme evaluation' in Chapter 3).

Along with organisational socialization processes, and taking into account different approaches to evaluation according to contexts, a view of employability that prioritises both pedagogy and curriculum development is of course important; the process evaluation of the fourth and final activity stage has therefore incorporated consideration of different aspects of Knight and Yorke's (2002) acronym "USEM". This stands for *understanding, skills of various kinds, efficacy beliefs, and metacognitive fluency*. Knight and Yorke (2002) believe that employability involves promoting a complex mix of outcomes such as those expressed in "USEM".

4.1 Curriculum design

The basic criteria we applied for host organisations to host interns were established in the WoW Programmes in 2002, and were applied consistently for all subsequent years of the programme. These criteria are detailed for the Input Evaluation of the WoW Programmes in Appendix 1 (Input Evaluation: History and Development of the World of Work Programmes at Wits University), in the section 'Criteria for hosting interns in 2002'.

4.1.1 The learning agreement/contract

In 2005 a learning agreement was to be signed by the intern, the host organisation and a representative of the WoW Programmes for the University, before or on the first day the intern undertook any activities with the host organisation as part of the Internship Programme. Of course, these requirements would have been communicated verbally to the host organisation beforehand, when the possibility of an internship placement with the host organisation was first established. We hoped that an actual document would help interns, as organisational newcomers, to deal with any uncertainties regarding how to do their job, how their performance would be evaluated, and even what types of social behaviours would be seen as normative, and what personal relationships within the organisation might be beneficial to them.

The agreement described and established the learning, service objectives and activities of the Internship Programme, and set out the responsibilities of the intern, the host organisation and the University. We opted to label the agreement a "contract", in keeping with the business and professional tone that we aimed to establish in the WoW Programmes generally. The contract provided guidelines, and effectively outlined the structure and design of the internship component for both the intern and the workplace supervisor. A close description of this kind of content in the

contract follows as it is useful for the evaluation to see how well all parties subscribed to the guidelines.

Regrettably, students and representatives from the host organisations in 2005 were not asked explicitly for their thoughts and opinions regarding the value of the contracts. Despite this there are at least two extenuating explanations that justify that the learning agreement or contract should be taken into account in the process evaluation of the internship component in 2005. The first is the fact that students themselves gave their input and suggested changes to the original learning agreement or contract in a session set aside specifically for this purpose during the Training Programme in 2002 (as mentioned in the Input Evaluation in Appendix 1, in the section 'Criteria for hosting interns in 2002'). It can therefore be argued that the concept and content of the learning agreement had already been negotiated and agreed upon, albeit by previous students. Secondly, I was responsible for circulating the contract, for positioning it to students and representatives from the host organisations in 2005, for explaining aspects of it when necessary, and for making sure it was implemented. My evaluation of the learning agreement or contract is therefore based on first-hand experience.

From the outset, the contract stated that the intern was expected to do substantive work related to the mission of the host organisation, and that had a significant component relating to the intern's academic qualifications, to it. The host organisation had to assign a specific project to the intern, which would require the intern's dedicated attention for the internship period. The project should have been negotiated with the intern prior to the signing of the contract, be of benefit to the host organisation, and relevant according to the intern's academic qualifications. The project details and timelines for delivery of aspects of the project were to be detailed in the contract.

On the whole this point and aspect of the internship was successful and interns were satisfied that they were doing work in the host organisations that was both challenging and aligned to what they had studied at postgraduate level. Of the entire group only one intern the key informant JN was disappointed in the nature and range of the work that was assigned to him at his host organisation. JN felt that his tasks were mainly administrative. He had to assist with organizing a conference at his host organisation and he did not find the work stimulating. Besides JN's reservations, I believe that this aspect of the contract was crucial as it formalized the necessity for interns to do meaningful work and made the importance of this clear to participating host organisations.

Other responsibilities of the participating host organisation included that

- the host organisation had to assign a supervisor to work directly with the intern to achieve the educational goals of the internship, by assigning appropriate work duties;
- the host organisation supervisor had to schedule regular meetings with the intern;
- the host organisation had to take into account in the work schedule that the intern should have access to various organisational departments, beyond his/her immediate area of work. It was explained that was necessary for the intern to be able to successfully complete assignments relating to the various aspects of an organisation.

Besides professional behaviours and fulfilling the project-related requirements, the responsibilities of the intern included that the intern had to meet with the host organisation supervisor to develop appropriate learning objectives prior to starting the internship period. The contract also stipulated that interns had to participate openly and honestly in the evaluation and supervision process, with both the host organisation's supervisor and the University's programme coordinator. A further requirement was that the intern had to maintain contact with the University's programme coordinator, by electronic mail, telephone contact, and written communication, at least once every two weeks. There were a few objectives underpinning the inclusion of these requirements. We believed they would help students learn during their internships. By explicitly stating the learning objectives, we hoped students would have a clear vision of their own goals and be able to monitor how they achieved these goals as they progressed during their internships. Meeting regularly, establishing learning objectives and negotiating these with the workplace supervisors would, we hoped, be the foundation for a successful mentor-mentee relationship. Our findings were that there was definitely room for improvement in terms of how well the workplace supervisors and interns established these learning objectives. They were often superficial and basic. In these cases the WoW staff intervened by making recommendations, or by simply asking pertinent questions about the learning objectives that led to their revision.

The responsibilities of the University were for the programme coordinator to monitor, supervise and provide mentorship through site visits, electronic mail, telephone contact and written communication with the supervisor from the host organisation and the intern, at least once every two weeks for the duration of the internship. In this way, the WoW programme coordinator guaranteed to provide the host organisation with support and assistance where possible in monitoring the intern. We fulfilled this obligation conscientiously. We had learned from two negative experiences reported in 2001, where students had performed unprofessionally during their internships, that intensive mentoring, and monitoring of students during their internships

was a critical success factor for the Programmes (Prof C Hamilton, Interview, 18 January 2007), and would only benefit each student. (See the Input Evaluation, Appendix 1, especially the section 'Lessons learned from the 2001 Internship Programme'.) By stating explicitly that WoW staff would be involved in this way, we also clearly indicated our involvement from the start and thus preempted any possible problems of host organisations complaining that the University was interfering in the internship process - even though this never happened. There is no doubt that the lesson learned in 2001 resulted in this approach in 2005, and that this close monitoring prevented any problems with unprofessional behaviours.

The last section of the contract included sections (consisting of blank fields) that were to be completed by the intern and the host organisation supervisor:

A. Statement of purpose: The intern hopes to gain the following from this internship: ...
B. Learning objectives or other goals: The specific goals toward which the intern's efforts are directed are ...
C. Intern's activities: The general activities of the intern at the host organisation, and the means by which the intern's goals/objectives will be met: ...
D. Key performance areas expected from the intern by the host organisation: ...
E. Specific project work expected from the intern by the host organisation: ...
F. Intern's work space requirements: ...
G. Other expectations: ...
H. Intern's work schedule: ...
I. Supervision by host organisation: ...

After the interviewing stage, and if there was mutual acceptance (by student and host organisation) for the student to undertake an internship, the actual workplace supervisor assigned to the student became the representative at the host organisation responsible for the learning agreement.

Most of the workplace supervisors in 2005 gave telephonic feedback - usually when I was following-up on the progress towards completing the agreement - that they found the learning contract unwieldy and very time-consuming to complete. Nevertheless, I believe that the contract effectively reinforced the structure and design of the internship component for both the intern and the workplace supervisor. It worked well to raise and "iron-out" any misconceptions at the very beginning of the internship component. The WoW staff's prior experience of the component had proven that typical misconceptions included, for example, an expectation from the intern to be offered permanent work at the end of the internship. Even though students would have been reminded of this verbally at various points during the Programmes' Activity Stages, it was vital to have this point included on hard copy and signed by all parties, to avoid disappointment.

A typical and possible misconception that may have been held by the host organisation generally and the workplace supervisor specifically is encapsulated in a popular joke relating to interns: 'What is the difference between an intern and a slave?' The response is that 'interns wear clothes'. The learning contract was a diplomatic and professional way of countering even subliminal expectations from the host organisation that the intern would be available for "slave work". This said, there was some spirited conversation in 2005, in the training room and at the weblogs, regarding the level of work that should be assigned to interns. It happened that the popular metaphor for menial and inappropriate work for interns in 2005 revolved around tea-making. Reflecting on this, GL said

> *I thought it would be a good idea to start off with this* hot *issue as I feel it has been covered by the various speakers in the past one week of WoW (world of work) workshops. The question that comes to mind is really ...*to make or not to make? *As we all look forward to embracing the world of work, many interns are intimidated by the fact that they may be under utilised in their areas of expertise and over utilised in another areas like the kitchen, hence the tea debate. Emotional intelligence has been emphasised as key for survival in the world of work. It is also not stagnant and can continually be developed and improved. I am of the strong opinion that as an intern, one should learn how to make a* good cuppa *as it provides for other opportunities such as socializing with other members of that organisation. On the other hand, many interns see this as bullying, and do not buy into the tea pot paradigm. (GL's Weblog, 8 April 2005)*

GL's weblog post clearly indicates that interns in 2005 were aware of, and concerned about the level of work they would be assigned. Guest lecturers and WoW staff seemed to share the opinion that interns should enthusiastically undertake "menial" work, especially when that work was typical of teamwork at the host organisation. But guest lecturers and WoW staff also made it clear that interns were entitled to work that would challenge the intern while benefitting the host organisation. I believe that while workplace supervisors may have found the learning agreement to be, to a degree, a tiresome burden, the interns appreciated it as an effective, proactive way to objectively position their expectations for work that would be interesting and challenging for them.

As an activity related to curriculum design, the intern's role in completing the learning agreement - which often required the intern to take the initiative and schedule time with his / her workplace supervisor for the task, and to think about and plan the content of the learning agreement - was valuable towards developing an awareness of a professional approach to negotiating working conditions. Besides unambiguously laying out the learning aims of the internship, the specific activities that would be undertaken, the key performance areas expected of the intern and how supervision would occur, the learning agreement necessitated discussions between supervisor and

intern. This would have ensured that, as a newcomer in the organisation, the intern had a specific task to complete that would also have helped him or her to establish a relationship - and "break-the-ice", if necessary – with the workplace supervisor.

As has already been mentioned, the learning agreement also established the groundwork and potential for effective mentoring during the internships. Csikszentmihalyi (1997) explains that such a scenario would assist both workplace supervisors and interns in understanding and productively contributing to work "flow". Csikszentmihalyi says that when students reach a state of flow, they are completely focused, with little room for distractions and irrelevancies:

> When goals are clear, feedback relevant, and challenges and skills are in balance, attention becomes ordered and fully invested. (1997)

It would appear therefore, that the learning contract is a crucial part of the internship component, as it establishes the ground rules for an effective work experience and is an opportunity for the intern to learn about, and practically implement, a professional negotiation tool. It was also a departure point and provided an infrastructure for the workplace supervisor and the intern to establish an effective mentor and mentee relationship.

4.1.2 Mentoring

The inclusion of mentoring strategies in the curriculum design of Activity Stage Four of the WoW internship component were motivated by the circumstances of, and lessons learned from, the internship components of the same programme as far back as 2001. These are discussed in more detail in Appendix 1, for the Input Evaluation of the WoW Programmes. In short, one of the lessons learned after the 2001 Programme was that mentoring was a necessity and had to be built into the curriculum design.

After realizing that Humanities postgraduates needed help in applying their intellectual abilities to the corporate world, the then Head of what was then the Graduate School for the Humanities and Social Sciences (now called the 'Humanities Graduate Centre'), Professor Carolyn Hamilton, also observed that an intervention involving University academics to assist with this problem was not effective. (Interview, 18 January 2007) Academics and departmental administrators were involved in the supervision and grading of assignments and a final essay in the 2001 Programme. Full Time Teaching Equivalent (FTE) incentives were put in place for University staff involvement, but did not seem to impact on their commitment and motivation toward the

Internship Programme. University staff reluctance seemed to stem from questions related to a lack of clarity on why they were being involved, and what that involvement required of them intellectually. One of the lessons we learned from this experience was that any design involving academic staff mentoring students in the workplace would be unlikely to succeed. (See the Input Evaluation, Appendix 1, especially the section 'Lessons learned from the 2001 Internship Programme'.)

While we discontinued University academics' involvement in the Programmes in 2002, there was still a need for the University's presence and involvement during students' internships. The reasons for this can be found, again, in Appendix 1 (the Input Evaluation of the WoW Programmes). They include the incident of two students' unprofessional behaviours during their internships in 2001, which raised the risk of compromising the internship component and the Programmes generally. This incident prompted the initial need for the monitoring of students who were placed in internships under the auspices of the University, but the "watchdog" tone of monitoring soon evolved into mentoring practices in subsequent Programmes.

We were well aware of the ambivalent reception the workplace gave to Humanities postgraduates (this is also raised and discussed in Chapter 1) attempting to enter the workplace. This informed a fundamental premise that we consistently, albeit implicitly, subscribed to when making curriculum design decisions for the WoW Programmes: that the Programmes should aim to change what we believed were misconceptions about the potential contributions that Humanities postgraduates could make to the world of work. While we knew as early as 2001 that Humanities postgraduates were not adequately marketing themselves towards entering the workplace (Interview with Prof C Hamilton, 18 January 2007), and that each participant needed to address this with the help of the Programmes, we also believed that the WoW Programmes as an entity could market Humanities postgraduates more effectively than individuals themselves could. This then explains the initial importance of monitoring students to safeguard the reputation of all Humanities postgraduates, and the importance of mentoring to ensure successful transitions into the workplace for all participants.

Nevertheless, potential host organisations were often hesitant about offering three-month internships to Humanities postgraduate students. The requirement to allocate a workplace supervisor who would mentor the intern during the internship component was, it appeared, onerous for many host organisations. When the host organisation learned that there would be support for the workplace supervisor in terms of co-mentorship of the intern from a WoW Programmes' staff member, the pendulum invariably swung in favour of then offering

internships. Mentorship from the University for the duration of the internship period was therefore seen as a significant advantage of the WoW Programmes, for host organisations.

There are many and varied mentoring models described in the literature, in both workplace and educational contexts. There are also glowing descriptions of the mentoring process generally available. For example, Gehrkes says that mentors are able to offer the mentee

> a new and whole way of seeing things. This gift of wisdom….comes from having lived and thought deeply and it permeates all the mentor does with the protégé. It is, a way of thinking and living what is given …Through the gift of self as philosopher, the receiver, the protégé is awakened. (1998)

This romantic vision of mentorship did not appear to be the reality for the workplace supervisors who were expected to mentor students during their internships. Many said, during the interviews, that they wished that they had spent, or had more time to spend with the intern(s). All of the workplace supervisors interviewed in 2005 confirmed that they were not receiving any acknowledgement, recognition or reward from the host organisation for mentoring an intern. I believe that this impacted substantially and negatively on workplace supervisor's commitments to mentoring interns. It also reinforced the necessity for co-mentorship from a WoW staff member during the internships. On one occasion in 2005 a workplace supervisor contacted me telephonically to thank me for meeting with her and the intern she supervised at her workplace, and expressed relief that the intern had a contact person at the University who she could

> compare notes with and discuss the intern with. (Field notes, 28 August 2005, UL's Supervisor).

Without exception all the workplace supervisors welcomed the co-mentorship arrangement. With substantial workloads, they viewed the sharing of the mentorship role as a reprieve, and were co-operative with the WoW staff member in this regard.

Co-mentorship was a distinctive arrangement in the WoW Internship Programme. Both the workplace supervisor and the WoW Programmes' staff member had, as mentors, similar goals and aims for the mentoring process. These included facilitating significant learning, and optimum intern performance to ensure the development of employability skills. The workplace supervisor as mentor was obviously in the best position to provide an environment for the intern to learn about the workplace, while the WoW Programmes' mentor was able to address the fostering of learning through technology (emails and the weblogs) and regular contact with the workplace

supervisor and intern. The WoW Programmes' mentor did not get involved with the specifics of the work tasks as these were often specialized.

It can be argued, therefore, that the WoW Programmes' staff member held the role of counsellor rather than mentor. Summerfield (2002) notes that these roles are not dissimilar, as both are based on a relationship of trust. However, in the case of mentoring in the workplace and the supervisor's role, organisational needs had to be taken into account, and met. The mentoring relationship may then not have been entirely confidential - for example, an intern's learning contract may have been circulated to other staff at the organisation. However, a key advantage of the WoW Programmes' staff member's role was that the intern could discuss fears, needs, problems, and any challenges without concern that the information would be circulated back within the organisation and thus possibly jeopardize the intern. Interns quickly realized this advantage and valued it.

Both the mentoring relationship (the workplace supervisor and the intern) and the counselling function (the WoW Programmes' staff member and the intern) included the learning of new skills and behaviours. With the workplace supervisor as mentor, Summerfield (2002) suggests the process is "acquisitorial", where the intern acquires new or enhanced areas of knowledge, skill or behaviours, which he/she can use in a practical way. With the WoW Programmes' staff member in a counselling role, "transformational" mentoring occurs. Summerfield (2002) suggests that "transformational" mentoring becomes necessary when the intern is working at a level or on a task that is challenging, and is therefore possibly feeling vulnerable and needing emotional support and encouragement.

Martin (2009) examined the quality of various models of course provision for work-based education in Australia, and found that student satisfaction with the work placement was closely linked to the mutual support of both academic and workplace supervisors. The fact that the dual roles of "acquisitorial" and "transformational" mentoring could be met by co-mentorship, and even the concept of co-mentorship from the two seemingly disparate contexts of University and workplace, makes the mentorship approach a distinctive feature of the WoW Programmes. The process evaluation will consider how well this model of co-mentorship worked in the section on the pedagogical dimensions of Activity Stage Four of the WoW internship component.

4.1.3 Weblogs

We had introduced journaling to promote reflective practices in the WoW Programmes in 2002. But, diaries are private, while blogs are in the public domain. In the case of an intern entering the workplace, blogs are more significant in terms of digital identity formation initially, and then later workplace identity formation, than a diary. This is because the author can develop a digital network and links with people s/he would never otherwise meet. Ewins says,

> A blogger's commentary on the world, other websites, other people, other webloggers, helps to define his or her self in relation to the wider environment. A weblog is a public face, a presenting of oneself and one's thoughts to the world, to an audience, however small… (2005)

Weblogs in the internship phase must be seen against the background of the weblogs that students started during the Training Programme. Then, early blog posts were typically summaries of training sessions and reflections thereon, news pieces, updates on personal developments and/or happenings. But it became evident that even by the end of the month-long training programme, most students' weblog pieces had a distinctive style. Personal character also became evident in the ways the student responded to comments made after a post. Engaging in blogging therefore prompted students to confront their own opinions and contemplate how their views might be interpreted and reflected upon by others.

We gave students general ideas and questions to consider in their weblogs during the Training Programme, and then another set that they could use as catalysts for weblog posts written from the workplace. These were suggestions only and students were not required to answer all or any of them.

- Write about the kinds of knowledge, skills and attributes your host organisation values, and how you are meeting these challenges. Refer to incidents, feedback from a colleague, a conversation at the coffee machine or your thoughts.
- Consider your own basic skills and understanding. How is your own practical competence and understanding of the workplace? How important do you think it is for Humanities postgraduates to have developed these attributes?
- How useful is your own specialized knowledge and intellectual ability proving to be, in the workplace?
- How do you rate your own workplace skills and your ability to apply knowledge?
- What are your thoughts (please give practical examples where possible) on your interactive and personal skills?

Although the primary objective of these questions was to promote reflection, as it was when the weblog project was initiated in the Training Programme, we were interested to see and evaluate how weblogging practices would change, if at all, as students moved from one activity stage in the Programmes to the next. Oravec (2002) makes the point that both fully online and traditional classrooms tend to be instructor-centered or dependent. Weblogs are a useful "middle space" between these, and Veronikas and Shaughnessy (2004) add that the blog can be a separate, student-owned space within the traditional course. Oravec (2002) suggests that this "blended learning" approach allows students to use the weblogs relatively creatively within the structure of a programme.

We were interested in these characteristics of blogging, as we were committed to include opportunities for reflection for meaningful learning at all stages and changes to the design of the WoW Programmes. Schön (1989) emphasises the role of reflection in professional or complex activities, particularly where situations are relatively unpredictable - as they may become when students are in the process of moving out of the University and into the workplace.

Moon explains reflective activity thus:

> Reflection is involved in meaningful learning where learners are seeking to make sense of new material for themselves, linking it to what they know already and, if necessary, modifying their prior knowledge and understandings to accommodate the new ideas. (2004)

GP provides an example of an intern "seeking to make sense of new material". GP had posted a weblog entry relating to teamwork. In it he reflected on a finding, since he had entered the workplace, that teamwork was not what he expected it to be.

> *My experience has been very different from what I was expecting, for instance the team making part does not happen at all to me. (GP's Weblog, 25 August 2005)*

I probed this in an interview with GP the day after he posted the weblog entry, and it was apparent that he was clearly modifying what he had constructed about the nature of teams from the training component:

> … here you find that in the different programmes we do not work as a team per se, that you'll be designated a team that you will be working with for a certain time. Here I found that everyone is working on their own self. They only maybe collaborate when they are in meetings, they never really actually talk to each other about each one's programmes and what development do they have. (Appendix 7.2, Interview, 26 August 2005, p 172)

What GP was actually encountering is the difference between theory (which was presented in the training component) and reality as he encountered actual teamwork, and the apparent lack thereof, in the workplace. GP then found that he had to reconsider his own behaviours to accommodate this new reality, and he had to avoid "nagging" for input that would help him to complete his own work.

> Even [the director] is saying to me, I must not push him, because I've been asking him about the Awards. I have been constantly asking him to be quick in finishing his questions because we are supposed to submit the application on the 30th… But then I am still waiting for the questions, so I am like a bit of a nagging for him, but also I think he understands. (Appendix 7.2, Interview, 26 August 2005, p 172)

Moon states that "learning journals" are becoming more common in non-vocational programmes where they may serve a variety of purposes besides being a vehicle to support reflective activity, e.g. to improve student writing, to increase creativity, to enhance problem-solving skills, for personal development purposes, to link theory (in the curriculum) to practice, and so on. Moon suggests that one of the most interesting purposes that links directly to many employment situations is the use of journals to accompany project work. The journal – or in the case of the WoW Programmes, weblogs - provides a location for planning, the collection of ideas, notes on progress, contacts, and reflection on any or all of these. But the weblogging assignment has value-added potential when the student also assesses his or her emotional responses to the engagement and self-management of the project work. When this happens, Moon (2004) says that the "short-term 'fill-ups' of skills" has been transcended and employability as a lifelong capability, in advance of the events associated with major employment, can be said to have been achieved.

Oravec (2002) states that the potential for multiple dimensions in weblogs allows for the development of students' "unique voices", empowering them, and encouraging them to become more critically analytical in their thinking in their responses to the resources they receive. Having access to how and what the student is revealing about his or her world – in our case, the world of work – is valuable for accessing implicit assumptions in our teaching.

4.2 Pedagogy

The pedagogical dimensions of the WoW Programmes - during the fourth activity stage, the internship - considers the strategies that were implemented during students' work-based learning experiences. Harvey's statement that

> Employability is not something distinct from learning and pedagogy but grows out of good learning (2003)

prefaces the discussion, as does his observation of a trend in employability development to

> ... learning to learn, through programmes, with a shift in pedagogy from 'knowing what' to 'knowing how to find out', and through reflecting on work experience. (Harvey et al, 2002, quoted in Harvey, 2003)

The second activity stage of the WoW Programmes, the Training Programme, represents students "knowing what" through exposure to hard, and soft skills, and information sessions. The third activity stage, the transitionary stage, represents "knowing how to find out". The final stage, the internship, encompasses both "knowing how to find out", and "reflecting on work experience". (Harvey et al, 2002, quoted in Harvey, 2003)

Elements that can be described as pedagogical at this stage are those that encourage student engagement with the world of work through areas raised by The Pedagogy for Employability Group (2004) such as

- requiring students to work on learning tasks, where possible, in authentic and/or richly-resourced contexts;
- involving collaborative work where appropriate (notwithstanding the challenges this introduces regarding high-stakes or summative assessment);
- providing cognitive 'scaffolding' to help students towards achievement currently beyond their unaided capability and progressively removing it as that capability develops; and
- encouraging the development of metacognition (for example, reflection and self-regulation).

4.2.1 Workplace supervisors: pedagogical approaches

Students were asked for their perceptions about their workplace supervisors in the interviews during their internships. Their responses revealed that 2005 interns experienced their supervisors as being either "hands-on" and involved in the details of their work, or that the supervisors had a "laissez-faire" approach to mentoring, and allowed the interns to find their own way in the organisation and complete their work independently. This raises questions about which approach best serves the individual and Programmes' goals of developing employability.

With regard to these different mentoring styles, Bernstein (2000) describes two forms of pedagogy: visible and invisible pedagogy. While both can be used to construct and reproduce

dominant or legitimate outcomes, they are fundamentally different. These differences prompt an interesting application of Bernstein's (2000) work to explore any contrasting pedagogical approaches in the WoW components. At the same time, it is useful to consider how visible or invisible pedagogical approaches impact on interns' socialization into the host organisation, defined by Van Maanen and Schein as being

> ...the process by which one is taught and learns the ropes of a particular organisational role. (1979)

The term 'invisible pedagogy' means that the manner of transmission is considered to be more implicit. (Bernstein, 2000) There were instances of this in the internship phase, as per FN's experience. Although FN (one of the respondents) said that he usually worked closely with his workplace supervisor (Internship progress report, 30 September 2005), he also described his supervisor as being "lenient". FN's supervisor's approach was to delegate tasks in an unstructured format, without a time frame or specific instruction. (Appendix 6.2, Interview, 3 October 2005) FN, exposed to this invisible pedagogy, had to interpret instructions and produce meaningful work independently. During this process, FN's supervisor saw his role as monitoring FN's work, as opposed to mentoring the intern. (Appendix 6.3, FN's Workplace Supervisor, Interview, 3 October 2005) In the same interview however, the supervisor mentioned that he regretted not spending enough time with FN, and cited work constraints as the reason for this.

Being 'monitored' as opposed to being 'mentored' was not helpful for FN. He seemed to feel he was being observed, rather than supported, and this extended beyond his relationship with his workplace supervisor to staff at the host organisation:

> Even if somebody is not supervising you, they want to see and are monitoring you and are sometimes more critical than your supervisor. (Appendix 6.2, FN Interview, 3 October 2005, p 143)

As a result, FN found making friends in the workplace difficult and he experienced a

> ...kind of psychological isolation in terms of work. (Appendix 6.2, FN Interview, 2 August 2005, p 150)

This was exacerbated by an uncertainty about his place in the organisation's hierarchy. This reinforces the value of placing more than one intern at a host organisation, especially when there are no former interns who may have subsequently been employed at that host organisation – as was the case at FN's host organisation. Taking into account that we did not have the leverage or authority with host organisations generally to be able to request a more "hands-on" supervisory

approach from FN's workplace supervisor, a more practical solution to FN's dilemma would have been to be able to refer him to another or previous intern for support and assistance.

The affects of the supervisor's pedagogical approach clearly did not aid FN's initial transition into the workplace. Even after the first phase of the internship, FN did not believe he was useful to the host organisation, or that he was able to "fit" within the host organisation. (Appendix 6.2, FN Interview, 2 August 2005) While invisible pedagogy appeared to create a less explicit hierarchy between FN and his supervisor, it also meant that FN was not provided with explicit codes to understand how the workplace works. For example, FN's was consistently concerned about his inability to complete tasks when he wasn't provided with a framework for delivery. On the one occasion when the workplace supervisor gave FN a task with a tight delivery time, however, the workplace supervisor reported that FN had produced very good work in that time. (Appendix 6.3, FN's Workplace Supervisor, Interview, 3 October 2005)

UL's very different experience during her internship would be characterised by Bernstein (2000) as consisting of a visible pedagogical approach, with precise performance criteria explicitly formulated. So while UL said she was unproductive for two days while her work brief was being developed, she believed her assimilation into the workplace was speeded up by her supervisor's clear communication of needs and expectations thereafter. (Appendix 3.2, UL Interview, 27 July 2005) These were closely aligned with the three-month project that UL and the interviewer who assessed her for the internship placement had discussed. There had even been a case of some conflict between UL's supervisor and her colleagues around an instance of ad hoc delegation of work for UL. UL's supervisor acted quickly, and in writing, to her colleagues to rectify this situation: she called for a system whereby work would be delegated to UL in a structured fashion, and only if it would contribute to UL achieving the learning outcomes for her internship that both UL and her supervisor had agreed upon. (Appendix 3.4, UL's supervisor's email circulated to 5 of supervisor's peers, 21 July 2005) UL's supervisor requested her colleagues to not only delegate tasks but to also process tasks, so as to help UL develop skills such as planning and prioritising. UL's supervisor's aim was to create a learning record that would

> help me chart her exposure, understanding and assimilation of the work we assign to her. (Appendix 3.4, UL's supervisor's email circulated to five of supervisor's peers, 21 July 2005, p 101).

In addition, UL said that her supervisor facilitated her participation in various aspects of the organisation's work. UL felt that her supervisor was supportive during her transition into the workplace (Appendix 3.2, Interview, 27 July 2005); this could be attributed to her supervisor's

visible pedagogical approach to UL's learning about the workplace during her internship. On the other hand, FN's workplace supervisor's non-interventional pedagogical approach did not assist, and indeed may have obstructed FN's development of the three aspects from Yorke and Knight's (2004) toolkit of constructs required for the development of employability: personal qualities, core skills and process skills. Certainly FN's understanding of the host organisation and the workplace would have benefitted from more structured supervision, such as the approach that UL's supervisor adopted. FN's problems with time management and the prioritisation of tasks meant that he could not claim to have developed "skilful practices in context". (Yorke and Knight, 2004) This in itself undermined his "efficacy beliefs" and negatively impacted on his personal qualities such as his self-confidence, adaptability, and his propensity to take initiative. The implication is that a more involved, structured and hands-on supervisory style benefits interns and this should be the ideal pedagogical approach for this activity stage of the WoW Programmes.

Interestingly, FN's supervisor had an expectation for these personal qualities to already be in place prior to the internship; he believed that ideally confidence building and the importance of

> ...personality, relationship building, how you interact with new people, listening, the proper way of communicating (Appendix 6.3, FN's Workplace Supervisor, Interview, 3 October 2005, p 159)

should have been developed during the WoW Training programmes.

The National Society for Experiential Education in the USA suggest that during the first stage of the socialization process during an internship, students experience both excitement as well as self doubt (in Furco, 1996). A workplace supervisor's effective, visible pedagogical approach - which may, for example include learning agreements such as that developed by UL and her supervisor - will help the intern develop self-confidence and more realistic expectations. (Furco, 1996) Just as UL read her supervisor's pedagogical approach as being supportive of her learning, FN may have perceived his supervisor's invisible pedagogical approach as being non-supportive.

There is evidence that FN did have one of Yorke and Knight's (2004) constructs for employability – metacognition, which includes the capacity for reflection, and that of self-regulation. (Maher and Graves, 2007) It is possible that FN's supervisor's non-interventionist, invisible pedagogical approach prompted this. However it is also possible that FN's development in this area stemmed from the soft skills training on emotional intelligence that he had attended during the WoW Training Programme. FN said as much when he relayed a difficult incident with a colleague

during the first stage of his internship, and said that he had applied what he had learned about emotional intelligence to resolve the situation successfully. (Appendix 6.2, Interview, 2 August 2005) GP also said that he had found the WoW Training Programme session on emotional intelligence in the workplace useful during his transition into the workplace. (Appendix 7.2, Interview, 26 August 2005)

Certainly FN's recognition of his own limitations at this time in terms of managing time, prioritizing work and even establishing positive relationships with the other staff members indicates a mature and discriminating understanding of his personal competencies and motivation (as when FN suggested he would be perceived as reactive, rather than proactive). FN's emotional intelligence competency can be regarded as an aspect of metacognition. (Yorke and Knight, 2004) While Goleman (1995) says that emotional intelligence is the single most important predicator of success, it was apparent that FN's emotional intelligence was not enough to facilitate an effective transition into the workplace. There is the possibility that future or similar programmes could preempt problems with supervisors' pedagogical approaches by raising awareness of different supervisory styles and approaches that students might encounter during the first stages of their internships. If students are prepared (during the training component) to recognise and deal with both visible and invisible pedagogies (Bernstein, 2000) their transitions into the workplace may be more successful.

4.2.2 World of Work Programmes' mentors: pedagogical approaches

In the WoW Programmes in 2005, and as Appendix 1 (Input Evaluation: History and Development of the World of Work Programmes at Wits University) confirms, host organisations typically did not arrange any practical activities or interventions to help interns make sense of their anticipatory socialization or entry-encounter experiences, which might have led interns more effectively into an understanding of the organisation and its underlying culture.

Korte (2007) quotes Bauer et al (1998) regarding the fact that the literature available on organisational socialization as a learning process typically positions the individual as having the main responsibility to learn to fit into the organisation:

> Organisations may facilitate this process to varying degrees by providing information and mentoring, however the individual was perceived as the primary agent of socialization.

Korte then asserts that this responsibility on the individual may be unproductive because as a newcomer, he or she may not be in the best position to acquire much of the information helpful toward successful socialization in the organisation. (Korte, 2007)

Eraut (1994) points out that while some employers make formal learning opportunities available to their staff, most learning at work is of an informal nature, often related to the culture of the organisation and frequently not codified into a recognised body of knowledge. Many organisations tend to rely on the implicit, informal and occasional learning of their employees and therefore do not make formal arrangements for learning to take place, to be recorded or even acknowledged. This was the case for all of the 2005 interns from the WoW Programmes. Another possible explanation for host organisations' reluctance to induct interns into the workplace may be that interns were seen as transient and that it would therefore not be worthwhile to invest organisational time and resources on them. This would be in spite of the high percentage of interns who were offered permanent employment at their host organisations, after their internships (please see Appendix 1, Input Evaluation: History and Development of the World of Work Programmes at Wits University).

Nevertheless, the organisations hosting the 2005 interns seemed to expect interns (perhaps especially since they had completed postgraduate level degrees and were perceived to be intellectually "advanced") to be able to "hit the ground running", meaning that they were expected to integrate and engage with the new working environment with a minimum of effort required in terms of assistance from existing employees. The implications were that the onus

remained with the WoW Programmes to assist interns to acquire knowledge of their surroundings, reduce uncertainty, and thus help them to start working effectively as soon as possible (taking into account that their internship period would be only 3-months in duration). Such an undertaking meant that the WoW Programmes' staff had to quickly orientate themselves with the culture, norms and work of the hosting organisation, so as to be able to assist the intern with their entry into it.

Eraut et al (2002) suggests that effective mentoring enhances all learning-at-work activities undertaken by the mentee. A first phase of "induction and integration", where the mentee is socialised into the workplace may be formal or informal and is necessary to help the mentee establish boundaries. In the cases of UL and GP, previous interns from the same programme helped with their "induction and integration", since UL and GP were interns at organisations that had hosted interns before 2005. It seemed that when there had been individuals from the Programmes preceding them, interns were assimilated into the organisation more effectively.

> *There are three interns who are now working permanently at [host organisation] and I am the fourth generation of the interns that come from WITS. I have had lots of support from my colleagues and the boss is a very friendly person. (GP's Weblog, 25 August 2005)*

Of the nine host organisations that participated in 2005 by hosting interns, six had never hosted interns from the WoW Programmes before. In the cases of organisations that were hosting interns for the first time, the WoW Programmes' staff assisted with "induction and integration". WoW staff prioritized these 'new' organisations in terms of the time we had available in the first two weeks of internships because we felt we could rely, to some extent, on the fact that the other host organisations already had some experience of the WoW Programmes. They therefore needed less guidance in terms of start-up issues like completing the contract. We also hoped that host organisations that had participated in previous years, and had subsequently employed interns would refer newcomers to those previous interns, to help them adjust. In his first interview at the start of his internship, GP went into more detail to explain the practical assistance that previous interns – now employees – at the host organisation were giving him:

> Yes, [2004 intern], especially, [2004 intern] has been of great help to me because he is the one who's dealing with the website and he is the one who is with the communications per se. So I've been working closely with [2004 intern] and in trying to find out what stuff do I need to do because he also has his role in communication and we are almost doing the very same thing and I am helping him with the database. He is actually updating the information of contacts that we have in the company. He has helped me set up my computer, the e-mail address and everything. He is the one who I ask when I have any problems, I go to him and I ask him and he has been very helpful. All the other

> interns, like [2002 and 2003 interns] have also been very friendly. (Interview, 26 August 2005, p 171)

Our support ranged from a telephone call on the interns' first day of work, to a site visit in the first week. Issues raised by the intern with the WoW Programmes' mentor/counsellor were typically practical at this stage. We learned from our experiences of the first weeks of the internship in previous years that recurring issues included access to a computer or workspace, or difficulties arranging a meeting time with the workplace supervisor. The WoW Programmes' staff member then diplomatically raised the same issues with the workplace supervisor, and they were invariably resolved. It happened that there were no such practical issues in 2005, but contact with the WoW Programmes' staff member at the beginning of the internship appeared to be valued by the interns because it reinforced that the intern was not alone, had support, and that there was concern and care for the individual during the "induction and integration" stage. So for example FN rated the support he received from the WoW Programmes positively. He recalled a site visit:

> I remember that ad hoc visit, it meant so much. It was healing. It was not scheduled before, but it meant a lot to us. (Appendix 6.2, Interview, 3 October 2005, p 160)

Eraut (1994) has classified the different aspects of learning and work, resulting in definitions of knowledge and typologies of learning in order to contextualise the way that individuals adopt different types of learning to meet specific needs. His definitions and typologies do not claim to fit together, and cover a wide range of different circumstance where learning may take place, including therefore the Internship Programme. Eraut defined three types of knowledge: codified, cultural and personal. Codified knowledge is public and formal information, and not of immediate relevance in a discussion of the WoW staffs' pedagogical practices. The second and third types - cultural and personal – are useful to describe WoW staffs' pedagogical practices.

Along with the tools developed for the Internship Programme curriculum, (such as the weblogs) and usually incorporating these tools, the WoW staff concentrated on assisting new interns develop their cultural knowledge. This is defined by Eraut (1994) as a wider understanding created through social interaction and networking, which can include formal codified knowledge but typically covers aspects of informal knowledge and the implicit cultural norms that identify a group within a wider organisation. A strong feature of the Programmes – especially at this anticipatory socialization stage - was that the WoW staff drew on their experiences of corporate environments generally, to explore and develop cultural knowledge with the intern in the early days of the internship. The respondents valued the informal discussions between WoW

Programmes' staff and the intern relating to issues such as dress code, tone of meetings, and time keeping at the host organisation. These were then platforms to develop cultural knowledge about that host organisation.

In terms of personal knowledge, WoW Programmes' staff often actively counseled interns to consider the skills and knowledge gained from their own personal experiences, and to reflect on and make meaning of their practical situation. (Eraut, 1994)

Eraut (1994) noted that it is difficult to research informal learning (such as the acquisition of cultural and personal knowledge) at work, as most people do not think about what they are learning, and are even less likely to be ready to discuss their learning with others. This resonates with my own experience in the WoW Programmes in 2005 and explains also why respondents did not comment more actively on the impact of the WoW Programmes' staff pedagogical approaches during their internships.

The second phase of socialization, according to Eraut et al (2002) is "exposure and osmosis", where learning takes place by peripheral participation. Here the WoW Programmes' staff member, in the role of counsellor or even mentor, was mainly passive. The primary function of the WoW Programmes' staff member was to ask if the planned aspects in the learning agreement were being implemented by workplace supervisor and intern, to ensure "exposure and osmosis". The third phase was one of "self-directed learning", where the intern took an active role, experimented and took risks. (Eraut et al, 2002) This phase required a positive and supportive workplace mentor and again, the WoW Programmes' staff member's role was simply to ensure that this was in fact happening. The final stage, according to Eraut et al (2002), was active performance management.

There were no specific and structured activities or events designed by either the workplace or the WoW staff to achieve each or any of the phases described by Eraut et al (2002), or to move students through the stage models of organisational socialization (anticipatory socialization, entry-encounter experiences, and ending with change and mutual acceptance). Progress and development was evaluated during the monthly visits to interns by the researcher, as these divided the internship period into segments that then implicitly correlated with socialization phases and stages. At the same time students appeared to have an awareness that the visits were markers for milestones reached or not achieved. There was a significant amount of flexibility in the semi-structured interviews, which were also used to gather data. It was therefore possible to follow a topic or perspective raised by the interviewee – these threads often revealed that the

student was naturally following typical socialization phases and stages. In cases where there was little progress according to the socialization phases and stages, the open and conversational interviewing style allowed for investigation and suggestions to address any problems.

4.2.3 Developing communities of practice

One of the implications of workplace supervisors' pedagogical approaches was on the development of communities of practice. The concept of a community of practice refers to the process of social learning that occurs when people who have a common interest in some subject or problem collaborate over an extended period to share ideas, find solutions, and build innovations. (Wenger, McDermott, and Snyder, 2002) Communities of practice can be purposefully constructed or can develop spontaneously. The latter seemed to be the case amongst the 2005 WoW participants.

FN experienced an invisible pedagogical approach from his supervisor and therefore lacked clear rules for measuring his performance. FN therefore did not know the rules to help him recognize particular contexts as requiring the application of a particular performance. About two weeks after his internship had begun, however, he was joined by GL, another participant in the WoW Programmes in 2005. FN was clearly relieved to have a peer to share his internship experience with.

> I have this whole issue of the stipend and it's nice to have someone to talk to. If I was alone and going through this, it would have been a lot more difficult. To have someone I can talk to and brainstorm with about what's going to happen. (Appendix 6.2, Interview, 2 August 2005, p 143)

GL was hesitant, in the first stage of her internship, to intrude on others' personal space. She valued the fact that with FN, she could

> ...take a walk and tell someone what you are going through. (Appendix 5.2, Interview, 2 August 2005, p 143)

Their relationship, as FN's supervisor observed, was therefore mutually beneficial. FN's supervisor said that he was

> ...surprised since they help each other a lot as a team. The way they interact with each other is different from the way they interact with the others. The teamwork was very good training. (Appendix 6.3, FN's Workplace Supervisor, Interview, 3 October 2005, p 140)

Even though UL was the only intern from the 2005 group at her host organisation, she also relied on contact with her peers who had attended the Training Programme with her. She maintained this contact through email, telephone calls and regular meetings. UL said that these communications were about the internship work experiences, and that her contact with fellow interns helped her to make her own transition into the workplace more effectively. (Appendix 3.2, Interview, 27 July 2005)

GP was a fifth generation intern at his host organisation; his host organisation had worked with interns from the WoW Programmes for four consecutive years. In his weblog, GP emphasised the support he was receiving from 'past' interns, who were, at the time of GP's internship, employees of the host organisation. Although GP explained that the support was mainly work-related, he found all the 'past' interns helpful, approachable and friendly. He also described one of the 'past' interns as a role-model. (Appendix 7.2, Interview, 26 August 2005)

Access to, or even knowledge about 'former' interns at the host organisation is an important area for evaluation of the 2005 programme. GL obviously had immediate access to former interns. UL was conscious of the fact that a participant from the WoW Programmes had completed an internship at her host organisation, and although she did not have the same direct contact with that former intern as GL had in his environment, UL felt that former interns from the same programme 'paved the way' to some extent for her:

> And I mean [intern, 2003] was there and there is also a guy called [ ] who did not come through the programme but he is also from Drama School at Wits. So I would say it's both the prestige of the programme and because of [intern, 2003] and I think the last year's interns and also Wits has this huge, huge, I don't know. It's like some Ivy League thing. (Appendix 3.2, Interview, 27 July 2005, p 81)

GL and FN were in the same host organisation for their internships and they both found the experience of sharing a site to be positive; they supported each other in a variety of ways. FN, on the other hand, was the only intern from the WoW Programmes in his host organisation, and there is no doubt that his transition into that workplace would have been more successful if he had had the support of a peer on site. Placing more than one intern at the same host organisation was a strength in the programme design in 2005 as it appears this approach facilitates a community of practice amongst interns at the same work site.

4.2.3.1 The role of weblogs in developing communities of practice

It is clear that emailing and particularly weblogging in 2005 contributed to the development of a community of practice amongst participants in the WoW Programmes. Weblogging effectively maintained the team that participants established during the WoW Training Programme, and thus ensured the continuity of a community of practice. In addition to this particularly strong point, the practice of weblogging linked the training and internship programmes as students continued communicating about issues that may have been raised in one site, while in another.

There were very few ambivalent responses to the e-learning methodology of weblogging. Students also seemed to appreciate knowing that the researcher read their blogs regularly, but seemed to value peer commentary more than any commentary from the researcher in the comments sections of their weblog posts. Interns therefore generally did not respond to questions that I posted as comments after their weblogs. (These questions were usually attempts to get the students to explore an area in more depth.) I view this as indicating an advantage of weblogs as e-learning tools, and as evidence that students did not feel obliged to respond to me in my capacity as a WoW staff member. They had autonomy over their weblogs and clearly did not regard them as typical university assignments.

Most students reflected on their role as a student in the WoW Training Programmes and then changed perspectives to present their roles as interns/employees/people in the workplace. They wrote on a variety of topics and did not report difficulties finding anything to write about. For example, some students used their blogs to discuss their problems, and to seek a solution.

There is evidence that the foundations for the community of practice were established well before the internship phase. Just after completing the WoW Training Programme and before her second interview at a potential host organisation (i.e. during the transition phase), UL communicated her anxiety about the possibility of having to compromise herself by accepting work at an organisation (because of financial need) where she felt she might not 'fit':

> *And it is not funny at all, choosing from different companies, trying to find out if the culture agrees with you. My soul has been sold, you know why, because I realise that while we still sweat to find a company that suits you, the desperation to get there is playing its own role. Talk about the money. I think that all of us are broke, not a good condition for a job search. (UL's Weblog, 'Going to work', 6 June 2005)*

There were at least three responses from peers to this weblog post, some from interns who had already been placed at host organisations. They were supportive and encouraging. The student's response to her peers' comments to her weblog post was to suggest an informal reunion at a pub

where participants from the programme could get together and talk more about their experiences of the workplace during the transition phase.

During his internship phase GP said that while the former interns in his host organisation gave him support and assistance, they worked independently. GP added that he missed working in a team – implying that he perceived the group of 2005 students who had attended the WoW Training Programme to be a 'team'. Weblogging was an opportunity for GP to explore this further and he started a discussion of the concepts of teams and groups with the other interns at their weblogs. GP seemed to have benefitted from this exercise of connecting with a team he already identified with - the WoW participants. He wished for the 2005 interns to be brought together again, and the discussion in itself facilitated this.

> *I am wishing that we have a reunion with all the guys that we have been on the [training] programme with and we will have to reflect on our experiences at the organisations that we have been designated to. My experience has been very different from what I was expecting, for instance the team making part does not happen at all to me. (GP's Weblog, 25 August 2005)*

The community of practice amongst the WoW Programmes participants served GP well in this case. The example shows how participants supported one another emotionally in the weblogs, and also generally shared practical advice. Instances of the latter ranged from explanations on how to add a resume to a weblog, to more specific work related assistance.

An unintended consequence of the weblogs was the students' inclusion of details concerning their social life and everyday challenges. This further enhanced the role of the blogs, both as a tool for students to reflect on their transitions into the workplace, but also as an aid for the WoW Programmes' staff, who gained insight into students' lives and an improved understand of the challenges and opportunities that students faced beyond the training room.

This became especially important and a crucial way of knowing what was happening in students' lives, after they left the training room and started their internships at different sites. More than simply maintaining contact with students, the blog content sometimes revealed circumstances that would have affected students' performances. GP's father died on the first day of his internship. He titled the weblog post, "Off to a rough start":

> *I started working on Monday 1st of August at the [host organisation]... The very same day my father passed away and I had to go home and be with my family up until after the funeral. (GP's Weblog, 5 August 2005)*

GP's peer UL responded with a supportive and motivating comment:

> *Hey GP, I'm really sorry about your dad.... I miss that sense of family unit that we created in April, really. I don't know who you are in touch with but I am thinking alongside an idea of a field, not even far, maybe Emmarentia Dam or something, where we can sit on the grass and just talk about the world of work....I'm in touch with JN and PO, so email me and tell me how we can do it. Stay well and remember that "you are the change..." we all are. (Comment after GP's weblog by UL, 2 September 2005)*

In this exchange, GP related information that he may not have communicated in the training room or to the WoW programme coordinators, and UL's response confirmed that a network existed to provide GP with support.

4.3 Overview: Process evaluation of Activity Stage Four: World of Work Internship Component

The task in this process evaluation of this final stage was to investigate if the internship component in the WoW Programmes adequately and effectively assisted students with the start of their careers in the world of work.

Candy and Crebert (1991) observed the following four problems as challenges facing new graduates when they commence employment:

1. employers see graduates as having heads full of theories, principles and information (and, by implication, as requiring intensive training before they can be 'useful' to the organisation);
2. new graduates are often ill-equipped to deal with aspects of the workplace such as problem solving, decision making, working in a team and learning for themselves;
3. new graduates have uninformed expectations that the work environment will display qualities of supervision, order and control similar to those experienced at university (and, by implication, will founder unless universities prepare them more realistically for real world conditions); and
4. in the course of adjusting and adapting to the workplace environment, new graduates move from the familiar, structured learning approaches adopted at university to self-reflective learning aimed at change and self-development.

UL's supervisor provided a metaphor for these problems as she gave her impression of what it must have been like for UL to join the host organisation as an intern:

> Well, look she has come at to a place where she has like jumped onto a speeding train, that is the only metaphor I can use for it, that was like my experience of joining the [host organisation]. And I can only imagine what it is like for someone, for the next person

> who has literally jumped on to a couple of very fast trains. Ok there is the big train, the [host organisation] and there are other trains which are the productions. (Interview, UL's supervisor, 25 August 2005, p 97)

When respondents spoke of their workplace supervisors, they did not refer to them as mentors or as resources to guide them with their future career decisions. UL would be the exception – she saw her workplace supervisor as a pillar in the profession. Thus, UL's mentor was not only a resource for UL but also someone she emulated for her professional standing and involvement.

Allied to this was the theme of support that emerged regularly in the process evaluation of the 2005 WoW Programmes. Whether the support was formal or informal, participants had some support either from the WoW staff, workplace supervisor, or peer. In GP's case, his knowledge about his host organisation initially came from colleagues who had previously been participants in former WoW Programmes. (Appendix 7.2) Another respondent, JN, reported that he received negative support from his family members, who were disparaging about his internship, while he received positive support from fellow participants in the WoW Programmes. (Appendix 4.2)

Networks can also be seen as a means of support, but only in the case of established networks (e.g. for an individual who has been in the workplace for a while and can use his or her network for more that specific work related information). After analysis of the key respondents' experiences, backed-up by an awareness of what was happening with all the participants in 2005, it appeared that networking with other professionals in the workplace was secondary for WoW participants as they adjusted and adapted to the workplace environment. It seemed more important for interns to connect with other interns than with seasoned professionals. So they did not seek out other professionals or attempt to make professional connections that could have helped them both personally and professionally.

While support, relationships with workplace supervisors and networking issues constituted some patterns and themes that arose from the experiences of the respondents in this process evaluation, there was not a common pattern regarding how the five individuals learned about and entered their host organisations during the final activity stage.

It should also be noted that the participants did identify that they were learning about their host organisation, usually informally through relationships that were established with colleagues in that host organisation. For each participant, connecting with other individuals was mentioned as important for him/her in the organisational socialization process, but other than this factor, the ways that each participant became socialized and thus connected to the host organisation were

quite varied. This was not surprising, taking into account that the host organisations that participated in 2005 differed in terms of culture, structure and staff, let alone the organisations' core businesses. A positive outcome of the WoW Programmes was that students as interns were able to find various ways to access information that would help them with the socialization process.

Table 3: Main Themes Identified in the Content Analysis - World of Work Programmes 2005

Appendix 3 - UL	Appendix 4 - JN	Appendix 5 - GL	Appendix 6 - FN	Appendix 7 – GP	→	THEMATIC ORGANISATION – LEVEL 1	→	DATA ANALYSIS ORGANISATION - LEVEL 2 (CHAPTER 5)
3.4 - Email correspondence								
3.3 - Workplace supervisor's interviews	4.3 - Workplace supervisor's interviews	5.3 - Workplace supervisor's interview	6.3 - Workplace supervisor's interview	7.3 - Workplace supervisor's interviews				
3.2 – Intern's interviews	4.2 – Intern's interviews	5.2 - Intern's interview	6.2 - Intern's interview	7.2 - Intern's interviews				
3.1 – Vertical Analysis	4.1 – Vertical Analysis	5.1 – Vertical Analysis	6.1 – Vertical Analysis	7.1 – Vertical Analysis				
KEY POINTS ↓	KEY POINTS ↓	KEY POINTS ↓	KEY POINTS ↓	KEY POINTS ↓				
		Expectation for WoW Programmes to find an internship opportunity in country of origin.		Unrealistic expectations for internship position i.e. job with the "Scorpions".		**Students' expectations of WoW Programmes**		**1. Activity Stage One: Selection of Programme Participants in 2005**
Intern raised value of mind-mapping				Workplace supervisor impressed with intern's "unique skill" of summarising / "pulling ideas together".		**WoW Training: Mindmapping**		**2. Activity Stage Two: World of Work Training Component**
Intern realised value of weblogging activity.		Positive about the value of weblogs; able to identify with others' internship experiences at weblogs.	Intern fairly positive about connecting with others through weblogs, but would have preferred to *hear* a voice.	Intern used weblog to garner "personal" support (after death of father).		**Establishing and maintaining weblog**		
	Intern raised importance of basic computer skills.	Intern raised need for basic computer skills.				**WoW Training topic: Computer skills**		
Business writing – intern raised differences in register			Intern raised the difference between business	Workplace supervisor disappointed with		**WoW Training topic: Business Writing Skills**		

and brevity (from academic writing) during internship.			communication and academic writing during internship.	intern's writing skills.	

Appendix 3 - UL	**Appendix 4 - JN**	**Appendix 5 - GL**	**Appendix 6 - FN**	**Appendix 7 – GP**			
3.4 - Email correspondence							
3.3 - Workplace supervisor's interviews	4.3 - Workplace supervisor's interviews	5.3 - Workplace supervisor's interview	6.3 - Workplace supervisor's interview	7.3 - Workplace supervisor's interviews			
3.2 – Intern's interviews	4.2 – Intern's interviews	5.2 - Intern's interview	6.2 - Intern's interview	7.2 - Intern's interviews			
3.1 – Vertical Analysis	4.1 – Vertical Analysis	5.1 – Vertical Analysis	6.1 – Vertical Analysis	7.1 – Vertical Analysis			
KEY POINTS ↓	KEY POINTS ↓	KEY POINTS ↓	KEY POINTS ↓	KEY POINTS ↓	→	THEMATIC ORGANISATION – LEVEL 1	→ DATA ANALYSIS ORGANISATION - LEVEL 2 (CHAPTER 5)
Intern raised value of emotional intelligence during internship.			Intern on emotional intelligence – transferred learning into the workplace.	Intern found emotional intelligence crucial in the workplace.		**WoW Training topic: Emotional Intelligence**	
			Workplace supervisor emphasised need for emotional intelligence.				
	Intern's belief in his ability to relate to others/teamwork	Supervisor impressed with teamwork; importance of teamwork in the workplace realised for first time.	Workplace supervisor surprised at bond between two interns – positive about teamwork.	Perceived absence of teamwork at the host organisation; intern found employees worked independently; intern "missed" the team of 2005 interns.		**WoW Training topic: Team Work**	
	Intern raised need for communication skills.					**WoW Training: (general)**	
Intern raised value of mock interviews.			.			**Interview process:** Impact of *WoW Training* on interview performance	**3. Activity Stage Three: Transition**
Intern reflected on issues of choice with regard to potential employment.	Intern reflected on impact of non-South African status.					**Choosing host organisation**	

Appendix 3 - UL	**Appendix 4 - JN**	**Appendix 5 - GL**	**Appendix 6 - FN**	**Appendix 7 – GP**			
3.4 - Email correspondence							
3.3 - Workplace supervisor's interviews	4.3 - Workplace supervisor's interviews	5.3 - Workplace supervisor's interview	6.3 - Workplace supervisor's interview	7.3 - Workplace supervisor's interviews			
3.2 – Intern's interviews	4.2 – Intern's interviews	5.2 - Intern's interview	6.2 - Intern's interview	7.2 - Intern's interviews			
3.1 – Vertical Analysis	4.1 – Vertical Analysis	5.1 – Vertical Analysis	6.1 – Vertical Analysis	7.1 – Vertical Analysis			
KEY POINTS ↓	KEY POINTS ↓	KEY POINTS ↓	KEY POINTS ↓	KEY POINTS ↓	→	THEMATIC ORGANISATION – LEVEL 1	→ DATA ANALYSIS ORGANISATION - LEVEL 2 (CHAPTER 5)
Intern reflected on appropriate and professional workplace behaviour.		According to intern: High expectations after postgrad training: "... save the world"; but actual experience of workplace = "... step-by-step journey."	Intern reflected on 2nd and 3rd weeks into the host organisation: "an exploration" and orientation; end of 3rd week: meaningful work.	Intern: lack of work experience a "stumbling block" for entry into workplace.		**Transition experiences**	
Intern reflected on personal growth.		Intern: Internship as a "step-in-the-door" to future employment.		1st week of internship: intern had unrealistic perception of his role - inflated importance.			
Intern reflected on establishing identity as a professional person.		Intern reflected on internship as "...the longest job interview".		Middle of internship: intern saw himself as an employee (problematic for workplace supervisor).			
Intern found differences (between work and university) in specific work tasks.	Intern was disappointed with *level* of internship work.	Intern was willing to carry out low-level tasks; Early stages of the internship: work was not challenging; Frustration about inability to use postgraduate academic training.	Workplace supervisor helped intern learn to prioritize tasks.	For intern, theoretical (academic) framework for task problem solving not relevant – a more practical framework needed in workplace.		**Tasks**	

Appendix 3 - UL	Appendix 4 - JN	Appendix 5 - GL	Appendix 6 - FN	Appendix 7 – GP
3.4 - Email correspondence				
3.3 - Workplace supervisor's interviews	4.3 - Workplace supervisor's interviews	5.3 - Workplace supervisor's interview	6.3 - Workplace supervisor's interview	7.3 - Workplace supervisor's interviews
3.2 – Intern's interviews	4.2 – Intern's interviews	5.2 - Intern's interview	6.2 - Intern's interview	7.2 - Intern's interviews
3.1 – Vertical Analysis	4.1 – Vertical Analysis	5.1 – Vertical Analysis	6.1 – Vertical Analysis	7.1 – Vertical Analysis
KEY POINTS ↓	KEY POINTS ↓	KEY POINTS ↓	KEY POINTS ↓	KEY POINTS ↓
Intern's awareness of "time-consciousness" in the workplace – other staff members as "clock-watchers".	Intern's awareness of "time-consciousness" in the workplace – criticism from supervisor re intern's "contrived" punctuality.		Flexible timeframe and choice of resources for task tested intern's productivity and time-management skills. Prioritising work was difficult.	
Workplace supervisor's expectations of intern communicated to colleagues.	Workplace supervisor's perception of intern positive and as professional.	Workplace supervisor's (previous) perception of postgrads as "know-it-alls".	Workplace supervisor would have preferred to give interns more substantive work.	Workplace supervisor related she often helped with most basic issues, e.g. toilet etiquette, funeral policies, tax, and medical aid.
Workplace supervisor's role not acknowledged or rewarded by the host organisation – but supervisor was motivated anyway.	Workplace supervisor's perception of intern positive and as professional.		Workplace supervisor saw role as monitoring work, rather than mentoring.	Workplace supervisor's role not acknowledged or rewarded by the host organisation – but supervisor was motivated anyway.
			Workplace supervisor: not enough time with the interns' and on their development (work pressures).	Workplace supervisor: WoW Programme's interns inexperienced compared with the other (international) interns.

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THEMATIC ORGANISATION – LEVEL 1
Time management
Mentoring experiences (WoW Workplace supervisor)

→

DATA ANALYSIS ORGANISATION - LEVEL 2 (CHAPTER 5)
4. Activity Stage Four: World of Work Internship Component

Appendix 3 - UL	**Appendix 4 - JN**	**Appendix 5 - GL**	**Appendix 6 - FN**	**Appendix 7 – GP**
3.4 - Email correspondence				
3.3 - Workplace supervisor's interviews	4.3 - Workplace supervisor's interviews	5.3 - Workplace supervisor's interview	6.3 - Workplace supervisor's interview	7.3 - Workplace supervisor's interviews
3.2 – Intern's interviews	4.2 – Intern's interviews	5.2 - Intern's interview	6.2 - Intern's interview	7.2 - Intern's interviews
3.1 – Vertical Analysis	4.1 – Vertical Analysis	5.1 – Vertical Analysis	6.1 – Vertical Analysis	7.1 – Vertical Analysis
KEY POINTS ↓	KEY POINTS ↓	KEY POINTS ↓	KEY POINTS ↓	KEY POINTS ↓
Intern positive about workplace supervisor's support.	Intern initially somewhat negative about workplace supervisor's support.	Intern ambivalent about workplace supervisor's support.	Intern ambivalent about workplace supervisor's support.	
Workplace supervisor "impressed" by support from WoW Staff during internship.	Problem of lack of support from family.	Intern appreciated support from WoW staff during internship.		Problem of lack of support from family. Intern related parental disappointment (at unemployment).
Intern's perceptions of other WoW interns (from previous years) in the host organisation as "intimidating".	Other staff's (negative) perceptions of interns.		Intern's perceptions of host organisation staff as monitoring interns, and critical.	
Intern appreciated support through contact with peers.	Intern's had substantial peer support outside of his host organisation.	Intern's need for contact with peers at other host orgs lessened because FN was an intern at same host org.	Intern's relief when fellow intern (peer) joined him at host org; able to discuss sensitive issues with her.	Former interns at host org gave 2005 intern support and assistance in the new environment.
	Intern saw internship as a networking opportunity.			

→

THEMATIC ORGANISATION – LEVEL 1
Mentoring experiences (Intern)
Other support
Host organisation's staff's perceptions of interns
Communities of Practice Participants forming informal networks of relationships

→

DATA ANALYSIS ORGANISATION - LEVEL 2 (CHAPTER 5)

CHAPTER 5 Process Evaluation of the World of Work Programmes, 2006

The task of process evaluation continues (from Chapter 4) in this chapter, to further investigate and contribute to an understanding of the aspects of the World of Work Programmes that work towards – or do not assist with - developing students' employability. I intend to use the same framework in this chapter that was used in Chapter 4, for the WoW Programmes' process evaluation in 2005. The investigation will however focus on aspects of, and findings from the 2006 Programmes that differed from the 2005 Programmes.

A brief macro perspective of the chapters thus far may be helpful to position Chapter 5. Chapter 4 contains a discussion of the concepts and conceptual framework of the programme evaluation; these provide the foundation for the Process Evaluations. The Process Evaluations are informed by the Input Evaluation in Appendix 1, of the WoW Programmes as they occurred in 2001-2006. The Input Evaluation details the circumstances, facts, or events that influenced the development of the WoW Programmes. Those explanations are vital for consideration during the process evaluation of the Programmes in 2006, which looks critically at the adequacy and appropriateness of the resources available to carry out the programme, as well as the practicability and relevance of the activities.

For context and background this chapter begins with a brief sketch of the five respondents from the 2006 group of participants, and then a summary of the key features of the WoW Programmes in 2006. Thereafter the actual process evaluation of the WoW Programmes in 2006 begins.

The five respondents from the 2006 group

In 2006, the selection of respondents for the programme evaluation was influenced by external circumstances: the Graduate School (now known as the Graduate Centre) made the decision that only five students would be guaranteed placements as interns in host organisations after the WoW Training Programme. Responses from these five students (in interviews and weblogs) are the primary sources of data for the process evaluation of the WoW Programmes in 2006.

Finding internships for Humanities postgraduate students was highly labour-intensive. The difficulties of the task intensified in 2005, with South African organisations becoming

increasingly reluctant to offer internships to non-South African students. In 2005 we tried to address the problem by reintroducing assignments and stating that access to the Internship Programme depended on performance (in the assignments) and on nationality (South African or SADEC Region). Nevertheless the Programme Coordinator took it upon herself to secure internships for all but one participant in 2005, regardless of these new criteria.

The problem of the Programme Coordinator's workload remained, however. In 2006 we had the opportunity to attempt another approach to address this challenge. The director of the Graduate School (now the Graduate Centre) decided to limit participation in the Internship Programme to five South African/SADEC applicants only. After a rigorous selection process, they would be offered scholarships to attend the Internship Programme. The scholarship included Training Programme fees and a guaranteed internship placement at an appropriate stipend-paying host organisation, with mentoring from the WoW Programmes' staff during the internship period. The thinking underpinning this decision, besides the fact that it was motivated by practical necessity, was that it would 'raise the bar' of internship performance.

This strategy provides a useful comparative opportunity in terms of respondents selected for data collection and analysis for the Process Evaluations over the two years. The five scholarship holders selected in 2006 became the five key respondents for the 2006 process evaluation. Besides the criteria of nationality, 2006 scholarship holders were selected on the basis of their inherent employability, while by comparison the factors influencing the selection of the five respondents from the 2005 group did not directly relate to their employability potential. In 2005 respondents were selected from different, and same internship situations; they were selected to reflect diversity in terms of gender, nationality and area of postgraduate study, and if they were communicative, open and forthcoming about their experiences as participants on the WoW Programmes.

In 2006 however, the respondents were originally the candidates for scholarships who were *already* showing, as Yorke puts it,

> a set of achievements – skills, understandings and personal attributes – that makes graduates more likely to gain employment and be successful in their chosen occupations, which benefits themselves, the workforce, the community and the economy. (2003)

As members of the selection committee, WoW staff referred to previous experience for an understanding of the set of achievements Yorke (2003) refers to. We drew on the various communications we had had with both employers and interns in the past, to gauge what would

make a candidate inherently employable. Our approach concurred with some of the findings from a recent analysis by Rovio-Johansson and Tengblad (2007) who found the following capabilities in graduates to be important for maximizing own employability:

- A basic understanding that [graduates] are responsible for own personal development and therefore they need to take own initiatives.
- An interest for personal development and for thinking and making plans for their future.
- A preparedness to act on opportunities, which offers career possibilities.
- A capacity to develop personal commitment in the work and towards the employer.

The fact that we actively looked for these skills, understandings and personal attributes in the 2006 scholarship applicants implies that the five students who were eventually selected should have been inherently employable. Access to those same students as respondents for this process evaluation therefore offers a valuable research opportunity of the 2006 WoW Programme - with the 2005 WoW Programme as antithesis.

A description of the key respondents who were also the selected scholarship holders for 2006 follows:

1. **BAB** was a 24-year-old South African woman with an Honours degree in International Relations from Wits University. She had had no formal work experience prior to her internship in 2006. BAB attended four interviews with potential host organisations, and was offered an internship at two of the host organisations (the other two host organisations turned down her applications for an internship). In addition, BAB acted independently of the WoW Programmes and emailed her Curriculum Vitae to two national banking institutions, without success. BAB elected to do an internship at a national investment and banking corporation, working with a Human Resources specialist dealing with change management within one of the company's business units. A peer, EGM, also completed her internship at the same host organisation and the two interns worked on the same project. BAB was first offered contractual work by the host organisation after the internship period ended, and was then offered permanent employment. A 'vertical analysis' on this respondent is available as Appendix 8.1. Three transcribed interviews about her entry into the organisation as an intern are attached as 8.2. Two interviews with BAB's workplace supervisor are available as Appendix 8.3, and her weblog – with all identifying information removed - is available as Appendix 8.4. BAB's coded weblog is Appendix 8.5.

2. **EGM** was a 30-year-old South African woman with a National Diploma in Public Relations and a Bachelor of Arts Honours degree in Industrial Psychology from Wits University, when she participated in the WoW Programmes in 2006. EGM's work history included five months of formal work experience and some exposure to organisational cultures. EGM attended two interviews and was offered an internship placement after one of the interviews at a national investment and banking corporation, working with BAB. EGM was not offered a contractual or permanent position by the host organisation where she had completed her internship. EGM's 'vertical analysis' is available as Appendix 9.1. Four transcribed interview (one with BAB) about her entry into the organisation as an intern are attached as 9.2. Two interviews with the workplace supervisor EGM shared with BAB are available as Appendix 8.3. EGM's coded weblog is Appendix 9.3.

3. **IUP** was a 27-year-old Zimbabwean woman. She had an Honours Degree in Media and Society Studies (Zimbabwe) and a Masters Degree in Forced Migration Studies from Wits University. She had some part-time experience working as a researcher and in public relations, in media organisations. Eight potential host organisations were contacted on IUP's behalf. She was invited to two interviews and was offered an internship at one host organisation, which she accepted. IUP's host organisation extended her internship for a total of 16 months after her internship period had ended. After her 'vertical analysis' (Appendix 10.1), an interview with IUP and her workplace supervisor is attached as Appendix 10.2. A second interview with IUP only is also attached as Appendix 10.2. The third and final interview at Appendix 10.2 is in the form of responses to the standard exit interview questions that IUP sent by electronic email on 4 December 2006. Appendix 10.3 consists of an interview with IUP's workplace supervisor, at which IUP was also present. IUP's coded weblog is Appendix 10.4.

4. **DOZ** was a 27-year-old South African woman with an Honours degree in Tourism from Wits University. Her part-time work experience consisted mainly of fieldwork for research purposes. DOZ attended two interviews and she was offered an internship with both organisations. She chose to complete her internship at a large mining organisation. At the end of the internship the same organisation offered DOZ permanent employment, which she accepted. After a 'vertical analysis' (Appendix 11.1), an interview with DOZ is available at Appendix 11.2, followed by an interview with DOZ's workplace supervisor, attached as Appendix 11.3. DOZ's coded weblog is Appendix 11.4.

5. **LAY** was a 26-year-old South African woman with an Honours degree in Forced Migration from Wits University. Her part-time work experience prior to her participation in the WoW

Programmes in 2006 was as a researcher for a Johannesburg-based organisation, and for the Department of Forced Migration Studies at Wits University. We sent LAY's curriculum vitae to seven potential host organisations. She was invited to only one interview at a non-governmental organisation, and was offered an internship thereafter – which she accepted. This host organisation had offered internships to participants from the WoW programmes since 2002. Many of those interns were employed at the host organisation after their internships there – LAY was also offered a two-year contract at the end of her internship, which she accepted. LAY's 'vertical analysis' is available as Appendix 12.1. Two transcribed interviews about her internship experiences are available as Appendix 12.2 and two interviews with her workplace supervisor – who was a participant in the Internship Programme in 2002 - are available as Appendix 12.3. LAY's coded weblog is Appendix 12.4.

The similarities in this group that are immediately obvious is that all scholarship holders were female. Four of the respondents were South African, and one was Zimbabwean. Like the key respondents for the 2005 process review, four were under 30 years old. The oldest respondent – EGM - had the most formal work experience, but her work experience was not as extensive as was the case for the oldest respondent from the 2005 group, GL. There was only one respondent with a Masters degree in 2006, while the other three respondents last postgraduate qualifications were at the Honours level.

There were eight women and six men in the entire group of participants in 2006 (i.e. including Training Programme participants). Half of the participants were from countries other than South Africa. (Appendix 1, Table 7: Demographics of participants, 2001-2006, p.17) Just as in 2005, most of the participants were between the ages of 25 and 30 years old. (Appendix 1, Table 7: Demographics of participants, 2001-2006, p.17) The Humanities fields represented by the entire 2006 group were African Literature, Demography Population Studies, Development Studies, Forced Migration, International Relations, Political Studies, Psychology, Sociology and Tourism. (Appendix 1, Table 7: Demographics of participants, 2001-2006, p.18) Half of these participants' most recent qualifications were at Honours level, while the other half had their Masters in Arts, and one had completed his doctorate.

Key features of the World of Work Programmes, 2006

The most significant difference between the WoW Programmes in 2006 and the programmes as they occurred in the preceding years was in the selection procedure. For the reasons outlined above and in Appendix 1 (Input Evaluation: History and Development of the World of Work Programmes at Wits University), internship placements were guaranteed for five scholarship students only.

This was not the first time scholarships had been granted to participants in the history of the WoW Programmes, but it was the first time that internship placements and WoW staff support were guaranteed for the five scholarship students only. The Input Evaluation (Appendix 1) will reveal that a scholarship was granted to DL for the Internship Programme in 2002. Interestingly, the basis for the award was on DL's academic results from his postgraduate studies, which were amongst the highest in the 2002 group. We thought then that academic results would be a predicator of success in the workplace. On the contrary, DL experienced problems with his interpersonal interactions with peers during the Training Programme, and with interviewers during the transitions stage (please see Appendix 1, Input Evaluation: History and Development of the World of Work Programmes at Wits University for more details). We learned from this early experience that our selection process would be more effective if we looked for what I have termed *inherent employability*, in the candidates to be granted scholarships in 2006. The question of whether this selection process was effective or not should be addressed in this chapter.

The selection procedure also meant that the Training and Internship Programmes in 2006 were run and managed even more separately than had been the case in 2005. Although they both still fell under the umbrella of the WoW course, they were designed to function differently and to make different contributions to postgraduates moving from the academic arena to the workplace. (Email correspondence, Prof Susan van Zyl, 24 October 2006)

Humanities postgraduates at Wits University were well aware of the existence of the WoW Programmes by 2006. Nevertheless, we held information sessions about the Programmes before the selection process started. Those who attended reported that they had heard about the Programmes from friends and/or had friends who had participated in the Programmes. Feedback during these information sessions reinforced what we had already realised in 2005: that most students valued the internship component over the training component. The perception was that the WoW Programmes were an effective means to gain employment. We had some concerns that restricting the arranged and mentored internships to scholarship students only could result in poor application rates for the training component. This did not turn out to be the case however; the 14

participants that we had in the Training Programme in 2006 was on a par with the numbers of participants we had in previous years (e.g. 16 participants in 2005).

No assessment procedures were put in place in the WoW Programmes in 2006. This was due to the fact that after the selection of the five scholarship candidates for the Internship Programme, all participants knew their status from the start of their participation in the Training Programme. So, while assessment had been re-introduced in 2005, it was discontinued in 2006 as a means for participants to qualify for the internship component. We continued the practice of weblogging, and, this year especially, emphasised the weblogs' potential to help students who would ultimately be finding internships or employment without our help to market themselves to prospective employers. The process evaluation in this chapter needs to consider if the discontinuation of assessment procedures impacted negatively on the WoW Programmes, or not.

A new feature of the Training Programme in 2006 was the inclusion of networking opportunities for students who we knew would not be proceeding to the internship component. We invited potential employers of Humanities postgraduates to address students during the training. These representatives discussed the nature of their organisation's work, and any possible employment opportunities. The process evaluation must consider the value of having organisations position themselves during the Training Programme, and whether this effectively enhanced networking opportunities for participants.

An important emphasis in the WoW Programmes in 2006 was in our efforts to facilitate and set-up a community of practice amongst participants. While this seemed to occur spontaneously in 2005, in 2006 we decided to try to make more of this. We thought that a community of practice would be an alternative source of support to assist participants who would not be receiving any mentorship after the Training Programme. The tools we used to promote the community of practice were the weblogs, and a complementary discussion group. The process evaluation must question if the e-learning tools used in the WoW Programmes in 2006 effectively enhanced the development of a community of practice amongst participants.

1. Activity Stage One: Selection of Programme Participants in 2006

1.1 Entrance criteria for the World of Work Internship Programme, 2006

As per previous years, any Wits University Humanities postgraduate student, regardless of nationality, could register for the Training Programme in 2006.

The full programme including the Internship Programme was limited to five people, however. These interns received scholarships, which included

- a guaranteed internship placement at an appropriate stipend-paying host organisation, for a 3-month period after the WoW Training Programme
- full WoW Training Programme fees
- mentoring from the WoW Programme staff during the internship period.

Only South African/SADEC applicants were eligible for the 2006 Internship Programme (due to constraints imposed by host organisations and WoW Programmes staff' limitations – these are discussed more fully earlier in this chapter, and in Appendix 1 (Input Evaluation: History and Development of the World of Work Programmes at Wits University).

The rigorous selection process for the scholarship-based Internship Programme included careful telephonic reference checking. Since another prerequisite for participation in the scholarship-based Internship Programme was that the applicant should have minimal work experience, referees were typically academics or part-time employers. During the telephonic reference checking process, referees were asked about the applicant's professionalism, including:

- timeous delivery of work
- standard of work delivered
- attention to detail
- writing and presentation skills
- indications that the applicant showed initiative while working
- punctuality
- ability to work with others
- ability to take direction.

(These questions were also used during the application process for the Training and Internship Programmes in 2002 and 2003; details on the development of the interview and telephonic reference checking process are available in Appendix 1 (Input Evaluation: History and Development of the World of Work Programmes at Wits University).

A new development that indicates a significant difference in the selection processes between 2005 and 2006 was that applicants for the scholarships in 2006 had to attend a panel interview with the WoW Programmes' Coordinator, the Director of the Graduate Centre and the Internship Programme mentor.

The Graduate Centre and WoW Programme's expectations of the students were first positioned during a discussion at the first scholarship holders' meeting (facilitated by this researcher) on 15 February 2006. Scholarship holders were urged then to consider their roles as leaders, and that this might involve volunteering, negotiating and even assisting with resolving any instances of conflict in the 2006 group of participants. It was emphasised that their consistent professionalism was required and that they would be positioned as "ambassadors" for the Humanities. Reinforcing this representative role, we placed head-and-shoulder photographs of each scholarship holder at our website, with their short biographies and links to their weblogs.

Practical issues were also addressed at that early meeting, such as the fact that scholarship holders were expected to write and post at their weblogs four times every week as well as respond to peers at their weblogs. They were also expected to maintain contact with the WoW staff and engage with the mentoring process during their internships by arranging site visits and being communicative with mentor and workplace supervisor. (Field notes, 15 February 2006)

The scholarship holders indicated their acceptance of these requirements and expectations by signing an "Agreement of Scholarship 2006 Conditions". This replaced the learning agreement or contract that had been implemented in 2005. We responded to complaints from workplace supervisors or representatives from host organisations in 2005 that the contract was too long and time consuming, and shortened the "Agreement of Scholarship 2006 Conditions" to one page. Another difference between the two years was that while the contract of 2005 was processed and signed at the start of the internship (Activity Stage Four), the "Agreement of Scholarship 2006 Conditions" was processed and signed on the applicant's acceptance of the scholarship, and therefore before the Training Programme started. One of the points made in the scholarship holders' agreement was that the host organisation could ask for an internship contract for the three-month period to be signed. In 2006 the onus of this contract (between student and host organisation) was therefore on the host organisation. We adopted this approach after learning how Wits Business School left the responsibility for the development of the contracts up to the hosting organisation, for the internships that were part of their Postgraduate Diploma in Management (PDM). (For further information on the PDM internships at Wits Business School, please see Appendix 1, Input Evaluation: History and Development of the World of Work Programmes at Wits University.)

We were well aware of the apparent exclusivity inherent in the selection process arrangements in 2006. We dealt with this by being as open and transparent as possible with all applicants, and by communicating our experiences and difficulties in securing internships for non-South Africans to

them. This approach seemed to work, as there was only one formal complaint from a prospective participant who was neither South African, nor from the SADEC region, about the criteria for eligibility into the Internship Programme. The Director of the Graduate Centre responded thus,

> I think it's important that you know that this (unfortunately) "not level playing field" programme, as far as nationality is concerned at least, is made known to all the training programme applicants and that in addition the South African/SADEC applicants go through a rigorous selection process before being admitted to the scholarship-based Internship Programme. (Email correspondence, Prof Susan van Zyl, 24 October 2006)

The student who made the complaint seemed to accept the explanation: after her complaint was addressed she applied for, and was accepted for the Training Programme. However one of the scholarship holders, BAB, intimated at the end of the Training Programme that she felt uncomfortable, and that the arrangement for some participants to have scholarships while others did not qualify was to some extent unfair.

> I think a lot of them became emotional at the end when they heard we were getting interviews and they not. So I think for them, that all of them must have the opportunity to be able to get interviews. (Appendix 8.2, BAB Interview, 20 June 2006, p 205)

In her final interview, BAB suggested that the programme organisers should increase the fees for the WoW Programmes or obtain sponsorship; this would, she believed, deal with manpower issues and thereby enable the WoW staff to secure interviews and internship placements for all participants. (Appendix 8.2, BAB Interview, 11 July 2006) BAB came from a financially secure background compared to her scholarship-holding peers. BAB made the independent decision to pay the Training Programme fees, even though scholarship holders had free access to the Training Programme. This decision was most probably influenced by BAB's discomfort at the fact that only a selected few would be participating in the Internship Programme.

At least one of BAB's suggestions (increasing fees) towards being able to offer internship placements to all would not have been feasible. One of the recipients of a scholarship, LAY, said that she needed the scholarship because she was not able to afford the training fees:

> I have heard about the internship programme from my friend in 2005 and I was interested to participate, but I could not because I did not have money to pay for the training... I have witnessed by the progress that my friend has made since he became part of the internship programme and I thought that it would be very advantageous for me if I participated in the internship programme but the obstacle that I am facing is lack of finance.... Therefore I decided to apply for the scholarship, as it will help me to train and gain the skills that will afford me a job in the world of work, since I do not have much work experience. (LAY's letter of motivation on application, 3 March 2006)

A crucial advantage of the selection process in 2006 was that it enabled students like LAY, who did not have financial means, to participate.

1.2 Students' initial expectations during selection for the World of Work Training and Internship Programme, 2006

IUP summarised her feelings at the beginning of the WoW Programmes as

> *relieved but scared at the same time. (IUP's Weblog, 22 February 2006)*

Anxiety about performance on the WoW Programmes was common amongst the scholarship holders. The need for professionalism was emphasised from initial contact and first meeting through to the various assessment stages of the selection process. From the outset therefore the candidates for the WoW Programmes' scholarships in 2006 were aware that, if selected, they would be expected to perform at a very high standard. This emphasis was not as prevalent in previous WoW Programmes. It was motivated by the fact that we felt obliged to ensure that scholarship holders were indeed of the highest caliber, so as to justify their selection (after their nationality) to other participants. This resulted in some anxiety from candidates. Like IUP, an early weblog post from LAY illustrates her feelings of nervousness and apprehension during the selection process:

> *The whole week has been filled with anxiety and nerve wrecking moments because of the interview I had to attend in order for me to be awarded the scholarship training. Since the beginning of the week I have been doubting my abilities because of high standards and requirements of the internship. (LAY's Weblog, 8 March 2006)*

The tone of the selection process, besides the actual requirements, was constructed to reinforce the WoW Programmes' expectations of a high level of performance from scholarship holders.

> *The required tasks were supposed to be accurate and very professional. LE, my mentor demands professionalism at every aspect of the programme. (LAY's Weblog, 8 March 2006)*

LAY also realised the point of this emphasis on professionalism in the selection procedure - which in turn reinforces its relevance:

> *This is one of the factors that forced me to realize that, she meant serious business by demanding accuracy and professionalism. That made me realize that in the world of employment there is no playing and lazing around. (LAY's Weblog, 8 March 2006)*

LAY set about managing her anxiety at this early stage by calling for peer support at her weblog, despite the fact that she had not yet met any of the other scholarship holders. Three of the other

scholarship holders responded to her weblog post, with comments that were both reassuring, and admitted to similar anxieties. One of the guest lecturers offered reassurance, as did a previous WoW participant.

IUP's approach to handling similar anxieties at this early stage was to consider the differences she expected to encounter in the world of work.

> *Things like deadlines to meet, resources to consider and prioritizing budgets. (IUP's Weblog, 22 February 2006)*

IUP also had an intuitive sense of what would be important for her transition into the workplace and for her to be effective and to function well therein before the Training Programme started. She listed networking as being one of these areas, managing change effectively and maintaining good working professional relationships as others. IUP recognised that, once in the workplace, she would be exposed to people with different cultural backgrounds. She made the observation that she would then be obliged to interact with people who were different to her, whereas at the University she had not felt this sense of obligation. IUP also wrote about her personal objectives:

> *I want to create a professional identity and be a beacon of light for everyone in the particular industry I will be working in. Being an intern is very exciting and scary at the same time. On the one hand it is flattering. On the other everyone in my department will be paying particular focus and attention on me and my work. I want to be able to handle criticism/feedback well. This is important as it will help me with my professional voice. I expect that after my internship I will have moved from anxiety to a state where I will appreciate my capabilities and specific growth areas. A willingness to work hard and my desire to excel in everything I do are key attributes to being successful. (IUP's Weblog, 22 February 2006)*

In the above extract from her weblog, it is clear again that IUP was questioning what she would be learning, thinking about what she wanted to learn, and predicting how this would help her in her career. This process at the point of entry into the WoW Programmes helped her to realize the value of her strengths and to consider the WoW Programmes' resources, so that she would be able to use these when the internship started. IUP's response confirmed our impression – made during the selection process – of her inherent employability. Sweizer and King (2008) suggest that this level of self-understanding is vital to help the intern form opinions and make judgments, which can then be communicated to others in the workplace. Sweizer and King (2008) also emphasise the role of self-understanding in forming effective relationships. BAB, one of the scholarship holders selected and a respondent here, attributed some of her self-understanding development while managing relationships to her only working experiences, being holiday jobs and part-time promotional jobs:

> *But let me tell you one thing, even though these jobs seem miniscule and might be overlooked by potential employers, they taught me things that I'll remember forever. It taught me how to work with difficult customers and very difficult bosses. It taught me how to be punctual and patient. And it especially taught me how to successfully complete difficult projects in a limited time frame. Do you think these aspects are considered by potential employers? And do you think these characteristics learnt in a small job can be used in future careers? (Appendix 8.4, BAB's Weblog, 23 February 2006)*

The answer to BAB's subsequent final question is definitely affirmative, as employability – being underpinned by self-understanding and emotional intelligence - can be developed, albeit implicitly, through the range of life experiences (including part-time work) before and besides fulltime employment. DOZ, another of the scholarship holders and key respondents in this process evaluation, confirms this view:

> *What I'm trying to argue is that don't ever take for granted the work that you do as a student, because you will gain something out of it. I know that all these skills would be useful in the work place. (DOZ's Weblog, 10 April 2006)*

It is clear that continuing with or developing the habit of self-examination, as IUP and BAB did in their weblogs even before the WoW Programmes started, has the potential to help interns recognise, acknowledge and deal with particular issues as they make the transition into the workplace. Sweizer and King agree that

> It will also help [the intern] identify and overcome obstacles and deal more effectively with clients, supervisors, and co-workers. (2008)

An important observation here, since it marks a definitive contrast with the 2005 WoW Programmes, is that WoW staff aimed to select individuals who exhibited signs and communicated their commitment (albeit implicitly) to a level of self-examination that would serve them effectively in their transition to the workplace, during the panel interviews for the scholarships for the 2006 WoW Programmes.

EGM is however a case in contrast. One of the three members of the selection panel for the scholarships in 2006 expressed reservations about her tendency to respond to questions in an undecided, ambivalent manner during the interview. Examples of her choices for responses included, "I'll consider it", "Whatever…", "It's ok…", and "That's not bad". (Field notes, 25 January 2006) There was a concern that EGM did not appear to have a significant personal commitment to her career progression and that this might impact on her development in areas such as her self-understanding. EGM's self-doubt and doubts about the host organisation she would eventually join as an intern are also evident in this weblog extract, written before the WoW Programmes were scheduled to start:

> *Having been through the introduction, I find myself anticipating with anxiety each day. I am conscious of the shift to a new schedule. Each day I get concerned about my potential host organisation, the nature of work I will be given and whether my performance will meet my employer's expectations. I often wonder about whether the organisational culture will be stimulating enough for an intern. It is a known fact that organisations differ in terms of rules, procedures, objectives etc. As a potential intern, I would have to comply with those restricted regulations. (EGM's Weblog, 'Stepping into WoW training and internship', 27 February 2006)*

The panel granted a scholarship to EGM, but believed it was necessary to raise her awareness of this possible perception of her ambivalence, and then, with her agreement, to help her address the issue. The objective here was to encourage EGM towards improving her emotional intelligence because, as Carmeli (referring to Wasielewski, [1985]) puts it,

> *Emotionally intelligent individuals are adept at placing themselves in positive affective states, and are able to experience negative affective states that have insignificant destructive consequences. Emotionally astute people can induce a positive affect in others that results in a powerful social influence (charisma), an important component of leadership. (2003)*

We hoped to help EGM move towards a more positive affective state through close coaching. When the objective of this coaching was discussed with EGM, she was however non-committal. (Field notes, 27 January 2006) The decision to offer EGM a scholarship despite reservations from staff raises a very interesting area for investigation in the evaluation of the 2006 WoW Programmes. Given that the objective of the selection procedure was to grant scholarships to individuals with the highest levels of potentiality, and that the process to identify this involved a degree of subjectivity, how accurate would our decisions prove to be? And how effective would a planned intervention to address any perceived shortfalls in individuals prove to be? These questions will be addressed as the programme evaluation tracks EGM and the other four respondents through the stages of the WoW Programmes.

1.3 Overview: Process evaluation of Activity Stage One, the Selection of Programme Participants in 2006

A crucial difference between the WoW Programmes of 2005 and 2006 was that in the latter year we actively sought candidates for scholarships who we believed were inherently employable. The rigorous process implemented to select these five respondents largely accounted for the fact that the group was of a high standard, and for their closer similarities in terms of skills and abilities (compared to the 2005 group of respondents).

However, it happened that there was greater difference in socio-economic status in this group than had been evident in the 2005 group and at least one of the five respondents revealed that she would not have been able to participate in the WoW Programmes without the scholarship, because of financial constraints. She therefore felt that

> ... this scholarship is a blessing for me since I desperately wanted to be part of this programme in the past, even though I had lost all hopes because it was expensive to gain access to the internship programme. (LAY's letter of motivation on application, 3 March 2006)

The emphasis on professionalism and our reinforcement of this expectation from scholarship holders accounted for higher levels of anxiety than we had seen from participants in 2005, at this early stage. The scholarship holders appeared to manage this anxiety in a variety of ways. Introspection and reflection in the weblogs about their fears, including close analysis of the causes and consequences of their feelings of trepidation, reinforced the selection panel's initial impressions of each scholarship holders' inherent employability.

2. Activity Stage Two: World of Work Training Component

Following the format established in Chapter 4, this section considers curriculum and pedagogy at the Training Programme activity stage. Also as in Chapter 4, there is a lot of overlap and interchange between the two areas and it would be counter-productive to try to disentangle curriculum and pedagogy and their effects from the various practices that occurred during the Training Programme. They are therefore generally dealt with simultaneously.

2.1 Curriculum content

The corresponding section in Chapter 4 provides an explanation for the categorization of training topics into the three clusters of soft skills, hard skills, and information sessions. The actual categorization of the 2006 Training Programme topics is available in Table 4: Training Programme Topics 2006 (p 215).

Table 4: Training Programme Topics 2006

Information sessions / Course content	**Hard skills**	**Soft skills**
"What I look for in an intern" (employers' perspective)	Blogging and employability	Corporate creativity
"The Transition to the World of Work" (previous interns' perspective)	Business presentation skills	Emotional Intelligence
"Empowering communities and creating opportunities"	Business writing skills	Stress management
Humanities and social sciences in the world of work	Interviews: role-plays and workshop	Creating your personal brand
Black economic empowerment	Mind mapping	Professionalism
Entrepreneurship/Intrapreneurship		Time management
The evolution of customer service		Teams and teamwork
HIV/AIDS and the workplace		
Johannesburg Stock Exchange (field trip)		
Working in the NGO sector		
Marketing (field trip)		
NEPAD		
Pioneers of Change		
Project and Programme Management (field trip)		
Corporate citizenship		
Corporate governance		
Companies (x4): descriptions and opportunities for possible internships		
Competition, collaboration and cooperation (with delegates from the Limpopo Local Economic Development Programme)		

(Please also see Appendix 1, Table 9: Contents of training component, 2002-2006, p 21)

2.2 Overview: participants' general perceptions of the Training Programme

The interviews and weblogs, as well as informal discussions revealed mixed responses to the hard skills and information sessions in the Training Programme, while all respondents valued the soft skills sessions. For example, in her first interview during the first stage of her internship, BAB said she was drawing on the soft skills areas from the Training Programme, especially areas such as Emotional Intelligence, stress management and interview skills.

> Yes, especially the ones where the interview skills and your actual personality in the work place and how you must separate your personal life with your work life. Those Emotional Intelligence, all those presentations we had um, come forth um, everyday. Um, the actual, the training with regards to pay, BE, um, payroll, those things I haven't thought of yet or the actual things that do happen in business. Um, those haven't occurred yet. But I think give it time, it's only two weeks now, give it time all those things will definitely come up. Um, but definitely the Emotional Intelligence, how you handle yourself in the work place, to cope with stress, those things will definitely come up. So I think it was quite a good thing that I went through that course. (Appendix 8.2, BAB Interview, 9 May 2006, p 199)

At the same stage in her internship, EGM also recalled the input on Emotional Intelligence and said she found that session valuable, along with stress management and time management. (Appendix 9.2, EGM Interview, 9 May 2006). EGM said she regretted that she had not paid more attention to the session on project management, because she clearly realised its relevance in the workplace once she started her internship.

It is possible that the Training Programme input on aspects of professionalism resonated for DOZ during her internship: her workplace supervisor was especially impressed by her ability to present herself well and to be punctual, and noted that this was unusual for someone with no experience of the corporate environment. (Appendix 11.2, DOZ Interview, 19 May 2006)

Another area of input that BAB particularly appreciated and found motivating was from previous interns who spoke to the 2006 cohort of participants:

> … just remembering in our training programme how some of the interns came to speak to us. I enjoyed that, to see how they had experienced the programme. I think that must be done early on in the programme so people can see this is working, so it worth it sitting there for a month long. (Appendix 8.2, BAB Interview, 20 June 2006, p 208)

Two of the respondents raised the subject of how the Training Programmes' inclusion of soft skills was a catalyst for thinking about professional practice and civic duty. When we designed

the curriculum in 2006 we believed that social responsibility should be included as a core area of generic professional skills. We therefore had a guest lecturer who addressed students on the subject of community upliftment. Both EGM and BAB were inspired by this session and it appeared that the guest lecturer's input prompted EGM to re-evaluate why she had elected to study in the Humanities:

> *I did my studies from the Humanities because my intention was to work with people, I was also curious about people's differences and their general well-being. At the same time I also enjoy helping out in the community wherever I can. (EGM's Weblog, 'The reasons why I went into the social sciences', 31 March 2006)*

However, BAB called for attention to be paid to achieving balance in the emphasis in the Training Programme on "social and Humanities" issues, and corporate issues:

> Um, maybe if it was... I know it's time consuming, but if it maybe was longer also and [we could] get more, even more presenters to come and talk about other different areas. And I think the corporate side of the working world should be brought in more.... Not meaning we have to be trained in finance or economics or those things. I just think we need a broader perspective. We need more people from corporate companies to come and talk. (Appendix 8.2, BAB Interview, 11 July 2006, p 207)

Nevertheless, in her final interview towards the end of her internship, BAB maintained that the Training Programme had been valuable and had helped her to move into the working world:

> With the training programme, what it did for me was open my eyes to the reality of the working world, what to expect, um… giving me more confidence with regards to my presentations skills, my communication skills and my emotional skills. I felt I was a bit immature to go work, to start working after I graduated. I think what… the programme was quite thorough. I don't think there is anything more you could add. (Appendix 8.2, BAB Interview, 20 June 2006, p 207)

2.3 Curriculum design and pedagogy

BAB had an unusual (for the WoW Programmes) and interesting experience: she was offered part time work by one of the host organisations that were considering her for an internship. This part time work was for a two-week period only, and was scheduled before the start of the WoW Training Programme. BAB was empowered by the unexpected opportunity. She was surprised at how quickly a working opportunity occurred for her once she was registered for the WoW Programmes, and she found the experience valuable:

> *I'm very grateful for this experience because it is helping me understand the working world, even though its only for two weeks. It also makes my decisions on where I want to*

work one day much easier. (Appendix 8.4, BAB's Weblog, 8 March 2006)

A weblog entry shows that even this brief exposure to the world of work meant that BAB had an experience that she could refer to while learning about the workplace during the Training Programme.

> *I enjoyed the visit from [guest lecturer] the other day because I had a good idea of what he was presenting after working at the [host organisation] for two weeks... I often like to compare the things I have learnt this week with the mining industry because its an area I'm very interested in. (Appendix 8.4, BAB's Weblog, 18 March 2006)*

Working before the Training Programme also did not seem to detract from her enthusiasm to learn more about the world of work:

> *I'm very excited for the start of our training next week and to meet all the trainees. (Appendix 8.4, BAB's Weblog, 8 March 2006)*

In terms of curriculum design, BAB's very positive reflections on this two-week working experience before attending the Training programmes suggests that this may be an effective model for future WoW Programmes or similar programmes. While we realised this mainly through happenstance after BAB's experience, we also embarked on a benchmarking exercise that informed the curriculum design for the WoW Training Programme in 2006.

Our process of benchmarking was not particularly formal or strategic since we were already aware that there were no other interventions with the same target audience and/or same processes as the WoW Programmes. We identified Wits Business School's PDM (Postgraduate Diploma in Management) Programme as being similar in some respects, most notably in that it had internships as a required aspect of its Programme. We hoped to be able to make some improvements to curriculum design as a result of this one-off event, and thus to improve our practices.

More detail on the impact of the benchmarking exercise of the Wits Business School's PDM Programme against the WoW Training Programme is available in the Input Evaluation section on the WoW Programmes (2006), in Appendix 1 (Input Evaluation: History and Development of the World of Work Programmes at Wits University). In summary, we decided in 2006 to attempt Wits Business School's practice of inviting representatives of possible host organisations to address WoW participants during the training component. We hoped that these host organisations would position their work, and discuss any employment possibilities for interns or new employees. In this way we aimed to provide networking opportunities for students who we knew would not proceed to the internship component.

In 2006 four organisations used the WoW Training Programme as a platform to raise awareness about their work. While students found these sessions interesting, and the information on the nature of the work these organisations engaged with pertinent, the exercise did not have the practical results – i.e. real opportunities for internships or employment – that we had hoped for. The four organisations invited students to send their curriculum vitae's for consideration, and many students did exactly this. There were, however, no subsequent invitations for interviews for possible employment or internships. We realised that this was because all the organisations were non-governmental, or not-for-profit organisations. They were in principle interested in hosting interns or using the WoW Programmes as a source of human capital, but did not in fact have the funding to remunerate new employees or interns.

Besides this intervention, the WoW Programmes continued to encourage training participants to market their specialized expertise by maintaining a weblog, and provided training and an Internet portal to do so. We invited organisations to look at the weblogs, to read about these areas of specialized expertise, and to possibly consider interviewing and then employing or offering an internship to Humanities postgraduates after seeing concrete evidence of their skills at their weblogs. In addition, the WoW Programmes' Coordinator also informally communicated employment/internship opportunities to all the people who were not scholarship holders and were therefore not admitted into the Internship Programme.

2.3.1 Weblogs

A guest lecturer, Roy Blumenthal, became involved in the Training Programme's Weblog Project in 2006, because we realized that we needed a facilitator with more weblogging technical expertise and experience than the existing staff had at the time. Blumenthal's pedagogical approach was to ask participants to establish their weblogs themselves, i.e. with only limited instruction. These instructions for the "weblog setup" were communicated via a YahooGroup (an Internet communication tool that is both an electronic mailing list and a threaded Internet forum) that Blumenthal established. Participants therefore had to access one layer of technology to function in another corresponding level of technology. There was initial anxiety from students about the process. Then all students collaborated successfully to access the instructions and to establish their weblogs. Accessing technology and working together to solve problems are all core employability traits, so we saw even the set-up of the weblogs as an opportunity for students to exercise skills that are required in the workplace.

There was an important shift in 2006 in the emphasis in the weblog project. In 2005 we generally positioned the value of weblogs for business, and framed the project then with the title "Blogging for business." That emphasis was to make the point about how social networks such as weblogs are helpful to identify and realize opportunities between organisations, across industries, and over entire careers. In 2006 however we concentrated on "Blogging and employability". This was in keeping with the emphasis on marketing one's employability, which we hoped would assist students secure their own internships in 2006. A practical example of this emphasis was that we urged participants to include their curriculum vitas at their weblogs.

2005 Interns' maintained single author weblogs. There is evidence in these individually maintained weblogs in 2006 of the seven different functions identified by Attwell, which have already been referred to in Chapter 4 (Process Review of the WoW Programmes 2005) as the various pedagogic processes that were apparent in the development of the 2005 WoW weblogs. These are:

1. Recognising learning
2. Recording learning
3. Reflecting on learning
4. Validating learning
5. Presenting learning
6. Planning learning
7. Assessing learning (Attwell, 2005)

While the single author weblogs should have supported the marketing agenda by creating a sense of individual presence, with the reader getting a strong sense of the authors (Ewins, 2005), there were relatively few comments after posts, which indicated that the weblogs were not visited by people outside of the WoW Programmes. In 2006 therefore, a team weblog was established in addition to the personal weblogs. We suspected that potential employers found the many WoW student weblogs too time-consuming too read or even peruse, and we hoped that they might find it easier to visit one weblog, where all students had a presence.

2.3.2 The team weblog

The potential of the team weblog to showcase employability was confirmed when I presented it to the General Manager of an organisation, to gauge his immediate responses to the students. I

recorded his reactions as he accessed the weblog for the first time. His response while reading a post by CTO (not a scholarship holder but a participant in the Training Programme) confirms the potential of weblogs for marketing students and their employability:

> Well, he certainly gives me a good impression about himself, because he is talking about issues which are topical, which is good. And he doesn't seem to be self-indulgent which is also good. He makes me think that this would be a good place to go and look at people who are potentially employable... what I am doing is really scanning for you know, I have headings in my head, and I am looking for words, ideas or issues that are topical... if CTO and BAB were available I would have set up interviews for them within the next 24 hours. (Interview field notes, 17 July 2006)

Despite the General Manager's declaration that students could be invited to a job interview as a result of their writing at the team weblog, we were again disappointed by the lack of presence of potential employers at the team weblog, which we monitored at the comments sections of the weblog posts. This can be explained by a point also made in Chapter 2 (in the section 'Weblogs as an innovative e-learning tool in 2005'), being that there were few weblogs in South Africa in 2006, and therefore little public awareness of them.

The pedagogical objectives of the team weblog were positioned in a brief to students from the guest lecturer who volunteered to manage them in 2006:

> *Here are the reasons I can think of for having this blog. I'm sure you can think of some to add.*
>
> *1. Make your learnings open to the world. In other words, share.*
>
> *2. Keep your group together in cyberspace, so that you may continue to network together, into the future. It's VERY easy to say, 'let's do coffee'. But when you're in the working world, time runs out, and you end up seeing your buddies once a year.*
>
> *3. Focussing you on professionalism. When each of you posts to this blog, you'll be acutely aware of the standard of posts by your colleagues. My guess is that one of two things will happen: either all of the posts will sink into being absolutely awful, and the blog will stop, quickly; or you guys will call an emergency meeting, get angry with each other, and vow to create a professional product. The people who come through that process will be great bloggers, and will make a superb blog. Some of you will drop out of the blog, cos it's just too much work.*
>
> *4. Giving employers something to think about. If you show a brilliant team blog, employers can read between the lines as to how individuals on the team blog might fit into their organisations. It'll also warn them off people who won't fit.*
>
> *5. Making it easier for your guys to motivate each other to greatness. Each of your individual blogs will benefit from this process.*
>
> *6. For you to learn a little bit about how the world of work ACTUALLY works. The*

> *Parieto Principle almost always holds in the real world. It's also known as the 80/20 Principle. It works across all sorts of things. In short, it can be stated as 80% of the success of a group comes from the efforts of 20% of the members. Or, 80% of the profits of a company come from 20% of its clients. And so on. In this case, you guys are going to come face to face with some ugly truths about each other, about teamwork, about motivation, about how tough things are, about projects, about project planning. Hopefully, you'll also get to see some amazing things about those topics!*
>
> *7. One day, several of you are going to go into business together, either as partners, or as collaborators. Doing this blog together will let you know who you want to work with in the future.*
>
> *8. The team blog (and your individual blogs) are very potent job interviews that are continuously happening. If you think of the blog as a microscope into your world that anyone can look at anytime they want, then you're on the money. This is an extravagant career-creation tool. If you use it properly.*
>
> *What I'd love from you guys is to jump into this as a debate, either in the comments section, or in separate blog entries. (Roy Blumenthal, 25 March, 2006)*

In response, the 'WoW 2006 Team' described the WoW Programme and their team weblog thus:

> An intensive course for postgraduate students to get immersed in the 'world of work' before they actually enter it. This blog is put together by the team to guide the way for other students to ease themselves into the great wide yonder.

There were 16 contributors to this weblog. The idea was for each participant to contribute to the team weblog as well as to his or her individual weblog. The first post was in March 2006, and the latest was posted in April 2007. In 2006 we had participants with a full range of specialized academic interests, and with qualifications at the various postgraduate levels students: from one PhD level student (African Literature), to participants with Honours in Psychology, Sociology and Tourism. (Please see Appendix 1, Table 7: Demographics of participants, 2001-2006, p 18) It was interesting that - despite this range of qualifications and interests, and even if they didn't have scholarship status - students contributed to the team weblog, often extending themselves beyond their own knowledge base to find new ways to understand the subject under discussion.

While the two ways of engaging with the tool were complementary it was apparent that the team weblog benefitted students in ways that the individually authored weblogs did not. Most obviously, the team weblog was more interactive than the single-authored weblogs. Ferdig and Trammell (2004) cite Vygotsky's educational theory that 'meaning making' develops through social interaction. While there could be more instances of students taking ownership of their learning and publishing authentic artifacts containing their thoughts and understanding at the

single-authored weblogs, the team weblog was an effective way to facilitate social interaction because

> knowledge construction is discursive, relational and conversational in nature. (Ferdig and Trammell, 2004)

Both the single-authored weblogs and the team weblog promoted students'

> ... full control and ownership over their online content (Ferdig and Trammell, 2004)

but the team weblog especially encouraged more diverse sharing. The result, when students participated in subject related blogposts with feedback and comments, was a "knowledge creation community". (Ferdig and Trammell, 2004)

We hoped that the weblogs would enhance writing skills. One of the features of weblogs is that students are able to go back and re-edit their posts, so

> they provide opportunities for feedback and potential scaffolding of new ideas. (Ferdig and Trammell, 2004)

Unfortunately we did not have samples of more conventional forms of writing from the general group participating in 2006, so it is not possible to make the claim that writing improved as a result of maintaining either single-authored weblogs, or from students participating at the team weblog.

BAB was the most prolific (in terms of weblog postings) of the five scholarship holders who were the respondents representing the 2006 WoW participants, at her personal weblog and at the team weblog. There were some students from the WoW 2006 Training programme who did not contribute to the team weblog at all. Despite that they were in the minority, it is worthwhile to consider their lack of participation. This may be explained in terms of students' interpretation of the word 'participate'. 'Lurking' on the team weblog could have been regarded by some students as participation. Allen (2002) supports this and suggests that 'lurkers' can become familiar with the ways of participating and thus gain confidence by observing the behaviours of participants in a computer mediated community. Nonnecke and Preece (2001) position lurking as an important aspect of an online community. They suggest that it is a form of passive or vicarious participation and increases the lurkers' understanding, while also providing a sense of belonging regardless of the amount of weblog posts or comments submitted. (Nonnecke and Preece, 2001)

2.3.3 The *Blogthinking* mailing list

In February 2006, the course designers realised that participants needed ongoing assistance with the practise of weblogging - especially in terms of using weblogs as a career management tool, and in developing their writing styles. We were also looking for ways in which to help participants develop a community of practice so that learning and information could be shared amongst WoW participants.

The concept of a community of practice refers to the process of social learning that occurs when people who have a common interest in some subject or problem collaborate over an extended period to share ideas, find solutions, and build innovations. Communities of practice have become associated with knowledge management as people have begun to see them as ways of developing social capital, nurturing new knowledge, stimulating innovation, or sharing existing tacit knowledge. (Wenger et al, 2002)

Communities of practice stem from our inherent sociability. There is consensus in the literature that communities of practice are typically not anticipated, nor are they supported by the formal organisation and formal training for work. Sharp's observation that communities of practice can, in fact, work at cross-purposes to the organisation's goals was particularly compelling, and the opportunity to access any divergent views on the WoW Programmes confirmed for me that investigating a community of practice in the Programme would benefit the research. (Sharp)

The weblogs were already a form of communication technology that had initiated and enabled a community of practice. The individual blogs allowed students to establish personal and intellectual ownership and to have full control over their online artifacts. The team blog promoted the community of practice that was developing between WoW 2006 participants in an even more focused manner, and was a single-stop for an impression of the employability of Humanities postgraduates generally.

Using the two formats of weblogs – individual and team – meant that we were simultaneously helping each student make something his or her own, and we were helping a community of learners make something their own, together. We were in effect extending the programmes' learning management system from the accomplishments of the individual, an emphasis that is typical in Higher Education, to facilitating discoveries about the workings of a group.

We decided to look even further, however, and to consider other available and complementary Internet-mediated communication technological tools that would enrich collaboration amongst

the 2006 participants. We therefore decided to experiment with an electronic mailing list and an Internet forum at YahooGroups, and we set up a mailing list exclusively for the participants in the WoW Programmes. YahooGroups makes it possible to set up free email list(servs). These use list-processing software and distribute email to all subscribed users on a list. We named the forum that we established *Blogthinking*. There were 192 messages posted at *Blogthinking* in 2006. The concept and workings of electronic mailing lists such as *Blogthinking* are also discussed in the Input Evaluation in Appendix 1, within the section describing the WoW Programmes in 2006.

Sharp suggests that a successful mailing list can create a community of discourse that may become the basis for future community of practice development. He points out that discourse communities, as opposed to communities of practice, are typically background mechanisms that support conversations, rather than as an end in themselves. This view confirms that we were on track with our objective for the mailing list (as a community of discourse) to support, improve and develop students' engagement with the weblogs (as a tool for the community of practice).

Sharp also lists the nature of typical content at a mailing list, including:

- as a knowledge filter: asking for help
- to share success stories
- to share site-developed marketing collateral, presentations, product reviews and benchmarks
- to share of statements of work, proposals, deliverables

to discuss the nature of reality for this practice.

These were also the general areas that characterised WoW participants' engagement with the *Blogthinking* mailing list. Since the mailing list was restricted to WoW participants only, WoW participants appeared to take advantage of the more informal and relaxed tone (compared to the professional tone encouraged for the weblogs) in *Blogthinking* to communicate support and encouragement. Typical instances of this occurred when students wrote to each other about experiences of interviews, searching for internships, possible work-related opportunities, social events, and personal events (e.g. offering condolences for the death of a family member or friend).

An area in which the interface between the mailing list and the weblogs was obvious occurred when students edited each other's weblog posts at the mailing list. Students did not want to use the comments facility at the weblogs to comment on or monitor each other's grammar, tone, style and spelling, as this would have embarrassed the author of the weblog post, and possibly could

have undermined the author's confidence in the public domain. Responses to suggestions concerning writing style were therefore more readily welcomed, accepted and acted upon, at the mailing list.

2.3.4 Assessment

Although the team weblog was never used for assessment purposes in 2006, Dieu (2004) suggests that they can be useful as assessment tools. Besides their value as a further development and research tool, facilitating the posting of ideas and links to the wider professional community, they can for example be used to publish assignments. Staff can also post assignments, suggestions and links for students.

We did not, however, use the weblogs in 2006 in this way. While assignments had been helpful in previous years to qualify participants from the Training Programme for the Internship Programme, we had already selected the five scholarship candidates for the Internship Programme in 2006 before the Training Programme started.

We communicated to participants that the test of their performance would be their own achievement of an internship or employment arrangement after the training component. In this way we emphasized the need for intrinsic motivation to perform well during the training. The weblogs were the only "assignment" – in the 2006 context, "exercise" would be a more appropriate term – maintained in 2006. Effective maintenance of the weblogs was positioned as necessary for WoW participants to market themselves in the world of work.

We therefore took a broader view of assessment with regard to the weblogs in 2006, in keeping with the public nature of educational blogging. Ferdig and Trammell suggest that,

> blogging opens up assignments beyond the teacher-student relationship, allowing the world to grade students and provide encouragement or feedback on their writings. (2004)

We felt confident that formal assessment procedures were unnecessary and that structuring the project for assessment by, for example, assigning topics, could be counter-productive. Downes agrees that assigning topics to blog about could result in weblogs

> automatically [losing] a level of authenticity and engagement (2004)

because student reflections may become constrained, thus compromising the learning benefits of reflection.

The success of the team weblog in 2006, could, it is possible to argue, be attributed to the fact that the team weblogs were not assessed. The participants took ownership of the team weblog in 2006 beyond any assessment needs required by the course designers, and the team weblog contributed to the establishment of the community of practice that developed amongst group members.

2.3.5 "Team Leaders" and the practise of students introducing guest lecturers

The daily routine of the WoW Training Programme included various ways of simulating a professional working environment. The Input Evaluation of the WoW Programmes (Appendix 1 (Input Evaluation: History and Development of the World of Work Programmes at Wits University) shows that practices were introduced in the Training Programme as early as 2002 to set a professional tone: they included opportunities for each participant to act as "Team Leader" for the day, meeting the guest lecturer, and formally presenting the guest lecturer to the other participants. It was hoped that this would help to develop skills such those needed for networking and presenting effectively. BAB felt that this was useful:

> *I am thankful for the opportunity of a self improvement activity like the team leaders. When it comes to public speaking or presentations I'm quite rusty in the sense that this is for real. We are introducing very important and successful people and I'm keen to learn from all the trainees' examples on how this is done in a professional manner. (Appendix 8.4, BAB's Weblog, 'Independence Day', 14 March 2006)*

2.3.6 Networking

The fundamental difference between the 2005 and the 2006 WoW Programmes – being that internships would be secured for five scholarship holders only - meant that the other participants in the Training Programme did not receive the same support or facilitation to secure an internship as the 2005 participants did.

Since we were not assisting the bulk of the students in 2006, we decided to incorporate networking opportunities into the Training Programme. We hoped that this would enable students to find and secure their own internships and/or employment, as networking is a crucial first step in the job search process. We believed that networking would help students identify their career

options and forge long-term relationships for mutual gain. We invited representatives from organisations that we believed would be interested in Humanities postgraduates for employment, to address the students. These representatives typically spoke about the work of their organisations, and any possible opportunities for interns. LAY gave an overview of the typical content at her weblog:

> *These companies were interesting to me, because for one, I liked the way [non-governmental organisation] presented their organisation, they showed us their different departments and what their responsibilities entailed. That way we were all able to see whether we could fit into some of the different departments and what skills or ideas we could introduce to them. I was also interested in the fact that they were dealing with development in the rural areas, and this is my area of interest. (LAY's Weblog, 7 April 2006)*

LAY's comment indicates that there was value in the presentations from various non-governmental organisations, besides as networking opportunities, especially with regard to the overview of the structure of the organisations, the workings and outputs of the various departments. However, and even though LAY knew that as a scholarship holder she had a guaranteed internship, she commented that the presentations were heartening for students who would not be receiving the WoW Programmes' staff's dedicated attention to secure internships that the scholarship holders would be benefitting from:

> *A lot of companies have come to speak to the world of work trainees about possible opportunities of becoming interns in their companies, and suddenly it seemed as if there is a silver lining after all at the end of the tunnel... (LAY's Weblog, 7 April 2006)*

Finally LAY expressed a wish that must have been shared by her peers in the Training Programme:

> *Hopefully the companies that have presented will be interested in us and be willing to give us a chance to become interns in their companies. (LAY's Weblog, 7 April 2006)*

The reality, however, was that none of the networking sessions we planned led to internship placements or employment for any of the participants. A possible reason was that the organisations invited were not ready to employ, or, being non-profit, did not have sufficient funding to remunerate interns.

Professor Carolyn Hamilton, the initiator of the internship programmes at what was then called the Graduate School for the Humanities and Social Sciences had suggested that poor networking skills amongst Humanities postgraduates, and limited access to networks, could be the result of previous unequal social structures in South Africa. (Interview, 18 January 2007) It is also possible

that the differences between networking in academia and networking in business played out in the presentations by organisations during the Training Programme, to the detriment of the students participating. There is a commonly held view by academics that business networking requires "hard selling", and the WoW training participants may have felt uncomfortable with promoting themselves in this way. By contrast, the basis of networking in the academic context is typically through intellectual interchange. Even though IUP, as a scholarship holder, was guaranteed her internship placement, her comment (made before the WoW Programmes in 2006 started) reveals concerns about networking that could well have been shared by all participants:

> *I am suddenly confronted with the fact that I have to move from the solitary to the social networking human being I am expected to be when I get into the industry. I suddenly wonder what kind of community I am going to make for myself. At the same time ensuring that in all these relationships professionalism has to take centre stage. How do I network with the relevant people from within the organisation and those outside the organisation? (IUP's Weblog, 22 February 2006)*

IUP's anxieties could have been addressed with more intensive preparation for the networking sessions that were part of the Training Programme. As it was, students were simply invited to the networking sessions, without prior input on how to network. Such skills could have included networking nuances such as how to ask for help and how to follow up a useful encounter. Practical tools such as an elevator speech (a short yet powerful description of what the student is able to do) could help each student create a lasting impression with people so that they would recall the student positively when an opportunity arises.

2.3.7 Information sessions

The intention for each information session was to provide information pertaining to business issues in South Africa and globally in a concise but interactive way. Sessions typically included short reflective activities, question-and-answer opportunities, and the general sharing of current trends and developments between students and the subject matter expert.

EGM valued these information sessions:

> *I think it was imperative that the programme also include socio-economic issues. As someone who plans to have a management consulting business in the next few years, I found the presentations on corporate citizenship, NEPAD as well as competition, collaboration and cooperation very useful. (EGM's Weblog, 22 March 2006)*

Another of the information sessions proved to be especially relevant to IUP during her internship. This was the lecture on BEE [Black Economic Empowerment], which IUP said she was encountering "...almost on a daily basis" at her host organisation. (Appendix 10.2, IUP Interview, 4 July 2006) IUP was relieved to have had the overview of BEE [Black Economic Empowerment] from the Training Programme, because

> ...when I met such issues here they were no longer foreign to me. (Appendix 10.2, IUP Interview, 4 July 2006, p 272)

Comments such as these confirm the relevance of the information sessions. However, there was a suggestion that the content of information sessions should have been more in depth:

> Also then… some of the presentations were quite theory based, that we've all learnt in university. For instance the BEE guy who came... he basically told us what BEE was. We were expecting more statistics, what has been happening, what's the future of BEE? He basically just gave us the 'what it is'. And there were one or two presentations like that where [they gave us] a definition. If you can maybe ask them to give a more in depth presentation. (Appendix 8.2, BAB Interview, 20 June 2006, p 205)

Besides actual information session, one of the claims that the WoW Programmes could make was the raising of participants' awareness of the information available to aid their transitions into workplaces. In a weblog post titled 'Financial Mail', BAB alerted her peers to an article with information for graduates to secure employment. (Appendix 8.4, BAB's Weblog, 19 March 2006)

2.3.7.1 Shared session with external delegates

We had included an information session on the World Competitiveness Report in the WoW Training Programme for four consecutive years (2002-2005). The guest lecturer who usually undertook this topic initiated an alternative in 2006, a session she called "Competition, collaboration and cooperation". WoW Training delegates shared this session with delegates from the Limpopo Local Economic Development Programme, at a Wits University training venue. The same session also addressed the 2005 topics "Economic clusters" and "Future initiatives in South Africa', which were therefore not repeated as stand-alone sessions in 2006.

BAB used the metaphor of peanut clusters to describe this training session and her learning,

> *What I also have learnt is how these clusters can affect the area they are situated in, or how it is plainly convenient for the business to be involved in this cluster. I never thought of how different businesses fuel one another to be able to make products or provide a*

service. (Appendix 8.4, BAB's Weblog, 22 March 2006)

LAY also found the session enlightening, but commented that she also found the content complex and sometimes overwhelming:

> *... I must say the presentation was intense and complicated. Most of the terms used were Business Economics like, I struggled with Business Economics at high school that is why I didn't pursue Business Economics at tertiary level. Now imagine me in that presentation, I felt like I was doing an MBA course. I struggled to understand the presentation, but I did get the whole idea of competition, collaboration and cooperation. (LAY's Weblog, 20 March 2006)*

It is possible that LAY may have felt less inclined to ask questions and seek clarification from the guest lecturer because of the mixed and larger group.

We hoped that the arrangement of combining delegates would lead to additional networking opportunities for our students. Although BAB said she enjoyed sharing the learning space with more experienced people, she felt that the session was focused on them as opposed to the WoW participants. (Appendix 8.4, BAB's Weblog, 22 March 2006)

The exercise of combining delegates from the world of work with WoW Programme participants seemed to fail on two counts. Firstly we forfeited the intimacy of the small group, which meant that WoW participants did not participate as actively as usual. Secondly, the networking we hoped for did not occur – possibly for the same reason we encountered when we invited representatives from organisations to present information about their work to the students: students had not received specific input on *how* to network, prior to the networking opportunity.

2.3.7.2 Customer service and HIV/AIDS – new contexts

One could assume that as Humanities postgraduate students, the WoW participants were already well-informed about HIV/Aids. Our objective in the information session on this topic however was to encourage consideration of the impact and consequences of HIV/Aids in the workplace context. For many students, this was a new perspective:

> *One should also think of the future whereby one will be CEO of a company and almost a quarter of your staff is infected with the virus, this means that one will be running his/her business at a loss. Many of your staff will be taking sick leave, and this means that one will have to hire out temporary workers who will replace the sick staff. I think that this is one of many reasons why one has to take responsibility when it comes to the issue of HIV/Aids. (LAY's Weblog, 27 March 2006)*

BAB also said that learning about the procedures in place for managing HIV/AIDS in the South African workplace, current statistics and socio-economic challenges of HIV/AIDS was an "eye-opener". (Appendix 8.4, BAB's Weblog, 27 March 2006)

Shifting from a student perspective to an employee perspective did not happen after all information sessions however. BAB did not draw any correlations regarding the impact of customer service on her own performance in the world of work after the WoW Training Programme's session on customer service. Although BAB said that she realised the importance of effective customer service, her responses were limited to her reactions as a customer, as opposed to providing a service to either internal or external customers, or both. BAB wrote that

> *After this session I'm going to change my attitude of being a habitual customer to one that gives constructive criticism to a company. (Appendix 8.4, BAB's Weblog, 26 March 2006)*

2.3.7.3 Project and Programme Management

We had included field trips for participants in the WoW Programme since 2002, to assist students with their understanding of Programme and Project Management – specifically - at an actual site. Informal feedback from students confirmed that this was an effective pedagogical approach, and we repeated the field trip in 2006. We visited the same project, a historical site named Constitution Hill in Johannesburg. It is the location of the Constitutional Court, and is also a multi-million Rand regeneration project. In 2006 we had another guest lecturer join us for this field trip, so that he could use it as a platform for his session on marketing.

IUP referred to some prior knowledge relating to the topics:

> *I feel glad that most of my undergraduate courses (Principles of Management in particular) are becoming relevant to me in this Internship programme. (IUP's Weblog, 26 March 2006)*

But for BAB programme and project management was a new area:

> *These are two areas I have never been exposed to at university and was looking forward to learning the basics. (Appendix 8.4, BAB's Weblog, 30 March 2006).*

Although BAB could not see an immediate application of skills in the areas of programme and project management and marketing, she reflected that once she had achieved expertise in her area she would want to

> *...tackle projects where marketing is needed and project and programme management is essential. (Appendix 8.4, BAB's Weblog, 30 March 2006)*

IUP also predicted that the skills would become valuable to her in her career:

> *No doubt they will become more relevant when I become a Project/Programme Officer in the near future. (IUP's Weblog, 26 March 2006)*

As a result of the input on project and programme management, BAB and IUP gained an understanding of the complex interactions required between

> *...aspects such as functional performance, time and money (Appendix 8.4, BAB's Weblog, 30 March 2006)*

And that

> *...one requires a great degree of interpersonal, leadership and management skills. (IUP's Weblog, 26 March 2006)*

The field trip and the basic overview on programme and project management, and marketing, therefore appeared to emphasise the necessity of soft skills, and this reinforced the importance of these skills in the Training Programme.

2.3.8 Hard skills

With regard to hard skills, EGM suggested that computer training should be more entrenched in the WoW Training Programme. She said that,

> ...sometimes it is difficult to go through in the workplace without having proper training. It's sometimes... I felt intimidated sometimes asking how to work on Lotus, MS Word, etcetera. (Appendix 9.2, EGM Interview, 20 June 2006, p 250)

Appendix 1 (Input Evaluation: History and Development of the World of Work Programmes at Wits University) indicates that in 2002 and 2003 participants were expected to attend training sessions arranged with Computer Network Services at Wits University to learn computer software programmes such as Excel and PowerPoint. These were the only training sessions that had an additional cost for the student, but they were still positioned then as compulsory. From 2004, however, we only urged participants to make their own training arrangements for their skills development in PowerPoint and Excel computer skills through Computer Network Services at Wits University. We did this because we were well aware that most students were finding it

difficult to pay the fees of the WoW Programmes (with the exception of the scholarship holders in 2006), let alone the extra costs of computer training. The arrangement was not, however, ideal.

DOZ's workplace supervisor was particularly concerned about her writing skills during her internship. It was clear that part of the problem was that DOZ's computer literacy was below standard. Her supervisor was also aware of this:

> ...you know my concern is that they are so computer illiterate. (Interview, 19 May 2006, p 308)

DOZ was able to establish her weblog, a prerequisite for scholarship holders. But I suggest that she did this "by the seat of her pants", and that her general approach to technology – possibly due to a lack of resources and training – was the same. This manifested especially in her layout of business documents during her internship. Difficulties in achieving the correct layout may have, in turn, made it more difficult for DOZ to achieve accuracy in her writing. In retrospect, the WoW staff should have incorporated a test to determine computer literacy levels in the selection process, and then should have insisted on computer training for candidates, who, like DOZ, did not have adequate skills in this area. The importance of this was emphasised by DOZ's workplace supervisor, who said that computer literacy was a basic employability necessity:

> So I will be expecting a student to be computer literate. At least to be able to design a table. I'm not talking about, you know, complicated stuff. (Appendix 11.3, DOZ's Workplace Supervisor, Interview, 19 May 2006, p 308)

2.3.8.1 Business presentation skills

BAB found the training session on presentation skills especially useful, and the approach to this learning opportunity quite different to any similar experiences she had had at the University:

> *Everyone in our class is still talking about the presentation skills seminar. What a great experience. For once in my life somebody has given me constructive criticism on my presentation skills. At school and university we had to do presentations, but never got feedback, only a mark. Here we were focused on by [guest lecturers] from [training providers]. The criticism and advice they gave me was extremely helpful. At last I know how to work with my nervousness and now I have the opportunity to sell myself in a professional and striking way. I can influence people to become interested in me and I can make myself stand out from the rest. The session was fun and it is amazing to see how the advice helped all of us in our second round of presentations. (Appendix 8.4, BAB's Weblog, 02 April 2006)*

The business presentation skills and writing skills sessions were arranged to run simultaneously. We halved the group for each session, and then swapped the students and repeated the sessions so that all participants attended both hard skills sessions. The strategy had in fact been implemented in the WoW Programmes the year before. It clearly worked well (considering BAB's feedback), as it meant that the lecturer could focus on skills development more closely with a smaller group, and could provide individual attention and coaching.

2.3.8.2 Business writing skills

In an interview conducted during her internship, IUP said that she found that the Training Programme sessions on writing skills and creativity were proving valuable to her in the workplace. (Appendix 10.2, IUP Interview, 18 May 2006) BAB reported (in her weblog) that she found the training session on business writing skills "very informative" and that as she found business writing to be

> *...totally different to what I know. (Appendix 8.4, BAB's Weblog, 02 April 2006)*

BAB explained what she believed were the fundamental differences between writing in an academic context, and writing for the world of work:

> *My writing skills are equipped out of fantastically long sentences and big words. All of us are used to the type of writing that can publish a novel. We explain things three times in one sentence, and you will be lucky if you understand the words. LE taught us that our writing and business writing is like chalk and cheese. This type of writing is more to the point, short and sweet, easy to understand, yet very professional. (Appendix 8.4, BAB's Weblog, 02 April 2006)*

There were other significant ways in which writing skills were addressed during the Training Programme. The selection of the five scholarship holders in 2006 meant that WoW staff could focus on these individuals from the Selection Stage, and assist them with their skills development in areas such as business writing. An example of one of LAY's first emails to the WoW office shows many errors:

> I would like to apologise for the delay and **incovenience** I thought **i** had sent the **massag**e to you but if you say you did not **recieve** it then **its** my fault, **may be** I type an **erro** e-mail, I am sorry. (Email correspondence from LAY, 3 March 2006; emphasis added)

WoW staff used opportunities such as emails from scholarship students to point out errors, edit and request improvements. This led to a noticeable improvement in LAY's writing skills especially.

The weblogs were also opportunities for students to try to write for the world of work audience, as opposed to an academic audience. BAB explained what she believed were the fundamental differences between writing in an academic context, and writing for the world of work:

> Well, obviously writing down what I've been experiencing, because I always do like keeping a diary or a journal. This one is more professional, I like doing that. Also the comments are great. If I get a comment it's the nicest thing to come in and see one comment and then you go and read it. It's just the way to put my, my thoughts down on paper. (Appendix 8.2, BAB Interview, 20 May 2006, p 204)

After a weblog post ("The art of writing and speaking in a business context", 28 March 2006) in which EGM summarised the most important learning points – for her – in the training sessions on business writing and presentation skills, one of the guest lecturers (also the WoW Programmes weblog specialist) urged EGM to proofread her weblog posts for errors, and to enlist the help of a peer to ensure that her weblog posts would be more accurate.

2.3.8.3 Interviews: role-plays and workshop

BAB's confidence in "getting" an actual job increased after the WoW Training Programme's session on CV writing and interviewing skills. BAB saw a distinction between learning about the world of work, and the hard skills necessary in situ (in an interview):

> *I found the session on our CV and interviewing skills most useful so far due to the fact that it was a workshop that helped me improve my ways of getting that actual job that we have all been looking for. The other sessions have taught me how to handle the real working world when I do get that job. Those sessions are of equal importance. I know getting that job is up to me, but I feel more confident now that I know what to expect from interviews and what employers expect from my CV (and boy was mine off track). The tips were great, and the mock interviews were terrifying. (Appendix 8.4, BAB's Weblog, 26 March 2006)*

EGM's apparent ambivalence had been noted by the WoW staff, and discussed with EGM in the early stages of her participation in the Training Programme. She also did not respond to a personal exercise created for her, the objective of which was for her to consider the negative impact of her typically insipid, bland responses, and to generate alternatives. (Email correspondence from researcher to EGM, 11 April 2006) EGM wrote a weblog entry titled "The

missing pieces of my job-hunting puzzle" that is revealing and may offer insights into the reasons for her ambivalence:

> *Before being motivated by [guest lecturer]'s presentation, I used to be confused as to why I never secured a job for myself. I had a very low self-esteem, lacked enthusiasm and dreaded going to anymore interviews. The whole thing of listening to tips of job-hunting just didn't work. (EGM's Weblog, 16 March 2006)*

After attending the session on CV writing and interviewing skills EGM said that she realised that employers were looking for

> *...a positive attitude*

which included enthusiasm, optimism and

> *effective non-verbal communication (that say I am enthusiastic). (EGM's Weblog, 16 March 2006)*

ATL, a participant in the WoW Training programme, added a comment after EGM's post, saying that

> *resilience and a positive attitude are the best tools to tackle interviews (EGM's Weblog, Comment by ATL, WoW participant 2006, 16 March 2006)*

and added that the interview role-plays would help EGM face an interview panel more effectively. (Comment from ATL, WoW participant 2006, after EGM's weblog post, 16 March 2006)

2.3.9 Soft skills

We continued our commitment to including soft skills in the Training Programme in 2006. Similar to our goals in 2005 we wanted, as course designers, for students to think about and apply the concepts from the soft skills sessions to their internship placements (in the cases of the scholarship holders) or to their transitions into the workplace (in the cases of the other participants). This could take the form of how the student related to clients, supervisors and other people with whom they interacted. It could also take the form of reflecting upon the dynamics and interaction the student observed among the other people at his or her workplace.

A new emphasis in 2006 was for the soft skills training to address, as much as possible, skills that participants other than the scholarship holders would require to source and secure their own employment, themselves. A new workshop titled "Creating your personal brand" was included

for this reason. Feedback from participants from the 2005 WoW Programmes meant that a workshop on time management was also included in 2006.

We also dedicated an entire session to professionalism, to raise and contextualize a range of employability skills, since we had become aware that the Training Programme benefitted participants most when generic skills were positioned explicitly. Hager and Holland confirm that such an approach is effective:

> A common theme in the literature on teaching and learning of generic attributes is that success depends crucially on the generic attributes being made explicit for students. Leaving them implicit, as happens in many traditional courses, does little to encourage significant learning and development of the attributes. (2006)

2.3.9.1 Emotional Intelligence

A training session on emotional intelligence, first introduced into the WoW Training Programme in 2003, was repeated in 2006. The objective of the session remained the same: to have students consider how emotional intelligence might be applied to their professional roles once in the world of work. We also wanted students to take a long-term view of the applicability of emotional intelligence, not just for their internships or first positions in the world of work.

The emotional intelligence training session was designed to introduce students to emotional intelligence concepts on two levels. The guest lecturer used an emotional intelligence-measuring instrument, a fairly simple questionnaire, to help students think about their emotional intelligence on a personal, one-on-one level and as it applies to interpersonal relationships. Discussions then focused on an organizational level - that is, applying emotional intelligence to the dynamics of an organization such as a government agency or corporation. In some cases the discussions were in the context of the internships, but they were also more broadly based. They were however limited since most students did not have actual professional work experience. This revealed that it is important to more closely relate the concepts of emotional intelligence to the students' internships so that they have a sense of immediate relevancy rather than some future relevancy after the Training Programme and even entry into the workplace. The materials could also be enhanced if students simulated a typical and routine work-related interaction – for example a meeting. Another idea would be to videotape the simulated meeting and have the students view the videotape prior to or during the discussion.

The introspective element of the session was valuable, however. LAY's brother died the day before she attended the emotional intelligence training session. She actually found that the content of the session helped her to manage her grief to a degree. (LAY's Weblog, 16 March 2006) WoW participants' responded with messages of support, condolences and recognition of LAY's professionalism despite her personal tragedy. GP, one of the key respondents from the 2005 WoW Programmes reminded LAY that he had lost his father when he started his internship. This confirms the tendency amongst participants in a programme of this nature to offer support when personal information is disclosed. (LAY's Weblog, 16 March 2006)

The emotional intelligence session appeared to shift EGM to reflect on the subsequent content of the Training Programme. For example, EGM mentioned an intrinsic awareness gained during the Training Programme. She specifically mentioned the session on entrepreneurship and said that

> *Throughout [guest lecturer]'s presentation, I asked myself the question of whether I have what it takes to be an entrepreneur.... I know I might have the passion and creativity to develop a consulting business in future but I need to add to these values. I have to see that my business has a vision for the future and survival, consider the risks I will be taking, network with more people, plan my business with an advisor and use my communication and networking skills. (EGM's Weblog, 27 March 2006)*

EGM continued in the same weblog post to make a connection between entrepreneurship and emotional intelligence, and to reflect on how her exposure (through an internship) could prepare her to be an entrepreneur:

> *Moreover, as [guest lecturer] said in order for one to be successful you need emotional intelligence. I need to work on handling my stress, emotions and arguments that may occur within my business in future. I believe that this would start by being exposed to an organisational context and from that I will be able to learn and develop. (EGM's Weblog, 27 March 2006)*

Towards the end of the Training Programme, there was an improvement after the indecisive and uncommitted responses EGM had given during the selection interview with WoW staff, as she asserted that

> *The most important lessons I am taking with from these presentations is that firstly, I have to be myself in a workplace. I know I have a dream and thus it is important to leave up to my dream. (EGM's Weblog, 4 April 2006)*

and EGM started reflecting more proactively on how she would manage her transition into the workplace:

> *I know a workplace is guaranteed of chaos so I want to handle my frustrations, stressors and emotions in a dignified manner. Moreover it is important to keep looking for*

opportunities while at the same time learning from my mistakes. (EGM's Weblog, 4 April 2006)

It is evident that the input on Emotional Intelligence in the Training programme was significant also for BAB, to the extent that she started to question the differences between emotional intelligence in different intrapersonal contexts, and her responses in those different contexts in a weblog post titled "The Importance of Transparency and Emotions":

> *The importance of "listening", "communicating", and "resilience" came forth in both quite prominently. Even though it was from different perspectives namely the corporate environment and the psychological environment, they both stress how important it is to have these qualities... The tests [guest lecturer] provided showed that I have little confidence in myself. I don't agree entirely with my results as I know I am a confident person on a social scale, but I do realise there is a difference between confidence in the workplace and confidence in my social life. I don't think I'm emotionally illiterate but I would like to improve my EIQ to enhance my decision-making. Just a quick question I want to raise: Is there a big difference between confidence in the workplace and confidence in one's social life? (Appendix 8.4, BAB's Weblog, 18 March 2006)*

A peer responded to BAB's question with an observation:

> *...there are people who have a lot of confidence in their work and their workplaces but are pathetic when it comes to social lives.*

The issue obviously struck a chord because the same intern then urged others:

> *Hey guys say something I think BAB has raised a pertinent question here! (Appendix 8.4, IUP's comment after BAB's weblog, 'The Importance of Transparency and Emotions', 18 March 2006)*

Raising awareness of emotional intelligence offers an opportunity to incorporate the concept of diversity into the curriculum. A session addressing diversity in the workplace was dropped from the 2006 curriculum because of negative feedback in 2004 about the lecturer from the participants. It can be argued that emotional intelligence and cultural differences are related as different cultures may express feelings in very different ways and some cultures may freely express feelings while other cultures will not, even under the same circumstances,. These differences may lead to communication difficulties and difficulties in establishing effective relationships.

2.3.9.2 Stress management

It appears that BAB's awareness of her responses to stress was raised after the WoW Training Programme's session on stress management. She reflected on her own coping mechanisms for

managing her stress levels. (Appendix 8.4, BAB's Weblog, 26 March 2006) The WoW Programmes' weblog specialist, also a guest lecturer, replied to this weblog post with extensive advice. This is significant as it showed some evidence that guest lecturers read students' weblogs, and responded even if the content was outside of the subject matter that they had been invited to address during the WoW Training Programme.

2.3.9.3 Time management

While her earlier weblog posts were often summaries of the content of the Training Programme sessions, EGM's weblog entries on time management shows some reflective activity and self-assessment. She noted that while she was never late for university lectures, her social time-keeping was poor. This impacted on her popularity and she recognised that she was

> *...known to postpone appointments at the last minute and to be full of excuses for not turning up. (EGM's Weblog, 6 April 2006)*

The session on time management obviously encouraged EGM to acknowledge that she could not be

> *...a good time keeper in one thing only (EGM's Weblog, 6 April 2006)*

and that

> *...there's still a way to go for me to maximise my effectiveness with time. I still need to learn to prioritise between my work and social life. I must learn to see which aspects have a long range of importance and which ones have short-range urgency. (EGM's Weblog, 6 April 2006)*

Acquiring time management skills requires learning about prioritising. Although the time management session included this by referring to Covey's (2004) 'Time Management Matrix', there was an observation from one of the workplace supervisors during one of the scholarship holder's internships that this skill was not yet "in place". Although the workplace supervisor said DOZ was punctual (arriving at work on time and not leaving before the end of the workday), he expressed some concern with her inability to prioritise tasks and appreciate the importance of deadlines:

> They will be sitting here doing other things, but you have given her work, which has not been done. (Appendix 11.3, DOZ's Workplace Supervisor, Interview, 19 May 2006, p 310)

2.3.10 Students' comments on guest lecturers' content and presentation skills

Although guest lecturers invited to address the students in the WoW Training programme usually spoke about their areas of specialty in the world of work, it happened that there was a crossover of opinions, especially on generic areas such as the subject of teamwork. The weblogs were an ideal place to explore and discuss contrasting points of view, as is evident in BAB's weblog:

> *I must say I disagree with [WoW Programmes weblog specialist] (sorry). Teamwork IS important. The presentation by [guest lecturer] fuelled my belief in teamwork. Don't get me wrong. I know how important individuality and individual work is. Nevertheless there are many instances where a team (combined out of a number of effective individuals) is highly valuable. Teamwork helps you fill the gaps of knowledge that you didn't have before. If you aren't experienced or knowledgeable in a certain area, one of your teammates will help you and feed you with new information, and visa versa. (Appendix 8.4, BAB's Weblog, 19 March 2006)*

Processing guest lecturers' contrasting views necessitated critical thinking and effective writing to be able to express a personal opinion effectively. BAB is an example of a student who achieved this at her weblog. At the same time, she reflected on the impact of teamwork on her personally, and she considered the differences between teamwork in different contexts (university and workplace):

> *I sometimes don't like teamwork. I will back [WoW participant 2006] up in this respect where she said that some team members just don't pull their weight. However, the difference between teamwork at university and teamwork in our work place one day differs. Here the people are willing, equipped and trained to do their job. And if they don't, they stand the chance of receiving Donald Trump's favourite saying, "You're fired". (Appendix 8.4, BAB's Weblog, 19 March 2006)*

In 2005 and 2006 the soft skills training session on "Diversity in the Workplace" was omitted because of the consistently negative feedback that students from the 2003 and 2004 groups had given about the lecturer who addressed this topic. However, the interns BAB and IUP had an interesting discussion at BAB's weblog regarding the subject of business cultures. The discussion may have stemmed from the training session on NEPAD. Nevertheless, it shows that participants were considering world of work issues that stemmed from the content, even if they were not necessarily raised during the Training Programme.

> *African countries, including South Africa, should learn the culture of the different countries they interact with business wise. One of these cultures is that of China. This is called the culture of Guanxi. This term is the Chinese term of how to conduct relationships in the workplace. Seeing that China has such a huge impact on a global scale and also in Africa, every business should learn the Chinese culture of networking and relationship building. (Appendix 8.4, BAB's Weblog, 19 March 2006)*

IUP's comment was:

> *I totally agree with you BAB on the issue of businesses learning the cultures of the companies that they deal with. Nothing can ever be more important than this. Even at a personal level it is imperative to understand each other's cultures to avoid blips and blunders. In a business environment lacking this essential component can have negative consequences. (Appendix 8.4, BAB's Weblog, Comment posted by IUP, 19 March 2006)*

BAB clearly enjoyed WoW Training Programme sessions that led to debate and discussion between participants:

> *What I also enjoyed about this session is that is sparked a lot of debate. Some brilliant points were highlighted during these debates. Thanks for that everyone. (Appendix 8.4, BAB's Weblog, 19 March 2006)*

ATL also appeared to appreciate hearing different perspectives, and debate:

> *Anyway, everyone is entitled to their opinion. It is not like we have to bargain everything presenters say. We need to be skilful and absorb what is relevant for us. I enjoyed [guest lecturer] 's presentation on NEPAD. The debated was heated and I felt like it could go on and on. (Appendix 8.4, BAB's Weblog, Comment posted by ATL, 19 March 2006)*

It is noteworthy that the guest lecturer who addressed the subject of NEPAD read and responded to BAB's weblog post (Appendix 8.4, BAB's Weblog, 19 March 2006) after his presentation. This suggests that even though there were relatively few comments after the weblog posts from the guest lecturers, there may have been some that were "lurkers" and who visited participants' weblogs and at least read responses from weblogs to their presentations. This confirms the potential of the weblogs as evaluation tools, and as opportunities for guest lecturers to read responses and reconsider, if necessary, their presentation for subsequent Training Programmes.

2.4 Overview: Process evaluation of Activity Stage Two, the World of Work Training Component

It is meaningful that BAB chose to title her weblog post reflecting on the first day of the WoW Training Programme in 2006 as "Independence Day". She saw her participation in the WoW Programmes as her

> *...path to being an independent woman.(Appendix 8.4, BAB's Weblog, 14 March 2006)*

For EGM one of the guest lecturer's had a significant impact on her sense of readiness for the workplace:

> *After [guest lecturer]'s presentation I was motivated and felt worthy as a potential intern. I further on wished that all employers were like that. [Guest lecturer] made it clear that an internship should be a two-way process - what is the organisation's expectations and the intern's expectations. (EGM's Weblog, 26 March 2006)*

After this presentation, EGM believed she had clearer expectations about her internship. These were to gain practical experience and to establish how her academic training could be beneficial in the world of work. As a result of the training session "What I look for in an intern" (the employers' perspective), EGM also said that she was

> *.driven by passion to learn more in my internship. I want to use it as a means to discover my true career potentials and to develop personally and career-wise. (EGM's Weblog, 26 March 2006)*

The Training Programme was therefore a conduit for these respondents to the world of work. The relevance of the Training Programme content was confirmed by IUP. During her internship and while she was at her host organisation, IUP wrote at her weblog that

> *Lessons learned from the WoW internship programmes are finally bearing fruit. (IUP's Weblog, 22 June 2006)*

During her internship IUP recalled the information sessions on Black Economic Empowerment and employment equity, the "hard" skills sessions on writing skills, and the "soft" skills sessions on creativity and professionalism specifically, saying that during her internship,

> *I have had a personal experience with all of them. (IUP's Weblog, 22 June 2006)*

3. Activity Stage Three: Transition

At Activity Stage Three, the five scholarship holders began the actual move from the academic world to the professional world. This Activity Stage is framed by the developmental stage of anticipation (H. F. Sweitzer and M. A. King, 2004), with interns typically feeling excited, enthusiastic, and possibly experiencing some anxiety.

The task of the programme evaluation at this point is to investigate how the WoW Programmes enabled the transition from the University into the workplace while assisting interns with managing their anticipation. This falls within the realm of pedagogical implications. As in 2005 (Chapter 4), the arrangement of the Transition Stage was mainly administrative and so the discussion of the curriculum content is limited to the impact that administrative sequences may have had on learning outcomes.

3.1 Curriculum content

The transition stage marked the point at which WoW Programmes' staff had the most direct contact with each individual participating in the WoW Programmes – this is true for every version of the programme since its inception. In the case of postgraduates from a variety of Humanities disciplines, there was no possibility of applying the "One Size Fits All" approach, as students had different interests, needs, requirements and specialized areas that WoW Staff had to take into account when assisting with securing internships and facilitating the move into the workplace. In 2006 the new administrative decision to select and focus on five scholarship holders meant that WoW staff's attention focused on those five individuals only. This allows for even closer analysis of those students' experiences, with the opportunity to examine the efficacy of the new selection process that was implemented in 2006.

3.1.1 The interview process

The task of attempting to secure interviews for internships was always easier when organisations had hosted interns from the WoW Programmes before, and for this reason the WoW Programmes especially concentrated on maintaining relationships with corporate workplaces that had participated as host organisations in previous years. For example, the WoW Programmes already had a relationship with the national investment and banking corporation where BAB and EGM were placed for their internships: one of the participants from the 2003 WoW Internship Programme completed her internship there.

We were surprised that BAB and EGM started their internships immediately after their first interview. That is, after the first meeting they were asked to collect their access cards and were showed to their workstations. Typically, the potential host organisations liaised with the WoW staff after the interviews, regarding their selection of interns, and other details such as starting dates. In some cases, the potential host organisations changed their decisions to host any interns after the interviews, due to internal changes or because they could not envisage a "fit" with the interns interviewed.

When I asked the interviewer at BAB and EGM's host organisation why the process of accepting interns had been so fast-tracked, she explained

> ... because the last intern you sent us has given us absolute faith in the standard of individuals from the programme. (Email correspondence from representative at host organisation to researcher, 19 April 2006)

The success of the WoW Programmes generally depended on its achievement of enabling Humanities postgraduates to make their transitions into both non-governmental *and* corporate environments. In the cases of non-governmental organisations, the possibilities for internships typically depended on the availability of funding for remuneration. In the cases of corporate workplaces, the issues of relevance of an intern with a Humanities background usually stalled the process (perceptions of Humanities graduates - and therefore by extension postgraduates - and the applicability of their training for the workplace is discussed in more detail in Chapter 1).

Since it was more difficult to achieve this in corporate workplaces, we felt, as WoW staff, some anxiety about these expectations: how could we ensure an ongoing stream of high-caliber individuals, and thus maintain annual opportunities for students within a particular corporation? Fortunately this dilemma was resolved in 2006 as a result of the decision to guarantee internships only to students who were scholarship holders, and who had had to meet the stringent requirements of the selection process. We therefore had confidence in 2006 that we would be providing exemplary students as interns to corporations with which we had already worked.

Apart from their specific experience of joining their corporate host organisation, BAB's and EGM's workplace supervisor made an observation that suggests opportunity for any newcomer trying to secure an interview for an internship or employment. BAB's and EGM's supervisor thought that the weblogs had excellent potential as a "screening mechanism" to assist host organisations to select interns even before the interviewing process:

> I think that's an excellent screening mechanism because you can definitely see what people think of, how they write, which is quite important. What goes on in their minds, what makes them tick… and I think that's a great mechanism before an interview. And you know... obviously they would start working on their blogs before they came to us. Yes, I think that would be great. And we would definitely see when there is a student with great potential, or someone with a good fit with [host organisation]. (Appendix 8.3, BAB and EGM's Workplace Supervisor, Interview, 11 July 2006, p 214)

Thus the weblogs could be used effectively to help organisations to assess the critical thinking, writing skills and personal motivations of prospective candidates for internships or employment.

3.1.2 Liaising with the host organisation

In her first interview (which took place shortly after her internship had started), BAB said that she did not believe she would not have secured the internship placement without intervention from the WoW Programmes. She believed that her successful placement had depended mainly on

> ...somebody senior to help me get in there, just to get my foot in the door. (Appendix 8.2, BAB Interview, 20 June 2006)

It seemed that BAB was much more aware of the power of networks and the importance of networking than her peers, and that this awareness would have been developed through her exposure to her father's work (her father held a high-ranking position in the mining industry).

Despite the fact that BAB had access to well-established, prime networks through her father, this did not assist her in terms of the practicalities of securing an internship. BAB's father gave her his opinions, which guided her decision-making for her choice of internship placement. Any names or introductions he provided did not ultimately lead to entry to the workplace, however, and BAB's internship opportunities occurred solely through the WoW Programmes. When BAB's access to connections in the mining industry became evident in interviews with mining companies, either overtly or subtly, the response from the host organisation was negative. In one instance the connections were perceived as threatening (to the host organisation) and in the other, BABS was perceived as being advantaged due to her access to networks, and therefore not as "needy" of the internship opportunity as other candidates. BAB finally achieved an internship at a host organisation that was ranked in the top seven best companies to work for from 2000 to 2005 in a Deloitte and Touche survey. The status and reputation of the host organisation appeared to be important to BAB, and she believed that her host organisation was one of the best banks in South Africa; she valued that the organisation worked internationally and believed that employees were treated very well. (Appendix 8.2, BAB Interview, 9 May 2006)

In my role as a WoW staff member, I found that representatives of host organisations were always willing to discuss the possibility of hosting interns. Sourcing potential internships often required WoW staff to conduct "cold" calls and initial contact with a decision maker was always achieved. Explanations for these easy introductions may include that organisations saw merit in the WoW Programmes, or saw benefit in hosting organisations. It is also possible that staff at potential host organisations were impressed – or even taken aback – by a representative from the "Ivory Tower" of academia initiating contact with them. My intuition was that the reputation of the University of the Witwatersrand and the Graduate Centre "opened the door" and facilitated

discussion. This then was what made the difference between a student contacting an organisation independently, and the WoW Programmes contacting the same organisation. Telephone conversations were typically followed up with explanatory emails from the WoW Programmes' office to the organisation. It was at this point that the process of placing students either faltered, or continued.

3.2 Pedagogy

A feature that distinguishes the pedagogy inherent in this Activity Stage is that there is a unique opportunity to evaluate the teaching of interview skills through the insights interviewers are sometimes prepared to share with WoW staff (and therefore WoW participants). Once we were able to secure interviews in 2006, prospective host organisations were aware of the fact that they would be interviewing a scholarship holder - a candidate from a select group. This seemed to encourage some interviewers to share their perception of the candidate more readily than in previous years.

Interviewers' perceptions of candidates in 2006 were also an obvious point of departure for discussions of individual performance during interviews. As the scholarship holders attended more than one interview, they experienced role models with various interviewing styles, which raised another opportunity: to prepare prospective interns for the different communication styles interviewers use.

3.2.1 The interview process

The workshop on writing a curriculum vitae and interviewing skills had been included in the Training Programme every year since 2002. The consistency of the issues that emerged from feedback from interviewers confirmed that formal instruction was needed in this area. After input on how to write a curriculum vita, the interviewing session incorporated role-playing, which was then videotaped. Students were therefore able to view their videotapes to access their strengths and growth areas. This was also helpful to encourage students to think about the interview as a process, rather than focusing exclusively on specific questions during the interview.

The session included emphasis on body language and non-verbal communication, with the objective of encouraging students to identify the emotions and thoughts that may accompany

body language. The role-plays in this sense also developed awareness amongst students of what their own body language may be saying. We also looked at spoken communication, such as choice of words and question development. We found that this helped students realize that it can be very difficult to create questions spontaneously. This provided the transition to the final discussion, preparation for a successful interview with an interviewer at a host organisation.

WoW staff role-played interviews with each scholarship holder, for every interview arranged for a potential internship placement. Discussions after the role-play typically referred back to the content of the training session. In addition, WoW staff encouraged each potential host organisation's interviewers to provide feedback after the interviews, and this was incorporated into skills development for each scholarship holder, and for preparation for the next interview. This is a significant feature of the WoW Programmes, as an interviewer's comments on a student's interview skills constituted feedback that is not usually available after a conventional job interview process, and it would be unlikely for an applicant outside of a programme like this to receive similar feedback on perceptions s/he created during an interview. In 2006, the fact that we had only a small group of selected scholarship holding students to focus on meant that the feedback and process was more detailed and comprehensive that had occurred in previous years.

An example of this level of feedback occurred when all five-scholarship holders were invited for an interview at a non-governmental host organisation, which is a negotiating forum for the government, business, labour and the community. This organisation had hosted, and retained, one of the interns from the 2005 WoW Programmes (JN).

This was the first workplace interview for the 2006 group of scholarship holders that the WoW Internship Programme arranged. The interviewer for the first round gave verbal feedback about the students' interview performances. I captured this feedback in an email (10 April 2006) and circulated it to all of the interviewees, and to the interviewer - who confirmed that it was an accurate reflection of her feedback. (Email correspondence from interviewer, 11 April 2006)

According to the interviewer, all the interview performances were similar in terms of standard. (Interviewer's feedback, 10 April 2006) The scholarship holders were interviewed singly, one after the other. A practical observation from the interviewer was that applicants entered the interview without pen and paper, and for the interviewer they therefore appeared 'empty-handed' and unprofessional. The interviewer found that all applicants asked inappropriate questions that showed a lack of research about the organisation:

> It is not enough to Google [host organisation] and read commentary about it. More in depth reading about the workings of an organisation is required. (Interviewer's feedback, 10 April 2006)

The interviewer also noticed most of the applicants had visited the fourth link in the search engine Google, which was a link to a critical essay on [the host organisation]. The applicants then used the article as the basis for a question in the interview. The interviewer said that

> A question on how [the host organisation] handles criticism is inappropriate in this, or any other interview. It's a negative way to end an interview. It also comes across as pretentious – you are not really in a position at this stage to ask such loaded questions. A much better question was (from one applicant): "What are your expectations of an intern?" (Interviewer's feedback, [email] 10 April 2006)

Despite the input students received during the Training Programme's session on preparing for an interview, lack of preparedness was the most common reason that students did not actively participate during interviews.

The interviewer suggested that when interviewees were invited to ask questions about the host organisation, they should have asked more practical and concise questions, related to their interests:

> Most of you are interested in HIV/Aids research. Instead of asking a very complex question, ask about the [host organisation's] workplace code of good practice on HIV/AIDS. Ask: "How difficult was that to get signed off? Who developed it?" (Interviewer's feedback, [email] 10 April 2006)

The interviewer's observation here suggests that sophisticated questions do not impress. Rather, they may suggest the possibility of "postgraduate arrogance". We learned from this that we needed to guide interviewees to keep their questions to how things work in the organisation, so as to demonstrate a practical interest. Postgraduate training teaches students to be critical and not to shy away from contentious issues – but this needs to be handled differently in the workplace, with some awareness of professional appropriacy.

The interviewer also noticed that all applicants were nervous. While the interviewer believed this was understandable, the interviewer said that it compromised and even "crippled" (Interviewer's feedback, [email] 10 April 2006) some of the applicants. Nervousness and anxiety during the interviews appeared to have contributed to applicants suggesting that they would do *any* work in the host organisation. The interviewer was also critical of this and suggested that applicant should

> Try to get the balance right. You know you will be doing menial work. That's fine. Say it. But also say you are focused on achieving X. Because X is your passion. Then, also say how it will benefit the company for you to be working on X. You're saying: "I don't mind doing menial work, but I can add value in this area…" (Interviewer's feedback, [email] 10 April 2006)

Anxiety makes students appear desperate and therefore inclined to compromise themselves. This is not to the host organisation's advantage as it suggests that the candidate lacks focus and will need to be micro-managed.

The interviewer's final point and advice to applicants suggests a straightforward, unambiguous perspective on the interview process and the objectives for it, from organisations considering hosting interns:

> Interviewers are not out to trick you. It's not an exam situation. It's not a test. They simply want to see: Do we like you? Will you fit with this organisation's culture? Will you be able to do the work? (Interviewer's feedback, [email] 10 April 2006)

This suggests reviewing the content of the training on interviewing skills that is a part of the WoW Training Programme. Specifically, the course designers should question if the approach to training interviewing skills promotes over-analysis. Humanities postgraduates are already well trained in analysis – and yet it is possible to miss the importance of being clear about core objectives such as the ones above.

After this first round of interviews at this particular host organisation, some interviewees were to called back to give a presentation on an aspect of the host organisation's work, to the Director. Some scholarship holders baulked at the prospect of having to work on the presentation over a weekend. The interviewer at the host organisation, who was also the person responsible for arranging the presentations to the Director, reacted sharply and pointed out that this contradicted any positive and enthusiastic impression potential interns should be ready to make. The feedback was in itself a valuable lesson for the scholarship holders.

It is possible that there was added pressure for scholarship holders attending interviews – more so than for students from the WoW Programmes from previous years – because the organisations knew that candidates were scholarship holders who had been through a rigorous selection process. Prospective host organisations were therefore expecting the "crème de la crème" – the highest caliber of individuals who would be flexible, enthusiastic, have leadership potential and a whole-hearted commitment to learning and working.

During the selection process we predicted the possibility that potential host organisations would not view EGM in this way. In her panel interview for the scholarship, EGM came across as ambivalent and unconvincing. We were concerned that EGM created obstacles for herself through her word choice. An interviewer may predict poor consequences with clients and for team interactions when the tone and content of what a prospective intern says is negative. WoW staff had attempted to coach EGM during the training component, to help her to project a more positive, enthusiastic demeanor. Although she did not appear particularly receptive to this (Field notes, 27 January 2006) and never responded to specific exercises set for her, she appeared enthusiastic about the benefits of receiving feedback from interviewers:

> *As someone whose been trying to get into the job market, I cannot emphasise the importance of getting feedback from potential job providers. By discussing the job seeker's strengths and weaknesses, will help in improving their job-hunting skills. (, EGM's Weblog, 27 February 2006)*

A possible explanation is that EGM valued the input from practicing professionals in the workplace more than the input from the WoW staff. If this was the case, the fact that the interview process included input from the interviewers themselves benefitted students like EGM.

3.2.2 Liaising with the host organisation

In 2005 the intern, and representatives from the host organisation and the WoW Programmes signed a learning agreement for the internship during the transition stage. In 2006 however the Graduate Centre did not take responsibility for ensuring that a signed placement agreement between the University and the host organisation was in place for every internship arranged for the scholarship holders. We realised that most host organisations already had specialized and specific (to the company) contractual requirements for new employees, and that they would prefer to use these – albeit with some adjustments – for interns. We were also influenced by the fact that, for the internships that were part of their Postgraduate Diploma in Management (PDM), Wits Business School left the responsibility for the development of the contracts up to the hosting organisation. (For further information on the PDM internships at Wits Business School, please see Appendix 1 (Input Evaluation: History and Development of the World of Work Programmes at Wits University), Input Evaluation.)

As course designers we had to weigh up the perceived learning value in administering the learning agreement or contract for an internship, or overseeing the process. We opted for the latter for two reasons.

Firstly, shifting the onus of the learning agreement or contract to students and host organisations was one of the ways in which the 2006 WoW Programmes promoted independence from the Programmes, especially at the Transition Stage. This approach was intentional, because we wanted to empower the majority of the students who we knew we would not be assisting to find placements. Secondly, we believed that there were important learning opportunities in a process of negotiating a learning agreement or contract, that were possibly impeded by simply making the document that we had already developed available. During the Transitions Stage we therefore advised students to raise and discuss the scope, nature and timeframe of the placement, and to look at, amongst others, issues of confidentiality, intellectual property (where applicable), assessment and performance requirements. Our role was to guide the process and to be available to provide advice. Students most often asked us for input on how to broach or handle the subject of remuneration. At the same time, host organisations often asked for advice on the amount interns should be paid. We were able to provide a scale, based on the amounts that WoW host organisations had paid interns in previous years, and 2006 organisations used these as benchmarks.

We kept in mind, however, one of the primary reasons for introducing and insisting upon the learning agreement or contract in the first place: to ensure that real learning would take place during the internships. We therefore monitored that objectives for learning were in place in any learning agreement or contract signed for the scholarship based internships.

3.3 Overview: Process evaluation of Activity Stage Three, Transition

In 2006 WoW staff felt some security in the caliber of students going forward to the internship component. Host organisations, especially corporate working environments, had high expectations of the type of students who would be joining as interns from the WoW Programmes, either because they were aware the students were scholarship holders, or because they had hosted students from the Programmes before and had successful experiences with those interns. The selection process we implemented in 2006 to secure five scholarship holders reassured us that we had done as much as possible to know each scholarship holder as much as possible at the Transition Stage. Matching prospective interns with potential host organisations was therefore a

more accurate process, and we were able to meet the expectations of host organisations with some confidence.

The respondents were generally exemplary in terms of their generic and hard skills, even at the Selection Stage and before they attended the training component. However, they reported that they had tried, before participating in the WoW Programmes, to secure internships, and were always unsuccessful. Only when the WoW Programmes introduced them to potential host organisations did they gain access to interviews and consideration for internships. This suggests that the power of networks for students may be overestimated, and that there is a real issue with the ways in which the workplace regards postgraduates from the Humanities, and their value to the world of work.

One of the benefits of having a smaller group of individuals (the scholarship holders) proceeding to the internship component was that WoW staff could coach and focus on each individual more intensively than in any previous instance of the WoW Programmes. It also meant that we could elicit detailed feedback from interviewers, and use that feedback to develop interviewing skills. General feedback about interviewing skills in 2005 confirmed that students were not volunteering information that confirmed their employability during job interviews. There did not appear to be a significant improvement in this area in 2006, which suggests the need for closer evaluation of the interviewing skills session that is part of the training component.

A major administrative change that affected students' transitions into the workplaces, albeit during interviewing and liaising with host organisations, was that the course designers decided that the WoW Programmes would not act as the third party in the learning agreement or contract that was to be signed once a host organisation accepted a student for an internship. The learning agreement was therefore between the host organisation and the student only. The WoW staff kept a very close eye on the process, requesting to be informed and checking that learning objectives were in place. It would seem that this approach worked well in that it encouraged students to lead the process themselves.

4. Activity Stage Four: World of Work Internship Component

Activity Stage Four marks the period during which scholarship holders were interns in actual workplaces. An interesting and fundamental difference between this and the former stages is the new emphasis on learning in the workplace as a largely social activity.

While participants had guest lecturers as primary sources of information during the training component, they would have had to share and debate goals, aspirations and experiences in different ways during their internships. When the scholarship holders entered the workplaces, shared learning between them and the other participants in the WoW Programmes became paramount, as did tools for interactions that would encourage participation and collaboration to foster motivation and transfer – especially of generic or "soft" skills.

Holland (in Hager and Holland, 2006) believes that developing and acquiring "soft" skills is an ongoing process that should occur in both educational and workplace contexts as a result of reflection and self-development, peer judgement and feedback. This affirms our expectation for learning of the soft and hard skills that were a part of the Training Programme to continue during the Internships. Holland also suggests that the most important aspects of characteristics of graduate attributes in terms of their application during the internships are their tendency to cluster, to be contextual, and to have contingent aspects, including their limitations with respect to transferability. Holland focuses on personal development, but also suggests the value and importance of collective forms of learning according to three distinct phases: tertiary study, professional practice and ultimately, leadership development. She identifies the learning outcomes from each phase as respectively, graduate capacities, professional capacities and leadership capabilities. (in Hager and Holland, 2006) The focus in this evaluation is on the learning outcomes as they pertain to professional capacities.

4.1 Curriculum design

The strategy in 2006 for the WoW Programmes to move the responsibility for the process of developing the learning agreement or contract to host organisations and interns suggested that we had less control, to an extent, over the practical aspects of the internships such as the specific work students would be doing, and therefore the learning outcomes they would gain from them. Although host organisations negotiated the nature of work with the scholarship holders during the internships independently of the WoW Programmes, we insisted on being well informed. It was important for the WoW Programmes' staff to be aware of the work students were doing because, as Boud and Solomon (in Hager and Holland, 2006) suggest, it is the nature of the work during the internship itself that provides the basis for the curriculum.

Lees' (2002) explanation of what employability means in practice is valuable for the evaluation of the curriculum during this Activity Stage. Although Lees looks at developing employability for

the individual student in Higher Education programmes more generally, the five main areas she suggests as being important are still relevant to the WoW Programmes with its more specific objective of developing employability skills. According to Lees (2002), content of the internship component should enhance

1. knowledge and understanding of the subject of study,
2. developing skills, both subject specific and personal and key skills,
3. work experience – and the articulation of learning from those experiences,
4. personal development - strategic thinking or reflection – thinking about what the students has done and how it has helped the student develop as a person, not just doing it,
5. possessing appropriate personal qualities. (Lees, 2002)

4.1.1 Length of internship

As per previous programmes, we hoped to help participants achieve these learning and development areas in a time frame of three months. It is worthwhile to consider if such a time frame is realistic: One of the workplace supervisors in 2006 believed that the time frame of the internship component was appropriate:

> I think that the three months is a good time because we are really starting to see, now we starting to worry about what we're going to do afterwards you know. We want to keep them on for a contracted period of time, so we've been looking at that. But I think the time frame is great. I think you can also mess around with the time, it can be either too short or too long and then they become internship employees and it becomes hard for them to leave. I think that's it. (Workplace Supervisor Interview, 20 June 2006)

The same workplace supervisor described the internship as a having been a three-month interview:

> The process of working with the interns and meeting with you on a regular basis – yes. Because... even better than an interview, because you get to see their good days and their bad days and an interview is just one day and it could be bad. I think a lot of people can interview very well and then you put them to the test in some things and they don't necessarily have the knowledge or the initiative. (Workplace Supervisor Interview, 11 July 2006)

4.1.2 Knowledge acquisition during the internship

The metaphor used in the previous section – that the internship period was like a three-month interview – is interesting, as is the workplace supervisor's mention of knowledge and initiative

necessary for the workplace. The implication is that, during the three months, the workplace supervisor was able to see how the interns applied their existing knowledge, and acquired and applied new knowledge. Eraut (1994) was mentioned in the Process Evaluation in Chapter 4, for his classification of three types of knowledge in the workplace: codified, cultural and personal. EGM is an example of an intern encountering these types of knowledge. In terms of codified knowledge, EGM said that she had acquired new skills during her internship relating to computers, office automation and change management. (Appendix 9.2, EGM Interview, 20 June 2006) In terms of personal knowledge, EGM believed that she had learned

> …to be more disciplined because in some of the projects you... there is so much independence attached to them and you have to keep yourself motivated and concentrate on achieving completion of the project. (Appendix 9.2, EGM Interview, 20 June 2006, p 248)

Eraut (1994) says that personal knowledge incorporates the ability of individuals to use skills and knowledge gained from their own personal experiences to make meaning of their current, practical situation. IUP said – in an interview conducted during her internship - that her (personal) knowledge gained from her Masters in HIV/AIDS (Forced Migration Studies) was valuable for her in the workplace. Even though she was not referring to the content of her Masters degree (HIV/AIDS) in particular, she was using her research skills and ability to analyse. She said that,

> I am positive that these are skills that one cannot do without, and that I have benefited from going through postgrad studies. I think they have helped me here and I don't think that it's any time lost or anything. (Appendix 10.2, IUP Interview, 4 July 2006)

The fact that IUP was able to consider the relevance of her postgraduate studies and the specific areas of her Humanities training that were now proving to have some value in the workplace suggests a significant degree of self-awareness. Eraut says that self-awareness is one facet of 'self-knowledge', which he defines as

> knowledge of one's own knowledge and skills, when and how to use them and when to look beyond one's own resources. (1994)

4.1.3 Shifting ideas about a career track

Eraut suggests that self-management involves using self-knowledge in order to achieve a particular end. (1994) During the Selection Stage, BAB had been clear about her interest in and plans for a career in political risk analysis. She had accepted however that a route to such a career

would not typically be straightforward for a Humanities student, and that a strategy could be to enter the organisation through an alternative department. After only 15 days into her internship, BAB seemed torn – not by the fact that her internship was not in political risk analysis, but at making a future career choice between Human Resources and change management, which was the area she was involved in through her "alternative" access to the host organisation. (Appendix 8.2) Then, when she was well into her internship, BAB reflected that she had learned it was possible to work in what could be considered an "unusual" environment for a Humanities postgraduate:

> *I always thought that it would be difficult for a person like me without any degree in finance to work in a corporate/financial environment. But I proved this doubt wrong when my first real job was at an investment bank. The only advice I can give to someone who has the same worry is to try and learn new aspects of your environment and what your company does every day. Make the effort to gain more knowledge, ask questions, and be open to new ideas. (Appendix 8.4, BAB's Weblog, 11 April 2007)*

Thus BAB had started the process of identifying a different career path for herself, and it appears that her self-knowledge to do so was enhanced by her internship experience. Similarly, RAME [intern 2007] realised that Humanities students are

> *seen more as 'paper pushers'*

and said that she

> *would not like to be judged only on my qualifications but also by the things I have been engaged in and my personality. (Appendix 8.4, BAB's Weblog, Comment posted by RAME, 11 April 2007)*

IUP was disappointed that her work as an intern did not explicitly draw on her interests in the HIV/AIDS pandemic in Africa, which she had studied as part of her Masters Degree in Forced Migration Studies at Wits University. Instead, her internship was to draw on her part-time work in media, and on her Honours degree in Media and Society Studies. I was responsible for urging IUP to take the internship offer despite the fact that it would not tap into her immediate career aspirations. (Appendix 10.2) This was because I did not believe that we (the World of Work Programmes' staff) would be able to secure any other internship opportunity for IUP, because she was Zimbabwean. IUP was also clearly aware that her options were limited because she was not South African, but she consistently expressed her disappointment, even when it was pointed out to her that her workplace supervisor also had a background in media and had used the qualification for entry to the workplace, and had then moved into other areas. It was only when IUP was halfway through her internship that she appeared to start to reconcile her disappointment

at not having the role she had hoped for, with the benefits of having a "foot in the door". In her second interview, IUP reflected on this compromise more positively:

> Yes, but now that I look at it, it's something that I can use to build up on whatever else I want to follow in the future, because everything is hinged on communications anyway. So now I am comfortable with it. I am even hoping to become a Communications Coordinator here in the event that I am taken. I think that I have 'adjusted' if I can put it that way. (Appendix 10.2, IUP Interview, 4 July 2006)

4.1.4 Orientation and establishing identity

Many interns had a "rough start" in the first weeks of their internships. DOZ found the first stage of her internship difficult. Two weeks after she had joined, she said that she felt "lost" and that she had started to question herself. (Appendix 11.2, DOZ Interview, 19 May 2006) She found however that she was able to increase her understanding of the area she was working in (Public Relations) by attending meetings. (Appendix 11.2, DOZ Interview, 19 May 2006)

IUP was late for her first day of work. She said that she "Felt very embarrassed" about this. She was clearly well aware of the need to project professionalism from her first day. (Email correspondence, 19 April 2006) Nevertheless, IUP selected four areas to do with her work and her workplace that seemed to be priorities for her, and gave feedback on these. They were

- *Work allocation*: "Today alone I have to meet with about 10 or more people who will be telling me what they do and I will be asking them what they want me to do for them. I have to set up an action plan of what I intend to do before the end of 2 weeks." (Email correspondence, 19 April 2006)
- *Approach to work*: "Been told that I am supposed to work on my own and that I shouldn't expect anyone to be following up on me (pretty hectic!)" (Email correspondence, 19 April 2006)
- *Salary / stipend*: "I have been asked what salary I would like and I haven't answered that question yet will be forced to answer it at 4pm. I am not even sure what to say." (Email correspondence, 19 April 2006)
- *Dress code:* "The dressing looks formal so I guess I am going have to tweak my wardrobe a bit." (Email correspondence, 19 April 2006)

The ways in which work was delegated to interns, the host organisation's approach to work (close supervision of newcomers or encouraging independence and autonomy), the salary or stipend and the dress code appeared to be the primary areas of concern and interest for interns as newcomers

and appeared to impact directly on the socialization process and how well interns orientated themselves and established their identity in the host organisations.

Sweitzer and King (2004) use the word *morale* to refer to the interpersonal and intrapersonal tone of the experience at the host organisation. About two weeks after she had started her internship, IUP's morale was high.

> *The purpose of this internship is to give me world of work experience, the much-needed chance to network with internal and external professionals from the industry. Looking at [host organisation] I will be gaining experience from labour, business, government, community constituencies and the media fraternity.*
>
> *I can feel it already that it is going to be a fantastic experience both for my personal and professional development. Not to mention the hard work involved in streamlining the communications strategy. By the end of this internship I will be in a much better position to position myself. I get the feeling here that I am not an intruder for whom they had to find a task for me. Because of this I am willing to make myself available to learn and to seeing an opportunities in the tasks that I am supposed to do. (IUP's Weblog, 3 May 2006)*

Besides the fact that IUP's tone is optimistic, she had clearly defined her goals and had begun to develop an understanding of the skills needed to achieve them. Sweitzer and King (2004) suggest that this is most important at this developmental stage. IUP's morale contrasts with EGM's, whose trepidation was evident in a comment she wrote after one of IUP's weblog posts at the beginning of the Transition Stage:

> *Ah yeah IUP. I wish I could rejoice at the fact that the training is over because now we have a challenge waiting for us and that is the world of work. (IUP's Weblog, Comment by EGM, 12 April 2006)*

It would seem that developing a knowledge and understanding of the formal and informal networks in the host organisation, and being able to use these appropriately and strategically, was valuable for establishing identity in the workplace. One of the most effective ways for interns to access networks during their internships was through the work the host organisation assigned to them. For example, IUP was given the task of working on the design and production of a booklet about her host organisation. She said that

> *The experience required me to network with internal colleagues as well as with people from outside the organisation like [six non-governmental organisations]. (IUP's Weblog, 28 June 2006)*

Practically, drawing upon networks assisted interns with career planning and work plans after the internships. Once within the host organisation, some interns had access to the host organisation's careers website for internal positions. In addition, workplace supervisors and colleagues were

available resources for information about career opportunities and, as in BAB's case, advised on the appropriacy of a position for the intern. (Appendix 8.2, BAB Interview, 20 June 2006)

Organisational assimilation is the process by which organisational newcomers build relationships and become organisational members, by learning the values, norms, and the required behaviour or the "culture" of the organisation (Mignerey and Rubin, 1995). Upon entering her host organisation, BAB clearly assimilated to her organisation's particular culture and communication norms. After assisting colleagues with organising an induction for new employees, and after listening to presentations on the host organisations' culture and values, BAB believed she had an understanding of the employability traits that would secure employment at the host organisation:

> *Five aspects of a person should be strong and prominent: A person should be smart, competitive, hard working, a self-starter, and a person with set values. (Appendix 8.4, BAB's Weblog, 16 May 2006)*

BAB then asserted clearly (and publicly through her weblog) that she subscribed to the culture and values of her host organisation.

> *Personally these are aspects I deem very important in my life. I believe in empowering myself, being confident in what I do, and taking pride in every aspect of my work and personal life. And to sustain these characteristics, I believe in the importance of care, dignity, and respect of one self and those around you. (Appendix 8.4, BAB's Weblog, 16 May 2006)*

Zamanou and Glaser (1994) define organisational culture as being the

> ...shared perceptions, patterns of belief, symbols, rites and rituals and myths that evolve over time and function as the glue that holds the organisation together.

The way in which BAB aligned herself with her host organisations' culture suggests that the organisation managed its culture so as create a positive impact on employee morale through involvement, teamwork, information flow, and consistent, fair supervision. Zamanou and Glaser, (1994) confirm that when organisational culture is managed in this way, it affects individual participation and involvement, as was the case with BAB.

4.1.5 Language, nationality and access

Responding to a question about advice that she would give to a postgraduate student from the Humanities about to enter the world of work for the first time, IUP pointed out that

> Academia is different from the world of work practically. The language and how people relate on a daily basis may be slightly different so one needs to adopt a flexible approach. (Appendix 10.2, IUP Exit Interview, 4 December 2006)

BAB used her first language, Afrikaans, with colleagues. She occasionally found that English-speaking colleagues would

> ...switch over in Afrikaans to me, but then will switch back over in English. So it's quite a mixture. (Appendix 8.2, BAB Interview, 11 July 2006)

For BAB, this meant that she could communicate in a relaxed manner. Speaking to a person in their home language was, for her, a way of showing respect that was often reciprocated. It made it easier for BAB

> ...to communicate and [you] feel like you on the same wave length. (Appendix 8.2, BAB Interview, 11 July 2006)

For BAB this facilitated access, as she also believed that

> Afrikaans and English are different cultures. (Appendix 8.2, BAB Interview, 11 July 2006)

Appreciating that language is a predictor of organisational culture indicates that BAB was realizing Holland's argument that employability traits in practice are contextual. (In Hager and Holland, 2006) Interestingly, IUP was not as prepared to be "flexible" about language in a social context. In a weblog post (IUP's Weblog, 'I don't speak your language', 17 June 2006) she bemoaned the fact that she was regularly, as a black woman, asked why she could not speak any South African languages. She found this invasive. It would seem that if IUP had difficulties accessing language in the workplace, she was more prepared to compromise herself there than she was willing to do socially.

In fact there were, for IUP, some advantages to not being a South African citizen in a South African workplace. In particular, IUP said that

> I would say being a non-South African gives me focus. I look at my internship as an opportunity that I shouldn't take lightly especially because I am a foreigner here. It is difficult to get a job when one is a foreigner, as employers consider citizens first before taking foreigners. So for me this has been a blessing which I wish could be carried further. I have become mature and this is why I have managed to become focused and basically throw myself in. (Appendix 10.2, IUP Interview, 4 July 2006)

While IUP said that she felt she could not take the opportunity of the internship for granted because she was not South African and possibly applied herself more to the experience because of this, she also had a keen awareness of the competition for internships such as the one she was completing:

> It's to do with being a foreigner, *and* being a Humanities student. It means that I have to compete with millions of other Humanities students here and in this case it's millions of other deserving South Africans. South Africa is at the moment focusing on getting their unemployed graduates to be employed through various learnerships programmes and JIPSA [Joint Initiative for Priority Skills Acquisition] initiatives. So when somebody gets an opportunity like this... it's a blessing to be honest. (Appendix 10.2, IUP Interview, 4 July 2006)

4.2 Pedagogy

Knight and Yorke (2000) suggest that employability is about how we teach what we teach, and have defined principles of good teaching that are consistent with the development of employability skills and attributes. Their suggestions appear to be geared towards academic programmes generally, where there is some commitment to developing employability in the Higher Education curriculum. They are still, however, a good starting point to consider pedagogy in a programme such as the WoW Programmes, which has the development of employability as a core objective.

As pertains employability development, students' teaching encounters across a programme should, according to Knight and Yorke (2000):

- Alert them to the 'rules of the game' - make them aware of what is valued and how it may be produced, both in general and in each case.
- Use the requisite variety of media (face-to-face, audio-visual, on-line conferencing, asynchronous information and communications technology).
- Use the requisite variety of methods (e.g. work experience).
- Be in a variety of styles (coaching, instructing, facilitating, clarifying).
- Meet the standard indicators of good teaching, namely, interest, clarity, enthusiasm.
- Be structured across the programme as a whole so that they get progressively less help and guidance from teachers as they encounter more complex situations, concepts, arrangements, etc.
- This entitlement should be explicit in a programme-wide teaching summary.

  Knight and Yorke (2000)

These pedagogical requirements, amongst others, are taken into account in the evaluation of the internship component.

4.2.1 Workplace supervisors: pedagogical approaches

About two weeks after she had started her internship, IUP detailed her explicit expectations of her workplace supervisor at her weblog. These were clear and unprompted, and reveal a typical expectation from interns of what they expected from workplace supervisors:

> *I require a mentor who will be available to help me through this time. Somebody who can give me feedback on how I am performing and how I can make it better. (IUP's Weblog, 3 May 2006)*

EGM compared the structured, deadline-oriented nature of work in an academic setting, with the more flexible nature of work in the workplace:

> *Unlike varsity where the normal procedure would be failing if you do not submit your assignment on time, my work situation gives me plenty of time to work and breathe. (EGM's Weblog, 13 July 2006)*

EGM said she appreciated this laissez-faire style of supervision:

> *Our supervisors are often not in the office but we have their numbers in case we need them. They are always available to talk when I need them. I love the freedom attached to my work .It wouldn't be nice to have a supervisor watching over your shoulder each time. (EGM's Weblog, 13 July 2006)*

But EGM also found that she had to manage her time responsibly due to this style of supervision. EGM drew on advice given from a guest lecturer from the WoW Training Programme, to cope with what she perceived to be the differences in academic supervision versus workplace supervision:

> *While I enjoy the freedom attached to my work, I get to learn to be responsible. I often have to remind myself to be committed and remain motivated towards my work. With the flexibility and time given, it is easy to be demotivated and unfocused. I remember one of the speakers from the WoW training who said always find something to do, if you have nothing to do. So when there is nothing to do or when I am taking breaks from my research I practice my computer skills. (EGM's Weblog, 13 July 2006)*

DOZ's arrangement with her workplace supervisor was more structured. They met two to three times a week, and DOZ's workplace supervisor had assigned a colleague to work with her when he knew he would be away. (Appendix 11.2, DOZ Interview, 19 May 2006)

It is particularly interesting that LAY's workplace supervisor for her internship was in fact a previous intern DL, who participated in the programme in 2002. The Input Evaluation has more detail on how DL then required intensive, one-on-one coaching to address the impact of his problematic interpersonal behaviours on perceptions of his employability. (Please see Appendix 1 (Input Evaluation: History and Development of the World of Work Programmes at Wits University), especially the section 'Monitoring and mentoring students, and assessing their performance as interns in 2002'). Four years after he had completed his internship, DL was employed - and regarded as employable by his senior - who often referred to DL as his "right-hand man". LAY was positive about his mentoring and supervision skills, which shows a real improvement in his interpersonal skills, and amounted to an effective relationship for IUP. In describing her workplace supervisor, LAY said that he fulfilled the roles of mentor, guide and supervisor:

> He is my guide because he guides me, he lets me know what is expected of me here at [host organisation], how things are done here. So he is a guide in the way that he shows me how I should handle myself, or if I am slacking or anything. This is not how we do things here, we do them in a certain way and if you would like to be employed permanently here, you better try to follow them. He is also a mentor because he teaches me a lot and shares his experiences with me as a past intern. That's why he is teaching me the things he does and how to improve myself. He is also my boss because I have to report to him. (Appendix 12.2, LAY Interview, 10 July 2006, p 325)

Differentiating between "guide" and "mentor" may be helpful to better understand LAY's explanation of her workplace supervisor. In his role as a guide, DL helped LAY navigate the inner workings of the host organisation and the "unwritten office rules". These inner workings of the organisation are simply the "behind the scenes" dynamics, or office politics, that are not always apparent, but are crucial to know. The "unwritten rules" can include the special procedures usually followed, including guidelines that are not always documented, and policies under consideration. DL learned how important it is to relay these "unwritten rules" from his own workplace supervisor:

> Basically what I have learned is that, the person who was my immediate supervisor... made sure that... he did not see me as his competitor, he saw me as somebody he needed to empower, and basically I knew each and every task he was doing. Besides that, he also made me understand how the world of work operates in terms of what happens in a work environment, you know.... He made a reference to some of the work organisational issues… say such and such issue that you see, this is how you try and manage it. I think those are the things I have learned at [workplace supervisor's host organisation in 2002] particularly from my supervisor. So I try all the time, even though it was just a week... I think that each and very task I give, I try to empower her. She is not doing tasks that I don't do, all she does is what I do, so I don't give her tasks like "Can you please get me

> that paper from the fax machine," and all that. I don't do that. (Appendix 12.3, LAY's Workplace Supervisor ['DL'], Interview, 7 June 2006, p 329)

It was interesting that DL referred to his own workplace supervisor during his internship in 2002, as his mentoring role model. DL mentoring LAY was the first instance, five years after the Programmes began, of a pattern of intern learning mentorship skills and then practicing those skills as a workplace supervisor.

It appeared that BAB's supervisor was well aware of the mentor's key role: to nurture the mentee's growth by facilitating an accepting, open and affirming learning atmosphere. In addition, BAB's supervisor supported BAB by making herself available. (Appendix 8.3, BAB and EGM's Workplace Supervisor's Interviews)

The positive feedback BAB received was an effective morale booster and built self-confidence and self-esteem. Clearly BAB's mentor concentrated on what the mentee was doing well and related these successes to BAB. Encouragement and affirmation from her workplace supervisor was important for BAB:

> *...one thing that I'm taking out of this internship into my next career is the positive feedback and the positive outlook I have experienced in the last two months. (Appendix 8.4, BAB's Weblog, 19 June 2006)*

BAB said that the feedback she received from her mentor was positive and constructive. We can assume then that her response to this feedback was not defensive.

> *We have been taught over again that we have the right to approach our supervisors and ask for feedback on our performance at [host organisation]. However, we have been beaten to it. Our supervisors have been giving us feedback even before we could ask. The feedback is great and it boosts the confidence immensely. And it showed me that one of the main problems graduates face is their own self-assurance once they start working. To me this is one of the main reasons behind graduates being scared to start working and the big gap between studying and our first job. (Appendix 8.4, BAB's Weblog, 19 June 2006)*

Positive feedback and support from workplace supervisors for the development of "self assurance" obviously depends on the intern producing meaningful work for the host organisation. The learning agreement at the transition stage would have required negotiation between workplace supervisor and intern, which would then have ensured that work was *meaningful*. It happened, however, and especially in IUP's internship, that the work she performed was, she felt, not valued. One of IUP's main tasks during her internship was to produce a newsletter titled

"Dialogue". She found the task interesting and challenging and appeared to apply herself to it. She was extremely disappointed therefore when the newsletter was not produced:

> I feel short changed though that since I came to [host organisation] no issue of the Dialogue Newsletter has been produced despite having gathered stories enough to fill two issues. ... The ED (Executive Director) and my supervisor gave the impression that they are too busy focusing on other things than helping me by signing off for the production of the newsletter. (Appendix 10.2, IUP Exit Interview, 4 December 2006)

Besides feeling "short-changed", the fact that her work was disregarded probably undermined IUP. Here the relationship between the workplace supervisor and the WoW staff member, and their roles to co-mentor IUP, failed her. In retrospect, the outcome may have been different and IUP may have seen her newsletter produced if the WoW staff member had been more actively involved in tracking the progress of this task.

IUP experienced some frustrations at the beginning of her internship, even though she found that she was able to connect with other staff members easily. These were so upsetting for her that she became tearful when discussing them during the interview. The gist of the issues appeared to be that IUP

> ...expected a fast-paced environment where I am delivering quickly. For instance I would have loved to be rounding up my first issue of the Dialogue (an internal newsletter), but it hasn't happened that way. I think it's also because of the work programme here. I think its structured in a way that they do their agreements and the way they do their meetings, it's such that you cannot pre-empt what is going to happen. I think that's the main reason why I haven't been able to do anything. (Appendix 10.2, IUP Interview, 18 May 2006)

IUP added that this made her feel like she was

> ...hanging, like suffocating. (Appendix 10.2, IUP Interview, 18 May 2006)

In addition, she found the technical and computer facilities at the host organisation dated, and believed that this slowed her down even more. (Appendix 10.2, IUP Interview, 18 May 2006) At this point in the interview, IUP's workplace supervisor said that she had been wondering if IUP had been

> ...managing [herself] or [was] feeling stuck in [her] place. (Appendix 10.2, IUP Interview, 18 May 2006)

The workplace supervisor explained that she had been too involved in her own work responsibilities to investigate further. (Appendix 10.2, IUP Interview, 18 May 2006) The workplace supervisor also explained that IUP's role was a new and necessary one. Colleagues

would not be accustomed to the role that she (IUP) would be filling – all this amounted to the fact that IUP had, the workplace supervisor believed, the opportunity to design her own work approach and direction. Far from consoling IUP, I believe that this perspective may have been alarming for her: not only did she have to manage the pace of work performed at the host organisation, but she also had the added pressure of having to use her own initiative. IUP was, it can be argued, looking towards her workplace supervisor and University mentor to give her clear directives on how to proceed. These were not, however, forthcoming. The workplace supervisor did however advise that IUP should volunteer for smaller tasks to help her integrate into the host organisation successfully, and that she should ask for assistance and guidance more readily. In addition, the workplace supervisor promised to work more closely on a specific plan of action related to a work programme, with IUP. (Appendix 10.2, IUP Interview, 18 May 2006) IUP also mentioned various role models at her host organisation who she could refer to, if only for their professional approach to work. IUP described her role models according to various employability traits. For example, she found her workplace supervisor to be

> ...a very persistent person who works hard. (Appendix 10.2, IUP Interview, 4 July 2006)

Besides her workplace supervisor's persistence, IUP also valued the efficient way that she had developed a work programme. She cited a colleague who not only worked hard but was also very thorough and organised. A third colleague was valued by IUP for both her ability to work hard, and her empathetic way of interacting with colleagues. (Appendix 10.2, IUP Interview, 4 July 2006)

IUP was not always or consistently disappointed with the level or degree of supervision she received from her workplace supervisor. She wrote in a weblog post titled "On top my work!" that after the successful completion of a task she was told:

> *"And good job IUP. You did really well. It's a pleasure to work with someone so professional and on top of her work." (IUP's Weblog, 28 June 2006)*

IUP reflected that

> *I must say it really is a pleasure and rewarding feeling to work with a supervisor who acknowledges the effort you put into work. Thanks for the compliment [workplace supervisor]. When you work with somebody professional sometimes you can't help it but just mirror them as well! (IUP's Weblog, 28 June 2006)*

IUP's two contrasting experiences raises the point for this process evaluation that over time, interns' experiences, and their perceptions of those experiences, may swing in different

directions. If such experiences are consistently recorded in a portfolio such as the weblog, the intern will have captured such a range and be able to see holistically that both seemingly negative and positive experiences are inevitable during an internship.

IUP's disappointment is congruent with Sweitzer and King's (2004) description of a typical trend at the beginning of the internship and just after the intern has joined the host organisation. They refer to disillusionment or a "crisis of growth" and advise that the best way to manage this is to review initial expectations of the internship. Sweitzer and King (2004) also raise the possibility that "disillusionment" is followed by a period of confrontation. At this time the intern may feel more confident and resilient.

This trend was especially evident in IUP. Approximately halfway through her internship IUP seemed to be happier with her work at her host organisation. Her project was progressing well: she had had to collect material from various colleagues, and she found their responses to her challenging, enlightening and humorous. (Appendix 10.2, IUP Interview, 4 July 2006) In this it is clear that IUP was benefitting from her work role, even though the role was not closely aligned to her initial career aspirations. She was, it appeared, learning to respond with some resilience to adverse work situations. Her response indicates that the role assigned to her was in fact secondary to the way in which she practically carried out the role, and the learning she gained while doing so. (Appendix 10.2, IUP Interview, 4 July 2006) IUP found that persistence was essential to complete the task:

> I would say persistence helped me through this process. If you remember when I came my primary concern was to get the Dialogue (an internal newsletter) out as soon as possible. So in my first week I had already made intimations to these people that I wanted stories for the Dialogue, so for me it became a song that I was singing everyday to these guys as well as giving them a deadline of when the stories were needed. (Appendix 10.2, IUP Interview, 4 July 2006)

Sweitzer and King would explain IUP's turnaround thus:

> As issues raised in the Disillusionment stage are resolved, morale begins to rise, as does task accomplishment. (2004)

IUP's succinct summary - by phases - of her socialization process into the host organisation during her second internship interview (when she was approximately halfway through her internship) confirms Sweitzer and King's (2004) theory of the stages of anticipation and confrontation, which they suggest are then followed by the final stages of competence and culmination of the internship:

> I would say that in Phase 1, I was a bit uneasy but I quickly adjusted and became comfortable in the task. Phase 2: I would say is where the action was happening because I am now doing what is basically expected of me and I have become very comfortable. I have relaxed and it feels like home, like I have been doing this for a very long time. And then Phase 3: I would say - what's the word - I would say basically a continuation... I think that's how I would describe it. (Appendix 10.2, IUP Interview, 4 July 2006)

4.2.1.1 Delegation and responsibility

BAB believed that her supervisor was aware of her ability to work independently and complete tasks. (Appendix 8.2, BAB Interview, 9 May 2006) Workplace supervisors' confidence in interns was not an absolute, however. The ways in which workplace supervisors communicated their concerns, and perceived implications (on their own reputations and workloads) of the intern making mistakes, impacted on the intern's confidence levels and feelings of security and assimilation within the host organisation. IUP and her workplace supervisor are a case in point.

Halfway through her internship and as IUP gained confidence and felt that she had been assimilated into the host organisation, her workplace supervisor found it necessary to remind her of her "temporary" status as an intern. This points to an issue relating to trust between the workplace supervisor and the intern, and to the ambiguous role that interns progress to when working successfully in and for the host organisation. To appreciate this ambiguity we need to consider the degree to which the workplace supervisor and other staff regard the intern as an intern, or as a colleague and fellow employee. While IUP had been encouraged to take the initiative regarding her work when she started her internship (Appendix 10.2, IUP Interview, 18 May 2006), she was subsequently told to copy her workplace supervisor on any correspondence to outside organisations. The workplace supervisor called for this because she was concerned that she would be held accountable if IUP made a mistake. (Appendix 10.2, IUP Interview, 4 July 2006) IUP was discouraged and surprised by this, possibly because she believed she had already proved herself by this stage in the internship (halfway), and was entitled to a degree of trust from her workplace supervisor:

> So this email came as a surprise to me because I did not look at myself as somebody who could be compromising the organisation, even though I am an intern. I feel that I am very much capable of conducting my work professionally. (Appendix 10.2, IUP Interview, 4 July 2006)

IUP admitted to signing an email with the designation "Communications Coordinator". This was a formal position and the host organisation was in the process of recruiting for it. IUP had only

applied for the position. IUP's workplace supervisor advised her not to use the title, as it was not legitimately IUP's. The incident indicates a trend evident with some interns when they feel assimilated and socialized into the host organisation. They then assume more permanent status than has been assigned to them. The incident led to IUP reflecting on her colleagues' perceptions of interns generally:

> I don't like it because it doesn't mean that if I am an intern I do not know what is expected of me and that if I am an intern I have no experience whatsoever about the workplace. Why, one of my colleagues here was asking me if I had ever attended a conference!! Sometimes people tend to view the label intern in a negative manner and think that if one is an intern they do not know what they are supposed to be doing. (Appendix 10.2, IUP Interview, 4 July 2006)

Clearly, and from this extract from IUP's second interview midway through her internship, IUP was ready to move from being "The Intern" to a more formalized role in the host organisation. The realities of the situation, and perhaps even frank discussions of whether a formal role could be possible, may need to be discussed with interns at the halfway mark during the internship, and not left for a discussion regarding any possible future opportunities at the organisation at the end of the three month period.

4.2.1.2 Dynamic versus reserved behaviour

BAB was completing her internship at the same host organisation as EGM. BAB and EGM exhibited different personality traits during their internships. The fact that they were at the same site is a useful opportunity to compare those specific personality traits, or dimensions of personality, that make one person more employable than another.

In contemporary or popular psychology, the "Big Five" factors – Openness, Conscientiousness, Extraversion, Agreeableness, and Neuroticism - are five broad domains that are used to describe human personality descriptively. These traits typically organize personality at the highest level and are very broad and comprehensive. I take this into account as I refer to them here only as an initial framework for considering the different personality traits of the two interns in the same workplace. I noticed certain polarities of facets of personality and summarise these as being, on the one hand, dynamic behaviour, and on the other, reserved behaviour.

Within the "Big Five" personality framework, I posit that dynamic behaviour encompasses five dimensions suggested by Fugate and Kinicki (2008) that have a direct impact on an individual's

employability. Openness to changes at work is such a dimension, and individuals with this trait are more likely to be flexible when confronted with the challenges inherent in uncertain situations. Individuals who show resilience in work and career contexts typically have a positive outlook and high levels of personal confidence, with

> ...positive expectations about future events, and show confidence in their ability to handle objective and affective challenges. (Fugate and Kinicki, 2008)

Work and career proactivity can also be grouped under what I term "dynamic behaviour". Fugate and Kinicki suggest that individuals with this propensity

> ...proactively acquire information about the environment (2008)

and are proactive about their function and their careers. High levels of career motivation (such as setting high personal goals) and successful work identity are the final dimensions of dynamic behaviour. "Reserved behaviour" in the workplace would preclude the five dimensions suggested by Fugate and Kinicki (2008), and would therefore be the antithesis of dynamic behaviour.

Halfway through their internships, one of BAB's and EGM's workplace supervisors differentiated between the two interns and their interactions with colleagues in the workplace:

> BAB just gets on with it. BAB has turned out to be extremely popular within the team here. Everyone knows her because she makes a point of going up to people and saying "Hi, I'm BAB and I'm working with WS 1 and WS 2 and can I set up this meeting". When I use the name BAB around people, they know exactly who I'm talking about. EGM's far more reserved and she is not as outgoing. So she's um, possibly not as well known and therefore hasn't made as much of an impact as BAB has. (Appendix 8.3, BAB and EGM's Workplace Supervisor Interview, p 209)

It seemed logical to question how and where BAB acquired her ability to connect and communicate with people with such confidence. During an interview BAB did not attribute her confidence to the WoW Training Programme or any of its specific interventions, and so apparently her confidence and self-awareness – evident here - can be attributed to the typical stages inherent in organisational socialization theory:

> Well, I'm much more confident in my work area. Not just because I know all the people now and I know the faces and I know the names, but I'm confident enough to go and ask my supervisor, "WS, do you have something for me to do?" and she'll give me something and I must try and do it by myself. She's not going to sit and spoon-feed me. So I'm much more confident in taking tasks on by myself instead of going to ask her all the time. My computer skills are great now so I'm very confident with that. Also I've done a little bit of a presentation for them. Not a very formal one. But that was nice to

> have that. So everything is… I'm more confident and positive about my future actually. (Appendix 8.2, BAB Interview, 20 June 2006, p 203)

BAB's experience of increased learning and productivity on site ties in with the National Society for Experiential Education's (in Furco, 1996), description of one of the six stages of internships: productivity and independence, during which there is increased learning and productivity on site, and interns become more confident and self-aware. According to Schein (1978) BAB would have been, at this point, learning how to get ahead, locating her place in the organisation and developing an identity; and according to Wanous (1992) BAB's confidence could be attributed to the fact that she would have adjusted to her working environment by locating herself and learning how her efforts could contribute to the host organisation's work.

Compared to BAB, EGM presented reserved behaviours. BAB made an observation that EGM did not have

> ...great people communication skills. (Appendix 8.2, BAB Interview, 20 June, 2006)

In her final interview, BAB said that she believed that the reason EGM's contract had not been extended at the host organisation was because EGM did not have the personality traits valued by the host organisation, despite the fact that she had worked

> ... equally as hard as I did. (Appendix 8.2, BAB Interview, 11 July 2006, p 207)

The personality traits valued by her host organisation included, according to BAB, her ability to make friends easily and to

> ...make my own situation more comfortable for myself. (Appendix 8.2, BAB Interview, 11 July 2006, p 207)

While EGM's demeanour was reserved, BAB believed that the host organisation recruited outspoken individuals who seemed inclined towards leadership roles. (Appendix 8.2, BAB Interview, 11 July 2006)

EGM believed that

> ...intellectual people and people with a positive attitude, who are motivated to work (Appendix 9.2, EGM Interview, 20 June 2006, p 248)

were most valued by her host organisation. Even though EGM's supervisor may not have agreed, and especially after any comparison with BAB, EGM believed that she was both a positive and

motivated person. (Appendix 9.2, EGM Interview, 20 June 2006) EGM also believed that these attitudes and behaviours were obvious to colleagues and workplace supervisors, because she "communicated" with her supervisor, for example requesting guidance when and where necessary. It appeared that EGM had not yet grasped the fact that such communication would be a *minimum* employability requirement. Just before the end of her internship, EGM said that she believed she was employable because she was

> ...a responsible person and respectful to [her] co-workers and ...effective in her work (Appendix 9.2, EGM Interview, 11 July 2006, p 251)

When EGM was asked how she thought her workplace supervisors might describe her, she said,

> ...perhaps responsible and pays good attention to detail. (Appendix 9.2, EGM Interview, 9 May 2006, p 245)

EGM's subsequent explanation reveals that she ranked responsibility and the ability to pay good attention to detail highly as employability traits:

> If I am given a task, I make sure that I complete it. I also pay good attention to details when doing that task. (Appendix 9.2, EGM Interview, 9 May 2006, p 245)

So EGM listed responsibility, attention to detail and thoroughness as prerequisites for success at her host organisation. BAB, in comparison with EGM, displayed dynamic personality traits such as enthusiasm and a willingness to take initiative, in addition to the traits EGM suggested would describe her. EGM's idea of "respect" is especially interesting here. As researcher, my own impression of BAB's and EGM's host organisation was that while courtesy would have been valued and expected between peers and colleagues, "respect" as an employability trait may have been viewed ambivalently. The culture of the host organisation included celebration of non-compliance and non-conformity. EGM's subscription to being "respectful" may have been perceived by the host organisation as submission or adherence, and thus as being neither a favourable nor a particularly employable trait. Another way of putting it would be to say broadly that EGM and BA's organisation appeared to value the "Big Five" personality trait of Extraversion more than Openness.

During her second interview while she was in the middle of her internship, EGM implied that she would not have had the confidence to approach her host organisation independently:

> I wouldn't even go to their website because I know I would never be chosen by such a company. (Appendix 9.2, EGM Interview, 20 June 2006, p 244)

It is interesting however, that EGM believed that she had, as a result of the internship, improved her ability to communicate more assertively. At the end of her internship period, she said,

> *One thing I have learnt in this is expressing yourself and asking a question when you do not understand something. I do not have to feel like I am stuck in a negative situation if I do not understand something. Fortunately in my work situation I have a network of people, besides my supervisors. There are instances when I felt I needed more guidance from my supervisor and I emailed her to ask her about the problem.*
> *There are also instances when I felt I was doing an unreasonable amount of work then I talked to the necessary person and addressed the issue.*
> *After confronting the concerned parties, it did help to gain a better understanding of everyone's role and how to improve the situation.*
> *If you are having problems in a work situation learn to address it immediately rather than ignore it or internalizing it. (EGM's Weblog, 13 July 2006)*

And in her final interview, EGM believed that the WoW Programmes had helped her to gain confidence:

> I think right now, I am more confident. Like before I was less hopeful of finding something, thus I was wishy-washy. Right now, I think I am confident. After the training and having considered the training and having had all the guest lecturers and the people from the workplace who came and talked to us... I know that I have to be myself and confident. I know what I want. (Appendix 9.2, EGM Interview, 11 July 2006, p 252)

It was clear that EGM had in fact adjusted her communication style – perhaps because of feedback from her supervisors, or from observing BAB and her more successful manner of interacting in the workplace – but it was a case of having done so too late to secure further employment at the host organisation.

One of EGM's and BAB's workplace supervisors (they had two) appeared to have made significant efforts to facilitate plans for the two interns, for after their internships at the host organisation ended. This effort included discussions with colleagues and the interns themselves regarding their aspirations. (Appendix 8.3, BAB and EGM's Workplace Supervisor Interview, 20 June 2006)

BAB's workplace supervisors wanted to offer BAB a position at the host organisation. The exact fit and her placement in a specific department seemed to be a secondary consideration, as

> [Head of Department] is very much of the mind that, if we have someone good, then let's keep that person and find a place for that person. (Appendix 8.3, BAB and EGM's Workplace Supervisor Interview, 20 June 2006, p 209)

4.2.1.3 Workplace supervisors and weblogs

It appears that students found some difficulty in maintaining their weblogs during their internships. Reasons included forgetting to write weblog posts during the internship, and a concern that weblog content could be seen as compromising for the host organisation, especially when it had not been approved before "publication" i.e. posting on the world wide web. (Appendix 8.2, BAB Interview, 9 May 2006) Both of these reasons suggest that interns were separating from the University, and focusing on the needs and priorities of the workplace.

IUP's workplace supervisor had never read a weblog before she encountered IUP's weblog. Although she only added one comment after a weblog post in all the time that IUP maintained her weblog, she clearly approved of the tool and IUP's engagement with it:

> *IUP, I just read your blog (first blog I've ever read) and its great. I really admire your honesty. (IUP's Weblog, Comment by IUP's workplace supervisor, 'Blogologist', 20 June 2006)*

We cannot assume that just because workplace supervisors did not add comments regularly, they did not access the weblogs. In fact, in the comments section after one of BAB's weblog posts, her supervisor wrote that she had been

> *...watching your blogs with anticipation.*

In addition, she wrote

> *I love reading them and am finding ways to use blogs more in the project teams that we work with! (Appendix 8.4, BAB's Weblog, Comment posted by BAB's workplace supervisor, 28 June 2006)*

An aspect of the weblogs that one of BAB's and EGM's supervisors particularly liked was the interaction opportunities after a post, in the comments section. The supervisor recommended the weblogs as a communication tool to the head of her department. She also found it a useful tool to communicate BAB's and EGM's progress and work to the head of the department.

> *I'm getting quite addicted to those blogs. I'm concerned that there's a hit rate measurement and someone will wonder if I'm stalking them because I go onto them everyday to see if they have put something new on! I really find it interesting. (Workplace Supervisor Interview, 11 July 2006)*

EGM did not seem to be aware of her supervisors' interest in her weblog, however. She posted a weblog entry suggesting that more explicit and active involvement from employers at the weblogs would benefit the interns:

> *I was just thinking yesterday about how wonderful it would be to have on line blogging from the companies involved. It would be an opportunity for them to talk about their expectations from interns and also share some of their past experiences with regard to interns. I believe this will help future interns shape their career development. (EGM's Weblog, 18 May 2006)*

EGM's workplace supervisor did post a comment after one of EGM's weblog posts. It appears, however, that the workplace supervisor's comment was not a direct response to the content of the weblog post. In EGM's weblog post, "One other deadline to meet" (24 May 2006), she discussed the challenges and frustrations of meeting a deadline when employees were too busy to cooperate. The workplace supervisor's response was upbeat and enthusiastic, but did not address any of the issues raised by the intern in her weblog post:

> *Hi EGM - I am so glad I have the opportunity to read this! I am thrilled to hear that you are enjoying things with us at [host organisation]. I hope it helps you to select your career preference. You've been doing a wonderful job so far - I think things may get even more interesting from now on. (EGM's Weblog, Comment by workplace supervisor, after 'One other deadline to meet', 24 May 2006)*

While this may have been frustrating for EGM, it confirms that workplace supervisors did not see the weblogs as forums for them to supervise work, but rather as opportunities to encourage and affirm mentees.

BAB's and EGM's supervisor believed that the interns used their weblogs reflectively and not just as summaries of activities.

> I think both of the interns have good knowledge on how to use their blog so it's not just a diary, like, "Yesterday I did this...". They do prompt some kind of thought about topics that might not be directly related to their work, but something that is relevant to people in the WoW. (Appendix 8.3, BAB and EGM's Workplace Supervisor Interview, 11 July 2006, p 213)

However, the supervisor compared BAB's weblog to EGM's, and found that BAB was

> ... thinking beyond her day-to-day work. And I'm not always sure that her blogs are prompted by something that happens at work. Whereas with EGM's blogs she is often thinking that way because something's happened or she read something that prompted her to think in that line. So, I think the blogs force them to think a little bit outside their chosen career, which I think is good. (Appendix 8.3, BAB and EGM's Workplace Supervisor Interview, 11 July 2006, p 213)

Another of BAB's and EGM's supervisors, who had added comments at both EGM's and BAB's weblogs, said that she found the blogs

> ...extremely interesting purely because it gives me feedback on whether they are enjoying what they are doing or they are finding it too tedious. (Appendix 8.3, BAB and EGM's Workplace Supervisor Interview, 20 June 2006, p 211)

From responses such as these, it is possible to conclude that the weblogs in 2006 were opportunities for workplace supervisors to gauge where their mentees were in terms of personal development and progress, by their reflective writing at their weblogs. Supervisors did not regard the weblogs as appropriate places to problem-solve. It appears that workplace supervisors were most interested in the weblog posts that indicated that the intern was thinking beyond the parameters of her immediate work, and were thus creating the knowledge artefacts that are the culmination of what Bartlett-Bragg (2003) terms a five-stage process of reflection in weblog development.

4.2.1.4 Risk-taking opportunities

The respondents in 2006 were far more inclined to reveal their mistakes to their mentor from the University, and within their weblogs, than the 2005 respondents had been. Willingness to communicate mistakes is a strong and significant feature of the 2006 WoW Programmes, which may be attributed to the closer mentoring process that occurred in this year. The more intense mentoring from the WoW Programmes staff followed on naturally after the more rigorous selection process for scholarship holders that occurred in 2006, which in itself set the stage for the expectation for scholarship holders to perform to a very high standard. There were more meetings throughout the WoW Programmes between the University-based mentor and the scholarship holders than there had been with interns of previous Programmes. The need for open, consistent communication about all aspects of the internship experience was regularly emphasised at these meetings. This could well be the reason that respondents in 2006 understood the importance of honest and thorough feedback. One of the benefits of this was that it contributed to the development of a community of practice amongst participants, especially when interns revealed the mistakes they had made.

One example of an intern communicating poor performance to the University mentor was when IUP admitted that she was late for the very first day of her internship and wrote in an email to her mentor at the University that she "felt very embarrassed" about this. (Email correspondence, 19 April 2006)

BAB relayed that she had learned a new computer skill from a colleague at her workplace. BAB described her early learning process during the internship as attempting to undertake (small) tasks independently, making mistakes, asking for help if necessary, and trying again. This contrasts with GL's experience as an intern in 2005: GL's performance was stalled by the fact that she did not know how to take the minutes for a meeting. GL did not try alternative ways of finding out how to do this task, nor did she attempt it. It appears that most of the 2006 respondents felt more inclined to attempt tasks and risk making mistakes. This was true especially for the 2006 respondents who demonstrated confidence, like BAB.

EGM stands apart as example of an intern who did not adapt as well or as quickly as her peers did in the workplace. Rather than risk making mistakes, EGM relied on fellow WoW intern BAB to help her deal with aspects of her work that she didn't understand. (Appendix 9.2, EGM Interview, 9 May 2006). It is possible that EGM's progress was negatively affected by having BAB in close proximity – perhaps she would have been more independent and more inclined to seek solutions independently if she had not had BAB to 'fall back on' when she was unsure or faced with a risk situation.

There were instances of personal realization of the mistakes that were made and the interns discussed these even if the errors had not been noticed or commented upon by staff at the host organisation. When staff did, however, realise the intern's mistakes, the manner in which the mistakes were discussed and resolved was very important:

> *I have made some mistakes in the workplace. Thank goodness they were little with no bad effects, but it is still sometimes embarrassing. But those who work with me took the time to point out my mistakes and give me constructive advice on how to fix it and how to go about doing it better next time. Examples of these mistakes were forgetting to fetch the printer cartridge from another department.... But it took me one day to learn from my mistakes and I succeeded with the help from my colleagues. Now I'm settled and relaxed and things have been running smoothly ever since. (Appendix 8.4, BAB's Weblog, 18 May 2006)*

That the staff at BAB's host organisation "took the time to point out my mistakes" and gave her "constructive advice" indicates that her workplace was a 'safe' place for her learning, with opportunities to take risks and where the outcome of an action was valued even if it was the wrong outcome. We can conclude that the ideal culture for an organisation hosting an intern is where risk taking is valued and encouraged, and mistake-making is seen to have the potential to aid learning. Le Cornu (2004) would agree as she suggests that

> ...a degree of discomfort in our learning actually provides for active learning.

It is reasonable to point out that host organisations cannot expect to create opportunities for learning through risk taking and by making mistakes when business may be compromised – and especially if mistakes recur. Learning by making mistakes must include a process of reflecting on the error and generating a solution or an alternative way of managing the situation so that the mistake does not happen again. The caveat of learning through mistake-making could well be 'getting it once' - as in BAB's case. Her supervisors agreed that her strengths could be summarised by the fact that she "just gets it once." (Appendix 8.3, BAB and EGM's Workplace Supervisor Interview, 20 June 2006)

The supervisor explained that this mutual impression of BAB was best illustrated when BAB was asked to help put together a PowerPoint presentation. The supervisor was particularly impressed that after a 20-minute briefing session, and with some material on the theory behind the presentation content, BAB was able to produce a presentation in 30 minutes that was a) congruent with the supervisor's personal presentation style b) accurate in terms of the content and c) up to the host organisation's standard in terms of PowerPoint presentations. BAB's workplace supervisor added that

> ...that's what I'm saying about BAB, how she's just got it so much quicker than even I got it when I started here... (BAB and EGM's Workplace Supervisor, Interview, 20 June 2006, p 214)

Interns not only disclosed actual mistakes, but also their instances of poor performance. For example, IUP wrote frankly about a document she was asked to prepare. She did not meet her deadline and had not checked the document thoroughly for errors before she sent it. The Chief Executive Officer of the host organisation tested her perception of her performance by asking her to send the document to the President of South Africa. This helped IUP realise that the document was inferior. What is most important about this incident is that IUP reflected on it, wrote openly about it at her weblog, and considered an alternative way of managing a similar task in the future:

> *I was alone in the office but I swear I blushed deeply over this incident. The lesson I learned from this goes back to the one in one of the lectures about professional writing. You know when you learn something sometimes when you are in that situation you may start feeling that it doesn't apply to you especially if you have always believed yourself to be a good writer. (IUP's Weblog, 18 July 2006)*

Two of the other scholarship holders responded to IUP's admission of poor performance. For LAY, IUP's admission prompted her to reveal her own experience of having produced inferior work:

> *Hi IUP it looks like you and I are in the same boat this week. I also send out something which was substandard not to my CEO alone but to the partners of [host organisation] as well, and I swear I felt so depressed the whole day, so I do understand the frustration that you are going through. (IUP's Weblog, Comment by LAY, 18 July 2006)*

This was typical of LAY: she tended to disclose her own experiences only after BAB and IUP initiated communicating about their risk-taking and mistake making. While this is fairly reactive behaviour, it does point to the power of the community of practice that existed in this group, as LAY obviously only felt secure about sharing her thoughts on making mistakes when others had already communicated their experiences:

> *Hi BAB I am glad that you are telling us that you have made mistakes at [host organisation], because this is one of the issues that I am afraid of. However you blogging about the mistakes reminds me that we are humans and we are allowed to make mistakes. (Appendix 8.4, BAB's Weblog, Comment by LAY, 18 May 2006)*

4.2.1.5 Coaching business writing

One of the main areas where mistake-making occurred was in business writing. Writing skills is popularly listed as one of the most important employability traits.

In 2006 there was an interesting incident relating to writing skills, between DOZ and her workplace supervisor, which also raised issues of risk for DOZ's workplace supervisor. DOZ was asked by her workplace supervisor to create an action plan for a particular project she was involved in. DOZ preferred to structure the writing in a narrative form. She was adamant that her approach was better, because, as she explained it

> Okay, one of the things, like this "Take a Girl Child to Work Programme" was meant for me, so I wrote it in a way so that I could understand it. (Appendix 11.2, DOZ Interview, 19 May 2006, p 304)

DOZ believed that her approach was correct because it resulted in a piece of work that *she* could read and understand. Her insistence on this point of view was surprising:

> Then I told him that this is my way and is for me. (Appendix 11.2, DOZ Interview, 19 May 2006, p 304)

A possible explanation for the fact that DOZ was so adamant could be in her belief that she should express her own style and approach, thus establishing her identity. As it was, DOZ did not want to be associated closely with her workplace supervisor in terms of her work output:

> Yes, I think it was going to be better, because it was something that I have done it myself. Something that was my own work not [workplace supervisor's] ideas... (Appendix 11.2, DOZ Interview, 19 May 2006, p 304)

And yet, DOZ's workplace supervisor's mentoring approach was not to limit any opportunities for DOZ to establish her own identity. He said that

> I do not want to do work for her, but I want to work with her. (Appendix 11.3, DOZ's Workplace Supervisor, Interview, 19 May 2006, p 307)

Although DOZ also said, in the same interview, that she had found the input on writing skills during the training component valuable, she had not yet appreciated that business writing (as opposed to academic course writing) is typically oriented to a wide range of readers in the workplace. In the light of DOZ's supervisor's concerns regarding the poor quality of her business writing skills, Cullen's (2009) reference to an article from the University of Houston's Academic Center, to point out key differences between business writing versus academic writing, is interesting. DOZ obviously had not yet realised at least one of these key differences, being that work-related writing targets multiple audiences with different perspectives. Other differences include that

- Writing at work focuses on problem solving.
- Writing at work may be read by unknown readers.
- Writing produced at work can be used indefinitely and can be used in legal proceedings.
- The format for work documents varies greatly from the format for academic documents.
- Academic writing is more often focused on development of thought, and length is encouraged. (Cullen, 2009)

In addition, DOZ rejected the practice of using a different format in her business writing, to that that she was more familiar with in her academic context. She grudgingly accepted to adopt the business writing approach suggested and requested by her workplace supervisor, only after I had positioned this as non-negotiable. DOZ's adherence to her point of view and belief in her approach to her writing is interesting on two counts. Firstly, it is a positive indication of her tendency to maintain a position, and to persevere with a point of view. The second point is the caveat: DOZ's reluctance to change her writing style can indicate a lack of flexibility and unwillingness to learn or adapt that reflects poorly on her employability. Of course, another perspective to consider is that DOZ's experience of academic writing was so entrenched that she found it difficult to adjust and change to another way of writing.

LAY was more amenable to coaching to improve her business writing. She responded well to input from the WoW Programmes' staff about her writing and was therefore able to detect improvement during the second month of her internship:

> My writing skills have improved a lot. Before it was just writing, I'd probably say that I was careless. I didn't check my writing. I didn't care. But since you pushed me and I am here and it's nerve wracking, I know that whatever I am writing I have to do a perfect job, you know. It has to be professionally done, so I take time in doing that. I know that sometimes I get frustrated because I take time and most of the time my deadlines are here and I have to make sure that it is perfect, so I do it slowly. I find myself re-reading everything all the time. It has improved a lot. I make sure that whatever I submit - I don't know - I read it a thousand times before I do that, to make sure. (Appendix 12.2, LAY Interview, 10 July 2006, p 325)

DOZ was well aware of the consequences of her errors in writing. On average, every sentence contained three errors of spelling, grammar or punctuation. Staff members' names were spelled incorrectly in an internal memo and DOZ's workplace supervisor said that some of his colleagues had complained about this (Appendix 11.3, DOZ's Workplace Supervisor, Interview, 19 May 2006)

He also pointed out that the correct spelling of staff names was available in the internal computer system. DOZ said that she realised that senior staff (who would be receiving the business writing) could develop perceptions of her as being incompetent, as a result of these errors and that she was trying to improve in this area. (Appendix 11.2, DOZ Interview, 19 May 2006) DOZ's workplace supervisor emphasised that attention to detail was vital in the work that his department was doing, and he expressed surprise at the poor performance in this area from an intern who was at postgraduate level:

> Who are postgrads? Unlike the first year students or something like that, because if we spend time editing small things it sort of consumes your time. (Appendix 11.3, DOZ's Workplace Supervisor, Interview, 19 May 2006, p 309)

In addition, DOZ's workplace supervisor made it clear that he expected an intern to communicate learning needs openly:

> Just to be able to say if they do not know what to do. I always encourage her that if you do not know, please ask. (Appendix 11.3, DOZ's Workplace Supervisor, Interview, 19 May 2006, p 308)

DOZ's workplace supervisor was frustrated with DOZ when she did not implement his recommendation, or when she did not try his approach, and also when she did not ask for help. In

addition she did not check her work with him before sending it to other staff members. His concern was that he would bear the brunt of her poor performance:

> I mean if a project is not a success, I'm the one who is going to take that flack, you know. (Appendix 11.3, DOZ's Workplace Supervisor, Interview, 19 May 2006)

And that the consequences of poor performance also have a wide-ranging impact:

> If I ask her to do something... if you understand that, you know that if there is a success or a flop whatever we do would impact in the image of the company. (Appendix 11.3, DOZ's Workplace Supervisor, Interview, 19 May 2006, p 308)

Having to carefully edit DOZ's work was time consuming. DOZ workplace supervisor said he accepted that this was part of his role to a degree, but that it also compromised meeting deadlines:

> Then it impacts on my delivery. Then if we do not deliver on time. I am the one who is going to sort of suffer at the end of the day. (Appendix 11.3, DOZ's Workplace Supervisor, Interview, 19 May 2006, p 308)

DOZ's workplace supervisor summarised succinctly the catch-22 situation that workplaces encounter in their efforts to assist students with their transitions into the workplace, while meeting business targets:

> That's where the dilemma that companies have in terms of students. You have students. You are training them, but at the same time you deal with real life situations. Whereby you need to deliver. Now the students must show you that they are willing to work, because if they are not doing that you end up doing it yourself, and then where is the learning? How does the student learn if you do not give them real work to do? Then if you take it and do it yourself, because you have a deadline, it has an impact on the student, because what do you expect from the student to do now? Then she must sit there playing on the computer and having nothing to do. I do not think that is good. So that is the dilemma you face in the situation where there is pressure for you to deliver. (Appendix 11.3, DOZ's Workplace Supervisor, Interview, 19 May 2006, p 309)

Despite these concerns, DOZ's workplace supervisor believed that DOZ had the ability to improve her performance during the rest of her internship. He also said that he had some confidence in her ability to work on a project, and that he appreciated that her presence freed him to leave the workplace to attend to other matters. (Appendix 11.3, DOZ's Workplace Supervisor, Interview, 19 May 2006)

4.2.3 World of Work Programmes' mentor: pedagogical approaches

The previous section considers risk-taking opportunities and interns' opportunities to learn by making mistakes. When risk-taking opportunities were afforded by the host organisation, the role the University mentor played in reframing – that is, challenging traditional conceptions around learning such as seeing mistakes as learning opportunities and asking rather than waiting for feedback - could be realised.

With regard to the general support she believed she had received during her internship from the University, IUP said that

> I am grateful for the support that I continuously received from LE through phone calls and emails. Her presence provided the necessary checks and balances to make sure that I was treated fairly in the workplace as well as to inform my supervisor the kind of objectives I was supposed to meet in the workplace. (Appendix 10.2, IUP Exit Interview Response by email, 4 December 2006)

IUP evaluated involvement of the WoW Programmes' staff during her internship positively:

> ...the University should continue the relationship of visiting students in their places of work to find out if things are going according to plan. (Appendix 10.2, IUP Exit Interview Response by email, 4 December 2006)

She saw a practical advantage in having a University staff member as mentor and believed that

> This helps in ensuring that students are not taken advantage of or shortchanged. (Appendix 10.2, IUP Exit Interview Response by email, 4 December 2006)

4.2.3.1 Shared work-day

A previous section considers risk-taking opportunities and interns' opportunities to learn by making mistakes. When risk-taking opportunities were afforded by the host organisation, the role the University mentor played in reframing – that is, challenging traditional conceptions around learning such as seeing mistakes as learning opportunities and asking rather than waiting for feedback - could be realised.

IUP had good writing skills, as is evident at her weblog. From 22 February 2006 to 13 April 2007 IUP posted over 30 weblog entries. There were only two occasions when I pointed out a spelling error in an email on that IUP had sent to me (Email correspondence, 22 February 2006) and the incorrect use of the subject header for an email (Email correspondence, 16 February 2006).

IUP's supervisor had trained her to manage her work programme effectively. IUP clearly found this useful and empowering:

> *One thing that I will forever be grateful for working with [workplace supervisor] is that she taught me the easiest and most efficient way of managing a work programme. It is so user friendly that anyone who wants to know what is happening in the communications section can simply go through it and see where progress or non progress has been made. (IUP's Weblog, 27 June 2006)*

It was this weblog post, and IUP's good writing skills, that prompted the idea of a shared work-day with DOZ, who was encountering problems with both her writing skills and her organisational skills.

As one of the course designers and the person responsible for arranging the shared work-day between DOZ and IUP, I hoped that DOZ would benefit as IUP had from the work programme IUP had learned, specifically as it had enabled IUP to

> *...always evaluate and assess [herself] in the problems encountered section. (IUP's Weblog, 27 June 2006)*

The objectives of the two interns from different work sites spending a day together included for them to re-connect with a peer from the WoW Programmes and share internship experiences. More specifically, however, the objective was for DOZ to learn about approaches and experiences with project management from a peer, and to impress upon her the importance of accuracy and professionalism in business communication. Towards achieving this, I asked both interns to prepare and share non-confidential samples of their recent work at their respective host organisations, so as to be able to compare their work processes.

DOZ discovered that there were many similarities with IUP in terms of the challenges that she encountered as an intern. With regard to the specific objective of the exercise, being an opportunity for DOZ to see and learn an approach to planning work professionally, DOZ wrote in a weblog post titled "My Shared work Day" that she had watched IUP executing her work:

> *At the time she was writing a short article that was going to be read by her managing director. She printed the page and she read it over and over again, just to see whether there were any spelling mistakes. I have taken that experience along with me, now I do the same before submitting my work. (DOZ post at Team Weblog, July 14, 2006)*

This indicates an important shift in DOZ's attitude. Clearly observing a peer with good writing skills assisted in shifting her attitude about the need for accuracy and professionalism in business writing. In the same weblog post, DOZ learned practical skills from her peer:

> *After the meeting we went back to her office where we shared ideas about how to design tables. Then she showed me her table, which I adopted. I'm glad that I got a chance to spend a day with IUP. I learned a lot from her. (DOZ post at Team Weblog, July 14, 2006)*

The shared work-day appeared to have learning benefits for DOZ, although IUP did not mention the event either in interviews or at her weblog. However, Moon (1999) warns that awareness does not necessarily guarantee change, and refers to Harvey and Knight (1996) to take the point further, as they consider the role of reflection in the professional development of teachers:

> Our claim is that reflection needs to be extensive, to involve examining lurking assumptions about what we do and why we do it. (in Moon, 1999)

Harvey and Knight (in Moon, 1999) suggest that transformative learning should be the aim for professional development. Their view correlates with Eraut's (1994) view of personal development contributing to 'control knowledge', which he explains as being, practically,

> Knowledge that is important for controlling one's own behaviour (Eraut, 1994)

and as encompassing

> self-knowledge about one's strengths and weaknesses, the gap between what one says and one does and what one knows and does not know; self-management in such matters as the use of time, prioritization and delegation; self-development in its broadest sense including knowing how to learn and control one's own learning; the ability to reflect and self-evaluate, that is to provide oneself with feedback; and generalized intellectual skills like strategic thinking and policy analysis, which involve the organization of one's own knowledge and thinking. (Eraut, 1994)

Eraut's (1994) list of ideas is, it can be argued, a holistic summary of what we were hoping students would gain as outcomes of their personal development in professional situations. But a common theme in the literature on teaching and learning of generic attributes is that success depends crucially on the generic attributes being made explicit for students. Leaving them implicit, as happens in many traditional courses, does little to encourage significant learning and development of the attributes. (Hager and Holland, 2006) A possible criticism of the "shared work-day" is therefore that, although the peer-interaction arrangement had potential and may have assisted DOZ to some extent, a carefully designed process after the event would have been ideal, to make the extent and nature of the learning explicit for DOZ.

4.2.4 Informal support

Similar to GP's weblog post in 2005, wherein he wrote about his father's death and received support from peers in the comments section, IUP used her weblog to write about a stay in hospital that had been unnerving for her. (IUP's Weblog, 23 June 2006) Again, a peer from the WoW programmes 2006 group offered support in the comments section. During the training component LAY wrote about her brother's death and GP reminded her that he had had also lost a family member. (IUP's Weblog, 16 March 2006) It is clear that the weblogs quickly started (as early as the WoW Training Programme) to function for interns as a means to disclose personal information about themselves and to elicit support.

The exercise of expressing support for peers at the weblogs also contributed to the development of emotional intelligence. Appraising and expressing emotions in the self and others is one of the ways to gauge awareness of an individual's emotions. Carmeli (2003) refers to Salovey and Mayer (1989/1990) to make the point that

> individuals who accurately appraise and express (perceive and respond to) their emotions are likely to be better understood by the people they work with, and they also have the potential to better lead and manage people when they are able to perceive the emotions of the people around them and to develop empathy - the ability to comprehend another's feelings and to re-experience them oneself. (in Carmeli, 2003)

The opportunity to promote emotional intelligence that the facility in the weblogs offers when students comment after posts gives weblogs a distinct advantage over conventional hard-copy or other web based progress files, or Personal Development Plans (PDP - used especially in the United Kingdom to help Higher Education students document their achievements, articulate and reflect upon what they know, what they can do and what they have done).

In her responses to the internship interview exit questions, IUP said that peers, friends and family

> ...have been there for me to always remind me how blessed I have been to have been able to clinch an internship job in a foreign country and having been kept by an organization for so long after the 3 months expiry of a normal internship period. They have impressed it upon me that this is a good sign that greater things are to come. (Appendix 10.2, IUP Exit Interview Response by email, 4 December 2006)

BAB also received support from family and friends:

> My parents understand the pressures on people our age especially now to get a job. Also because I've got two very successful sisters. So they know how it feels to struggle to get to where they are now, but they are very supportive, and also especially my father, um supporting me to get involved with big companies like [host organisation], my mom is

> just a motherly support of course. And then my friends, we are all at the age where we all trying to get jobs. I've actually got a friend who's just started a job now and another friend who started an internship. So we are all going through the same thing. And so we all asking each other, "How's it going?", "How are you developing?" So most of the time when we talk it it's about work and how things are going. (Appendix 8.2, BAB Interview, 20 June 2006)

GP, one of the key respondents from the 2005 WoW Programmes offered a summary of the WoW Programmes, the transition to the workplace and the world of work generally in a comment he posted after one of LAY's weblog posts.

> *This is the time to put on your thinking caps because this type of world is very distinct from the academic world. As you have said that you felt like you were doing an MBA course, this is what the world of work is. The World of Work teaches you to be multi-skilled in order to fit the requirements and be competitive in the post-modern world of work, where by an employer or an employee need to be knowledgeable about all aspects of the world of work. There are so many dynamics that are involved in the working world and so one needs to be equipped with all the tools that we have been offered by the Graduate World of Work Foundation Internship Programme. This kind of programme has helped us to successfully complete our transition from the academic world to the world of work. (LAY's Weblog, Comment by GP [Intern 2005], 20 March 2006)*

GP adopted the role of expert advisor in this comment. In so doing, he points to the significant role previous interns in the WoW Programmes can play in assisting participants with their transitions into the workplace.

DOZ felt it was important for her to stay in contact with other interns, because

> I would like to know how they are doing. I would like to know whether we are sharing the same problems. Maybe it would be nice that I am not the only one who is feeling this way right now. (Appendix 11.2, DOZ Interview, 19 May 2006, p 306)

Some interns were able to make face-to-face contact with people in their host organisations who had previously completed internships – facilitated by the WoW Programmes – at the host organisation. This was the case for LAY, DOZ and IUP. DOZ, for example, was in daily contact with an intern from the WoW Programmes who had completed her internship at the same host organisation in 2004. That intern was offered a permanent position at the host organisation and remained employed there from 2004 to 2008. She became a vital part of DOZ's community of practice, and DOZ found that their relationship was reassuring for her:

> ...very nice for me, because I am gaining some of her experiences ... to know that it is not only my bad experience - that's what she felt before and now she is fine. (Appendix 11.2, DOZ Interview, 19 May 2006, p 306)

However, IUP did not seem to find a former intern (JN, WoW Programmes' participant 2005) at the same organisation a means of support. Despite the fact that IUP seemed to have had a difficult time in the first days of her internship (evident from her crying during the first interview, and raising issues relating to her disappointment at the pace of her work), and despite the fact that the former intern was also a Zimbabwean like IUP, and from the same University Programme – she had not found real support from him:

> I think he is just a colleague just like everyone else. Apart from the fact that we are both Zimbabwean, we are just colleagues I guess. (Appendix 10.2, IUP Interview, 18 May 2006)

On the other hand, IUP found that her peers from the WoW Programmes 2006 were more effective in terms of support for her. Even though they weren't at the same work site, IUP said she maintained contact by email and telephone and that

> They also tell me about what they are doing and I also tell them about what's going on here. You know, I think it's some kind of comfort zone. (Appendix 10.2, IUP Interview, 18 May 2006)

It would seem that the Programmes' approach of encouraging peer support throughout the internship worked effectively: even though interns were in different workplaces and even industries, sharing their experiences of the socialization process seemed to reinforce that there are common and typical challenges for any entry into the workplace.

4.2.4.1 Interns at the same host organisation

We encouraged interns to make contact with people in their host organisations who had previously completed internships. One of the workplace supervisors in 2006 suggested that subsequent programme design should include more specific and concrete steps to facilitate past and current interns talking to, and leaning from each other. BAB and EGM's workplace supervisor therefore suggested that potential WoW interns from the 2007 group should be able to contact BAB and EGM, to ask them about their experiences at the host organisation:

> It would be really great if we got interns next year, if they could connect with BAB and EGM to ask things – like, "How did you find out about this?" "Did you enjoy the internship at [host organisation]?" I think it can be something that can be integrated into your next programme. It can be quite nice for whoever you get to come here next year, to be able to say, we had these two people here before, contact them if you want and talk to

them. (Appendix 8.3, BAB and EGM's Workplace Supervisor Interview, 20 June 2006, p 211)

BAB and EGM's workplace supervisor was obviously not aware that this arrangement was already integrated in the WoW Training Programme. In 2007 IUP was invited to address the interns for the WoW Programmes for that year. She said that she felt "exhilarated" at the thought of seeing some of her peers from the 2006 WoW Programmes, who were also invited. (IUP's Weblog, 13 April 2007) This was an opportunity for IUP to reinforce her membership in this community. IUP intended to relay to the new cohort of students that some of their expectations about the world of work would be met, and some would not be met - she had clearly planned to share her reflections with the new entrants to the world of work. (IUP's Weblog, 13 April 2007) By this alone, IUP was adopting a form of leadership over newcomers to the workplace. There are many examples of former interns passing on advice in the weblogs in 2006. One of these is from EM, an intern who participated in the WoW Programmes in 2003. She posted a comment after LAY expressed some of her fears and insecurities regarding the WoW Programmes:

> *Hello LAY. I'm a past intern. I went through the programme in 2003 and it really was an amazing and growing experience. I think it's pretty normal to be nervous, but you must remember that you have made it through a stressful process and it was decided that you are worthy of getting the scholarship, which means that although you may doubt your ability, there are others who believe in you. Don't forget that, you will manage. (LAY's Weblog, Comment by EM,to 'My fears and insecurities', 8 March 2006)*

While EGM and BAB could not refer to any former interns at their host organisation, they had each other: they were both completing their internships in the same time frame at the same host organisation. This situation calls for consideration of whether two interns learning in the same workplace increases the chances of them developing a strong bond. This was definitely the case for EGM and BAB, as it was for GL and FN who were both interns at another host organisation in 2005. Some reasons for interns at the same organisation forming such a bond may include the fact that they entered the host organisation at the same time, and with the same status. Competition – e.g. for secure employment, or for acknowledgement of work – did not seem to occur between interns at the same host organisation.

One of the supervisors who worked with EGM and BAB indicated distinct advantages and disadvantages of having two interns working closely together, as opposed to hosting just one intern. She mentioned that the interns' confidence and therefore performance was enhanced because sharing the experience of the internship meant that they did not feel like

> ...little fish in the big sea. (Appendix 8.3, BAB and EGM's Workplace Supervisor Interview, 20 June 2006, p 210)

The workplace supervisor was able to delegate tasks according to interns' interests:

> I gave them the option and just naturally BAB said I want do this and EGM said I'd really like to do that. (Appendix 8.3, BAB and EGM's Workplace Supervisor Interview, 20 June 2006, p 210)

A disadvantage mentioned by the workplace supervisor was that she recognised her tendency to allocate tasks more readily to BAB, who she saw as being more efficient. She then felt obliged to

> ...stop myself and ask EGM to do something because I don't want to create a comparison or conflict. (Appendix 8.3, BAB and EGM's Workplace Supervisor Interview, 20 June 2006, p 210)

In fact, only EGM and BAB's workplace supervisor seemed sensitive to issues such as assigning more work to BAB and therefore being concerned about being perceived as favouring BAB. This was not an issue raised by either EGM or BAB.

Another consideration for the evaluation of the practise of placing two interns at the same host organisation is whether learning together has any value or contributes to the development of employability. This is difficult to gauge, but it was clear that EGM was dependent on BAB for both social interaction and for her help with areas EGM did not understand. EGM had completed six months of work in a governmental department before attending the WoW Programmes. She had not established any meaningful social relationships in that environment, compared to her relationship with fellow intern BAB, who she had only known for one month (the WoW Training Programme). (Appendix 9.2, EGM Interview, 9 May 2006)

BAB was less dependent on her peer. She enjoyed having EGM's support, which for her meant discussing "how we are feeling" (Appendix 8.2, BAB Interview, 9 May 2006), but BAB appeared to have already established resources and a modus operandi to help her learn new things and problem solve. EGM said she would have found the internship more difficult if BAB had not been an intern from the same Training Programme, at the same host organisation, with her. (Appendix 9.2, EGM Interview, 9 May 2006). BAB was aware that she had never before made a friend in a working context and valued EGM's presence because of this, but she was curious about establishing such friendships independently and believed she had the skills to do so successfully. (Appendix 8.2, BAB Interview, 9 May 2006) While she was cautious about appearing too "upfront" (Appendix 8.2, BAB Interview, 9 May 2006), BAB believed that her host

organisation's employees would describe her as a "friendly person" and an "open person" because she liked interacting with people. Halfway through her internship, BAB had established meaningful bonds with other employees. (Appendix 8.2, BAB Interview, 20 June 2006)

It seemed therefore that EGM's progress was aided by having BAB as a fellow intern, but that BAB did not benefit as much. BAB and EGM's workplace supervisor, however, offered a different perspective, suggesting that EGM may have been disadvantaged by inadvertent comparisons with BAB*:*

> The fact that EGM has BAB is actually a pity for EGM that her and BAB have been put together. Because I think if, if EGM was on her own she would still stand out and have made a good impression on us, just as she has, but comparing her to BAB and BAB's energy levels and her intellect and initiative, is just, is not really a fair comparison. You know its not comparing apples with apples. I think BAB is in a different league. I think EGM has made a good impression, and I think if we were an HR department, with a position to give her we would, but we don't because we are not in HR. I think they would definitely take her on in HR upstairs, because she's proven her worth there. She's not shy, though that in itself is not a bad thing and it can definitely fit into the culture, but she has taken a little bit longer for that to come out. (Appendix 8.3, BAB and EGM's Workplace Supervisor Interview, 20 June 2006, p 210)

4.2.5 Developing communities of practice

Although definition of communities of practice have been provided earlier in this research, it may be helpful to briefly consider the term again, before delving into how, where, why, when or indeed if a community practice developed amongst the participants in 2006.

Wenger, McDermott and Snyder (2002) define communities of practice as

> groups of people who share a concern, a set of problems, or a passion about a topic, and who deepen their knowledge and expertise in this area by interacting on an ongoing basis.

As course designers, we first became aware of the potential of weblogs to create a community of practice when we introduced this tool in 2005. In 2006, our approach was more informed and explicit, and we facilitated the process of weblogging more intentionally, specifically to promote a community of practice. A main objective for this stemmed from the selection process in 2006. We wanted to investigate every possible support structure available to assist students who we knew we would not be helping as actively in their actual transitions into workplaces, as we had in prior years of the WoW Programmes. We hoped that a community of practice, through

weblogging, would promote peer support for the students who would be making their transitions independently of the WoW Programmes. The team weblog and the YahooGroup *Blogthinking* were essentially support mechanisms for the individual weblogs, and towards achieving this objective.

As we learned more about the concept communities of practice, we realised that while communities of practice are often intentionally developed, participation is typically voluntary. Thus we realised that assessment of weblogs (which we had tried in 2005) was probably unrealistic and counter-productive. As it was, we did not need to implement assessment in 2006 since we had already selected the five scholarship holders as the individuals who would proceed to the Internship component before the WoW programmes actually started. There was a clause in the "Agreement of Scholarship 2006 Conditions" which each scholarship holders had to sign on acceptance of the scholarship, whereby they agreed to maintain individual weblogs. In so doing we reinforced scholarship holders roles as leaders or champions of the community of practice, an idea positioned by Wenger et al (2002), albeit in an organisational context. As leaders, we hoped the scholarship holders would help maintain momentum and awareness about the group, recruit members, encourage participation, and provide resources for group activities. (Wenger et al, 2002) Of all the scholarship holders, it was BAB who adopted the role of leader most proactively. BAB volunteered to establish the 2006 team weblog, and posted more frequently than the other scholarship holders there.

Efimova (2002-2005) suggests that weblogs are like mushrooms - independent individuals on the surface, but interconnected underground. This metaphor effectively describes the weblogging project and can be extended to the blended learning mix of technologies and interactions at the YahooGroup *Blogthinking* and at the team weblog**.** So, while the weblogs represented independent individuals on the surface, the YahooGroup *Blogthinking* and the team weblog ensured that all WoW participants were interconnected underground. The highest degree of interaction at the YahooGroup *Blogthinking* occurred during the Training Programme, followed by the month after when participants were most actively involved in searching for internships and sharing their experiences of interviews and possible work-related opportunities. A by-product of the team weblog was that it had the potential to market the World of Work Programmes as it represented the diversity of all the participants, but it also achieved its objectives, detailed by the guest lecturer and weblog expert Roy Blumenthal (25 March, 2006) and included in Activity Stage Two: World of Work Training Component.

Wenger et al (2002) suggest seven principles in the development of healthy communities of practice, which are useful in this process evaluation. These are:

1. Design for evolution.
2. Open a dialogue between inside and outside perspectives.
3. Invite different levels of participation.
4. Develop both public and private community spaces.
5. Focus on value.
6. Combine familiarity and excitement.
7. Create a rhythm for the community.

I intend to refer to each of Wenger et al's (2002) principles in turn, with regard to the technologies that appeared to contribute to a community of practice in 2006.

1. Design for evolution

Any community's needs will evolve over time. Since communities are dynamic and inclined to unexpected change, design should reflect adaptability. To accommodate evolution, we needed to combine design elements that would help catalyze community development. So for example Blumenthal positioned the team weblog as a tool that participants could use to select business partners in the future and as a professional networking tool, well after it had functioned as a means to show employability.

2. Open a dialogue between inside and outside perspectives

We hoped that the weblogs would facilitate deep learning by enabling the perspectives of outsiders – who could then help WoW participants see new possibilities within their own development and transitions into the workplace. Wenger, McDermott and Snyder suggest that

> good community design brings information from outside the community into the dialogue about what the community could achieve. (2002)

Allowing and encouraging input and feedback from outside perspectives helps increase the vitality and value of a community of practice. The YahooGroup *Blogthinking* was the only e-learning methodology that did not allow input from outside the community, as it was restricted to invited members – WoW participants - only. The team and individual weblogs were open and

public, with limitless opportunity for peer and external review in the comments sections. In 2006 workplace supervisors expressed more interest in the weblogs than they had in 2005.

3. Invite different levels of participation

An effective community of practice will allow for various levels of participation by the members. There were three levels of community participation amongst the 2006 WoW participants. The first was a small core group of people who actively participated in discussions and debates at the team weblog. Interestingly, the core group did not consist of scholarship holders only. CTO, for example, was a main contributor to the team weblog. At his own weblog he wrote that

> *I learnt a lot from other bloggers and mostly that blogging is a way of socializing, sharing your experiences, making friends... That does not exclude purely professional blogs. There are political blogs, journalists' blogs, etc. Since life is all about choices, I chose to blog for socializing and build up professionalism in the process. (CTO's Weblog, 14 April 2006)*

It is significant that a WoW participant who was not selected as a scholarship holder took on the team weblog as a community project, identified topics to address, and thus contributed to moving the community along its learning agenda. This suggests that the community of practice empowered participants other than the scholarship holders.

Besides this core group of contributors to the community of practice there was a fairly active group who participated occasionally. Members of this community of practice did not appear to favour the weblogs over the YahooGroup, or vice versa, and individuals were consistent in their degree of participation at all forms of technologies. A large portion of the students rarely participated. As "lurkers" they may have had private conversations about the issues being discussed and thus would still have benefitted.

4. Develop both public and private community spaces

Wenger et al (2002) suggest that a community of practice should have both public and private means of engagement, thereby allowing for opportunities to discuss details in private before presentation in public. In the WoW Programmes, the individual and team weblogs were the public space, and the YahooGroup *Blogthinking* was the private space. Both public and private spaces should support each other – in the WoW Programmes context, the strength of the

individual relationships at the YahooGroup *Blogthinking* enriched the weblogs, and the weblogs strengthened individual relationships at the YahooGroup.

5. Focus on value

WoW participants had to have seen value in the development of a community of practice, or there would not have been the incentive for participation. It appeared from different accounts, both in weblogs and interviews, that participants valued the community of practice in different ways. For example, just one of the respondents, BAB, saw the weblogs as a way for her to gain a different perspective (besides, for example, the informal chats the two interns were having) on EGM's working experiences. (Appendix 8.2, BAB Interview, 9 May 2006) BAB also used her weblog to post information - on Corporate Social Investment (Csikszentmihalyi) and Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) - that she believed would be of interest to her peers and an opportunity to engage with peers. (BAB's Weblog, 19 June 2006) - and then BAB also found that reading and responding to each others' blogs strengthened the trust between her and EGM, who were completing their internships at the same host organisation. (Appendix 8.2, BAB Interview, 9 May 2006)

Just these three ways that demonstrate BAB's valuing of the weblogs as one of the tools of the community of practice indicates a multi-faceted appreciation of the community of practice. From a pedagogical perspective, the primary areas of value we expected from our practice of implementing and supporting the community of practice were learning, and reflection upon learning.

6. Combine familiarity and excitement

The term "neutral space" (attributed to Ray Oldenburg, urban sociologist) is often used in the literature on communities of practice, and usually with the description of communities of practice as being separate from job responsibilities. Wenger et al add that

> Unlike team members, community members can offer advice on a project with no risk of getting entangled in it; they can listen to advice with no obligation to take it. (2002)

The WoW Programmes' 2006 community of practice appeared to be a comfortable and neutral environment where members also tried to generate excitement through lively exchanges of knowledge. CTO (A WoW Training Programme 2006 participant) wrote about how he tried to shift away from "assignment" type blogposts, by providing links:

> *Another concern I had was about the theming of the teamblog. I am not against the idea of being guided by a theme, but at certain times I feel like writing pieces of university*

essays. I like change and I always go green. Having been studying development since my first year at university, when preparing a post for the teamblog, I felt like writing assignments. I have certain stuff that I never dared to post. It looks like writing assignments again and again. That is the very reason, whenever I have to post on the teamblog on the theme of African development; I try my best to link it to news or any other topic. Moreover, I avoid making it as formal as an assignment given that there are so many books, websites, experts, journals, etc that address the topic better than I do. (CTO's weblog, 14 April 2006)

7. Create a rhythm for the community

Wenger et al (2002) call for a healthy rhythm of activity that will neither overwhelm nor under stimulate the participants as their final principle in the development of a community of practice. I observed that the level of interest in the WoW Programmes 2006 community of practice ebbed and flowed in a natural way, and according to the rhythm of specific activities that took place in the WoW Programmes.

4.2.6 Perceptions of employability

In response to a question designed to investigate workplace supervisor's impressions regarding the intern's employability, EGM and BAB's supervisor honed in on attitude:

> I think I've spoken quite a lot about BAB and I really emphasised her interpersonal skills strongly and I think that's why she has made such an impression within the [host organisation] team. At [host organisation] we look for entrepreneurial spirits, we look for attitude more than anything else. So our feeling is not... it doesn't matter if you don't have the skills, but if you've got the right attitude we'll take you and you'll learn the skills. (Appendix 8.3, BAB and EGM's Workplace Supervisor Interview, 20 June 2006, p 210)

EGM and BAB's supervisor defined "attitude" as it was appreciated by the host organisation, thus:

> ...the culture here is very much, hit the ground running, be an owner-manager... take control of what it is that you are doing, be innovative, speak up, young, dynamic... you know it's a very young organisation for an old, traditional sort of [industry]. We want people to get on by themselves requiring little supervision, to come up with ideas etcetera. And it's always been the case of, if you… first you have the skills, but the wrong attitude and if you don't fit in here... and BAB fits in. I'm amazed at her knowledge of the broadest range of things. You know, she will act as if she's a hard and fast HR practitioner and she doesn't know anything about HR and the next minute she's putting power point presentations together with a very strong communications slant for

> me. She's done administrative work and like preparing team-building sessions for [Head of Department]. She's literally done photocopying, but then she can express an opinion on anything that doesn't have anything necessarily to do with the work she's doing here. (Appendix 8.3, BAB and EGM's Workplace Supervisor Interview, 20 June 2006, p 93)

In addition BAB and EGM's workplace supervisor explained how she understood the notion of employability, and that she believed that BAB could be considered, within the context of her organisation, as employable because they had shown an ability to think outside the box, adapt to change, and learn new material. Other traits the supervisor listed as qualifying one as employable were having the right attitude, tacit knowledge, enthusiasm, flexibility and humility (Appendix 8.3, BAB and EGM's Workplace Supervisor Interview, 20 June 2006). With these employability skills and traits in place, the workplace supervisor believed that it would be possible to change any preconceived ideas in the merchant banking industry about the value and relevance of a Humanities degree:

> ... just because you studied something in the Humanities field, it doesn't mean that you have to say well I'm going to accept a lower paying job because I'm not a Commerce graduate. Or, you know, I'm not going to be able to work in a commercial sector. I think hopefully we can prove this thinking wrong by getting somebody like BAB employed in a merchant bank, where they are quite strict on asking for merchant banking experience first. This would be one of the exceptions because she's got, you know, the other kind of drive. (Appendix 8.3, BAB and EGM's Workplace Supervisor Interview, 20 June 2006, p 212)

Reinforcing the importance of a positive attitude in making a successful transition into the workplace, BAB's supervisor commented after a weblog post in which BAB's described the final days of her internship:

> *One does not need several degrees to be a success at work - it all boils down to attitude and the willingness to learn. Remember [head of department] spoke about this at the last induction session when she said that at [host organisation], if you have the right attitude, we are prepared to teach you the skills. Having the right skills and the wrong attitude is a recipe for disaster in most organisations. One of the things I have observed over the past few months working with you is how important your particular attitude is. You embrace my definition of employability. At the last meeting I had with LE she asked me what my definition of employability is. My answer referred to your attitude! I have noticed how you have always done every thing asked of you - no matter how menial I may have thought the task was. You have shown initiative in coming up with ideas and solutions, and I really value being able to leave you to get on with things. You have also made an effort to get to know all the people you have worked with at [host organisation]. Many interns make the mistake of staying quietly in their own area believing that the temporary nature of their internship means they don't have to make an effort to mingle and form relationships. You have not done this - and it is precisely because of this that you have made you mark on us here. As I have also said to LE - you are an asset to the team here, and your classmates at WoW can be proud of what you have done for the programme.*

> *The WoW programme must be great if it produces people like you! You can be really proud of yourself too and I will definitely be staying in touch to track your career progress. For someone like you - the sky is the limit! (Appendix 8.4, BAB's Weblog, Comment posted by BAB's workplace supervisor, 28 June 2006)*

Towards the end of her internship, IUP applied for the post of Communications Coordinator at her host organisation. Her application was ultimately unsuccessful because she was not South African, but her explanation of why she believed she was qualified for the position details her perception of her employability. Besides having the necessary skills (writing and computer skills) and knowledge (the principles and practices of communications and public information techniques), IUP believed that

> *The experience I have had with [host organisation] so far has given me the edge that makes me positive that I am a fit for the position of communications coordinator with the organisation. (IUP's Weblog, 25 June 2006)*

And that in addition she was able to

> *work independently with limited supervision and under multiple deadlines; (IUP's Weblog, 25 June 2006)*

and could

> *develop and maintain good working relationships with internal staff as well as external people especially media personnel and people from other organizations who deal with the [host organisation]'s diverse interests (Government, Business, Labour and Community). (IUP's Weblog, 25 June 2006)*

A summary of the aspects of IUP's and BAB's attitude that assured their employability includes their

- completion of all tasks, including those that were menial,
- ability to establish positive working relationships,
- tendency to show initiative by suggesting ideas and solutions,
- ability to work independently.

4.3 Overview: Process evaluation of Activity Stage Four, World of Work Internship Component

A possible shortcoming in the process evaluation of the WoW Programmes in 2006 was that all respondents were scholarship holders. No data was collected from participants in the WoW Training Programme who found their first positions in workplaces independently and without

support or mentoring from the WoW Programmes' staff. However, a scholarship holder – LAY – offered some feedback about one of the other WoW Training Programme participants – DEP.

LAY communicated with DEP often, as he had secured a temporary position at an organisation in the same building as LAY's host organisation (it should be added that the WoW Programmes did refer DEP to the organisation, but there was no further involvement thereafter). LAY relayed that DEP seemed, while at work, to be

> ...under pressure a lot, he smoked a lot and was always shaking. He wouldn't eat during lunchtime but would say that everything was fine, he just works a lot. You could tell that DEP was drowning in his work, we used to talk a lot about him being under pressure and how I was coping at the [organisation]. (Appendix 12.2, LAY Interview, 10 July 2006, p 327)

LAY and DEP shared their experiences of their transitions into their respective new environments, but LAY suggested that this was inadequate for DEP. By comparison, she had substantial support as a scholarship intern.

> I can talk to you and the scholarship interns when I am under pressure and for him he did not have anyone that he can speak to especially where he is currently working. He even said that he wished he could work with us so that he could have some one to talk to, because he sometimes talks to himself in that office. He said that we don't even come and check on him so he gets rather lonely in there... I feel that during the time he was working for [organisation], he was facing a difficult for him to adjust to the new environment as he did not have any support internally. (Appendix 12.2, LAY Interview, 10 July 2006, p 327)

The description of DEP is concerning, and in sharp contrast to the development of confidence in their employability that the scholarship holders revealed at the weblogs and during the interviews. While this reinforces the value of mentoring and support from the WoW Programmes' staff during the transition and internship stages, it also points to a need to extend that mentoring and support to all participants in the WoW Programmes, and not only to a select group such as the 2006 scholarship holders.

LAY's workplace supervisor had been an intern with the WoW Programmes in 2002. He recalled that financial support was a crucial issue for interns in 2002:

> I think the greatest challenge was that we were not given any form of financial support from the organisations that we went to [in 2002]. I think that it is a strain for most of us as interns, and at that point in time... (Appendix 12.3, LAY's Workplace Supervisor ['DL'], Interview, 7 June 2006, p 330)

In 2002, not all host organisations were remunerating interns for the three months of the internship, but by 2005 all were. Besides remuneration during the internships (for three months), students participating in the Programmes from 2002 to 2005 often required financial support for Training Programme fees, and Internship Programme fees. (Also see Appendix 1, Input Evaluation, for more detail on fees and remuneration during the WoW Programmes, 2002-2005.)

In 2006, all but five of participants only needed to pay the Training Programme fees. The scholarship holders did not need to pay any of the fees and received remuneration during their internships. This benefitted scholarship holders substantially. Only one of the scholarship holders did not need financial support, and in fact she made a donation of the Training Programme fees to the WoW Programmes. There is no doubt that financial support enabled the other four scholarship holders to focus on their learning and transitions into the workplace effectively, and there were accounts during the interviews of the sense of relief that financial support brought to scholarship holders.

As course designers, our attempts to compensate for the fact that we would not be providing hands-on support for participants who completed the Training Programme and started their moves into workplaces included inviting representatives from host organisations to address students during the Training Programme. We had hoped that this would assist Training Programme participants to establish networks. We also hoped that the weblogs would increase each student's exposure and thus facilitate improved networks in the workplace. The reality was that networking occurred most effectively during the internships, and the scholarship students – the only participants in 2006 with guaranteed internships - therefore benefitted most. BAB confirmed this in a weblog post, wherein she said that while the training had been valuable, it was during her internship that she met people:

> *The training has definitely been of great help to me in the working world and I would certainly recommend it to other students. It has opened many doors for me and I have met so many wonderful people through my internship at [host organisation]. (Appendix 8.4, BAB's Weblog, 5 July 2006)*

It was only at the end of her internship, and after her contract was extended at her host organisation, that BAB said her understanding of employability and the process of networking had shifted:

> *I will definitely blog on my future experiences at [host organisation] so watch this space. After reading LE's blog on our YahooGroup mails about showcasing our employability, it made me realise how important it is to show your employability and using the opportunities we gain to the full. We've heard about networking and employability*

> *throughout the WoW 2006 Programme and it was hard to understand it at that moment because hardly any of us ever experienced it seeing that we were recent graduates. The hard work has paid off and its not only my foot that's in the door anymore, now I've got the opportunity to open the door wide and look for other doors to open. (Appendix 8.4, BAB's Weblog, 31 July 2006)*

The scholarship holders reiterated the value of the internship component. After a month at her host organisation, BAB felt more optimistic about the "catch 22" situation for postgraduates attempting to establish themselves in the world of work and being turned away due to a lack of experience, and her prospects as a newly qualified Humanities postgraduate:

> *Today I had some extra time on my hands so I updated my CV. It's a good feeling to add something to the experience section. The "chicken or egg" situation is seemingly brighter now. (Appendix 8.4, BAB's Weblog, 18 May 2006)*

At the middle point of the internship, and almost exactly a month later, BAB's reflected again on the "chicken or egg" situation:

> *I heard many stories how employers do not want graduates and how graduates do not have the experience to start working. This links to my first blogging entry "Experience or no experience? That is the question". I questioned the whole issue of the unreasonable argument of graduates needing experience before you can start your first job at certain places.*
> *[Host organisation] took me in as an intern without any experience. And so far I have seen that being a hard worker and a keen learner will get you where you want. What employers should look for is not just the experience behind a graduate's name, but also their abilities and desire to learn about the company and its people/clients. The graduate should be one to add value to the company, whether he has less than one-year experience behind his name or more. (Appendix 8.4, BAB's Weblog, 19 June 2006)*

In her responses to the internship interview exit questions, IUP said that the most important things that the WoW Programmes had done for her was

> Instilling confidence in me that the way one handles themselves in a work situation creates an impression and that one needs to drive the correct impression home. (Appendix 10.2, IUP Exit Interview response by email, 4 December 2006)

BAB also relayed, in an interview in the last stage of her internship, that her employability was enhanced by her development of confidence during her internship:

> When I first arrived I was very nervous in not knowing whether I will be able to do a task by myself and whether I can do without any other support. By now I've got two new projects to tackle. I've already started it by myself. If I can't… the only reason why I would want people to help me is because of manpower. I need more people to be able to tackle it. Not because I'm not confident here. (Appendix 8.2, BAB Interview, 11 July 2006)

IUP and BAB's development of confidence, in comparison to any of the 2005 respondents, appeared to be fast-tracked and facilitated her transition into the workplace more quickly than we saw with the 2005 respondents. This can be attributed to the closer mentoring that occurred in 2006 since the focus from the WoW Programmes' staff was on five scholarship holders only. While IUP wished that the WoW Programmes could have helped her to secure permanent employment, she said that she did not think she would have been able to secure an internship position independently of the WoW Programmes:

> I appreciate the assistance that was extended to me by the University. I doubt that I would have clinched an internship position on my own. I am grateful for this opportunity. No one can take away this unique experience from me! (Appendix 10.2, IUP Exit Interview response by email, 4 December 2006)

BAB said that the Internship component met with all of her expectations:

> There's nothing negative I can say about the internship. I've got out of it everything that I wanted to, I've made friends. I was trained in certain things I didn't know how to do. At the end of the day I got a contract job with, with the place that I did my internship at. So, everything I wanted I got out of my internship. (Appendix 8.2, BAB Interview, 11 July 2006)

Months after she had completed her internship, BAB recognised her host organisation's commitment to her development when she was offered a permanent position at the host organisation in the area she had originally wanted to be working in. However, she also acknowledged that the WoW Programmes had been essential for this achievement:

> *It has almost been a year since I started the WoW 2006 Training Programme, and it has definitely paid off to do the course. I got into an internship with the help of the programme, and even though I started off doing a job I didn't understand and didn't study, I ended up exactly where I wanted to be: Politics. It's like they say, getting that foot in the door can help immensely. (Appendix 8.4, BAB's Weblog, 27 February 2007)*

Table 5: Main Themes Identified in the Content Analysis - World of Work Programmes 2006

Appendix 8 - BAB	**Appendix 9 - EGM**	**Appendix 10 - IUP**	**Appendix 11 - DOZ**	**Appendix 12 – LAY**	→	THEMATIC ORGANISATION – LEVEL 1	→	DATA ANALYSIS ORGANISATION - LEVEL 2 (CHAPTER 6)
8.4 – Coded weblog								
8.3 - Workplace supervisor's interviews		10.3 - Workplace supervisor's interview	11.3 - Workplace supervisor's interview	12.3 - Workplace supervisor's interviews				
8.2 – Intern's interviews	9.2 – Intern's interviews	10.2 - Intern's interview & exit Interview responses	11.2 - Intern's interview	12.2 - Intern's interviews				
8.1 – Vertical Analysis	9.1 – Vertical Analysis	10.1 – Vertical Analysis	11.1 – Vertical Analysis	12.1 – Vertical Analysis				
KEY POINTS ↓	KEY POINTS ↓	KEY POINTS ↓	KEY POINTS ↓	KEY POINTS ↓				
	Intern's expectation for WoW to facilitate her entry into a corporate environment.		Expectation to learn more about the workplace through the WoW training and thus to develop employability.	Expectation for WoW Programmes to facilitate acquisition of work experience, which intern perceived as necessity for getting employment.		**Students' expectations of WoW Programmes**		**1. Activity Stage One: Selection of Programme Participants in 2006**
Enthusiastic, committed attitude to weblogs; regular postings.	Intern met, but did not exceed course requirements for posts at weblog.	Enthusiastic attitude to weblogs; regular postings.	Intern did not engage with weblog.	Fair engagement with weblog.		**Establishing and maintaining weblog**		**2. Activity Stage Two: World of Work Training Component**
Intern volunteered to establish team weblog.	Intern's participation at team weblog was minimal.		Intern posted only once at team weblog – after being prompted to do so (about Shared Work Day) by WoW Staff.			**Establishing and maintaining team weblog**		
Intern had access to well-established business networks. Intern aware of the importance of networks.			Workplace supervisor's positive observations about intern's ability to work in a team.			**Networking**		

Appendix 8 - BAB	**Appendix 9 - EGM**	**Appendix 10 - IUP**	**Appendix 11 - DOZ**	**Appendix 12 – LAY**
8.4 – Coded weblog				
8.3 - Workplace supervisor's interviews		10.3 - Workplace supervisor's interview	11.3 - Workplace supervisor's interview	12.3 - Workplace supervisor's interviews
8.2 – Intern's interviews	9.2 – Intern's interviews	10.2 - Intern's interview & exit Interview responses	11.2 - Intern's interview	12.2 - Intern's interviews
8.1 – Vertical Analysis	9.1 – Vertical Analysis	10.1 – Vertical Analysis	11.1 – Vertical Analysis	12.1 – Vertical Analysis
KEY POINTS ↓	KEY POINTS ↓	KEY POINTS ↓	KEY POINTS ↓	KEY POINTS ↓
	Intern believed she was implementing what she had learnt about Project Management (WoW Trng Prgrm) during internship.			
			Workplace supervisor's positive observations about intern's presentation skills.	
			Workplace supervisor's issues with intern's poor business writing style, lack of attention to detail. Also, weak computer literacy. Intern was aware of these problems and need to address them.	
				Intern experienced death in her family on first day of WoW Training Programme. Linked experience to Emotional Intelligence.

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THEMATIC ORGANISATION – LEVEL 1
WoW Training topic: Project and Programme Management
WoW Training topic: Business Presentation Skills
WoW Training topic: Business Writing Skills
WoW Training topic: Emotional Intelligence

→

DATA ANALYSIS ORGANISATION - LEVEL 2 (CHAPTER 6)

Appendix 8 - BAB	**Appendix 9 - EGM**	**Appendix 10 - IUP**	**Appendix 11 - DOZ**	**Appendix 12 – LAY**			
8.4 – Coded weblog							
8.3 - Workplace supervisor's interviews		10.3 - Workplace supervisor's interview	11.3 - Workplace supervisor's interview	12.3 - Workplace supervisor's interviews			
8.2 – Intern's interviews	9.2 – Intern's interviews	10.2 - Intern's interview & exit Interview responses	11.2 - Intern's interview	12.2 - Intern's interviews			
8.1 – Vertical Analysis	9.1 – Vertical Analysis	10.1 – Vertical Analysis	11.1 – Vertical Analysis	12.1 – Vertical Analysis			
KEY POINTS ↓	KEY POINTS ↓	KEY POINTS ↓	KEY POINTS ↓	KEY POINTS ↓	→	THEMATIC ORGANISATION – LEVEL 1	→ DATA ANALYSIS ORGANISATION - LEVEL 2 (CHAPTER 6)
1st phase of internship: intern valued WoW training on professionalism and stress management.						**WoW Training topic: Stress management**	
	Time management an issue in the workplace for intern. Unsettled by random, unplanned, ad hoc tasks.		Workplace supervisor's concern with intern's apparent lack of ability to prioritise tasks; observation that time urgency and prioritising is different for students / employees – "students" don't appreciate implications of deadlines. But, workplace supervisor's positive observations about intern's punctuality.	Intern valued WoW Training Programme input on Time Management, during her internship.		**WoW Training topic: Time management**	
Intern reflected on skills necessary for workplace before transition.						**WoW Training: (general)**	

Appendix 8 - BAB	**Appendix 9 - EGM**	**Appendix 10 - IUP**	**Appendix 11 - DOZ**	**Appendix 12 – LAY**
8.4 – Coded weblog				
8.3 - Workplace supervisor's interviews		10.3 - Workplace supervisor's interview	11.3 - Workplace supervisor's interview	12.3 - Workplace supervisor's interviews
8.2 – Intern's interviews	9.2 – Intern's interviews	10.2 - Intern's interview & exit Interview responses	11.2 - Intern's interview	12.2 - Intern's interviews
8.1 – Vertical Analysis	9.1 – Vertical Analysis	10.1 – Vertical Analysis	11.1 – Vertical Analysis	12.1 – Vertical Analysis
KEY POINTS ↓	KEY POINTS ↓	KEY POINTS ↓	KEY POINTS ↓	KEY POINTS ↓
			Primary motivation for host organisation's selection of this intern was that she had a disadvantaged background. Host org committed to assisting a previously disadvantaged person.	
Intern: Internship had "exceeded my expectations totally". Intern attributed work placement and entry to host org to WoW Prgrm – did not believe she could have achieved this independently.	Intern believed work placement was due to Training Programme; she did not believe she would have secured a work placement without WoW Trng Prgrm.	Intern frustrated about perceived slow pace of work and dated technology.	Lack of clarity at start of internship re nature of work placement.	Intern's comment that WoW Training Programme had prepared her for transition.

→

THEMATIC ORGANISATION – LEVEL 1
Liaising with the host organisation
Transition experiences

→

DATA ANALYSIS ORGANISATION - LEVEL 2 (CHAPTER 6)
3. Activity Stage Three: Transition

Appendix 8 - BAB	**Appendix 9 - EGM**	**Appendix 10 - IUP**	**Appendix 11 - DOZ**	**Appendix 12 – LAY**
8.4 – Coded weblog				
8.3 - Workplace supervisor's interviews		10.3 - Workplace supervisor's interview	11.3 - Workplace supervisor's interview	12.3 - Workplace supervisor's interviews
8.2 – Intern's interviews	9.2 – Intern's interviews	10.2 - Intern's interview & exit Interview responses	11.2 - Intern's interview	12.2 - Intern's interviews
8.1 – Vertical Analysis	9.1 – Vertical Analysis	10.1 – Vertical Analysis	11.1 – Vertical Analysis	12.1 – Vertical Analysis
KEY POINTS ↓	KEY POINTS ↓	KEY POINTS ↓	KEY POINTS ↓	KEY POINTS ↓
				Feedback was important for intern – seen as a way of supporting her learning process.
Entering the host org through area other than career goal, perceived as a "foot in the door". Towards end of internship, original career goal doubted – with interest expressed in the alternative entry into the org, as a long-term career option.	Internship helped intern with choice re future career path.	Intern had a clear career objective – internship placement not immediately aligned to this. Intern disappointed that internship work was not aligned to career aspirations, but reconciled with this at end of internship.	No specific career aspirations stated at entry to WoW.	Intern had a general career direction – internship placement not immediately aligned to this. Intern did not appear concerned about this.
Enjoyment of social aspects of work.				
		Mentor urged intern to accept work placement despite it not being aligned to career objective, because non-South African citizenship status limited opportunities.		

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THEMATIC ORGANISATION – LEVEL 1
Knowledge acquisition during the internship
Shifting ideas about a career track
Orientation and establishing identity
Language, nationality and access

→

DATA ANALYSIS ORGANISATION - LEVEL 2 (CHAPTER 6)
4. Activity Stage Four: World of Work Internship Component

Appendix 8 - BAB	Appendix 9 - EGM	Appendix 10 - IUP	Appendix 11 - DOZ	Appendix 12 - LAY			
8.4 – Coded weblog							
8.3 - Workplace supervisor's interviews		10.3 - Workplace supervisor's interview	11.3 - Workplace supervisor's interview	12.3 - Workplace supervisor's interviews			
8.2 – Intern's interviews	9.2 – Intern's interviews	10.2 - Intern's interview & exit Interview responses	11.2 - Intern's interview	12.2 - Intern's interviews			
8.1 – Vertical Analysis	9.1 – Vertical Analysis	10.1 – Vertical Analysis	11.1 – Vertical Analysis	12.1 – Vertical Analysis			
KEY POINTS ↓	KEY POINTS ↓	KEY POINTS ↓	KEY POINTS ↓	KEY POINTS ↓	→	THEMATIC ORGANISATION – LEVEL 1	→ DATA ANALYSIS ORGANISATION - LEVEL 2 (CHAPTER 6)
Workplace supervisor: weblogs were a way of maintaining contact/gauging interest in tasks.	Workplace supervisor *compared* the two WoW interns at host org – especially with regard to interpersonal skills.	Workplace supervisor expected intern to work independently. Intern slightly intimidated by this.	Workplace supervisor noted intern's reluctance to change her practice according to his recommendations.	Intern's workplace supervisor was a previous WoW intern (2002). Intern appreciate supportive input and interest from workplace supervisor. Intern described workplace supervisor as being, simultaneously, mentor, guide and supervisor.		**Workplace supervisors: pedagogical approaches**	
			Workplace supervisor's concern that intern's poor performance could jeopardize his position/company's image.			**Delegation and responsibility**	
Mid-way through internship, intern established bonds with host org colleagues.	Interview panel's perception of intern as complacent.			Workplace supervisor's observation about intern's "shyness" – and suggestion for intern to address this.		**Dynamic versus reserved behaviour**	
Able to attempt tasks independently, make mistakes, ask for help if necessary, and try again.						**Risk-taking opportunities**	

Appendix 8 - BAB	**Appendix 9 - EGM**	**Appendix 10 - IUP**	**Appendix 11 - DOZ**	**Appendix 12 – LAY**
8.4 – Coded weblog				
8.3 - Workplace supervisor's interviews		10.3 - Workplace supervisor's interview	11.3 - Workplace supervisor's interview	12.3 - Workplace supervisor's interviews
8.2 – Intern's interviews	9.2 – Intern's interviews	10.2 - Intern's interview & exit Interview responses	11.2 - Intern's interview	12.2 - Intern's interviews
8.1 – Vertical Analysis	9.1 – Vertical Analysis	10.1 – Vertical Analysis	11.1 – Vertical Analysis	12.1 – Vertical Analysis
KEY POINTS ↓	KEY POINTS ↓	KEY POINTS ↓	KEY POINTS ↓	KEY POINTS ↓
				Business writing coaching from WoW staff based on ad hoc correspondence between intern and WoW office. Intern very cooperative about this. Significant improvement in writing skills resulted.
	Coaching included attempts to shift possible perceptions of intern as complacent/ambivalent. Intern equally complacent/ambivalent about this coaching.			
		Mentor's objective: to connect intern with peers located in different sites; exercise was not especially significant for intern.	Objective of "Shared Work Day", for this intern, was to address writing skills by using peer influence (IUP) to reinforce importance of writing skills. This was beneficial for intern.	

→ THEMATIC ORGANISATION – LEVEL 1

- **Coaching business writing**
- **World of Work Programmes' mentor**
- **Shared work-day**

→ DATA ANALYSIS ORGANISATION - LEVEL 2 (CHAPTER 6)

Appendix 8 - BAB	**Appendix 9 - EGM**	**Appendix 10 - IUP**	**Appendix 11 - DOZ**	**Appendix 12 – LAY**
8.4 – Coded weblog				
8.3 - Workplace supervisor's interviews		10.3 - Workplace supervisor's interview	11.3 - Workplace supervisor's interview	12.3 - Workplace supervisor's interviews
8.2 – Intern's interviews	9.2 – Intern's interviews	10.2 - Intern's interview & exit Interview responses	11.2 - Intern's interview	12.2 - Intern's interviews
8.1 – Vertical Analysis	9.1 – Vertical Analysis	10.1 – Vertical Analysis	11.1 – Vertical Analysis	12.1 – Vertical Analysis
KEY POINTS ↓	KEY POINTS ↓	KEY POINTS ↓	KEY POINTS ↓	KEY POINTS ↓
Positive support from parents and friends.		Positive support from family, friends and peers.		Significant informal support for intern from a WoW Training Programme participant, located in same building but different host org.
"Nice" to share internship with peer – i.e. not very strong feelings about this; not dependent on fellow intern. Shared goals with fellow intern (peer).	Fellow intern at host org was an important means of support. Intern expressed dependence on fellow intern.	2005 WoW intern at same host organisation was not a significant source of support.		
Regular participation at Team Weblog.	Intern had some contact with other 2006 interns at their different host organisations, but not to the extent of intern's relationship with her fellow intern at the same host org.	Support from fellow interns in different workplaces through email and telephone calls.		Support for intern with regard to incident of death in her family, posted at weblog.
Workplace supervisor: Intern's interpersonal skills a major strength & Intern's interpersonal skills = her employability.	Intern believed process of the internship helped change her perceived behaviours (from being complacent/ambivalent.)	Intern was more enthusiastic about "different career path".		

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THEMATIC ORGANISATION – LEVEL 1
Informal support
Interns at the same host organisation
Developing communities of practice
Perceptions of employability

→

DATA ANALYSIS ORGANISATION - LEVEL 2 (CHAPTER 6)

CHAPTER 6 Product Evaluation

The Product Evaluation in this chapter incorporates a holistic approach, including contextual or transformation information where possible, to investigate whether the WoW Programmes developed, or assisted with the development of Humanities postgraduate students' employability skills. This information is drawn from the Process Evaluations of the 2005 and 2006 World of Work Programmes in Chapters 4 and 5.

Stufflebeam recommends structuring the final report of a programme evaluation according to the Programme Antecedents (background information), Programme Implementation (for possible replication purposes), and Programme Results. (2004) I have incorporated this suggestion in this chapter, except for the 'Programme Antecedents' - an overview of the WoW Programmes from 2001 to 2004 - which is available as Appendix 1 (Input Evaluation: History and Development of the World of Work Programmes at Wits University) and is therefore not included here.

I intend to summarise comparatively the findings from the process evaluation of the WoW Programmes in 2005 and 2006. An overview of the WoW Programmes in 2007 and 2008 will follow this. The length of my involvement in the WoW Programmes, in various capacities but always as a researcher, has lent a unique – and positive - dimension to the research process. It has meant that the evaluations of the years 2005 and 2006 are flanked by information gleaned from my direct involvement in the programmes from 2002 to 2004, and from 2007 and 2008. The evaluations of the years 2005 and 2006 should benefit from this range: the development years leading up to the evaluation years, and the subsequent years that should have revealed the components in the design of the programmes that have survival value.

I use the term 'survival value' for aspects of the WoW Programmes that I predict will be relevant for future programmes with similar aims and objectives regardless of minor differences in, for example, the structure or design of such programmes. Hypothetically these aspects should, I believe, 'survive' and be both valid and beneficial even for a programme with a different context, because they are particularly successful. The pedagogical and curricular aspects of the WoW Programmes that have survival value will therefore inform the chapter, and I will refer to Dacre Pool and Sewell's (2007) model of employability for consideration of the WoW Programme's development of the employability of Humanities postgraduates.

The objective of this chapter is therefore to articulate the findings of the evaluation that may lead to improvements in this particular programme, and may be helpful to other educational institutions with (or considering) an internship programme.

1. Programme Implementation - WoW Programmes 2005 and 2006

As per the process evaluation of the World of Work Programmes 2005 and 2006 – in Chapters 4 and 5 respectively - the following section of the Product Evaluation (Chapter 6) considers key findings according to the activity stages in those chapters:

- Activity Stage One: Selection of Programme Participants
- Activity Stage Two: World of Work Training Component
- Activity Stage Three: Transition
- Activity Stage Four: World of Work Internship Component

1.1 Findings from Activity Stage One: the Selection of Programme Participants in 2005 and 2006

Selecting participants for the WoW Programmes was an administrative process. It is not possible to analyse any pedagogical and curricular aspects of the WoW Programmes at this stage. Nevertheless, the decision-making process for the criteria for selecting participants has been important to evaluate, as these were typically influenced by external factors such as the availability of internships and the WoW Programmes' resources. These considerations then set the parameters for the pedagogical approaches and curriculum design of the other stages of the WoW Programmes.

1.1.1 The value of standard selection criteria

In 2002 the Internship Programme goals largely determined the structures that were put in place for the selection of programme participants. Since the Programme's overall goals did not change fundamentally during subsequent years, these basic selection criteria (please see Appendix 1 (Input Evaluation: History and Development of the World of Work Programmes at Wits University) were used every year:

Besides ensuring consistency in the administration of the programmes from year to year, these entrance requirements enabled

- the programmes' emphasis on the development of professional skills (as the concept of professionalism is understood in the workplace) to applicants and university staff before the programmes commenced.
- a measure to protect the WoW Programmes' developing reputation and relationships with host organisations by screening applicants.
- an opportunity to access information about the applicant's potential for professional performance and employability development that could not be assessed by academic results only. This also informed the individual strategies that would be needed to improve both the applicant's employability and professionalism development.

1.1.2 The value of separating components

In 2005 we found that positioning the training component and the internship component as separate, but compatible components was effective to some extent. Students typically had three main expectations when they first applied for the WoW Programmes: to learn about the world of work, to orientate themselves to the workplace, and for the WoW Programmes to help facilitate good career opportunities. The Input Evaluation (Appendix 1) confirms that the existing design of the training component was geared to meet the first two expectations; the curriculum for the 2005 training component also reinforced that this part of the WoW Programmes met the first two expectations. The training component could not make any claim for facilitating actual career opportunities however. Future or similar programmes should make it clear from the start that such a Training Programme is designed for information about the world of work and not necessarily for entry into it. When this is achieved the Training Programme should be able to stand-alone and function separately and effectively from the Internship Programme.

In 2005 two participants chose to complete the training component only and not to apply for the internship component. Unfortunately there was no investigation into why the individuals made this choice, how effective they found the training component and whether it alone helped them towards their entries into the workplace. This is a limitation of the research and an area that should be highlighted for future enquiry. If we know how the WoW Training Programme served individuals who attended it only, we will be able to judge whether it benefits students independently of the Internship Programme.

1.1.3 Selection criteria in 2005

Applicants were told at the selection stage of the WoW Programme in 2005 that only South African citizens (or people from the SADEC region) would be considered for the Internship Programme. We planned for the Training Programme to include strategies such as the CV Writing and Interview Role-plays Workshop to help participants who were not South African citizens or from the SADEC region to find their own internships, or manage their first entry into the world of work independently of the Programmes' staff. Neither this particular selection criteria nor the Training Programme strategy could be investigated for its impact and consequences, because the Programmes' Coordinator did in fact secure internships for 12 of the 13 students after the Training Programme ended. While we therefore cannot tell if the strategy was in fact helpful for participants to find their first placement in the corporate environment independently, a key finding relates to staff responses to selection criteria: in 2005 the Programmes' Coordinator evidently perceived an inequitability in the selection criteria and therefore decided to waive it. This meant that the Programmes' Coordinator voluntarily assumed the responsibility of finding internships for almost all the students. Future and/or similar programmes must account for the pressures on programme staff that may be realised as a result of selection criteria.

One of the standard selection criteria for entry into the WoW Programmes was that applicants should not have had any formal work experience. Part-time employment such as working as a waitron was not seen as formal work experience, while full-time work was. The criteria had been applied since the inception of the WoW Programmes in 2001 (please see Input Evaluation, Appendix 1, Input Evaluation: History and Development of the World of Work Programmes at Wits University) and was motivated by the Programmes' objective to address the Catch-22 situation of students not being able to break into the workplace due to their lack of experience. In other words, the WoW Programmes were positioned as a way for newcomers into the workplace to be able to claim some experience by having completed an internship.

Despite this criteria and the fact that she did in fact have formal work experience, a key respondent GL was accepted for both the training and internship components in 2005. Her participation gave us the opportunity to assess whether this criteria was valid. A key finding was that GL benefitted from her participation despite her former work experience. We learnt that the Programmes may benefit even experienced students who wish to change career paths or feel that they need to re-orientate themselves in the workplace, or want to learn more about the world of work.

The letter we asked students to submit explaining why they wanted to participate in the WoW Programmes gave us indications of attitude and expectations; students also submitted samples of their academic writing and these allowed us insight into their writing abilities. There were of course also interviews conducted to help both applicants and staff determine if the WoW Programmes were the right choice of intervention for individuals. We contacted previous part-time employers and academic staff telephonically for references on each applicant. Despite these steps, we still felt we had to rely on our intuitions to a large extent, to determine if an applicant would in fact benefit from the WoW Programmes. The Programmes' staff believed that the selection process would benefit from a more rigorous Human Resources assessment tool.

1.1.4 Selection criteria in 2006

In 2006 the interns were scholarship holders; they were carefully selected individuals who first participated in the Training Programme and then proceeded to the internship component. This enabled an interesting research opportunity for comparison with the selection process in 2005. While the respondents in 2005 were selected according to basic criteria (respondents in diverse internship situations, respondents at the same host organisation, respondents who would reflect diversity in terms of gender, nationality and area of postgraduate study, and those who were generally communicative), the respondents in 2006 were the scholarship holders only – and their selection was driven by WoW staff's largely intuitive decisions regarding the inherent employability of candidates. The implication of scholarships as a basis for selection is that there was prior assessment, not "in process assessment" – the selection of scholarship candidates was a form of prior assessment. The relationship between the two components was therefore much more predetermined in 2006, because we knew exactly which individuals would be automatically proceeding to the internship component, and who would not. This strategy was obviously markedly different from the selection process in 2005, and indeed in previous years.

The scholarship holders in 2006 benefitted from the financial support that underpinned their scholarships, and appeared to be able to focus on their transitions into their host organisations more effectively without financial obligations as an additional stressor. The ratio of one WoW staff member to mentor five interns meant that scholarship holders benefitted from more focused mentorship, which resulted in an improvement in professionalism. This contributed significantly to individual development and led to increased confidence, which in turn meant an improvement in areas such as networking and communication skills.

We included maintenance of a weblog as a clause in the agreement scholarship holders signed when they accepted their scholarships. This established and reinforced scholarship holders' roles as leaders and champions of the community of practice we hoped would occur in 2006. One of the WoW Training Programmes' participants took such an active role in the team weblog that he could be regarded as a leader, even though he was not one of the scholarship holders. While this suggests that there were opportunities for a range of levels of participation in the community of practice regardless of whether participants were scholarship holders or not, it also points to a crucial failing in this model of participant selection. Choosing individuals on the basis of their propensity for employability *before* the start of the WoW Programme underestimates the potential of the programme to develop individual employability. The only possible circumstance that would warrant this kind of selection in future or similar programmes would be after more rigorous testing and/or evaluation of a propensity for employability, as opposed to selection based on intuition of an individual's propensity for employability.

1.2 Findings from Activity Stage Two: World of Work Training Components in 2005 and 2006

The basic structure of the training component was maintained from 2001 to 2008. It was always a month-long series of workshops or presentations on a variety of world of work issues, conducted by established specialists. Some aspects of the training component were introduced early in the Programmes' history (such as simulating work environments during training, introduced in 2002) and were retained, thus proving their survival value. They, along with aspects introduced later (such as the weblogs in 2005) that I predict will also have survival value, are discussed in the next section.

1.2.1 The value of a simulated work environment during the training component

In 2002 the course designers decided to create a simulated work environment during the training component. This was so effective that it was repeated during every subsequent Training Programme.

Simulating a work environment at the University meant that participants had to dress formally if possible, and were urged not to appear "as students" during the Training Programme. This was a simple and effective way of starting the process of the transition from student to professional.

There was an emphasis on punctuality and participants started the day by reading topical business-related news in the newspapers and financial publications provided to them. This stimulated group discussions of current issues and developments in the world of work.

Each student was assigned the role of team leader for one or two days during the Training Programme. This meant that the student had to meet the guest lecturer, introduce and thank him/her, organise the group, manage time and even take notes (minutes) for the group. In this way transferable skills were developed such as e.g. facilitation skills, team (participation and management), networking, presentation and administrative skills. It also effectively reinforced the concept of the team as a support mechanism.

Although the work environment simulation occurred only at the training stage, it proved useful to anticipate and assess participants' different responses, and therefore alerted us to possible future problems that could arise once the participant entered the workplace. It also facilitated the analysis (with the students themselves) of cognitive processes and behaviours in situations that are difficult to provoke and/or to observe in reality.

1.2.2 The value of assignments

A feature common to all the Programmes, from 2001 onwards, was assignments. We grappled with the design of appropriate and effective assignments every year. The process started in 2001 when academic staff was involved in developing the assignment tasks with students and assessing the outcomes of the assignments. We found that attempts to include academic staff in this way were unsuccessful, and the practise was discontinued in 2002 (please see Appendix 1, Input Evaluation: History and Development of the World of Work Programmes at Wits University).

In 2005 we reintroduced assignments for assessment, but without the involvement of academic staff. We wanted to see if the assignments would be useful for students to prove their performance and thereby qualify for the internship component. In this way assignments were a means of selection. Using the assignments as a screening tool was useful. We found that participants' performances improved, as they fulfilled all the requirements of the assignments, knowing that the consequence of not doing so would impact on their chances of an internship. While it is possible to confirm that assignments had a significant impact on students' performances and even assert that this improved students' professionalism, there were also important benefits of assignments realised in other areas.

1.2.2.1 The value of weblogs

The practise of weblogging was a particularly effective assignment in that it started (along with the task of mind mapping), and then maintained, a community of practice amongst participants. We realised that the weblogs became ePortfolios of learning. They fulfilled Atwell's (2005) seven functions for an ePortfolio, as they recognised, recorded and allowed for reflection on learning, as well as validated and presented learning and also allowed for the planning and assessment of learning.

The weblogs were an effective connector between the training programme and the internships. When we also realised the potential of weblogs as a tool to develop a community of practice in 2005, we decided to focus on this benefit much more explicitly in 2006, especially as a means of support for students who were not scholarship holders and would be making their transitions into the workplace independently after they had attended the Training Programme. The team weblog and the YahooGroup *Blogthinking* were therefore introduced in 2006 to support the weblog project and assist with developing a community of practice through the weblogs.

Both the individual and team weblogs and the YahooGroup *Blogthinking* met with Wenger, McDermott and Snyder's (2002) seven principles in the development of healthy communities of practice; the e-learning technology was designed for evolution, opened a dialogue between inside and outside perspectives, invited different levels of participation, developed both public and private community spaces, focused on value, combined familiarity and excitement, and created a rhythm for the community. (Wenger et al, 2002)

Blogthinking was an archive of commentary and experiences from the 2006 participants in the WoW Programmes. It was an effective support mechanism for the practice of blogging. It appeared that the *Blogthinking Yahoo! Group* in 2006 kept the momentum of the group going. When people posted sporadically at their weblogs, they still supported each other and continued to communicate at *Blogthinking.* The interaction at the group in turn spurred members on to go and blog.

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
2009		4	20	1				1			1	
2008	7	23	3	139	37	13	12	6	22	7	1	
2007				86	120	122	98	23	20	25	9	1
2006		10	125	26	13	8	4	2		3	1	

Table 6: Message history for *Blogthinking*

Blogthinking currently has 52 members, most of who are also moderators (meaning that they can manage the discussion group, by, for example, approving new members). (Data as at February 2010, from Yahoo website)

With these eLearning tools – the combination of weblogging and the discussion group – we arrived at a "best fit" solution for the assignment design for the WoW Programmes. Weblogging, and the discussion group to support it, effectively moved students beyond the acquisition of job-relevant tools, towards what Schön (1987) calls "reflection in action" - being the capacity of professionals to consciously think about what they are doing, while they are doing it. While it must be acknowledged that the actual learning opportunities during the training component were both richer and broader than could be outlined in a blog entry, students developed their employability while becoming "reflective practitioners" through the process of writing about the training - and then later their application of their learning during their internships - at their weblogs.

1.2.3 Applying a model for evaluating employability development

A model of employability development by Dacre Pool and Sewell (2007), designed after the 2005 and 2006 WoW Programmes presents a more developed concept of employability than anything similar we had available to us as we set about designing the training components in 2005 and 2006. It may be useful to refer to this practical model of graduate employability retrospectively for this evaluation of the implementation of the 2005 and 2006-second activity stages, being the WoW training components.

Dacre Pool and Sewell (2007) promote their model as being useable, and as being a practical, coherent model that addresses the multi-faceted, complex nature of employability. Another of the reasons the model is useful to consider is that Dacre Pool and Sewell (2007) emphasise emotional intelligence in their model, which they consider to be a vital but previously under-recognised employability component. In the process evaluation of 2005 (Chapter 4), Manring's (2004) findings were raised, being that service-learning promotes students' emotional intelligence. This suggests the importance of the introduction of the concept of emotional intelligence in the WoW training component, *before* service-learning. Introduction of the concept, partnered with an assignment to practice emotional intelligence through reflective writing proved to be an effective way to help develop participants' emotional intelligence in preparation for the next stage, the

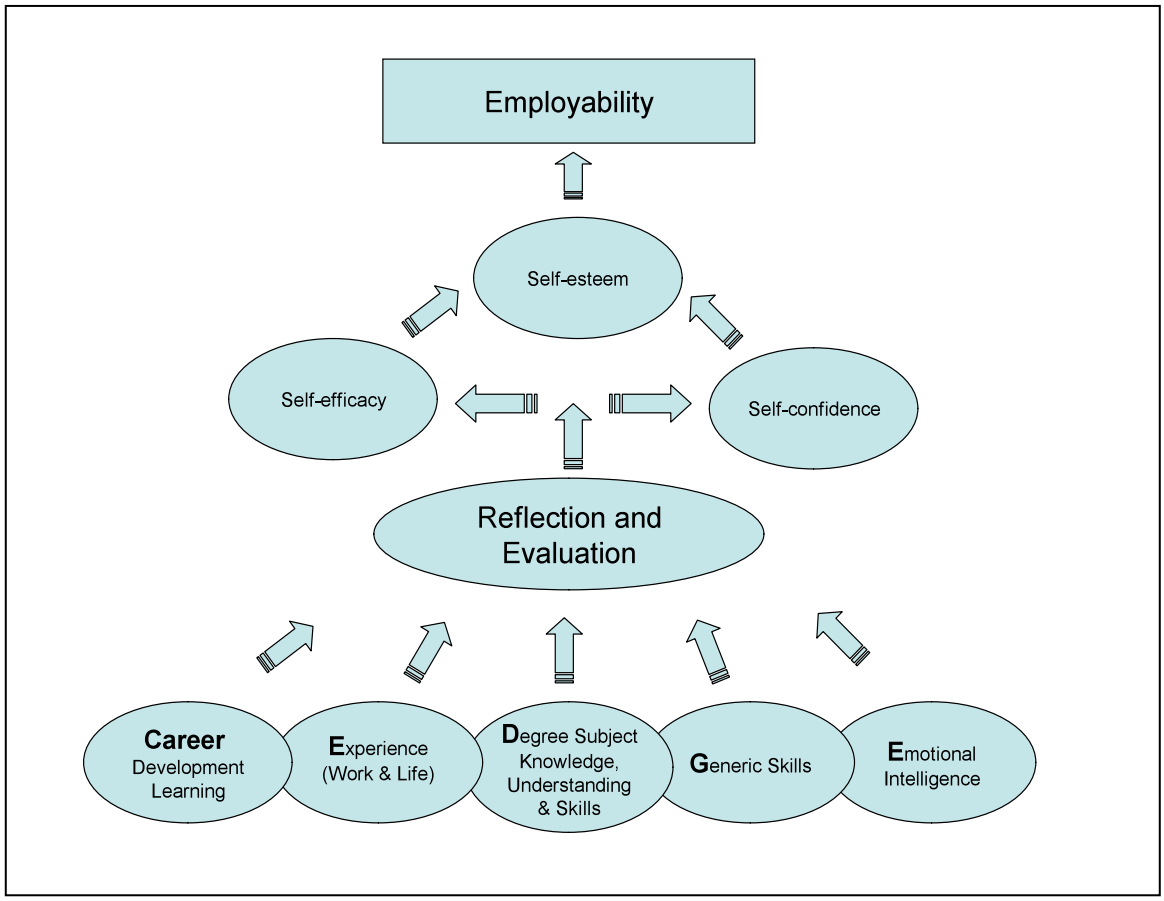

Figure 4: The essential components of graduate employability (Dacre Pool and Sewell, 2007)

internships. The weblogs also offered an opportunity for students to be able to 'showcase' their emotional intelligence development – and therefore their employability – to potential host organisations or employers.The mnemonic CareerEDGE is used as an aid in Dacre Pool and Sewell's (2007) employability model, for the five components on the lower tier of the model. It is suggested that students should be provided with opportunities for them to access and develop the components on the lower tier of the model. Both the training and internship components of the WoW Programmes aim to provide and/or facilitate these learning opportunities.

Then, it is essential they be also given opportunities to reflect on and evaluate these experiences, which should result in development of higher levels of self-efficacy, self-confidence and self-esteem – the crucial links to employability. The weblogs as an assignment in the WoW Programmes are exactly these opportunities for reflection and evaluation.

The process evaluation of the training component in 2005 (Chapter 4) reveals that the curriculum and pedagogy of the training was limited by the fact that we, as course designers, did not feel we could ask guest lecturers participating on a pro bono basis to revise aspects of their content, or emphasise and/or include other areas. We urged guest lecturers to visit student weblogs to read students' commentary on the training sessions they had attended, but there is no concrete evidence that this occurred. The potential exists, however, for guest lecturers to engage with students at the weblogs. This may lead to guest lecturers' reconsidering the content or pedagogical aspects of their training session, if necessary and as a result of students' input at the weblogs.

A disappointing aspect of the weblogs in 2005 and 2006 however was that the guest lecturers and representatives from the host organisations did *not* engage with students at their weblogs. This was however indicative of the fact that weblogs were not well known as a communicative technology at the time, rather than being a reflection of their perceived value by guest lecturers and representatives from the host organisations.

1.2.3.1 Generic skills

Dacre, Pool and Sewell (2007) refer to generic skills as 'core skills', 'key skills' or 'transferable skills'. They include adaptability/flexibility, willingness to learn, working in a team, good communication (oral and written) and numeracy.

Dacre, Pool and Sewell's (2007) list of skills correlates with some of the personal attributes, skills and elements that make up the Employability Skills Framework developed by the Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry and the Business Council of Australia, which include communication; teamwork; problem-solving; initiative and enterprise; planning and organizing; self-management; learning; and technology. In addition, the Employability Skills Framework includes the following personal attributes: loyalty; commitment; honesty and integrity; enthusiasm; reliability; personal presentation; commonsense; positive self-esteem; sense of humour; balanced attitude to work and home life; ability to deal with pressure; motivation; and adaptability. (Australian Chamber of Commerce Industry and the Business Council of Australia, 2002)

One area in which the WoW Training Programme in 2005 appeared to fail students was the lack of a skills acquisition session on time management. While many elements of Dacre, Pool and Sewell's (2007) list and similar aspects from the Employability Skills Framework developed by the Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (2002) are intrinsic and should perhaps be categorised under emotional intelligence, time management was the one area in which the WoW Training Programme in 2005 could have practically aided students' employability.

Participants did not respond well, and performance during the Training Programme suffered as a result of our attempts to simulate a conventional full workday in the training room (by scheduling training sessions from 08h30-17h00). Students appeared to find this time frame exhausting, compared to and probably because of the flexibility of time they had experienced as students. We realised that we needed to introduce a training session in future programmes that would help students adjust to 'institutional' time and manage their time better.

Ideally, a hard skills training session should have been included in the 2005 Training Programme, followed by structured time planning exercises implemented during the internship, and monitored by the workplace supervisor.

A hard skills session on the topic of time management would reduce anxiety and avoidance and eliminate the cramming of tasks. It would motivate and promote the review of work and enable the student to initiate ideas. Ideally, the session should be scheduled after the session on emotional intelligence, since effective time management does to a large extent depend on self knowledge and goals: if students have developed an awareness (after learning about emotional intelligence) of their goals they will be able to prioritize activities more efficiently.

I have suggested that a time management training session should fall within the hard skills cluster. This is because the training session should include resources and documents to assist students in creating a personal schedule. From the design and implementation of this personal schedule, time management skills should be easy to observe, quantify and measure. Another measurement tool could be an online planning quiz to assess how well students' plan, implemented at the beginning of the Training Programme, and repeated at the end of the internship component.

To further improve time management skills, students could be requested to complete a weekly planner, a 10-week planner and a 4-year planner. Workplace supervisors could be trained and requested to oversee this process during the internship stage.

1.3 Findings from Activity Stage Three: Transition

The interview process reinforced the importance and value of generic attributes that are important in the workplace. The interviews were effectively “sink or swim” situations and were often the first times that the scholarship holders practically encountered generic attributes such as communication, critical thinking and interpersonal understandings with such immediacy. The workshops (during the Training Programme, preceding the Transition Stage) on both curriculum vitae development and interview skills, (which included intensive one-on-one role-play sessions relating to interview skills) supported and prepared students effectively when they began to attend actual interviews.

The most significant characteristic of the Transition Stage in terms of curricular and pedagogical approaches was that the WoW Programmes’ staff worked with each participant (more so than at any other stage) and interventions varied from individual to individual. The origins of this intensive coaching practise can be found in the WoW Programme in 2002 (see Appendix 1, Input Evaluation: History and Development of the World of Work Programmes at Wits University). The benefits of this approach were established then, and were repeated in the WoW Programmes in 2005 and 2006. Coaching in this way clearly assisted students’ transitions into the workplace. The WoW Coordinator’s personal involvement during this stage, including both emotional and practical support, was valued by students, who intimated that this approach impacted positively on their levels of confidence before their interviews.

The WoW staffs’ practice of contacting the interviewer at the host organisation after the interviews for feedback on the student’s interview performance resulted in powerful learning

opportunities. It meant that students and WoW Staff could gain insights into the interviewer's perspective, and could then use this feedback to assist the student to adjust or address performance during future interviews - if necessary. WoW staff were best prepared to counsel a student, give guidance and make suggestions regarding the decision making process and the final choice for an internship placement when interviewers gave candid and insightful feedback on a student's performance in an interview. We appreciated that this kind of access to detailed feedback on interview performance would not usually occur as part of a job search process if students were looking for a job independently of a programme such as the WoW Programmes.

Students were unaware of the necessity to respond to a work-related offer in writing – regardless of whether or not they had decided to accept or reject the offer. This seemingly administrative task was in fact loaded with learning opportunities for the student, including developing business writing skills and general professionalism. Insisting on this task helped the WoW Programmes maintain positive relationships with host organisations.

It was apparent that students were not inclined to market themselves during the interviews - that is, they did not articulate how and why they believed they were employable. From this we can conclude that students lacked the confidence to do so, or did not want to appear inappropriately "pushy". Another explanation could be that students did not have an adequate understanding of employability (from both a general, industry-specific and host organisational point of view) within which to frame themselves for the interviewer. Besides possibly undermining themselves and therefore not achieving the objective of the interview (to secure an internship), students' organisational socialization processes could also be negatively affected by their lack of understanding of their own employability, as newcomers in a workplace.

1.3.1 Degree subject knowledge, understanding and skills

Dacre Pool and Sewell (2007) describe the component "Degree subject knowledge, understanding and skills" as a central concept in their model (see Figure 4: The essential components of graduate employability, Dacre Pool and Sewell, 2007). They point out that employers will judge graduates on the basis of how well they have completed their degree course and that candidates should be able to communicate the added value of having a postgraduate degree. The latter part of Dacre Pool and Sewell's (2007) observation is especially pertinent, according to our experience of the transition stage in the WoW Programmes.

GP, a respondent in 2005, was a case in point of students' inability to communicate aspects of their postgraduate degree that may have impacted on their employability development. GP had completed an Honours degree in International Relations before participating in the WoW Programmes. He was able to reflect positively on the usefulness of this postgraduate degree during the internship itself (Activity Stage Four), but did not do so at the transition stage (Activity Stage Three):

> I think the knowledge that I have from the postgraduate degree is very relevant for the job that we are doing here at [the host organisation], because I have done a course that deals with corporate social responsibility and sustainable development, which is in line with what is being done here at [the host organisation]. (Appendix 7.2, GP Interview, 7 October 2005, p 177)

The ability to communicate the value of having done postgraduate research, including for example the process of defining an interesting, challenging but manageable research topic, the ability to deal with large quantities of information, working independently, accepting supervision, applying research and project management skills, would be valuable at the transition stage and would probably assist prospective interns or employees to secure employment. Both UL and GP (respondents in the process evaluation for the WoW Programmes 2005) referred to the content of the WoW Training Programme rather than to the content of their postgraduate degrees, in discussions around how they positioned themselves as employable individuals. UL refuted the idea of her Masters degree research as an example of Project Management. (Appendix 3.2, Interview, 9 June 2005)

Dacre Pool and Sewell's (2007) component "Experience – Work and life" is grouped here with the component "Degree subject knowledge, understanding and skills" because the response to this component from the WoW Programmes in 2005 and 2006 appears to be similar.

The fact that employers perceive individuals with work experience as being more employable than individuals without any formal work experience is problematic for postgraduates attempting to enter the workplace for the first time. A mitigating factor to take into account for postgraduates without any world of work experience is the possibility of their wider life experiences, as they are typically mature students. We found however, that students were not articulating any benefits of even part-time work experience, or the importance of possible wider life experiences, at the transition stage in the WoW Programmes.

The interviews that formed part of the data collection for the process reviews (Chapters 4 and 5) occurred during the final stage of the WoW Programmes, the internships. It was only at this point

that participants appeared to know how to communicate the transferable skills they may have gained in a range of contexts. Probable explanations for this would be that only actual exposure to the workplace context (during the internship placements) assisted participants gain a real and practical understanding of the impact of work and life experiences on their employability.

1.4 Findings from Activity Stage Four: World of Work Internship Component

After introducing mentoring in 2002 we realised its crucial importance and powerful effects on the induction, enculturation and professional development processes of interns.

1.4.1 The value of mentoring

Successful mentoring relationships have long been recognised as central to student learning in cooperative education courses. (Ricks and Van Gyn, 1997) The researcher had dual roles with regard to evaluating mentoring, in this research. One role was that of participant observer, collecting data on how the mentoring relationship between the workplace supervisor and the intern progressed during the internship component, and the pedagogical changes by the interns. The second role was that of mentor: coaching and assisting interns to reflect on their transitions into workplaces and their related development. Interns took advantage of the fact that a third-party who was not employed at their host organisation would be a "safe" person to discuss issues with, when those issue may have otherwise jeopardized their internship and/or future at the host organisation.

The University-based mentor's involvement in this way, as it was introduced in 2002, was a distinguishing feature of the Programmes. The trend in other internship programmes appears to be for the academy to relinquish involvement with the intern to the workplace supervisor, with periodic feedback only. However, this can compromise the alliance that internship programmes in Higher Education seek to establish between the organisation, the student and the university. The staff of the Programmes at Wits University consistently maintained contact with the workplace and made sure that the workplace supervisor could easily call for assistance during the internship.

Of the three important entities (students, worksite supervisors, and the academic institutions) contributing to the quality of the internship experience, the workplace mentor has, arguably, the most significant influence on the activities, relationships, learning, development and even

assessment of interns, by virtue of the fact that s/he has the most contact with the student during the internship. Workplace supervisors therefore play a crucial role in creating an environment for ensuring significant learning experiences for students.

As Klassen and Clutterbuck put it,

> ...mentors unleash mentees' capacity to solve problems and arrive at high-quality decisions by being supportive, challenging and, above all, *helping them to reflect on events*. [Emphasis added] (2002)

In 2005 and 2006 there were no guidelines or any "how to" input from the WoW Programmes to assist workplace supervisors with their mentorship skills. Day has observed a reluctance to discuss the affective elements of mentoring and suggests that this may inhibit accurate introspection of the types of teaching and learning that occur during the mentoring process. (1999)

This was only addressed in a dedicated workshop for workplace mentors in 2007. The section on 'Programme Results' in this chapter describes this workshop and details the survival value and importance of assisting workplace supervisors with the "how to" aspect of their mentorship skills, including developing an awareness of best practice and the benefits of effective mentoring.

In 2005 and 2006 it was apparent that host organisations valued the fact that the University offered support and mentoring during the internship component. All the workplace supervisors appreciated the co-mentoring arrangement. Interns also valued the co-mentoring arrangement, as having a mentor or counsellor outside of the organisation (i.e. at the University) meant that the intern could safely discuss any issues that might otherwise have been perceived to be compromising in terms of the intern's possible future at the host organisation.

Mentorship schemes in workplace readiness programmes are therefore strongly advocated as a value-adding activity. After witnessing mentorship processes, it is possible to confirm the five aspects of a positive mentor-mentee relationship that Eraut et al (2004) have suggested are especially important for enabling novices to settle in more quickly and learn more:

1. *Time together*: the amount of time the mentee spends working with their mentor in the work environment. (Eraut et al, 2004) In the WoW Programmes, this time was established during initial discussions between workplace supervisor and the student and recorded in the learning contract - a process that was monitored by the Programme Coordinator.

2. *Interest*: the mentor shows an interest in the mentee as a learner and in their professional development. (Eraut et al, 2004) I suggest that the workplace supervisor's interest was dependent on the amount of interest shown in his/her mentoring arrangement by the WoW Programmes Coordinator. It was apparent that there was no support or acknowledgement from the host organisations for the workplace supervisor's mentoring role. Often the only interest in the progress or any challenges experienced came from the WoW Programmes Coordinator. I also suggest that if the Programme Coordinator removes him/herself from any involvement in the mentoring arrangement in the internship component, many workplace supervisors would downgrade their interest, and therefore their efforts, substantially. The WoW Programmes Coordinator's involvement in this regard is therefore essential.

3. *Trust*: the mentor encourages the novice to practice their skills and to 'have a go' in a safe environment, thus providing both challenge and support. (Eraut et al, 2004) In the process evaluation of the WoW Programmes in 2006, I coined the term 'mistake-making' to describe an important aspect of learning in the internship component. When workplace supervisors allowed interns to make mistakes and to then reflect on how they performed and recovered, real learning and resilience occurred through reflection.

4. *Questioning*: the mentor actively questions the mentee, encouraging them to think about their practice. (Eraut et al, 2004)

5. *Feedback*: the mentor gives formal and informal feedback on a regular basis, thus allowing the novice to take stock of their progress. (Eraut et al, 2004) One of the most useful forms of feedback implemented in the early years of the internship component was the 360° performance appraisal (please see Appendix 1, Input Evaluation: History and Development of the World of Work Programmes at Wits University). Unfortunately this was not implemented in the WoW Programmes in 2005 and 2006.

The data also revealed different styles and approaches to mentorship. Of the five 'types' identified by Eraut et al (2004), there were four modes of mentorship that occurred in the host organisations that partnered with the WoW Programmes in 2005 and 2006 (Eraut et al's third mode is excluded here as it is applicable to vocational internships only, and is therefore not relevant):

- *Mode 1*: 'Buddy' style mentoring is a short-term arrangement in which a general mentor helps newcomer at work during their first weeks, rather than months. When this occurred as a mode

in the WoW Programmes, it was usually aligned with a laissez-faire style and/or an invisible pedagogical approach. (Bernstein, 2000)

- *Mode 2*: Career mentoring occurs with a mentor separate from immediate line managers or project leaders, and whose function is to be a sounding board and stimulus to reflection, advising on possible relationship problems, and establishing a career plan. The Programme Coordinator, in the role of University-based mentor or counsellor, fitted this mode.

- *Mode 4*: Person-centred mentoring is typically a long term relationship with one mentor, usually in the same work team, who is expected to provide professional guidance, and possibly supervision, but not necessarily the more general career advice and guidance available under Mode 2 above. We affixed the label "workplace supervisor" from the start of the mentorship scheme in the internship component, to describe the person who worked most closely with the intern in the workplace. Klassen and Clutterbuck (2009) however warn that many employees see the role of a mentor as different to that of a supervisor/line-manager. They refer to a survey by Starcevish and Friend (1999) in which the majority of respondents saw mentors as being person-focused whilst supervisors were perceived as results/productivity focused, which could be incompatible with that of a mentor. This role-confusion did not seem to occur in the 2005 and 2006 WoW Programmes, however. Respondents usually had a more holistic, as is clear in LAY's (a 2006 respondent) description. She said that her workplace supervisor was

  > ... a mentor, a guide and a supervisor at the same time. (Appendix 12.2, LAY Interview, 10 July 2006, p 325)

- *Mode 5*: 'De-centred' mentoring. In this mode the intern may ask a range of colleagues at the work site for help. While Eraut et al (2004) suggest that this is 'unofficial mentoring' because it lacked the label, they add that it was also at least semi-official in that it indicated a deliberate policy of creating a 'just ask' culture. This mode usually occurred in the WoW Programmes alongside any of the other three modes described above. It was also evident especially in non-governmental and small organisations where one person was expected to carry several responsibilities. Interns appeared to rate contact and relationship development with other colleagues at the host organisation as being the most important factor influencing their organisational socialization process. In cases of host organisations where interns from previous WoW Programmes were employed, 2005 interns could refer to these employees and were therefore assimilated into the organisation more quickly and easily than in the cases

where there were no individuals available with similar experiences that the 2005 interns could draw upon. WoW Staff found it necessary to assist with "induction and integration" when an intern was placed at an organisation that had not hosted interns from the WoW Programmes before.

After Eraut et al's (2004) types of mentorship, I would add group mentoring. When an intern shared his/her work site with a peer from the same year, integration into the workplace was enhanced for both individuals. This effectively established a community of practice amongst interns. This community of practice as a form of support was a dominant theme in the process evaluation of the 2005 WoW Programmes. In 2005 and 2006, there were two respective cases where two interns reported to one workplace supervisor. Peer mentoring also occurred: regardless of whether they had access to peers or former interns at the host organisations, interns maintained contact with one another by email and by communicating with commentary at the weblogs. Participants therefore supported each other in a variety of ways (socially and professionally), and especially as a result of the weblogs we introduced in 2005 and the YahooGroup *Blogthinking* that was introduced in 2006. These e-learning technologies could be said to result in yet another form of mentoring: e-mentoring.

A final mode of mentoring was what I term 'generational-mentoring', and which occurred in the WoW Programmes. Since it is a new category, an example may be useful. DL was a participant in the 2002 Internship Programme. In 2006 he mentored a participant from the WoW Programmes and drew on his experiences as a mentee to inform his approach to mentorship. In addition, DL maintained a close relationship with the workplace supervisor who had mentored him in 2002:

> We constantly communicate; we are apparently working on the same project together from the Eastern Cape. (Appendix 12.3, LAY's Workplace Supervisor ['DL'], Interview, 7 June 2006, p 329)

An explanation for this successful mentor-mentee relationship, and for its longevity, was that DL and the mentor were successfully "matched" during his internship in 2002. As DL explained,

> It is because of the relationship we had at the [host organisation], I proved to him that I am a valuable individual and that I can work with him, but he also proved to me that he is a valuable individual to me... (Appendix 12.3, LAY's Workplace Supervisor ['DL'], Interview, 7 June 2006, p 329)

This match was serendipitous, however. The WoW Programmes did not investigate or try to facilitate effective matches between mentee and mentor on the basis of dimensions such as personality type or experience. Future or similar programmes may well benefit from attention to

this, by, for example, using a form suggested by Klassen and Clutterbuck (2002) that asks mentees to indicate their positive and negative preferences with regard to mentors, and their general preferences on dimensions such as career experience.

Klassen and Clutterbuck (2009) pose the question: should mentoring be voluntary, compulsory or subtly coercive? They suggest that the best approach is to design a mentoring scheme that is voluntary, as forcing participation could result in a mentoring situation where one or both parties has a negative attitude or poor motivation, and consequently

> ... an informal, unofficial, voluntary, mutually-agreeable, and self-selected interaction between two people has become a program - an institutionalized stratagem for trying to force what probably can only come about naturally. (Nickols, 2003)

In the WoW Programmes, organisational participation was voluntary but the mentoring relationship was mandatory and included in the learning contract.

An issue to be taken into account during any debate on voluntary versus compulsory mentorship is whether the mentor will simply *like* the mentee. It appears that this plays an important part in the new interns' organizational acculturation process. The data from the WoW Programmes internship stage in 2006 showed that attitudinal factors were especially important and employers responded more positively to individuals who showed initiative, enthusiasm and an ability to learn and adopt new practices quickly. For example, in the process evaluation of 2006 there was an instance where dynamic personality traits, positioned in this research as encompassing Fugate and Kinicki's (2008) five personality dimensions (openness to changes at work, work and career resilience and proactivity, career motivation and work identity), were seen and valued by the workplace supervisor as contributing to employability, in comparison to reserved behaviour. In such a case, a voluntary mentorship system would disadvantage the reserved intern.

In addition, and practically: a voluntary mentorship scheme was not feasible for the WoW Programmes. WoW staff was usually hard-pressed to secure internship placements, let alone voluntary mentors. After five years of the Programme we realised that an alternative route to encouraging active and effective mentorship in host organisations, and to combat any possibilities of poor mentor motivation or attitude, could be through the provision of mentorship training. A description of an intervention towards this is described in Chapter 7, as it is also a recommendation for incorporation into future or similar WoW Programmes.

A final aspect of Activity Stage Four in 2005 and 2006 to be raised is that of the weblogs. While students established the weblogs during the training component, they continued to maintain them

during their internships. For the WoW Programme staff, the weblogs continued to be a way to access and therefore evaluate implicit assumptions in the programmes' design. In addition, the weblogs allowed WoW Programme staff insight into some of the challenges interns were facing beyond the workplace, such as their personal lives (e.g. death of a father) which then informed mentoring approaches towards interns. In addition, the benefits of the weblogs that were obvious during the internships included that they assisted interns with

- personal development (through reflective activity)
- improving writing, creativity, and problem-solving skills
- linking theory (in the curriculum) to practice
- project work (as an opportunity to record planning, the collection of ideas, notes on progress, contacts, and reflection on any or all of these)
- developing critically analytical thinking.

Holmes confirms the value of weblogs in the context of the WoW Programmes. When I asked him for his opinion of the WoW Programmes' weblogging assignment, while it was still an innovative learning technology in 2005, he said

> I would think that this would indeed by a useful way for students to enhance the likelihood of them gaining and succeeding in the kind of employment they seek. It would provide for them to rehearse their claims on the 'graduate identity' (i.e. someone worthy of being seriously considered for employment in occupations normally reserved for graduates). Moreover, it would engage them in the kinds of practices that they might anticipate engaging in once in graduate employment. (Email correspondence with Len Holmes, 11 August 2005)

2. Programme Implementation – 2007 and 2008

This section presents findings of the impact of key pedagogical and curricular design elements from the WoW Programmes in 2005 and 2006 (the evaluation years) that were repeated in 2007 and 2008.

2.1 The World of Work Programmes in 2007

We had a particularly successful and energized group in 2007. Two incidents in 2007 testify to the close-knit nature of the cohort of students participating in the WoW Programmes:

Students, by their own initiative, arranged to participate as a group in a community walk. T-shirts were designed to identify the 2007 "WoW-ers", as they called themselves. These arrangements were made on the YahooGroup facility *Blogthinking*.

Students, again by their own initiative, established a weblog titled "The Great WoW Book Project". The objective of the weblog was to start the process of collecting ideas and observations that would assist future interns with their transitions into the world of work. The aim, according to the group, was to compile "a best-selling, successful book." The project ceased after only a few weblog entries, but is still a useful indicator of the level of enthusiasm from this particular group.

2.1.1 The survival value of weblogs

While the extrinsic features of the weblogging project in 2007 were dependent on the particularly intense sense of teamwork demonstrated by the students participating in the WoW Programmes in 2007, the intrinsic survival value of the weblogs' contributions to the notion of a community of practice was reinforced. Communities of practice may not work as well in one year to another, but the fact that some sense of community of practice occurred as a characteristic feature of weblogging in the Programmes from 2005 onwards suggests that the contingent features of having a strong group is an indication of particular groups taking particular advantage of the e-learning tool. This does not diminish the idea that in more or less successful ways, weblogs contribute to communities of practice.

While we appreciated especially the value of weblogging for team development in 2007, individual students took on the weblogging assignment with high levels of commitment. A significant number of the participants in the WoW 2007 Programmes maintain their weblogs to date, as well as links to their peers from the WoW Programmes, at their weblogs. These weblogs have evolved from the assignments they were in 2007 to professional commentaries in 2011. An introductory statement at a WoW 2007 participant's weblog is a case in point:

> *This blog reflects on life at work at comments on the latest news that shapes my 9-5 working day in a Corporate Communications consultancy. (EBOF's Weblog, January 2011)*

RAME, another former (2007) WoW participant is more explicit about the origins of her weblog as it is in 2011, in her introductory statement:

> *This blog was formally inspired by the World of Work Training Programme at the Faculty of Humanities, University of the Witwatersrand. It has since evolved into a commentary on my professional experiences and life in general. (RAME's Weblog, January 2011)*

A practical explanation for the success of the WoW Programmes in 2007 lies in the selection process for that year. In 2007, the selection process was most similar to that detailed for the WoW Programmes in 2005 – which is detailed in Chapter 4.

Although, as in 2005, South African students and students from the SADEC region qualified for the Internship Programme first, WoW staff still managed to accommodate students from other countries. Also as in 2005, securing internship placements in 2007 required a high level of perseverance on the part of WoW staff. There should therefore be some consideration, in the design and implementation of future similar programmes, that such a level of labour may not be realistically replicated. In other words, staff employed to facilitate typical internship placements may not be prepared for the extraordinary effort required in securing internship placements for postgraduates from the Humanities specifically.

Nevertheless, a significant consequence of participation in both components of the WoW Programmes for all participants is clearly an improved sense of teamwork and therefore the effective development of a community of practice. This community of practice is then, in turn, enhanced by the diversity of the group, facilitating the development of cultural intelligence for all participants.

2.2 The World of Work Programmes in 2008

In 2008 we received funding from the National Lotto to support up to five postgraduate students, broadly in the area of heritage. This meant that these students were exempt from the fees normally associated with registering in the WoW Programmes, and they also received a stipend of R 5000 for their 3-month internship period, provided they receive an internship placement at an appropriate non-governmental organisation. According to the requirements from the funder, scholarship candidates could be from countries other than South Africa, if the host organisation was willing to accept students from other countries. The heritage scholarship internships selection process took place after the training month. Students with postgraduate qualifications in areas other than Heritage could also apply for the heritage scholarship by writing a 'heritage' business plan, or by making a presentation to a panel consisting of WoW Programmes' staff and representatives from potential heritage host organisations.

2.2.1 Benefits of the WoW Training Programme 2008 for scholarship holders

The following section is a compilation of comments from scholarship holders on how they benefitted from the WoW Training Programme (note that these are a selection of responses from just some of the training sessions):

- Developing a Curriculum Vitae

  Thanks to the WoW seminar on "Preparing your CV". Preparation is indeed the key to relaxation and self-confidence. Without this seminar I wouldn't be having confidence right now. I don't know the outcome of the interviews but I am glad I came out of each interview session with a smile on my face. (LESAM's Weblog, 2008)

- Site visit – Johannesburg Stock Exchange

  I really appreciated this visit because it simplified the world of business and resolved some emotional inadequacies I felt about the entire subject. (EMAGO's Weblog, 2008)

- Global competitiveness

  If we were all to work and collaborate together, we would fit like a jigsaw puzzle. My weaknesses would be complemented by someone else's and vice versa. In South Africa, our various cultures could function interdependently rather than with a conflict centered mentality of "survival of the fittest". (EMAGO's Weblog, 2008)

- Corporate Creativity

  [Guest lecturer] constantly presented problems that we had to learn to solve practically. The first was to get our networking forums running and interlinking each to the other. I would say that this seminar could be linked to every other that we attended in the WoW Training and Internship Program. (EMAGO's Weblog, 2008)

- Emotional Intelligence

  I have even gone as far as drafting a personal constitution. This constitution sums up all the ethics that I value the most. This personal constitution is my source of self-regulation and meditation as I can assess myself according to whether I am aligned with my wants or not. (EMAGO's Weblog, 2008)

- Practical Business

  I was inspired to start my own business - especially because there is an organization out there that is prepared to guide me as I go along succeeding in my mission in life. It made me proud to be a South African. (EMAGO's Weblog, 2008)

- Networking

  Networking is highly relevant for me as a musician because of the precarious nature of

the music and media industry. [Guest lecturer] would agree that this manner of networking requires emotional intelligence. (EMAGO's Weblog, 2008)

- Building Sustainable Business

  ...if I want other people or organisations to be associated with me, I need to continuously develop and broaden my skills in order to ensure that I am a brand that they can rely on and be proud to be associated with. (EMAGO's Weblog, 2008)

- Mindmapping

  This strategy to learning and connecting new ideas with existing ones will be even handier during our internship where we will have to adapt to the environment as quickly as possible! I will definitely take this skill to my workplace as it links the analytical and logical left brain to the creative and vision oriented right side of the brain! (EMAGO's Weblog, 2008)

- Professional Writing Skills

  This lesson is invaluable. I will be forever thankful to [guest lecturer] and the WoW facilitators for polishing our level of professionalism. As a South African musician, this programme has equipped me with the responsibility to change people's perceptions about musicians and their level of professionalism. For that, I am eternally grateful. (EMAGO's Weblog, 2008)

- Weblogging

  I am discovering more things about myself, the way I view others and possible ways of managing my weaknesses through my interaction with others, as they are the observers of what I do. (EMAGO's Weblog, 2008)

- Presentations skills

  In future when I do my presentations, I intend to create my own techniques based on what I learned in the WoW and my own creativity. (MOTOMO's Weblog, April 2008)

  Spending the whole day practicing our presentation skills really helped me. (LESAM's Weblog, 2008)

2.2.2 Benefits of the World of Work Internship Programme 2008 for scholarship holders

The following section is a compilation of comments from scholarship holders on how they believed they benefitted from the WoW Internship Programme.

Before accepting a placement for an internship at Constitution Hill, MOTOMO attended interviews at a variety of potential host organisations. She believed she acquired interview skills:

> *The most important thing about these interviews for me is they provided me with a platform to learn more about myself and how I cope in different situations. (Weblog, 24 May 2008)*

During her internship, MOTOMO arranged an exhibition – and acquired a variety of related administrative and organisational skills in the process:

> *I have been writing research papers all my life but I have never worked on an exhibition before. Last week, on this very day, I felt like I had a crisis of epidemic proportions. I had to start working on the exhibition and I had no idea were or how to start looking for material. Thanks to my knowledgeable office mates, I gathered up a few phone numbers and ideas and set to work. I have everything well thought out now; I just have to work on getting all the pieces together. (Weblog, 6 June 2008)*

During her internship, LESAM learned the importance and value of networking:

> *The past three months have been a great learning experience for me. I met a host of characters that I genuinely liked and some that I tolerated because I had to. I learnt a few things from many of these people that I am likely to remember for a long time to come. The greatest lessons I have learnt have been from the invisible ordinary people. (Weblog, 7 August 2008)*

MOTOMO also acquired interpersonal skills and learned how to manage work relationships professionally:

> *The greatest lesson I have learnt so far is to make friends of colleagues. Some of them are not the nicest of people but at one point or another you will have to work with them. I have come to realise that people do not take the time to understand each other which leads at the end of the day to the belief that some people are naturally nasty. (Weblog, 23 June 2008)*

> *Relationships with other people have their own challenges but they should not be a burden. They should be mutually beneficial to all involved. I have come to realise that a person needs two things to keep relationships working; wisdom and strength. (Weblog, 21 July 2008)*

LESAM was asked to give critical input on her host organisations. Through this experience he learned how to give feedback that would be both critical and constructive:

> *On Thursday I had a meeting with the director. He wanted to know what my perceptions of the place were and what I thought about the tasks I had done so far. ...I took the opportunity to voice what I felt were my areas of concern. I thought to myself that I had given my honest opinion as he had asked and that it was up to him to do what he wanted with it. (Weblog, 27 June)*

Learning how to deal with 'difficult' personalities and to convince people to contribute was one of the skills MOTOMO learned during her internship:

> *I have learnt one or two things. People are not unwilling to help; they just need to be*

> *convinced that they should help. They need to be convinced in the right way using carefully selected and applied language as well as tone. (Weblog, 27 June)*

One of the skills MOTOMO acquired during her internship was to work to a budget:

> *I was so sure I would have the whole exhibition wrapped up in no time at all until I saw the price list. They are not cheap at all and I do not think I can afford to do business with them at the moment. I did however get permission from a very kind publisher to use material from his text. As of today, I will be focusing on getting hold of one or two more photographers who have very interesting work that I would like to get my hands on. (Weblog, 6 June 2008)*

During her internship EMAGO acquired administrative skills:

> *[Colleague] also helped me to grasp the basics of some Microsoft programs that [host organisation] uses for organisational purposes. I practiced using some of these programs at home and gained a better understanding of organizational issues and the importance of professionalism. (EMAGO's weblog, 2008)*

When she attended a seminar on gay and lesbian issues at her workplace during her internship, LESAM learned about the complexities of establishing and acknowledging diversity amongst staff members in the workplace:

> *Initially I thought the seminar would be boring but as it turned out, it became my first lesson on tolerance at the workplace. One thing that struck me through out the seminar was how most of those who claimed to be open-minded and accepting were in reality rooted in conditional acceptance. ... it became clear that prejudices can not be done away with so easily. (Weblog, 24 May 2008)*

EMAGO and LESAM's work briefs were extended to allow them the opportunity to participate in strategic planning discussions:

> *This morning I received some exciting news! [Host organisation's] general manager invited LESAM and I to take part in discussions about improving the live performance sector of the South African music industry. Should the projects to be implemented become successful, the value of our South African music brand will increase, thanks to [an organisation representing music performing rights in Southern Africa]. (EMAGO's weblog, 2008)*

EMAGO learned about the importance of balancing productivity, efficiency and work of a high standard during her internship:

> *... made me realize that I need to maximize productivity but still maintain producing work that is of excellent quality-not a very easy value to maintain…When I first started my internship at the [host organisation's] I was very concerned with the quantity of work I was producing. By the end of this week, I must have made time to explore other computer software that will make my work more excellent and convenient for those who may explore the [host organisation] music archive in the future. (EMAGO's weblog, 2008)*

EMAGO learned about the ways in which her host organisation functions:

> *It is increasingly important for me to understand the way the organization works and ask questions about certain issues relating to the organisation's mandate that I am unsure of. (EMAGO's weblog, 2008)*

LESAM found the overall support at his host organisation very beneficial:

> *I just want to thank you and the whole [host organisation] team for all the support you have given us since the day we started our internship at [host organisation]. The workplace training and support you have given us was just amazing, and in this regard I would like to express my deepest indebtedness to you guys. We owe you an immeasurable debt of gratitude we can never repay, for you have gone the extra mile in helping us adapt to the world of work. (LESAM's weblog, 2008)*

During his internship, LESAM was given the opportunity to work on diverse projects:

> *This week, my manager has once again given me another wonderful opportunity to exploit my research skills at [host organisation]. I am very happy about my progress so far, and though still negotiated, the project I am doing is quite a massive step, which will benefit, or rather reduce financial burdens on live bands performing in Johannesburg. (LESAM's weblog, 2008)*

LESAM also felt that he had learned about the world of work:

> *I have learnt a lot about the world of work already, from data capturing and indexing to filing of some of the finest composers' works this country has ever produced. (LESAM's weblog, 2008)*

Finally LESAM was also able to have "fun at work" while benefitting from the highly functional teamwork in his host organisation:

> *I am gladly motivated to say EMAGO and I are improving everyday at work because of the higher level of teamwork, and support we are getting at [host organisation]. (LESAM's weblog, 2008)*

Clearly the WoW Programmes' scholarship scheme in itself does work. The evidence from the data collected from scholarship holders in 2006 (see the Process Evaluation for the 2006 WoW Programme, Chapter 5) and the feedback on the WoW Programmes in 2008 provided here testifies to this. In addition, scholarships enable close mentorship arrangements and remove stress factors relating to economic need – when the latter is an issue.

The criteria for scholarship selection for the WoW Programmes were dictated by the fact that the Programmes had no funding. This meant that there was no possibility to provide interns from countries other than South Africa and the SADEC Region with stipends, when host organisations were not willing to provide financial support for foreign students. We were therefore forced in

2006 to select candidates for scholarships on the basis of nationality. In 2008, specific requirements from funders meant that we could only select scholarship holders who would be able to complete internships in heritage-related host organisations. Neither of these criteria could be said to have fairly recognised prior performance or economic need.

Scholarships are usually awarded competitively; they go to the 'best' candidates, where 'best' implies academic excellence. In addition economic need is taken into account for financially and educationally disadvantaged students. In the first case, however, the departure from the WoW Programmes' as academic courses has been well documented in the research. The question then presents itself: how should scholarship holders be selected - *if* the scholarship model of selection is to be repeated, and if academic excellence is no longer a prerequisite? A proposal for the scholarship selection for a WoW Programme to include an "Assessing Organisation", so as to include consideration of the applicant's propensity for employability, is discussed in the 'Conclusion', Chapter 7.

The idea of selecting scholarship holders on the basis of their propensity to be employable, as opposed to their previous academic performance, suggests one of the major achievements of the WoW Programmes. There is general agreement that a credit-bearing internship is the hallmark of a serious internship programme. It is a particular achievement that the WoW Programmes successfully negotiated the move from being an academic, credit-bearing programme, to becoming a programme focused on employability development - without losing credibility. The WoW Programmes retain a sound reputation for being rigorous (in terms of learning expectations and performance) and effective (in terms of facilitating transitions into the workplace) – even well after they were discontinued.

"Academic Excellence and Rigor" is just one of the criteria suggested by Ryan and Cassidy (1996) as being necessary for the evaluation of internship programmes. Ryan and Cassidy (1996) developed these criteria, or standards of excellence of internship programmes, as a response to the lack of both standard definitions and recognized norms for evaluating and comparing different types of internships. These are used as general criteria for the WoW Programmes in the following section.

Enhancing on-campus excellence

Ryan and Cassidy (1996) advocate that the internship programme should be aligned with the University's mission and curriculum. The strategic plan for Wits University, titled "Wits 2010 - A University to call our own" (also mentioned in Chapter 1) describes Wits as an "engaged" and "emerging" university, that also aims to be

> ...critically responsive to society's expectations that Higher Education should become a key driver of development for people, communities, social institutions and democracy. (Vice-Chancellor Prof. Nongxa, (12 February 2005)

It can be successfully argued that the goals and objectives of the WoW Programmes of ensuring productivity by developing employability are indeed aligned to this strategy.

Institutional excellence and integrity (Ryan and Cassidy, 1996)

The WoW Programmes were discontinued after 2008, due to a lack of funding. Funding was an ongoing issue throughout the years of the programmes. Despite this, an appropriate and effective management structure and staff were in place to ensure the consistent quality of the programmes.

Individual attention and involvement (Ryan and Cassidy, 1996)

Ryan and Cassidy (1996) call for individualized attention for participants in an internship programme. The mentorship in the WoW Programmes, well documented in the research, ensured that each participant benefitted from a high level of close attention to personal needs and challenges in the process of preparing for, and entering the world of work.

Appropriate internships (Ryan and Cassidy, 1996)

On occasion, participants in the WoW Programmes were urged by the WoW staff to accept internships at host organisations that were not their first, or ideal choice. This was primarily because those students were not South African, and their choices were therefore limited. There were, however, remarkably few of these instances and internship placements were usually appreciated by participants as being closely aligned to their career goals.

Appropriate course work (Ryan and Cassidy, 1996)

The Input Evaluation (Appendix 1) and process evaluation (Chapters 4 and 5 respectively) indicate that both the training and internship components incorporated course work that facilitated experiential learning processes for participants.

Diversity (Ryan and Cassidy, 1996)

The range of participants, guest lecturers and host organisations participating in the WoW Programmes ensured that students were introduced to a diverse range of nationalities opinions and ideas.

Assessment and evaluation (Ryan and Cassidy, 1996)

The curriculum design, pedagogical approaches, and the implementation of innovative e-learning tools to encourage self-directed learning were fine-tuned from one year of the WoW Programmes to the next, to ensure effective assessment and evaluation. One of the most interesting - if only experimental at the time - aspects of the WoW Programmes has been the development of weblogs as a reflective learning tool, a way to establish and facilitate a community of practice, an assignment (for assessment) and a marketing tool for both the individual and the programmes themselves. While these aspects have been described in some detail, the weblogs also hold potential for further application and development in the context of this or similar programmes, for example in the area of e-mentoring. Various other curricular components of the WoW Programmes such as participation in the preparation of a learning plan (the contract), and writing reflective weblog entries that included analysis of on-site issues and critical incidents and understanding the stages of the internship ensured the thorough preparation of students for their transitions into the world of work.

While the WoW Programmes met with Ryan and Cassidy (1996) suggestions for criteria to evaluate an internship programme's excellence, these and all other aspects of the WoW Programmes discussed in this research represent an operational response to the problems of Humanities postgraduates' transitions into the workplace. They address individual aspects of performance and, as the data analyses have shown, have resulted in improvements in interpersonal skills, intrapersonal skills and other traits associated with the current discussions on

employability. While the WoW Programmes have not led to significant increases in the numbers of Humanities postgraduates in the workplace, they have contributed to a new perspective on what is required for such a programme to be successful.

South African business is inextricably linked to social, political and economic considerations. The current emphasis on survival and short-term profitability is not conducive to newcomer development, which requires considerable investment especially in terms of mentorship time and effort. Potential mentors are expected to get on with the business of producing 'bottom line' results, which compromises opportunities to spend time with students. Nevertheless, for all students participating in the WoW Programmes there has been a very real opportunity to enter, experience and assess the world of work in meaningful ways. While the programme evaluation cannot claim that the WoW Programmes are an all-embracing panacea to the challenges Humanities postgraduates face when they try to enter the word of work – including the critical issue of widely-held perceptions regarding the value and relevance of Humanities postgraduate skills in the workplace – it certainly is an effective intervention in terms of facilitating entry and developing the employability of these students.

CHAPTER 7 Conclusion

The two important areas that emerged as a result of the WoW Programmes' evaluation that warrant discussion for their ongoing value and for their potential to take any Higher Education project involving the development of employability further are - as I argue from my research and experience - the practices of weblogs and mentoring. Besides the aspects of the WoW Programmes that were discussed in Chapter 6 (Product Evaluation) as having 'survival value', programme designers may also find the significant contributions to learning that occurred in the ways that weblogs and mentoring were implemented effective for future programmes that aim to develop employability.

7.1 Multiple functions of weblogs and employability

An insight that accompanied the process of the WoW Programmes' evaluation that will continue to interest and engage me was one that was not actually a formal component of the programmes, but grew from the WoW Programmes' needs. Initially the introduction of weblogs in the WoW Programmes was motivated by the possibility that they could be a more efficient way of keeping a learning journal, while at the same time showcasing Humanities skills to a broader audience and thereby increasing the marketability of Humanities postgraduates.

A great deal more than this happened as a result of the weblogs, however. WoW staff members were excited by the unexpected ways that weblogs contributed to the development of employability. The general benefits of weblogging in the WoW Programmes should, however, not be limited to the (now possibly over-commercialized) notion of "blogging" or the technology involved.

One of the benefits of the weblogs is that it allowed students opportunities to use various sources of knowledge, including the non-assessed learning outcomes from formal education, training in the workplace, work experience, and everyday (life) experience. So a student participating in the WoW Programmes could construct a blogpost in his home language, write about the significance of a game of chess, snow in Johannesburg, or his mother. It happened that for the students, the weblogs became places where these "other" kinds of knowledge could legitimately occur next to serious observations about the world of work.

Besides being a platform for various sources of knowledge, we learned from the WoW Programmes that weblogs allow for two crucially important opportunities: for students to publish their own content about their employability development, and to collaborate with each other about that development. We found that the former facilitates reflection (and also, as an important by-product, the development of writing skills), and the latter the development of a community of practice. Both mean significant learning happens at the weblogs, a process that can simultaneously be accessed and assessed by people in a position to offer employment. It is the fact that these two activities can happen at once that makes this, to my mind, a groundbreaking development.

When Humanities postgraduate students publish content and explore, comment, and think critically about world of work topics at their weblogs a change of thinking occurs. As they post at their weblogs, students move from being members of the "academy", to becoming members of both their community of practice (others also seeking to develop their employability) and often to members of the world of work. They are, by these means, able to re-conceptualise themselves.

Weblogs allow for democratic discourses. This feature is important for the opportunity it raises for students to engage with both their University-based mentor and workplace supervisor effectively and meaningfully. It also plays an important role in the facilitation of the development of communities of practice. In addition, the public nature of weblogging ensures that these communities of practice are not self-contained entities and that they develop in the larger context of the world of work. All of these factors support transformation.

The weblog is simply the agent of this transformation. In its role as an e-learning tool, it must be underpinned by sound conceptual principles of learning, however, so these are considered next.

Weblogging enables learning by way of ongoing practice, through active participation and shared reflection with peers, colleagues, University-based mentor, workplace supervisor and potential employers. A weblog post becomes a record of the student's metacognitive processes, and diverse ways of understanding and sharing experiences. Learning involves both social interaction and mediation. Weblogs, as realised in the WoW Programmes, effectively illustrate cognitive processes and collaboration interaction. In addition, there is a tight symmetry between the idea of learning equaling reflection, and reflection equaling learning. Weblogging demonstrates the connection of these principles of learning in strong ways.

The project of weblogging in a programme such as the WoW Programmes allowed for the development of a community of learners with a shared history, as well as the development of both

individual and group identities. The access to information posted by individuals was useful for both the WoW Programmes' staff member, and the host organisation's staff member, in their respective roles as mentor and workplace supervisor. As group identities developed, the WoW Programmes' designers could access information from the participants about the ways that they felt the WoW Programmes contributed to their employability development, which could then be used for decision-making processes for future programmes. Workplaces supervisors could also 'watch' the development of the group so as to compare their intern's development with that of interns at other sites.

The WoW Programmes' evaluation has revealed that another powerful contribution that the practice of weblogging can make is in enabling students to communicate the employability skills and competencies they have developed.

A crucial factor that was programme specific was the weblogs' capacity to promote employability. In the WoW Programmes we were not only teaching content for the development of employability, but we also saw how the process of students learning about employability became visible at their weblogs, as did their critical engagement with the notion of employability. This idea of weblogs of enabling *visibility* of the Humanities "in action" outside the academic arena was important.

It may be particularly difficult for potential employers to get a sense of how Humanities postgraduates work, and to see the skills that they incorporate in their work, as they cannot see those skills. Humanities postgraduates "in action" in the context of the WoW Programmes can be understood as interns processing knowledge - a discursive, relational and conversational process that is well aligned with the structure of weblogs. A crucial benefit of the weblogs that was revealed in the WoW Programmes was that they facilitated making the invisible nature of knowledge processing become visible, and thereby contributed to marketing the Humanities to the world of work.

It is worth mentioning again that a unique and interesting key finding as a result of the WoW Programmes' evaluation was that in using weblogs, developing employability and achieving employment acted simultaneously. We hoped that prospective employers would watch the students develop online while engaging with content over which they as employers had some control and expertise themselves. We also hoped that as Humanities students thought through unfamiliar material their critical thinking skills – the hallmark of a successful education in the Humanities – would become evident. This did occur. In Chapter 6 I related an incident when a

General Manager of an organisation said that he would have called two of the 2006 interns for an interview "within the next 24 hours" (Interview field notes, 17 July 2006) after reading their weblog posts, if they had been available for employment. Put simply, weblogs proved to be highly effective alternatives to trying to get a job by submitting a traditional curriculum vitae and performing well in an interview. We were well aware that Humanities postgraduates did not effectively articulate their abilities, or the skills they had acquired during their postgraduate studies, during interviews with potential host organisations. The weblogs were therefore an alternative tool for one of Hillage and Pollard's (1998) key aspects of employability, 'presentation', which they use for what they call 'job getting skills', for example CV writing, work experience and interview techniques. The weblogs as records of employability development at work are more insightful, accurate and fair than a once-off interview would be. A supervisor involved in the WoW Programmes described this succinctly:

> ... an interview is just one day and it could be bad. I think a lot of people can interview very well and then you put them to the test in some things and they don't necessarily have the knowledge or the initiative. (Workplace Supervisor Interview, 11 July 2006)

The specific power of weblogs in the Humanities as employment tools is that they can therefore become an important form of the individual's 'presentation' for employment. (Hillage and Pollard, 1998)

Future programmes will have the task of finding ways to encourage workplace supervisors and future employers to interact more actively with the interns at the weblogs, and to create awareness of the weblogs amongst potential employers. Raising awareness should however prove easier than our experiences of trying to do so from 2005 to 2008, as weblogs have now become far more familiar and popular than they were when we first incorporated them in the WoW Programmes.

7.2 Multiple functions of mentoring and employability

The importance of the role of a mentor in the development of employability has been emphasised in this research. What is unusual and perhaps unique, as far as I can determine, is the mentoring partnership of the WoW staff member and the workplace supervisor, working together to help the student develop employability. It was clear from the WoW Programmes' evaluation that this partnership offered the postgraduate student a unique and highly effective support structure to facilitate a transition into the workplace successfully.

The dual mentorship model in the WoW Programmes

In the WoW Programmes the mentoring process started in the relative safety of the University during the training component. At this point the WoW staff members started to understand each student's particular learning style, ambitions, social background, personal vulnerabilities and strengths and skills. The depth and range of this knowledge came from opportunities like observation, interpersonal communication and interview coaching, but also, crucially, from access to each student's weblog. This information was very important to facilitate a good match between student and host organisation for the internship component, but was also the basis of a deep understanding of the student that led to trust.

Workplace supervisors also had access to the weblogs and could therefore also establish a relationship that extended beyond basic supervision, when the students reported to them as interns. However, the Process Evaluations of the WoW Programmes revealed that the main focus for the workplace supervisor, when the intern started, was on getting the intern to perform and complete work, which involved briefing the intern on organisational practices and requirements, and on the workplace supervisor's expectations. Workplace supervisors participating in the WoW Programmes in 2005 and 2006 explained that they did not have the time or organisational support to monitor or mentor their intern's affective responses during the internships. The availability of a mentor from the WoW Programmes was therefore crucial when students made their transitions into the workplace.

There is evidence in the Process Evaluations of the WoW Programmes that the students valued having the WoW staff member as a mentor during the internships enormously. The WoW staff member's roles as mentor were diverse, ranging from career counselling and career planning to ongoing input on demonstrating professionalism.

The collaborative arrangement between workplace supervisor and WoW Programmes' mentor benefitted all involved in the students' transitions into the workplace. Also, without exception, all workplace supervisors appreciated the dual-mentorship model, and appeared relieved that their role was to focus on the practical aspects of the intern's work performance while the University mentor was responsible for assisting the intern with general behavioural aspects of the transition into the workplace.

The programme mentor-workplace supervisor partnership should be further researched to explore how the collaboration can be maximized to benefit students' transitions into workplaces. Once

identified, this information will be invaluable to future programme designers, mentors and workplace supervisors and will help to achieve even better success in internship placements.

Some of the ways in which the intern received mentoring from the WoW staff member included site visits, email and telephone contact. It is worth mentioning again that the presence of a WoW staff member as a mentor – even if only by email or telephonically – was practically helpful and reassuring for the students. The weblogs however proved to be the most powerful points of contact between the WoW mentor and the students. It happened that while telephone conversations and email contact were typically reserved for administrative issues, students used the weblog posts to reflect on employability issues more widely. Writing a weblog post required the student to think through these issues carefully so as to be able to articulate the observation, experience or learning point accurately. The weblogs therefore contained more reflective content than communication by telephone or email. Weblogs were also not constrained by working hours and the students knew that the WoW staff accessed and read the weblog entries daily.

Of course interns often had other sources of support for their transitions into the workplace: family, peers and even past participants from the WoW Programmes, but these were informal. The fact that the WoW staff member's role as mentor had been formalized, both in the learning contract and in discussions with the workplace supervisor, was empowering for the students. The arrangement appeared to give them confidence: as Humanities postgraduates they may not have had vocational training at University, but they did have vocational support.

Without exception, all interns used the WoW staff as resources to deal with workplace challenges and issues that they did not want to raise with their workplace supervisors, for fear of jeopardizing or compromising their employment opportunities either at the host organisation or in that particular industry. Interns sometimes had to manage a complex balance in their relationship with their workplace supervisors as they tried to prove themselves worthy of employment, while going through a socialization process and managing day-to-day challenges such as mistake-making. We also realised that many workplace supervisors did not have adequately developed skills to engage with and/or to support students as mentors.

Thinking about mentoring and employability

By the end of the WoW Programmes in 2006 we were well aware that most workplace supervisors were not effectively mentoring the interns. For this reason, WoW Programmes' staff

never referred to the staff members at organisations who worked closely with the interns as mentors, but as 'workplace supervisors'.

Since the inception of the WoW Programmes in 2001, organisations had been asking us to assist with mentorship training. We had the opportunity – by working with other departments at Wits University – to develop and implement a workshop for potential and existing mentors at host organisations, in June 2007. We hoped that this intervention, titled the *'Grow Tomorrow's Leaders Workshop'* would improve the quality of mentorship in future internships facilitated by the WoW Programmes. The workshop was designed as an interactive discussion highlighting what participants already knew about mentoring and linking that knowledge within the group to some basic theory about the concept of mentoring and the roles mentors play. A mentor from a host organisation and an intern from WoW spoke about their experiences of mentoring. They explained how they engaged in the challenges presented by their mentoring relationships and how mentoring had benefited them and their organisations. We also included a session to focus on the use of distance and e-mentoring and the technology which can support it. Weblogs from WoW interns were presented and discussed.

Although the workshop was not repeated, the fact that over forty workplace supervisors attended demonstrated a new interest in the concept of mentorship. A possible motivation for this interest may be the current trend evident in organisations, of recognising mentorship as a leadership trait by rewarding employees who mentor or coach others, through promotion or remuneration. Whether career advancement and/or an increase in salary are the reasons for the interest in mentorship, or people are altruistically motivated to share their skills and experiences with young people, it is clear that there is renewed commitment towards mentorship in the workplace. Organisational interest in mentorship suggests that an opportunity for future programmes, that may be similar to the WoW Programmes, is to provide mentorship-training opportunities. Besides the benefit of improved mentorship for students and as a skill for workplace supervisors, mentorship training provided by the University can be an effective marketing tool for the WoW Programmes, or for any similar programme. Participating organisations will benefit, as productivity will increase through the improved performance planning and teamwork from employees with newly acquired mentoring skills, especially when organisations make it possible for the mentors to undertake their role in addition to their usual duties. Commitment from organisations to mentorship processes may well occur when organisations realise that a key benefit of training employees as mentors (and then supporting opportunities for them to practise their mentorship skills on the interns they are hosting), will occur when those mentorship skills

are also applied to other, existing employees who could benefit from mentorship. Ultimately this would lead to an improvement in organisational performance.

Another important benefit is that mentorship training offered by a programme like the WoW Programmes can be a germinal link between the University and the world of work, promoting cooperation and thus helping to bridge the gap between the two different environments.

Further research would be valuable to investigate the potential of weblogs as an e-mentoring system. While it is acknowledged that e-mentoring will not replace or elicit the depth of information that face-to-face interaction will generate, it should support and record the unique partnership of the two different forms of mentoring as practiced by the WoW Programmes' staff member working in the University environment, and by supervisors in the organisations in which interns are placed.

7.3 Reflections on the research process

In evaluating the WoW Programmes, the task of managing and combining my roles as programme designer, staff member, lecturer, mentor and researcher initially appeared challenging. It was interesting, however, that the various facets of my engagement resulted in a sound amalgamation that was beneficial for the evaluation of the WoW Programmes. In reflecting on the research process, one of the things that struck me was the methodological fit between the theory-driven approach to programme evaluation and my research role as participant-observer. This relatively unexpected coherence between programme evaluation approach and participant-observation also extended to the application of Stufflebeam's (2002) CIPP Model for the evaluation. The decision to apply the CIPP Model allowed for the flexibility that Stufflebeam advocates, and the model could be adapted according to the idea of activity stages – which in turn seemed to be in accordance with the programme specific elements in the evaluation.

Theory-driven evaluation as the main approach to the programme evaluation

A starting point at the planning stage of the evaluation of the WoW Programmes was to review and select a relevant approach to programme evaluation, and then a model that would conform to that approach. As evaluator my conceptualization of the most relevant programme evaluation approach, and then a practical model within it, started with addressing a basic question: "What is

the definition and scope of the problem of employability development for Humanities postgraduate students, and what can be done to address it?"

The decision to use a theory-driven approach to evaluation proved valuable because of its recognition of the importance of goals, and that complex interventions do not in themselves simply 'work' (i.e. directly produce intended outcomes). Critically, this approach in programme evaluation recognises the role of context, which proved so important in the WoW Programmes – the needs of postgraduate Humanities students in particular surfaced repeatedly, as did the organisational needs which had to be taken into account, for example during the selection of WoW student participants. Finally, the fact that a theory-driven approach allows for greater attention to unintended outcomes proved to be important; in the WoW Programmes this has allowed for exploration of the practices of weblogs and mentorship.

The next step was to find a model that was based on the theory-driven approach, and that could work in the contexts of both Higher Education and the workplace. Stufflebeam's CIPP Model met these criteria, and ultimately proved to be the right choice to help make informed decisions about the WoW Programmes.

The CIPP Model in the programme evaluation

The CIPP Model had the advantage over other available models in that it accommodated the day-to-day, practical, political considerations of the WoW Programmes. This was possible because of a key characteristic of the CIPP Model: flexibility. This characteristic of the model served the WoW Programmes' evaluation best. Stufflebeam (1980) has noted that a problem with programme evaluation models is that evaluators tend to take them too literally, and that the main contribution of business and/or educational evaluation should be conceptualization, with the model selected assisting with this. The methodological implication concomitant with the application of the CIPP Model was that the model offered me "tools to think with", but did not have to be applied literally. It was important for the WoW Programmes' evaluation to work with a model that was not constraining and did not have to be rigidly applied. In the WoW Programmes' evaluation therefore, the CIPP Model served as an effective guide.

Since the WoW Programmes were well established, it was possible to do away with the Context Evaluation aspect of the CIPP Model, which Stufflebeam included to assist with the setting of goals. Excluding Context Evaluation did not appear to have any adverse effects on any of the

other aspects of the CIPP Model, testifying to the flexibility the model allows. The decision to exclude Context Evaluation also did not mean that the WoW Programmes' goals were not taken into account during any of the other stages of evaluation – on the contrary, they permeated all other aspects of the evaluation.

The CIPP Model's aspect of Process Evaluation was useful to guide implementation of the evaluation, and the Product Evaluation aspect should be equally useful to assist with the recycling of the WoW, or similar, Programmes. I will discuss the Input Evaluation, and my approach to it in particular, shortly; the way in which the Process Evaluation was managed in the thesis should however be explained next.

Benefits of organising the Process Evaluation in activity stages

The flexibility inherent in the CIPP Model (mentioned earlier) proved to be crucial for the design of the Process Evaluation aspect of the WoW Programmes (Chapters 4 and 5). The two components of the WoW Programmes (training and internship) each contain multiple distinct 'mechanisms'. As intermediate processes, each of these 'mechanisms' creates the conditions for other ones to work.

My approach in the Process Evaluations was to treat each 'mechanism' as an activity stage. I could then evaluate the WoW Programmes sequentially, from reaction to learning to performance. I have not encountered similar approaches to the CIPP Model's aspect of Process Evaluation, and I suggest that this particular strategy may be useful for future evaluations with similar challenges. One of the significant advantages of this strategy was that if negative findings emerged in a later activity stage, the sources of data in an earlier activity stage proved useful in determining why such findings eventually came about.

My assessment of the value of Stufflebeam's CIPP Model is that it successfully met with the general point of evaluating the WoW Programmes, in that it established and provided useful information for judging decision alternatives, and assisted with both assessing and improving the worth of the WoW Programmes.

Participant-observation

The research process was primarily dependent on making firsthand observations of activities and involvement in all interactions, in accordance with the theory-driven approach to evakuation, and included my involvement in all aspects of the Programmes. My primary role was that of 'participant-observer' in the research process.

As a member of the staff for the WoW Programmes, I was privy to all information relating to the Programmes and had easy access to all participants. In addition, students were aware that I was also a student. This helped to secure my status as that of an "insider". Labaree (2002) suggests that "insiderness" may have special value in terms of being able to interpret the culture of the community. Certainly, my role as participant-observer, which provided me with the opportunity to access the participants as an insider, also enabled me to read and comprehend developments such as the communities of practice as they evolved in the WoW Programmes.

An unexpected benefit from my dual roles as participant and observer was that, since I was working with Humanities students who also had experience of postgraduate research, they cooperated in a way that facilitated rather than hampered the research.

An interesting dimension of my research role as participant-observer and my status as "insider" was that I also often acted as an "ombudsman". Experience in both the academic world and the world of work was taken into account when WoW staff members were recruited for the Programmes. Students and workplace supervisors were therefore aware that I had some experience as both student and lecturer, and that I had worked in corporate and non-governmental environments prior to (and during) my involvement in the Programmes. The implication of this for the research process was that students in particular were of the perception that I would not "take sides" or favour either the University or the workplace, because of my dual background. The balance that students expected me to demonstrate contributed to their degree of trust and readiness to disclose issues important to the research, especially during their internships. Thus my role as participant-observer effectively helped me to acquire information *during* the programme, and, in this way, ensured alignment with the main tenets of the theory-driven approach to evaluation. In addition, students knew that they would not be jeopardizing their positions as interns (and, as many hoped, future employees) by revealing sensitive issues relating to their experiences in the workplace, as I was ethically bound as a researcher to maintain confidentiality. It must be pointed out again that most, if not all students participating in the WoW Programmes were familiar with qualitative research, and may have designed and/or conducted research

according to similar methods themselves. This often brought about an understanding from participants of my method and approach, and therefore cooperation from respondents in the research.

Interviews to collect data from the ten respondents selected for the Process Evaluations ranged from one-on-one (researcher with student or workplace supervisor), to interviews with intern *and* workplace supervisor, to interviews with more than one intern at the same workplace, occasionally with the supervisor. I experimented with these different interview formats, as I wanted to ascertain if the different dynamics would impact on the quality of the data. I found that there were no substantial differences, and interns did not behave significantly differently, or disclose less or more, because of the presence of a workplace supervisor or peer.

As a participant-observer, I had the task as a WoW staff member of mentoring interns, thus I was both mentor and researcher during the interviewing process. I managed these dual roles by keeping separate notes. I maintained field notes on observations that were relevant for the research, and separate notes when in my role as a mentor, that were then typically used for feedback sessions after the interviews with the WoW Programmes Coordinator. This proved to be an efficient way of ensuring that the roles did not impinge on one another.

There also did not seem to be a problem in terms of respondents' abilities to perceive and respond to my dual roles. The interviews were semi-structured and often veered away from prepared questions to investigate specific complex issues. There were one or two instances when a respondent asked me, during an interview, to speak to the workplace supervisor about an issue, for example extending the contract. I noted these requests as administrative tasks to be addressed with the WoW Programmes Coordinator, and was able to return to the interview with the respondent easily.

The emergence of the theory-driven approach in the history of programme evaluation relates to the discovery that what occurs during the programme is significant and should be assessed. The evaluation of the WoW Programmes has therefore been a systematic endeavour, investigating workplace training and internships as avenues towards the development of employability for Humanities postgraduates. The length of my involvement in the WoW Programmes has been a key feature in my role as researcher and evaluator. I believe that the research process was positively effected by the fact that I have seen the WoW Programmes' development from the beginning, and its evolution over nearly a decade. This stretch of time means that, as participant-observer, I have insight into the WoW Programmes prior to the evaluation years, as well as to the

subsequent years flanking the two key evaluation years. (The years 2007 and 2008 have therefore been discussed in Chapter 6, as they are useful to consider the components that have survived after the evaluation years.) While the theory-driven approach was congruent with this programme evaluation at a methodological level, it was also evident that in practise a close link occurred between the theory-driven approach and my role as participant-observer over eight years.

In conclusion, I am optimistic that the extent of my experience with the WoW Programmes, as well as the evaluation of what happened during it in 2005 and 2006 in particular, will extend the generic goal of most evaluations, being to provide 'useful feedback' to assist with decision-making.

Limitations

Thus far I have emphasised the aspects of the research that I believe indicate continued value for an intervention such as the WoW Programmes, and which led to the success of the Programmes. Three basic questions emerge, however, as the basis for a discussion on the limitations of this research. The first question concerns the treatment of the Input Evaluation; the second, access to respondents for the interviews, and the third relates to the researcher's status as both participant-observer and evaluator of the research.

The discussion of the Input Evaluation in the research as a limitation issue stems from the fact that this aspect of Stufflebeam's (1984) CIPP Model was not presented in a standard way. It was evident from the beginning of the decision-making process related to the methodological approach to the Wow Programmes that the treatment of the Input Evaluation would have to be unconventional. This is because no other programmes with similar goals, contexts and participant profiles (postgraduate Humanities students) existed that could be referred to – which also meant that there were no other evaluations that could be used as a model for the WoW Programmes' evaluation.

Since it was not possible to benchmark the WoW Programmes against any other intervention, the decision was made to investigate lessons learned from the previous WoW Programmes that occurred in the years leading up to the WoW Programmes in 2005 and 2006. Besides the key limitation of having to use the WoW Programmes history itself for the Input Evaluation, this adaptation resulted in some challenges. My extensive involvement in the WoW Programmes meant that, as researcher, I was able to access a considerable amount of detail for the Input

Evaluation. Clearly, however, the scope of the thesis could not accommodate such a comprehensive Input Evaluation. As a result it was not possible to include *all* three aspects selected from Stufflebeam's model: Input, Process and Product in the thesis. An Input Evaluation would typically be brief and concise, but this was not achievable based on a history of a programme spanning eight years. For reasons of emphasis and to ensure readability, the decision was therefore made to move the Input Evaluation to the Appendices and to focus the evaluation on Stufflebeam's (1984) Product and Process dimensions.

The second limitation in the research was the practical issue of access to respondents. Interviews with participants in the WoW Programmes were crucial sources of data for the research. Without exception, all participants consented to participate in the research study and the interview process. While it was relatively easy to arrange the interviews with interns, and they made themselves available for several interviews, workplace supervisors participated in the interviewing process less enthusiastically. It was often impossible to arrange three interviews with the workplace supervisor, over the course of the internship. The reason for this was the supervisor's workload related time constraints.

The third and final question suggesting a research limitation stems from the researcher's role as participant-observer; the limitations raised relate to objectivity, and evaluation. As both participant and researcher in the teaching and evaluating of the WoW Programmes, it could be argued that the evaluation was compromised by my degree of involvement and commitment. There is the possibility that commentary on the weaknesses of the WoW Programmes were moderated by the students (who were also participants) who knew about my involvement and my level of commitment.

This limitation however could be offset by the fact that primary data was collected in two very different modalities, the interviews and the weblogs. Respondents may have felt reluctant to articulate negative views about the WoW Programmes in the face-to-face interviews, with me. They may have felt vulnerable to do so in the interviews, because of physical presence. By contrast, the weblogs were in the public domain. It is highly likely that my "presence" was not even a consideration while students wrote their weblog entries and they did not even consider me as their primary reader. The fact that there were few replies from students to the comments that I made at their weblog entries, further confirms this.

My status in the research as both participant-observer and evaluator articulates with a wider concern in programme evaluation, being the extent to which a programme evaluation should be

theory *based* (i.e. broadly programme specific) as opposed to theory-*driven*, which suggests that it may be compromised by the extent to which the evaluator is influenced by the opinions, approaches and theories of those who conduct the programme. The possible limitations arising from my close connection with the WoW Programmes, and my role - not only in teaching the programme but also in designing some features - would suggest that my simultaneous role as programme evaluator could threaten the integrity of the evaluation.

Future research

This study was performed at the Graduate Centre, at the University of the Witwatersrand; the focus of the study was on a programme with a specific target group: Humanities postgraduate students who had completed their degrees, and had little or no working experience. Whether the results of this study apply to other Faculties at this, or other universities, needs to be examined by replicating a very similar intervention in other contexts.

Further longitudinal research regarding the development and maintenance of employability may identify specific factors that contribute to former individuals who participated in the WoW Programmes (or similar interventions) becoming successful employees. Such research could therefore determine the long-term impact of an intervention such as the WoW programmes on the development of employability.

The primary focus of this research was on the relationship between the components of the WoW Programmes and the development of employability of postgraduate interns. Future research might consider how individuals' experiences impact on the development of employability, by adopting life history or biographical type methods.

Future research could also focus on a better understanding of human resource practices in the host organisations, and the impact that aspects of these practices may have on work placements such as internships.

Closing this research

The Humanities face major challenges - and opportunities. The literature generally suggests that the crisis of Humanities higher education began in the late 19th century as Western post-industrial societies became increasingly preoccupied with the ability to produce wealth. The outcomes of a Humanities education were not seen to be aligned to, or essentially useful for these aims.

Human capital or knowledge capital is now, however, seen to be crucial for productivity, growth and for national competitiveness. Bennet (2001) rates knowledge work as the most important sector of the economy in 'rich' countries, with knowledge workers belonging to the fastest growing employment group. Today's global economy therefore depends upon the creation and application of new knowledge, and hence upon educated people and their ideas, and knowledge institutions such as universities. Herein lies the opportunity for the Humanities to contribute to the world of work, and to redress a situation described by Tothill almost a decade ago and still pertinent for the South African context, today:

> At a time when unemployment levels are of ongoing concern to OECD governments, graduates of higher education generally have greater success in the labour market than those with lower qualifications – but Humanities graduates consistently find themselves in a less favourable position than the bulk of graduates of other disciplines. (Tothill, 1993)

This "less favourable position" amounts to higher unemployment for Humanities graduates than for graduates of other disciplines. Humanities graduates are also more likely to be employed in jobs below the level of their qualification or in part-time or 'unstable' positions. This is certainly the case for Humanities postgraduates at the University of the Witwatersrand in Johannesburg: with little or no work experience, employers are reluctant to consider investing time, training, remuneration and effort in new employees whose areas of specialization do not suggest direct benefit for the organisation. In addition, factors that work against the employment of Humanities postgraduates include perceptions that postgraduates may have arrogant demeanors and may be unwilling to learn new material in the workplace that may be "basic" in comparison to postgraduate study. But the greatest concern by far that employers have of all new entrants to the workplace relates to their work-readiness. This concern extends beyond whether the individual has experience, to whether the individual has the soft skills that are necessary for the creation, communication and application of new knowledge.

The aim of the World of Work Programmes at Wits University was to assist postgraduates from the Humanities to develop these skills, and thus to develop their employability. One of the participants from the 2005 World of Work Programmes described the personal impact of this development:

> I have been able to refine myself and my special qualities and what it is that I can offer, and what it is that is a bit beyond me. (UL, Appendix 3.2, Final Interview, 25 August 2005, p 90)

Besides the evaluation of the aspects of the WoW Programmes that supported and contributed to the development of employability, I believe that the research signals an opportunity for Humanities education to consider future similar programmes so that Humanities postgraduates are perceived to be able and skilled, and are effectively equipped and empowered to contribute in the workplace.

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