THE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY

Testing work placements

When the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Western Australia (CCI) wanted to investigate better options for businesses wanting to work with Edith Cowan University students, it decided to kill two birds with a single stone.

CCI sought out a student who could work with the organisation to help it develop a guide for its members in what to look for and expect when having a student on placement within their business.

At the same time, it provided CCI with an opportunity to test how well the process could work.

“Workplace Integrated Learning and Work Placements can be very useful but we wanted to provide businesses with a clear understanding of the process for employers, what was expected of them and how it would operate,” says CCI WA Workplace Services Manager, Lena Constantine.

“WIL should work for the mutual benefit of the business and the student.

The student brings new ideas, aspects and perspectives and the business is able to provide some life experience and offer the student a chance to build their networks.”

For ECU student Stacey Shepherd, who worked with CCI in developing a part of the Workplace Integrated Learning guide, the opportunities that arise from spending time embedded with the organisation are clear.

“The greatest benefit in working for the CCI was gaining experience in a highly regarded workplace that has a key position in the Western Australian business setting,” she says.

“I had used CCI services in a previous role so getting behind the scenes gave me good exposure to more of their business units as well as giving me experience.

We particularly looked at current issues facing WA workplaces, which required researching and digesting information to enable others to grasp the concepts. I was fortunate enough to meet other CCI team members and people with WA education sectors, which are relationships I hope to leverage in future.”

Lena says the results of the project had saved CCI WA time and the final product would be useful in guiding other businesses down the Workplace Integrated Learning path.

“We were surprised and delighted by the quality of her work on the project and it halved the time we needed to spend on it,” she says.

“Having Stacey around proved a really valuable resource and it is something we plan to repeat.”

For more information, call 134 328, email engagement@ecu.edu.au or visit www.ecu.edu.au