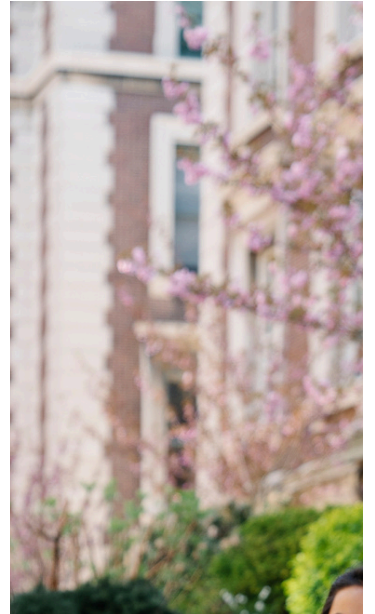# HOW TO:

Embed Practera's Authentic Project Learning Programs within Curriculum

Academic Guideline

Overview

This guide is intended for University Educators seeking to include authentic industry engagement within academic units, outlining how you can implement student-industry project models offered by Practera.

Practera

Practera is a University recommended provider available to support the delivery of high quality, authentic, online student-industry project experiences in-curriculum, along with a range of other experiential learning offerings. They provide fully managed student-industry project programs, an experiential learning platform to support the delivery of these experiences at scale, and learning design services.

Practera projects bring professional experience, skills and connections that students need to succeed. They have delivered quality outcomes in a diverse range of geographic, disciplinary and student demographic contexts, maintaining an active research & benchmarking database.

> 130	> 50,000	89%	83%
University Partners	**Student & Industry participants**	**Student program completion rate***	**Student & Industry Willingness to Recommend***

89%	88%	84%	92%
Students improved employability skills*	**of students enhanced social & professional connections***	**client deliverables met or exceeded expectations***	**Of students intend to cite experiences in job applications***

Download Practera's free whitepaper on quality in online experiential learning.   **DOWNLOAD** ⬇

An ability to deliver authentic student-industry experience online can offer educators and students substantial benefits, including;

- preparing students for ever more prevalent hybrid and global work
- equity & inclusion
- broader geographic access to industry and students
- enhanced scalability
- increased levels of data gathering & quality assurance.

Practera Offerings

Our University like others, is seeking to find ways to offer experiential learning activities to greater numbers of students through the curriculum.

Practera's authentic, digitally enabled experiences offer an opportunity for us to include this kind of activity at scale for different cohorts of students.

The aim is to help students to apply theory to practice, develop professional skills, increase student outcomes and satisfaction, and meaningfully engage all students with employers.

The following three Practera online, team-based student-industry project models have been identified by the University as meaningful & authentic, having broad applicability to a range of disciplines / contexts, and reasonably scalable. They can be embedded (and adapted) within units.

1. Industry Nano-Project	**2. Industry Micro Project**	**3. Industry Major Project**
2-3 weeks/25 hours	**4-5 weeks/50 hours**	**8-10 weeks/80-150 hours**

Practera have delivered programs for >100 Universities and thousands of employers worldwide over the past 12 years. At our University, we have evaluated Practera, it's offerings, ICT & legal compliance and undertaken pilot projects to validate the ensure quality of provision and student experience, in the appropriate context.

After reading this guide, staff can;

- Engage with Practera directly by emailing connect@practera.com to discuss your specific requirements
- A Practera representative will contact you for a discussion, a call we can join.
- If there is a good fit, Practera will provide a scope and quote for your needs.
- Costs will need to be funded by your school, unit or service, and scopes of work will be governed by the central contract.

Practera can then work directly with you on design, adaptation, implementation, delivery and reporting.

Benefits

Practera brings 12 years of experience in designing and delivering programs that work for educators, students and industry in delivering authentic work experience. Professional Experience in the curriculum (even short form) is key to long term success in the labour market (UK DoE, Planning for Success 2017).

Practera projects with a strong component of feedback, reflective practice and skills surfacing have been demonstrated to advance students' career & employability readiness and demonstrate strong evidence of skills uplift, surfacing and articulation. Below is a case study of the recent experience of a new partner, the University of Leeds, with a 100 student pilot of a 2-week nano project.
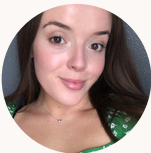
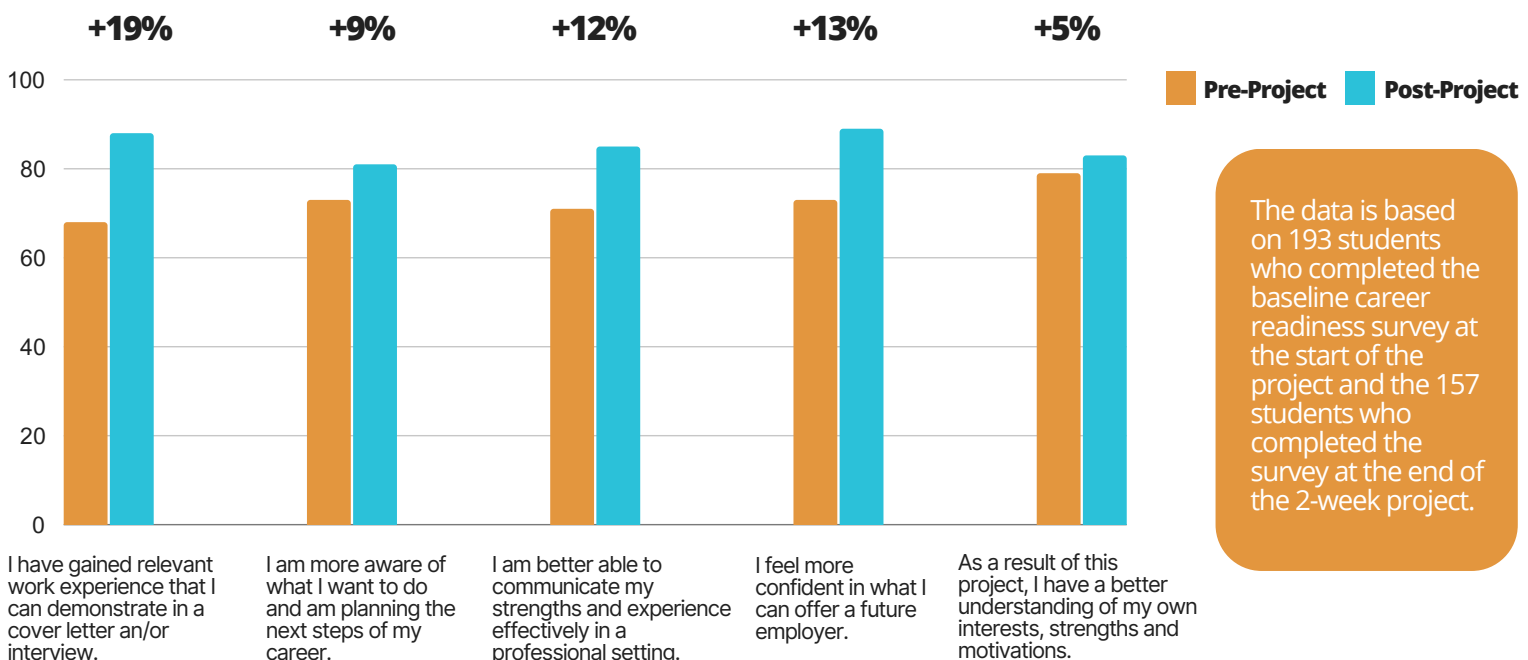| Student	Industry	Educator
UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS	SeparateSpace	UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS
"This program has helped me better understand working in a team under tight time constraints and with a meaningful task. It has also broadened my experience with working with people from different backgrounds. this is definitely a strong experience to talk about in future interviews."	'I am very impressed with the work that you have done on this - and with the final report, which is clear and actionable. Thank you very much to you all. We are looking for an intern to join our team to work with us on marketing. If you're interested, please send me an email	'We found the Practera program very easy to work with, first time round and at a scale of 100 students. The team was experienced and professional. We agreed on project themes and client sectors and Practera took the program from there with our students, delivering great outcomes for students and industry partners. We were welcome to sit in, observe and monitor the program but not required. I was very impressed."
Hannah Guest, BSc Biology Leeds Industry Projects	**Amanda Bell** CEO and Founder, Separate Space **Leeds Industry Client**	**Jan Spalek** Deputy Head of Global Opportunities

+19%   +9%   +12%   +13%   +5%

Legend: Pre-Project | Post-Project

Chart y-axis: 0, 20, 40, 60, 80, 100

Categories:
- I have gained relevant work experience that I can demonstrate in a cover letter an/or interview.
- I am more aware of what I want to do and am planning the next steps of my career.
- I am better able to communicate my strengths and experience effectively in a professional setting.
- I feel more confident in what I can offer a future employer.
- As a result of this project, I have a better understanding of my own interests, strengths and motivations.

The data is based on 193 students who completed the baseline career readiness survey at the start of the project and the 157 students who completed the survey at the end of the 2-week project.

Overview: Sample Program Models

Name	1. Industry Nano Project	2. Industry Micro Project	3. Major Industry Project
Intensity (samples)	**2-3 weeks/25 hours**	**4-5 weeks/50 hours**	**8-10 weeks/120-150 hours**
Delivery	Virtual	Virtual or hybrid. Option for in-person events.	Virtual or hybrid. Option for in-person events and site visits
Summary	Teams respond to an authentic, digitally-enabled industry project with structured, weekly industry client engagement & feedback (1 unique brief per team). In Micro & Major, we recommend and assume the academic staff member fills a mentor role. External professional / industry mentor role can be provided at additional cost.		
Industry deliverables	Report	Report + Presentation	Report + Prototype + Presentation
Industry engagement	Industry Client only 2 hours direct: Briefing workshop + 2 online reviews	Client + Mentor 8 hours direct: Briefing workshop + 8 reviews + live presentation event	11 hours direct: Briefing workshop + weekly meetings + 6 online reviews + live presentation event
Price / student - 1) TURNKEY - EITHER Practera sources industry & delivers program in full*	**$250**	**$500**	**$700**
OR 2) BLENDED, Industry sourcing + Practera platform, uni delivers *	**$130**	**$220**	**$350**
Minimum cohort size **	50 students	40 students	30 students

* $AuD. See appendix A for more detail on differences between models
** Smaller cohort sizes are possible but may attract higher prices per student.
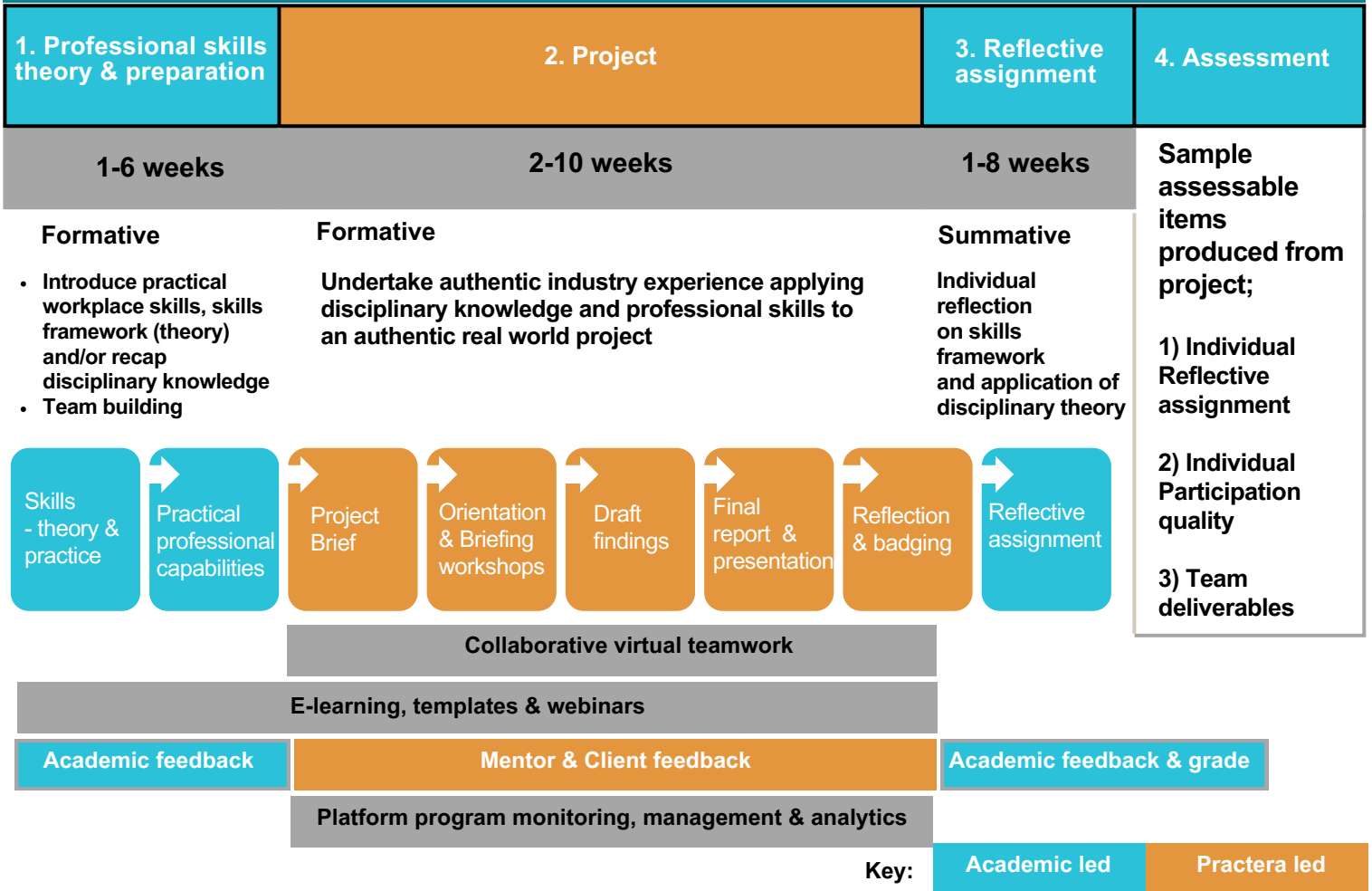
Variation & Customisation

Each of these industry project models can be adapted to reasonably significant degrees to meet specific unit learning objectives, assessment approaches, disciplines / themes, industry type, student capability, skills, level of academic staff involvement, delivery model (fully online / hybrid-in person).

Additional models

Practera also offers a range of other experiential learning models including a broader array of group and individual industry project models, placements, employability and skills modules, challenge style projects and innovation challenges. You can request more detailed information and/or a briefing through connect@practera.com

Sample Module Design and Assessment incorporating Practera Industry Project

12-week project based experiential unit			
1. Professional skills theory & preparation	**2. Project**	**3. Reflective assignment**	**4. Assessment**
1-6 weeks	**2-10 weeks**	**1-8 weeks**	**Sample assessable items produced from project;**
Formative	**Formative**	**Summative**	
• Introduce practical workplace skills, skills framework (theory) and/or recap disciplinary knowledge • Team building	Undertake authentic industry experience applying disciplinary knowledge and professional skills to an authentic real world project	Individual reflection on skills framework and application of disciplinary theory	**1) Individual Reflective assignment** **2) Individual Participation quality** **3) Team deliverables**

Skills - theory & practice → Practical professional capabilities → Project Brief → Orientation & Briefing workshops → Draft findings → Final report & presentation → Reflection & badging → Reflective assignment

Collaborative virtual teamwork

E-learning, templates & webinars

Academic feedback	Mentor & Client feedback	Academic feedback & grade

Platform program monitoring, management & analytics

Key: | Academic led | Practera led |

Sample learning objectives

Distinctive learning objectives for a collaborative student-industry project incorporated into a unit of study, might include;

1. Apply your <skills> and <knowledge> to real world industry problems
2. The ability to analyse and present a practical solution to an industry problem in the domain of *<specify industry sector / problem type>*
3. The ability to create new knowledge, data or evidence in support of an industry partner's objectives
4. The ability to form and work in a virtual team with peers to apply professional skills <including...> to solve a problem for a real industry client

Educators may choose different levels of involvement / support provision in the project design.

Powered by **Practera**

Sample Module Creation and Assessment Cont.

Sample activities and assessments *Student-industry projects can be assessed authentically in a variety of ways; assessments, marking criteria and weightings will be chosen by the module leader/educator. Below is a sample list of formative and summative assessments for a 4 week project, with sample credit- bearing elements, based upon previously successful in-curriculum projects. The educator may choose to evaluate many items, or few.*

Week	Deliverables & assessments	via Practera (industry feedback)	via LMS (formally graded)
1	**Baseline Skills Self- Assessment & Development Plan**	Week 1 **Monday 12pm** Formative, no feedback	
1	**Project Plan (Team)**	Week 1 **Thur 5pm** Formative, Industry Client feedback	Assessment 1: (10%) Team Grade. Incorporate client feedback & submit
2	**Draft Report (Team)**	Week 2, **Sun 5pm** Formative, Industry Client feedback	
3	**Team 360 Self & Peer Assessment (Team)**	Week 3, **Mon 5pm** Formative, Peer feedback	
3	**Final Report (Team)**	Week 3 **Sun 5pm** Formative, Industry Client feedback	Assessment 2: (30%) Team Grade. Incorporate client feedback & submit
4	**Virtual Final Presentation to Industry Client (Team)** Verbal feedback from client (students to record)	Week 4, time TBC with Client. 10 min presentation. 10min Q&A. Verbal feedback from client (students to record).	Assessment 3: (20%) Team Grade.
5	**Final Individual Reflection**	Final Skills Self-Assessment. Formative, no feedback.	Assessment 4: (40%) Individual Final Reflection on the LOs in context of the experience. Individual Grade.
5	**Participant Feedback Survey**	Week 5 **Wednesday 12pm** *to obtain completion badge & e-certificate	

Additional/alternative authentic assessment options include;

- Individual engagement with project content and tasks, tracked by the Practera platform
- Peer and industry client feedback on the student's performance during the project generated by the Practera platform
- Assessment of group deliverable quality including collective identification by the team of specific elements for which members were responsible
- Client feedback on the quality and utility of team deliverables
- Mock Interview conducted by module leader with individual students on students' reflections, development and performance during the project

Model 1 Detail:
Industry Nano Project
2-3 weeks / 20-30 hours

SAMPLE WORKFLOW

ORIENTATION

ONBOARDING
Reflect on skills, set goals

2 WORKSHOPS
Meet Team & Client,
Receive project brief & start research.

WEEK 1

SUBMIT DRAFT REPORT
for Client feedback.

TEAM 360
Self & Peer Assessment

WEEK 2

SUBMIT FINAL REPORT
for Client feedback.

FINAL REFLECTION
e-certificate & badge

Overview

- 2-3 hours direct industry engagement per team: Briefing workshop, 2 online reviews & mid-point meeting

- 3 peer & self-reflections
- Student support:
  - Orientation Workshop
  - Project Briefing Workshop
  - Weekly industry feedback
  - Coaching Calls, if required
  - In-app content
  - Academic teaching & feedback (optional)

CASE STUDY — Job Smart Edge WIL Project

THE UNIVERSITY OF
SYDNEY
Business School

92%	**89%**	**91%**	**87%**	**91%**
Completion rate	Student willingness to recommend	Client willingness to recommend	Increase in student's employability / global skills	Students will use this experience as evidence of skills in the future applications

- ✔ **447 students**
- ✔ **91 teams**
- ✔ **91 industry clients**

Themes:

Growth Strategy, Digital Marketing, Funding & Finance, International Business, Sustainability, Culture & Talent

Sample brief & client:

Stoke manufactures recreational hydrofoil motor products to enhance watersports experiences. They asked the student consulting team to undertake international market research to identify priority export markets, provide information on them and make recommendations for market entry.

Industry Testimonial

STOKE

"It has been a pleasure to work with the whole team. They were professional and polite in their conduct but also confident enough to present ideas and challenge our thinking. They took feedback exceptionally well and it was great to see the improvements in the report from the draft to final version. Given the tight timeframes of the project, I was extremely impressed with the amount the team managed to learn about our business and industry from their research, and then how they were able to put that into well thought through actionable recommendations. Well done all!"

Hamish Leighton
Founder & CEO

Model 2 Detail:
Industry Micro Project
4-5 Weeks / 40 – 60 hours

SAMPLE WORKFLOW

ORIENTATION

WEEK 1

WEEK 2

WEEK 3

WEEK 4

ONBOARDING
Reflect on skills, set goals

2 WORKSHOPS
Meet Team, receive brief.
Meet Mentor & Client.

TEAM 360 #1
Submit Project Plan for
(Academic &) Client feedback

SUBMIT DRAFT REPORT
for Academic & Client feedback

TEAM 360 #2.
Submit Final Report for
Client feedback,

PRESENT FINDINGS
live to Client (& Academic)

SUBMIT FINAL REFLECTION
for Academic feedback,
e-certificate & badge

Overview

- 8 hours direct industry engagement per team with mentor & client: Briefing workshop, 8 online reviews, weekly meetings, live presentation
- 3 peer & self-reflections
- Student support:

  - Orientation Workshop
  - Project Briefing Workshop
  - Weekly mentor + industry feedback
  - Coaching Calls, if required
  - In-app content
  - Academic teaching & feedback (optional)
  - Live Presentation

CASE STUDY | Grand Challenges Program (July 2024)

THE UNIVERSITY OF MELBOURNE

87%	85%	99%	100%	89%
Completion rate	Student willingness to recommend	Client willingness to recommend	Final report high / outstanding quality	Student gained relevant work experience that they can demonstrate ito employers

- **113 students**
- **12 teams**
- **12 industry clients**

Themes:

STEM Innovation, Growth Strategy, Sustainability, Digital Marketing

Sample brief & client:

AFL Asia, the representative body for Australian football in Asia, vision for Asia to be the AFL's leading international growth region. AFL Asia continually provides communities across Asia opportunities to discover AFL, engage with content, and participate in its programs and competitions. AFL Asia asked the UoM Grand Challenges Student Team to analyse its Asian social media strategy & presence and provide recommendations for improvement.

Industry Testimonial

AFL ASIA

'Amazing talented UoM student consulting team! Within three weeks, from no knowledge of AFL Asia to a solid report and presentation delivered, they proved themselves! They grew really fast with guidance and feedback, and did well in a live presentation at AFL House to AFL Asia Chair. Hope they had a great experience.'

Judie Gao
Board Member, AFL Asia

Model 3 Detail: Full Industry Project
8-10 weeks / 80 – 150 hours

SAMPLE WORKFLOW

WEEK 1	**ONBOARDING** Reflect on skills, set goals
WEEK 2	**2 WORKSHOPS** Meet Team, receive brief. Meet Mentor & Client.
	SUBMIT PROJECT PLAN for (Academic &) Client feedback,
WEEK 3-4	**TEAM 360 #1** Submit Status Updates & Draft Insights for (Academic &) Client feedback.
WEEK 5-6	**SUBMIT DRAFT REPORT** for (Academic &) Client feedback
	TEAM 360 #2 Submit Final Report and Present findings live to Client (& Academic)
WEEK 7-9	**SUBMIT FINAL REPORT** for Academic & Client feedback, e-certificate & badge

Overview

- 11 hours direct industry engagement per team: Briefing workshop, 9 online reviews, weekly meetings, live presentation
- 4 peer & self-reflections
- Student support
  - Orientation Workshop
  - Project Briefing Workshop
  - Weekly industry feedback
  - Weekly client meetings
  - Coaching Calls, if required
  - In-app content
  - Academic teaching & feedback (optional)
  - Live Presentation

CASE STUDY — La Trobe Masters in Cyber Security Capstone Industry Project

94%	**72%**	**72%**	**81%**	**80%**
Completion rate	Student willingness to recommend	Client willingness to recommend	More confident in what s/he has to offer a future employer	Clients improved business decision making & capability

- ✓ **136 students**
- ✓ **14 teams**
- ✓ **14 industry clients**

Themes:

Cyber Security Strategy, Cyber Threat Assessment

Sample brief & client:

Synctegral Pty. Ltd provides Information Technology services for clients in various industries ranging from Construction and Manufacturing to Government and Medical Devices. The client asked the Student Consulting Team to focus on:

- Assigning SSL certificate to our internet server domain and reviewing the penetration cyber security testing approach for the same.
- Develop a company cybersecurity strategy based on the mentioned above assignment.

Industry Testimonial

SYNCTEGRAL

"The team did well and resolved one of our SSL major issues, which allowed us to present SAP Business Application Studio to about 7000 participants, and we won third place globally. The team made a special contribution with the diagram they designed which we used in our presentation."

Adi Mogilevsky
Solution Architect, Synctegral

Engage with Practera

Thank you for reading this guide.

Next Steps

- Discuss with your relevant program leader or central Careers team member if you're not sure whether Practera may be a good fit for you
- Engage with Practera directly by emailing connect@practera.com to discuss your specific requirements
- A Practera representative will contact you for a discussion, a call we can join.
- If there is a good fit, Practera will provide a scope and quote for your needs.
- Costs will need to be funded by your school, unit or service, and scopes of work will be governed by the central contract.
- Practera can then work directly with you on design, adaptation, implementation, delivery and reporting.

Appendix A: Available Delivery Models

Practera

	Turnkey – fully managed	Blended – we source, you manage	Platform Only (SaaS) – you source, you manage
Practera platform for students, clients & administrators	✅	✅	✅
Full customisation available e.g. embed own skill frameworks	✅	✅	✅
Industry Sourcing & Project Brief QA	✅	✅	❌
Workshop facilitation	✅	❌	❌
Student/client management & monitoring	✅	❌	❌
Coaching Calls	✅	❌	❌
Administration, comms, reminders	✅	❌	❌
Academics provide teaching and feedback on pre-defined deliverables (in-curriculum only)	✅	✅	✅
Guaranteed industry feedback	✅	❌	❌

Appendix B:
Sample Project Brief Themes

Practera regularly sources project briefs across a large range of themes and disciplines. Some of the themes below are suitable for multidisciplinary teams, others align to a discipline. Some would require prior knowledge, or a longer project timeframe. We can also design new themes with you. Ahead of sourcing your briefs, we would agree preferred sectors, themes and geographies.

Growth Strategy	Technology Innovation	Sustainable Impact
Undertake a consulting project to help your client grow	*Undertake a technical feasibility, prototyping or trends analysis project*	*Help an organisation with a project aligned to the UN SDGs International Business Data Analytics*
International Business	**Data Analytics**	**Pubic Policy**
Research an international market for an exporter	*Develop trend, customer & market insights with data*	*Analyse & brief the policy landscape*
Digital Marketing	**Cybersecurity**	**Megatrends**
Analyse and enhance your client's digital presence	*Help an organisation analyse & improve their cybersecurity*	*Research the megatrends shaping your client's future*
Funding & Finance	**Web / App Development**	**Legal Issues**
Research funding options & sources for an organisation	*Provide recommendations for a website or app design*	*Develop a background note on an issue of importance in your clients industry*
Accounting	**Cloud Architecture**	**Risk**
Help your client undertake an internal audit	*Analyse options to shift business systems into the cloud*	*Develop a risk register for an organisation*
Talent & culture	**Supply Chain**	**AI**
Research & benchmark your clients employer of choice policies	*Research Supply chain best practices for your client*	*How is AI changing my sector? - research & recommendations for better utilisation*

If academics prefer not to include a project that is strongly aligned to a particular employment sector, an alternative approach is to focus on projects that emphasise development of transferable skills innately developed in those subjects. Academic colleagues can choose the skills they want to develop through the experiential learning and scope or define a project accordingly with the Practera team.

To create custom in-curriculum program templates, we would need to work with the university stakeholders to customise existing templates and align them to your learners' needs and your desired outcomes. To do that, we will work collaboratively through the following steps:

	Mobilise & Plan	Programme Design	Programme Configuration	Programme Implementation
Objective	Set the project up for success	A practical and stakeholder endorsed target program design	Build & configure required program assets	Manage transition and move to target program design
Timing	1 week	1-4 weeks	1-4 weeks	Programme duration
Activities	• Kick off meetings • Define objectives & issues • Identify stakeholders & diarise • meetings • Develop user personas • program, assets & collateral review • Identify data sources • Prepare project plan	• Review program assets & collateral • Stakeholder and/or user workshop(s)* • Develop user journey maps • Develop high level experiential program learning design • Detailed program design/requirements • Develop program metrics, monitoring & evaluation framework • Feedback, iteration & approvals	• Source, build and/or modify required experiential learning assets • Configure Practera • Internal QA • Stakeholder & user Acceptance testing • Feedback, iteration & approvals • Develop documentation for users & stakeholders • Develop launch assets eg; workshop decks, communications, change plan • Provide support services to participants across multiple cohorts	• Launch • Support program launches • Provide BAU technical support • Reporting • Review pilot operations • Identify improvement opportunities
Deliverables	1. Charter & plan	2. Design document	3. Content / experiential learning assets developed 4. Experiential learning platform configured & tested on Practera 5. Required learning & operational assets	6. program launched & technical support services delivered 7.Review report & V2 requirements improvements (out of scope)

Appendix D: Detailed cohort delivery approach

To create custom in-curriculum program templates, we would need to work with the university stakeholders to customise existing templates and align them to your learners' needs and your desired outcomes. To do that, we will work collaboratively through the following steps: .

Mobilise & plan	Develop assets	Participant recruitment	Launch Cohort	Programme Management	Reporting
1-6 weeks		**8 weeks**	**Programme Duration**		**1 week**
• Mobilise University & Practera team • Identify target student segment(s) and key characteristics • Confirm project type(s) & any adaptation requirements • Define program objectives, timelines, key dates	• Define program brand(s), student key messages, marketing tactics & channels • Update/develop operating assets • Practera platform configured for delivery & reviewed	• Set expectations and context for the program to students (Uni) & industry (Practera) • Industry clients receive / seek more information about the program • Clients submit & refine project briefs • Student enrolments confirmed • Student & client cohort completed • Student & client pre-program engagement	• Students teamed and assigned clients/briefs • Practera App experience launches • Participants register and onboard to App • Programme launch; Virtual team orientation session with all participants • Mitigate / manage student attrition	• Check dashboard • Track progress • Provide support, respond to enquiries • Make proactive interventions to resolve issues and improve outcomes	• Reporting • Evaluate, reflect, document adjustments & improvements for next cohort • Student & industry experience promotion, testimonials & employ connections

Engage with Practera directly by emailing connect@practera.com to discuss your specific requirements.

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