UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI

AN INVESTIGATION INTO IMPACT OF WORK PLACEMENT ON QUANTITY SURVEYING CAREER DEVELOPMENT

BY

KIBURI DANIEL MBUGUA

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A project paper submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of a bachelor degree in Quantity Surveying, department of real estate and Construction Management, School of the Built Environment.

MAY, 2014
DECLARATION
I, KIBURI DANIEL MBUGUA, hereby declare that this project is my original work and has not been presented for a degree in any other university.

……………………..  ………………………..
Signed                                                                                          Date
Kiburi Daniel Mbugua
B66/0795/2010

DECLARATION BY SUPERVISOR
This project has been submitted with my approval as a University Supervisor

……………………..  ………………………..
Signed                                                                                          Date.

Mrs. Olivia S.O. Mwembe
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I would like to express my sincere gratitude to all those persons who have assisted me to accomplish this work and throughout entire campus life.

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For any errors, shortcomings, or misguided information or interpretation within this work, I take full responsibility. All those who helped me are absolved from any blame whatsoever and should not be considered to have been party to those aforesaid issues.
DEDICATION
To my mother Mrs. Mary Wanjiru, my brother-in–law Njoroge, my sister Mercy and Brother Anthony.

You are the pillars that my life stands on. Thank you for your courage, kindness and inspiration.
ABSTRACT

This survey study examined the impact of work placement in career development in quantity surveying practices. The principal aim of the research was to provide a composite comprehensive description of the work placement educational approach as well as a profession development as experienced by of quantity surveying employers by presenting the issues, benefits and drawbacks associated with the approach. To keep firms engaged in the program, the study canvassed employers’ perspectives on the work placement service with a view to improving program effectiveness to contribute in career development.

The research design was survey design in nature. The data was gathered through questionnaires with senior representatives of the quantity surveying profession. The primary concern was to gather rich and deep data which would allow a credible account of the approach to be composed from the employers’ perspective. The design recognised the limitations of the research and acknowledges that the findings are not exhaustive.

The participants reported highly positive experiences of employing work placement students and that the approach works well in practice. It emerged, however, that smaller practices experienced some difficulties in securing placement students and that the larger quantity surveying practices and construction companies were better placed to recruit placement students. The participants expected the placement student to be capable of arraying out basic measurement tasks under supervision within a team structure to support the production of a range of tender and cost planning documents.

The participants reported that the learning institutions, in general, did not maintain a background presence and allowed the participants a high degree of autonomy in managing the students’ experience. They maintained a high degree of control and supervision over the students and were aware of their status as learners. The participants felt that the work placement approach provided valuable opportunities to recruit short term staff and vet them as potential full-time employees. They reported few problems which would not be encountered in employing young staff in any case. In general they consider work placement graduates to be more employable than their full time equivalents.

Firms indicated they wanted concise and easy to understand information about new education initiatives and more support to understand program responsibilities that was useful to them. Firms made it clear that they required more support to understand work placement responsibilities workplace assessment log books and feedback forms. Ensuring students were prepared for work placement and matching students and firm were also identified as areas of concern.

The principle conclusion is that there is a strong argument for adopting and implementing a work placement approach in quantity surveying education courses as well as a means of career development.
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LIST OF ACRONYMS

UON - University of Nairobi
BORAQs - Board Of Registration of Architects and Quantity Surveyors
VET - Vocational Education Training
UK - United Kingdom
IQSK - Institute of Quantity Surveyors of Kenya
STIAC - Science, Technology & Innovation Advisory Council’s
SMF - Small and Medium Firms
QS - Quantity Surveyor
NCIHE - National Committee of Inquiry into Higher Education
CHAPTER ONE

1.0 INTRODUCTION

In Kenya the provision of quantity surveying course is provided by the University of Nairobi and Jomo Kenyatta University of Technology. At diploma level it is provided by Technical University of Kenya formally known as Kenya polytechnic where a technical course is undertaken as well as degree programme. Subject to fulfilment of degree, graduates acquire the title of assistant quantity surveyor at the employment sector. Cap 525 of Constitution of Kenya require a minimum of two years on-the-job training followed by a prescribed examination set by the Board of Registration of Architects and Quantity Surveyors (BORAQS) prior to being registered as quantity surveyors. Successful candidates commence this programme as early as from the graduation date. This is unlike in other countries such as United Kingdom (UK), where the professional experience required does not include the pre-graduation experience which could be important in the professional development at the early career stages.

The development of construction industry in Kenya has been on the rise recently. This has led to a great demand for quantity surveyors in the industry. The respective learning institutions have struggled to provide equivalent supply sufficient and qualified new entrant to the demand gap. In 2010 the University of Nairobi produced approximately 42 graduates. This cannot be compared with the estimated job vacancy owing to the fact that at least 39 of the graduates from 2010 are now employed (Higher Education index report, 2011). The University of Nairobi offer a four year course of study with little emphasis on the work placement (internship) at 3rd year and there the subsequent experience at the work placement made. Contrary to this, in U.K specifically the University of Manchester, the students undertake a compulsory field work which includes undertaking project with different magnitude during their academic course (University of Manchester: principles and procedures for students placements, 2013).

Elsewhere in Ireland among the institute that provide chartered quantity surveying course is Letterkenny Institutes of Technology, which offers a four year full-time sandwich course. The term ‘sandwich course’ refers to ‘a course in which periods of study in an educational institution alternate with periods of practical experience in an appropriate work situation in industry, commerce or a profession (Higher Education Authority of Ireland 2004).’ The
Limerick Institute of technology also provides for work placement which occurs in the third year of the programme.

Back to Kenya, the shortage of quantity surveyors prompted a significant expansion in the capacity of the Institutes of higher learning to deliver quantity surveyor (QS) graduates at honours degree level. This was achieved by upgrading polytechnics to university level among other reasons. A good example is the Technical University of Kenya formally known as Kenya polytechnic college. In addition more universities that did not provide quantity surveying course has been granted the powers to do so. Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology has now obtained accreditation from the ministry of higher education for its Honours Degree in Quantity Surveying courses to curb the shortage and also increase the QS in the construction industry.

Principles and procedures for student placement (University of Manchester) implemented on February 2013 clearly defined work placement as learning programmes that: enable students to gain work experience relevant to the programme specific to the programme of study or university wide programme teaching practise, as part of a teacher training programme placements which may be paid or unpaid.

In conclusion, work placement provides a bridge between the academic work that is undertaken in class as theory and the practise in the market in the modern skills and technology hence it is beneficial to provide the work placement in the higher institutions as a measure of producing superior graduates to the quantity surveying profession.

1.1 PROBLEM STATEMENT
The study is being undertaken against a background of a highly competitive industry in the quantity surveying profession as a result of more high institutions providing the degree course. Previously, graduates encountered few problems in securing suitable well paid employment. In addition, many undergraduates were employed part-time, frequently in junior quantity surveying positions. The need to provide work experience within full time curricula may therefore not have been viewed as a pressing issue. The current increase in supply in quantity surveyor in the Construction Industry has resulted in employment opportunities becoming very scarce and it is widely acknowledged that employers prefer students with previous work experience over those lacking appropriate work experience (Bennett.et al, 2008).
The expansion in the capacity to supply quantity surveying graduates has led to much greater choice for prospective students and competition for entrants amongst the respective universities. The challenge for the ‘established’ institutions such as UON is to maintain student numbers in the face of growing competition. They must now critically evaluate the effectiveness of their programmes in a rapidly changing economic and educational environment. Institutions can no longer afford a “take-it-or-leave-it” approach based on past practice, when obtaining work experience for their students, which is seen as more effective and relevant than providing a longer period of study in preparation for work (Cunningham 2010).

This research is being conducted, primarily, to inform every player in the quantity surveying field, ranging from the employers to institutions of higher learning on the emphasis that work placement might improve the career of QS under taken within the undergraduate period as opposed to after graduation, as a means of developing early careers in the quantity surveying profession. Work placement of could be identified by the examiners and members of the professional bodies as a possible option which might benefit the profession and the entire construction industry performance. To date, however, the Institute of Quantity surveyors of Kenya (IQSK), one of the professional bodies, has had discussions about the merits of work placement has been of a general and anecdotal nature, based largely on individuals’ perceptions of the value of the approach rather than a debate informed by published research. In respect to this, the body is currently trying to launch an initiative to secure their students member to work placement.

According to Crebert. et al (2004) most research related to work placement has focussed on three main areas: the educational value of the placement, the impact of placement on subsequent student employability and the perceptions of the students about placement. This study sets out to examine placement from the perspective of the employer’s perspective.

Closer home, Kanyanjua (2012) whose research was intensely focused on experimental approach, cover the impact of internship in general to the students mainly the education value gained therein. His interviews focused on the how the students benefited from the work placement with relevance to their school work and the preparation to the job market. He focused on the general effect and not a specific section of profession
According to Crebert et al. (2004) and Little and Harvey (2006) the most extensive recent research into placements was the *Graduates Work* survey carried in the UK by Harvey and colleagues in 1997. They interviewed 258 managers, graduates and undergraduate employees in 91 organisations and found that ‘respondents overwhelmingly endorsed work-based placements as a means of helping students develop attributes that would help them to be successful at work.’ (Harvey et al.). This study was carried out over ten years ago across a range of disciplines abroad. In the context of Irish quantity surveying there are, however, no direct studies of work placement and it is considered important to obtain these views. It is considered, therefore, both relevant and timely to conduct this research to address this gap in the knowledge in a scientific quantitative approach.

The study will impact on the economy in Kenya in that it will contribute a better learning system to produce better equipped graduates such that they will have better skills early enough not just in the academic fulfilment but also in the work skills especially owing to the fact that Kenya is at the verge of digital revolution. There is need to have more efficient systems to incorporate with the digital era so as to meet the provisions of ‘vision 2030’. Without the manpower with proper skill then this vision can only remain in writing. In response to this, seeks to better the quantity surveying profession with the incorporation of work placement. As a result the QS profession need to incorporate the requisite skills to every member especially the new entrants with the development of sophisticate operations which can only better be learnt in the work placement.

1.2 OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY
As identified in the problem statement there is a need to research for the importance and the impact of the work placement in the quantity surveying profession. The main aim of this study is to improve the quantity surveying profession by recommending a better learning system that incorporate with work experience by understanding what the employer would want from a new graduate employed by him

**Specific objectives**

a) To establish whether employers prefer new graduates with work placement experience to those without.

b) To determine whether the work placement is relevant in the quantity surveying professional career development.
c) To determine whether academic work placement would incorporate the necessary career skills in a graduate QS.

d) To identify changes required to manage the increased demand for work placements to improve the quality graduates produced in institutions and employer satisfaction with it.

1.3 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- Why do employers prefer graduates with work placement to those without?
- Is work placement relevant to quantity surveying profession?
- Does work placement incorporate relevant quantity surveying skill in work environment?
- Are there necessary changes required to cope with demand for graduates with work placement?

1.4 RESEARCH PROPOSITION

There is a difference between graduate quantity surveyors with work placement experience and those without in the work environment that make the employer prefer the former.

1.5 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The study is primarily focussed on finding how important the work placement in development of quantity surveying career. This has given an insight on the critical reasons why firms would prefer to employ a new graduate with work placement. Owing to ease of adaptability in the work environment to the better understanding of the professional practise, the study sought to uncover more merits in work placement in the quantity surveying profession.

In addition the study has also unveiled the reasons why some firms do not offer work placement opportunities while other prefer such positions as important. This has enabled the researcher to have a better understanding of the employers’ perspective in general out there in the industry.

The study has also sought the benefits of offering work placement to the firms that do not offer such vacancies as well as seek to address the reasons why these firms do not offer this opportunity. On the other hand this study aimed at encouraging the students and the institutions of higher learning on the benefits of work placement.
Furthermore the study sought illustrate to institutions of learning specifically the construction faculty on the impact and the merits of placing students under work placement as part of their curricular activity. For the students, the study has shown what is expected of them at the work placement and how this impacts their career in the later in the profession practise.

1.6 SCOPE OF WORK
The study was conducted to a single population which is employers. Due to limitations later discussed the study will be conducted in the Nairobi county mainly employers who in this case refer to the consulting Quantity Surveyors. Specifically it involved issuing of questionnaire to listed firms in the BORAQS register within Nairobi.

The sampling method discussed later in chapter three helped to reduce the population to a relevant sample. The method of data collection also needed to be conclusive so as to uphold the objectives of the research so as to answer the research question.

1.7 LIMITATION OF THE STUDY
Like any other research work, this study was face by many shortcomings. First is that the scope of study was too wide for the limited time span available for this study. This called for proper sampling methods when collecting the data. The method of sampling adopted was able to capture the crucial data as well as save on time as later discussed in the study under research methodology.

The other limitation was lack of proper response by the sampled population during data collection since most respondents ignored the questionnaires. The easiest way preferred in administration of questionnaires was via e-mails. This was not the effective in the collection of data as many firms tend to ignore such e-mail owing to the fact that it benefits them little if any. Hence hand delivered collection was adopted.

Cost constrain was also a major layback in this study. Travelling from one firm to another required funds which are naturally limited. This consequently dictated a smaller sample hence has critical effects on the result of the study if the sampling is not done comprehensively. The other limitation was to identify and get information from professionals who have work placement especially from chartered institutions since they are scattered and few. The solution to this was to have strategic sampling as part of research methodology during data collection.
1.8 ORGANISATION OF STUDY
This study comprises 5 chapters:

Chapter one which describes the core of the problem addressed by the project as well as outlines the objective of study and the significance surrounding it.

Chapter Two presents a review of the literature dealing with work placement in third level education. The review outlines the literature search process, discusses various learning theories underpinning work placement and describes various models of work placement used in third level courses. It examines the advantages, disadvantages and key issues related to work placement. Particular attention is paid to the employer’s perspective of work placement approaches.

Chapter three explains the design adopted to conduct the research: a phenomenological methodology has been chosen which uses questionnaires to explore employers’ experiences of work placement. It explains how the data collection process was planned, implemented and analyzed and explains the measures taken to ensure valid, reliable and credible findings. It also describes the sampling and data analysis technique adopted to conduct the research.

Chapter four presents the findings of the questionnaires received back from senior managers in quantity surveying and construction firms to discover their experience of employing work placement and full time graduate students. The questionnaires data is converted into information by extracting key statements made by the participants and identifying patterns, trends and common themes among the participants’ responses.

Chapter five comprised of a conclusive summary with the relevant recommendation and conclusion.
CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION
This chapter has defined the term work placement and discuss the existing models of work placement operating in learning institutions both in Kenya and in the world. It has also examined the theories surrounding the ideas of work placement, benefits and disadvantages and the key issues revolving around it. The chapter has in addition examine the previous contribution in researches done in relation to work placement.

2.1.1 Background
The formal system of education has come under many critics mainly due to its domination of ‘books’ based education. Hager (2000) critically challenged the effectiveness of the traditional approach as being accepted without questions being asked its impact in the professional industry. He described it as ‘standard paradigm of learning’ which he urged that learning is only evident by exercising judgement in examinations and that the theories learnt cannot be separated from the practice in the real world.

In their research, Munro and Fuller (2004) remarked that there is a widely held belief that formal or qualification-based learning is ritualistic and virtually meaningless while the work based learning is real, relevant and goal oriented. Hager (2000) recommended a learning system which incorporated as an effective learning approach which should occur outside the within the academic boundaries. He precisely stated that the work placement could be achieved family, friends and colleagues and not exclusively from office environment.

Similarly, Boud and Solomon (2001) urged that the increasing use of work based learning approach represents a revolutionary shift in empowering the professional the academic systems so as to determine what is to be learnt based on relevance. They advocated for the recognition of work placement as a site of learning and the validation of working knowledge acquired in the workplace as important to the academic standards and practises.

As a way of enhancing employability to undergraduates, many programmes have evolved (auburn, 2007). This has been echoed by a government report (National Committee of inquiry into Higher Education 1997) which recommended that:
‘All institutions should, over medium term, identify opportunities to increase the extent to which programmes help students to become familiar with work and help them to reflect on their exposure to and of work place’.

The biggest limitation that has faced the implementation of the work based learning system is organising a smooth running curriculum. Course designers favouring work based approaches have adopted a performance approach where the students will be required to do so many activities in limited time duration. Toohey (1999) characterises the competence or system based approach as stressing competence attainment and that the knowledge should be purposefully applied to produce skilled performers. She described the personal experience approach as being centred on individual student’s needs and interest in which learning is organised around life experiences to deliver improved behaviour. This approach only favours projects researches or problem based structure that incorporates theoretical knowledge with practical application.

2.1.2 Theoretical framework

Constructivist Learning Theories

Constructivist learning theories hold that learning is a process of constructing meaning (Merriam and Caffarella 1999). Constructivist learning approaches stress the process of learning, rather than the product and emphasize the importance of experience, learner activity and the context (Lave and Wenger 1991) in developing knowledge. Learning is seen as a continuous process Constructivist learning theories underpin work-based learning approaches.

The learning associated with work placement is primarily experiential in nature (Keating 2003). Numerous commentators have emphasised the importance of experience in the learning process. Dewey claims that all genuine education comes about through experience (quoted in Merriam and Cafferella 1999). Boud, et al. (1993) propose ‘Experience is the foundation of, and the stimulus for, learning . . . learning can only occur if the experience of the learner is engaged, at least at some level.’

Kolb describes learning as a four stage cycle, illustrated chart 2.1. The process involves engaging in new experiences (concrete experience); reflecting on these (reflective
observation); integrating ideas resulting from the experience (abstract conceptualization); and applying these new ideas in actual practice (active experimentation).

**Chart 2.1**

Kolb cycle, Kolb 1999

The overall process describes learning as involving transforming experiences into knowledge. The final stage of the cycle restarts the process thereby establishing a continual learning spiral allowing learners to gradually develop deeper understandings of complex experiences and generate further meanings and implications (Turnock and Mulholland 2007).

Boud et al. (1993) note that experience itself does not necessarily result in learning: there needs to be active engagement with it. Experience has to be arrested, examined, analysed, considered and negated to shift it to knowledge. This second stage of Kolb’s model aims to generate new perspectives which in turn lead to re-evaluation, experimentation and behavior change, or a commitment to action.

Experiential learning, therefore involves learners actively construct their experience (Boud et al. 1993). The learning process cannot be separated from its context (Merriam and Caffarella
Learning occurs most effectively when learners are actively involved in the context in which the knowledge is to be used (Boud 1997) and this knowledge is remembered longer and is more easily retrieved (Engel 1997). Merriam and Caffarella quote Wilson’s view that everyday learning only occurs among people acting in culturally organized settings suggesting that the physical and social context and the tools used are central to the learning (1999).

Turnock and Mulholland suggest that constructivist instruction should focus on providing experiences and contexts that encourage learning and present an appropriately structured approach which allows the learner to grasp key principles and enables them to ‘fill in the gaps . . . to go beyond the information given.’

### 2.2 MODELS OF WORK PLACEMENT

Work placement must be distinguished from other work based learning approaches such as those described by Boud.et.al (2001) who characterizes work based learning as involving a partnership between industry and academia through which company employees undertake learning projects in work to gain academically validated qualifications and develop knowledge to meet individual and organizational development needs. Academic work placements share a number of these characteristics, however in these instances, the learner is a student rather an employee and the focus remains primarily academic rather than commercial. An important common factor between the two approaches can be summarized in their claim that ‘work is the curriculum’ Boud.et.al (2001).

Murphy (2008) notes that learning through work has always been recognized in higher education and placements, apprenticeship, internships, sandwich courses and block release as means of delivering this learning. Cunningham et al. (2004) describe internships as a period of paid or unpaid supervised and structured work experience prior to professional qualification, whose main aim is to move from theoretical and academic studies into practical application and development of work-related skills.

Work placement approaches vary a great deal between different educational institutions and form an important component of many full time third level education programmes. In the past many programmes, particularly in the vocational and technological education sectors, expected students to obtain appropriate work-related employment during the academic break. This, however, has typically not been enforced, supervised or assessed, and the quality of the
work experience varied widely. In addition, suitable short-term employment opportunities have become occasionally difficult to obtain. Curriculum designers have attempted to solve these problems by integrating work experience into the programme.

Work placement can adopt various forms: UON provides a useful example within the higher technological education sector of the flexibility of the approach. Most undergraduate programmes within the university and all six Faculties offer at least one vocational work placement period in the third year. The length of the placement varies from one course to another: aiming to provide the learner with their first experience of working in a particular sector. However, the work placement is optional to all.

Typically the placement is approximately one semester (15 weeks to seven months) long and is generally undertaken in the second semester of the third year of the programme and is generally taken in a single block. Students on medium and longer term work placements are usually paid and students typically could expect to cover their living expenses (University of Nairobi 2008).

Beyond UON, work placement is becoming a more widespread and common approach in higher education. Within the university sector, the trend is most apparent in the more recently established universities. The Technical University of Kenya pioneered the approach catering for compulsory placements for their diploma students (McGinn 1999). Nairobi Aviation college currently operates the integrated training placements on many of its’ programmes where the administration their students to work on vocation liaises directly with the employers in the respective industry and secure. Within the more established universities, Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology, Kenyatta University, Egerton and Maseno University, the emphasis remains on voluntary student-organised vocational placements which are supported by the various institutions’ career service.

Silver (2007) reviews the development of sandwich course education in the UK from its origins in Glasgow University in the 1840s. The demand for a large increase in the numbers of students in applied science and technology in quarter century following World War II, led to a rapid expansion in the provision of sandwich placement courses in the Colleges of Advanced Technology and subsequently, the polytechnics. The aim was to combine a practical industrial approach with a greater element of broad fundamental science than had
been found in existing courses. Sandwich courses represented just over 7% of further education provision in the UK in 2004-2005 (Little and Harvey cited in Bennett et al. 2008). McGinn (1999) reports that cooperative education, the US equivalent of work placement approaches, was first introduced in the University of Cincinnati in 1906 and had been adopted by more than 2,000 universities and colleges by the turn of the millennium. He notes that the University of Limerick introduced this concept to Ireland during the 1970s.

2.3 ORGANISATION OF WORK PLACEMENTS
The approach taken in implementing a work ‘sandwich’ placement has been described by various commentators (McGinn 1999; Keating 2003) and typically includes the following components: designing the curriculum, procuring placement positions, student preparation, appointing academic supervisors, arranging and supporting the placement, supervisor support, outcomes assessment, employer evaluation and academic follow up.

2.3.1 Designing the Curriculum
The various arrangements available to course designers for work placement have been reviewed above. The programme should, ideally, be designed in accordance with Toohey’s (1999) and Biggs’ (1999) principles and aim to deliver effective educational experiences. Turnock and Mulholland (2007) argue that the programme must have clear, student friendly aims to guide both the student and their supervisors. These aims should be supported by appropriate learning outcomes reflecting the level of student ability. In addition the programme should outline how the student is to be supported during the placement.

2.3.2 Procuring placements:
Little et al. (2006) contend that if work based learning is so important, then there need to be equal access to it and Murdoch (2004) points out that these placements should provide adequate opportunity for achieving the intended learning outcomes. In this light, Little and Harvey (2006) comment that the difficulties of securing suitable placements for the ever increasing numbers of students . . . should not be downplayed. Securing appropriate placements is a major challenge for institutions, particularly when work placement opportunities are scarce. In a depressed sector it may be necessary to seek placements beyond the immediate region or abroad: these present major difficulties in terms of supporting, visiting and assessing students.

McGinn (1999) discusses the importance of identifying suitable employers, acquiring and developing company intelligence, establishing an adequate and appropriate employer network
and encouraging employers to participate in work placements; Little and Harvey (2006) point to the need to secure ‘repeat businesses. This process is facilitated by implementing administration and liaison with participating organizations which may be coordinated by a college External Affairs Division (McGinn 1998) or Faculty Placement Officer (Keating 2003).

2.3.3 Student Preparation
The preparation of students for the work-placement is fundamental to the success of the process. Preparations vary between institutions. Keating (2003) contends that the quality of the placement can be significantly improved by ensuring that students already have acquired a solid foundation in both personal and technical skills required for the placement and, in particular, indicates the desirability of developing noticing, reflection and intervention skills to maximize the benefit of placement. Hill (2004) advocates an approach where final year placement students present their experiences to pre-placement students. McGinn (1999) outlines a preparatory process involving briefing the students on the main elements of the programme which emphasizes developing presentation and interview skills and providing advice on drafting curriculum vitae.

2.3.4 Academic supervision
The academic supervisor occupies a key role in the work placement process. Turnock and Mulholland (2007) noted that work-placement supervisors should fill a coaching role and act as an informant to students to help them understand and adapt to workplace environment and to help them appreciate their contribution to their employer’s organization and its relevance to learning at college. They suggest that the academic supervisors’ duties fall into four categories: managing the process which involves planning, briefing, troubleshooting and debriefing; student advisor which involves identifying and addressing problems; educator which involves negotiating learning objectives, facilitation, supervision and feedback; and assessor which involves verifying the level of competence achieved. They characterize effective supervisors as enthusiastic, interested in the learner, motivating, open, empathic, and positive and a skilled listener.

2.3.5 Arranging and Supporting the Placement
Students’ placements may be arranged by direct contact from the student, by institution recommendation or by student interview. Little and Harvey (2006) comment that students may take the initiative in securing their own placement where they want to work with a particular employer and may apply on-line or seek out job opportunities on the web. They
also describe how the college may screen students by matching student and employer preferences and recommend compatible students to the employer. McGinn (1999) describes a similar process where applicants are screened and a panel of typically a small group of students is sent to the prospective employer for interview.

Work placement is typically supported by employer visits by the academic supervisor (McGinn 1999). The purpose of these visits is to discuss student progress to identify issues which may improve the process. The employer visit may form part of the assessment of the programme.

2.3.6 Assessment
Brennan (2005) notes that early versions of work placement were often not formally assessed; however, students were generally required to produce a placement report or keep a log book. This has been used in a few learning institutions although not followed strictly. For example in Kenyatta university students a keep a log book which is rarely inspected by the supervisors. Murdoch (2004) notes that since 2001, UK work placements must comply with the ‘Code of is Practice for the Assurance of Quality and Standards in Higher Education: Placement Learning’, which assumes effective quality assurance system to ensure that standards are maintained and the learning outcomes are assessed. It is now unusual for placements not to be formally assessed (Brennan 2005). In many instances students are required to pass the placement component in order to graduate.

There is a wide range of methods available to assess work placement. Keating (2003) lists Gray’s examples: self and peer assessment; assignments and projects; portfolios; dissertations and theses; presentations; poster displays and learning log or diary. He suggests using a range of methods, with broad and flexible assessment criteria which can cater for various learner styles and differing learning environments. In the School of built environment at UON the assessment of the Work placement is barely there.

The inconsistent quality of placements presents particular problems and assessors must ensure equality of treatment amongst students (Hill 2004; Murdoch 2004). It is therefore essential that appropriate assessment strategies are put in place. Nairobi Aviation College, for example, assesses the student placement on the basis of competence development by means of a presentation and a portfolio of evidence what they have done during the placement,
rather than on the experience itself. The students are encouraged to identify good and bad experiences and must identify in their evidence how development of competencies has taken place. Where learning contracts are used, the assessment is a relatively straightforward process of establishing the degree to which learning outcomes are achieved (Keating 2003).

2.3.7 Employer evaluation
The degree of employer involvement in the assessment process varies amongst Institutions. McGinn, (1999) notes that the University of Limerick provides for employers to return a student’s performance and placement evaluation form which forms part of the student’s academic record.

2.3.8 Debriefing
Debriefing involves the detailed questioning of the student about their experience with the aim of identifying and consolidating the learning and working through problems that may have arisen during the placement. In many instances students are unaware of the extent and nature of the learning that has occurred and may feel that they have learned very little unless it is drawn out through discussion. The debriefing process is also an opportunity to work through negative features of the placement experience such as lack of motivation on return to college; ethical dilemmas and doubts about career choice, which cannot be resolved by making notes (Keating 2003; Little and Harvey 2006).

2.4 EVALUATION OF WORKPLACE LEARNING.
Bennett et al. (2008) for example, are typical in claiming that investigations have concluded that formal work placements has significant benefits on both the student and the employing firm. They promote the approach from the employer’s perspective and suggest that employers regard work placement more highly than a high degree classification and the status of the graduates’ university when assessing graduate applicants seeking permanent employment. Support from the student perspective is led by a wide range of contemporary educational theories and commentators who advocate the learning contexts discussed above.

The support for the effectiveness of job placement is not without criticism however. Silver (2007) reports early criticism of the sandwich approach and cites claim that system of supervision is not effective as students find it compelling. Hutchings noted poor collaboration and motivation of employers and supervisors resulted in variable quality outcomes within the approach.
Auburn (2007) suggests that there is a widespread uncritical view of the work placement approach. He expressly stated that there is a tendency of uncritizised support to the work placement system. He identifies some evidence supporting work placement, which he suggests is very weak and notes that criticisms of the approach ignored as faults which can be made right by improved design.

The following sections present the claimed benefits and disadvantages of the work placement approach and identify key issues in its implementation and operation.

2.5 ADVANTAGES OF WORK PLACEMENT
Support for the contention that work placement is effective has been presented by a number of sources. Mwangi (2013) interviewed 60 people in ten organizations to explore how people learned to be more effective and to progress their careers. His research revealed that most learning at work results from doing the work itself and collaborating with colleagues. He cited in his findings that at most 10-20 per cent of what makes a person effective comes from education and training and suggest that most learning at work is planned and objective-oriented. He concluded therefore that education and training have a minor role to play in supporting learning for work. This is an important support argument for adopting work placement, given that vocational education’s objective is to prepare students for the workplace.

The discussion of work placement models above identified that the majority of courses using this approach are vocational. They aim to prepare, educate and train students for a particular career. Murdoch (2004) maintains that work placement modules are included in educational programmes because of their vocational relevance to the programme and to prepare students for work. He cites McKenna’s views that the placements should aim to provide practical experience; develop knowledge and skills beyond the classroom; explore career choices; develop the ability to work with others and improve working habits. It is suggested that these aims form highly relevant and effective learning outcomes for vocationally based programmes and are beneficial to employers, the educational institutions and students.

2.5.1 BENEFITS FOR EMPLOYERS
The success of placements depends on a mutual understanding of the aims and roles of the approach by the students, employers and academics. Wilson (cited in Murdoch 2004) contends that students must demonstrate a willingness to contribute and learn and to exhibit a
good work ethic. He also maintains that employers must prepare students for the workplace and provide appropriate tasks.

2.5.1.1 Vetting potential employees
Employers view the placement process as an opportunity to screen potential employees and build an ongoing relationship with the educational institution with a view to recruiting or retaining graduates (Knight 2001). Bennett et al. (2008) note that where a company subsequently employs a placement student following graduation, that they will have benefitted from the screening process provided by the educational institution and will have had the opportunity to form an in-depth judgment of the student’s ability and potential during the placement. There will be ample opportunity to observe the student’s personal attributes, which Wilson claims are the most important employment selection criteria. Wilson further suggest that employers not only seek recruits who possess discipline related knowledge but also a range of well developed generic skills. This provides capacity for graduates to be highly qualified, able to think, learn and adapt, be problem solvers, effective communicators players. Bennett et al. (2008) support this view and claim that numerous studies have shown that strong disciplinary knowledge of itself rarely helps a fresh graduate obtain a career-oriented job. It also claims that employers call for graduates with potential to transform organizations in anticipation of change and claim that traditional educational programmes struggle to deliver graduates who possess these qualities (cited in Bennett et al. 2000)

2.5.1.2 Cost effective
Placement is cost effective as it allows the use of students to carry out routine or technical tasks which consequently releases experienced staff from minor professional duties. He notes that a primary factor affecting placement is company need. Bennett et al. (2008) noted that businesses may recruit placement students for specific projects, or, more critically, simply to obtain cheap labour. It is suggested, that this is an attractive and flexible staffing option, particularly for smaller businesses that may be reluctant to employ additional full-time staff to meet short-term capacity limitations. Where the placement is with international partners, it develops a pool of graduates with hands-on experience of working abroad, in a different language and commercial environment and who possess mobility and cross cultural skills.
2.5.1.3 Produces ‘ready to work’ graduates
The widespread call from industry for work-ready graduates was strongly emphasized in the Dearing Report (1997)

‘The strongest single message which we received from employers was the value of work experience. This is particularly emphasized by small and medium enterprises that need new employees to be able to work effectively in the workplace from their first day. Further development of work opportunities requires action by both employers and institutions.’ National Committee of Inquiry into Higher Education (1997)

Hill (2004) argues that work placement is a straightforward way of satisfying Dearing’s call. According to Bennett et al. (2008) students who have undertaken a work placement should have a realistic view of the nature of their chosen career and as a consequence are less likely to suffer culture shock when starting their first full-time job. Their research revealed that 67% of a sample of 169 employers perceived that graduates who had undertaken work placement fit into a firm more quickly and easily.

2.5.2 BENEFITS FOR ACADEMIA
The political pressure on educational institutions to strengthen links to industry has been outlined above. In particular McGinn notes the report of the Science, Technology &Innovation Advisory Council’s (STIAC) identification of the potential of work placement and cooperative education approaches to develop formal partnerships between educational institutions and industry (1999). He claims that educational institutions benefit from these links.

2.5.2.1 Mutually beneficial links between academia and industry
The vocational education sector is primarily aimed to prepare students for work (Murdoch 2004). However, few educational institutions have the financial resources to provide the latest facilities and equipment operated by industry and must therefore seek to develop reciprocal relationships with industry with a view to both benefiting from each other’s strengths. He claims that these links provide educational institutions and students with access to industry’s state-of-the-art equipment and current best practice. In quantity surveying for example there
is need bridge the gap between the real practice and the theory as construction involves a wide variety of material and equipment as well as construction technology. Lave and Wenger (2002) argue that use of the practice’s technology and input into its’ products is more than learning how to use tools; they claim that it is also a way to connect with the history of the practice and to participate more directly in its cultural life.

McGinn (1999) maintains that work placement provides a means to develop healthy working relationships with industry. These provide a forum for the exchange of ideas, views and practices, which may, in turn, lead to high level contact in areas such as research and development, product development, process development, consultancy, training and faculty development. Placements and consequent collaborative activities inform employers of what higher education does and how it operates (Blackwell et al. 2001) and may enhance a university's reputation in the business world (Bennett et al. 2008).

2.5.2.2 Informs curriculum design
Murdoch (2004) notes that work placements are incorporated on educational programmes because of their vocational focus and notes that employers judge their effectiveness by student productivity. Employers and the professions are major stakeholders in the vocational educational process and McGinn (1999) argued that educational institutions must cater for their needs and ensure that curriculum and syllabus design is current, relevant and reflect the knowledge and skills that will be expected of graduates in the industry. Work placements may change tutors’ attitudes and result in a more relevant curriculum by allowing work experience concerns to merge into the curriculum and to supplement the skills acquired in class. McGinn (1999) notes that placement firms provide valuable feedback which facilitates the fine tuning of course design and identifies the need for new courses to meet industry demand. He concludes that this has led to a more responsive mind-set to industry changes amongst his colleagues.

2.5.2.3 A means of staff development
Murdoch (2004) indicates that the placement process typically involves supervisors visiting the workplace, frequently more once. These visits allow the tutors to counsel the students, monitor the experience and develop employer-institution links. He suggests that these visit afford tutors the opportunity to observe and discuss current industrial practice at first hand which contributes directly to staff development. It is suggested that students are encouraged to explore innovative aspects of their chosen practice in their final year assignments and
frequently incorporate elements which they had experienced during their work placement. This also has a knock-on effect of informing staff of current developments in the work place. Blackwell claims that placement promotes more efficient utilisation of institutional resources.

2.5.3 BENEFITS FOR STUDENTS

2.5.3.1 Viewed positively by students
Little and Harvey (2006) confirmed Harvey et al.’s earlier ‘Graduates Work’ positive findings regarding work placement. They conducted a series of 82 semi-structured interviews with placement students from seven higher education institutions in the UK and found that all the students involved in the research agreed that placement benefits outweighed the disadvantages. They concluded that ‘students continue to draw very tangible learning gains from work placement. The students perceived that the placement had developed their interpersonal, personal and intellectual skills. They reported improved communication and networking ability, improved oral and written communication, client liaison and reporting to senior management, and improved phone/e-mail ability. They also claimed increased personal skills including self-confidence, personal organisation, time management, adaptability, flexibility, maturity and risk-taking attitude. The students claimed increased subject knowledge, confidence with subject matter and project management skills; some perceived improved analysis, synthesis and critique skills and foreign language development. They tended to report greater personal rather than intellectual development (Little and Harvey 2006).

2.5.3.2 Remuneration motivates students
Work placements are typically paid. The attraction of this factor to students is obvious. In effect, it means that they need to finance one year less of full time study. It may be said that this factor promotes greater access to higher education. Little and Harvey (2006) ranked money at the head a list of benefits that employers felt that work placement provided for students. Occasionally students may secure an unpaid work placement usually with charitable organisations or higher education institutions. In these instances, Little and Harvey (2006) reported that students were usually employed on a four day week basis with the opportunity of obtaining part time work elsewhere. It is suggested that a key characteristic of the workplace is financial reward. Pay and bonuses motivate and encourage enhanced performance and, potentially, study (Blackwell et al. 2001). In addition, the work placement presents an opportunity to impress employers with a view to obtaining full-time employment following graduation.
2.5.3.3 **Develops ‘key skills’**

Bennett et al. (2000) report that research undertaken for the Dearing Report (1997) found that students rated getting a qualification for a job as the most important reason for going to university and that students wanted to develop work related skills more than ‘conventional academic outcomes such as intellectual growth and stimulation’. The Report calls these ‘key skills’ which include written and oral communication, numeracy, ability to use information technology and of learning how to learn. They refer to Harvey et al.’s claim that these skills are highly desired by employers who want adaptive, adaptable, transformable people. Bennett et al. also claimed that academic courses cannot teach all the competences needed for a career in a particular field and that the employer's contribution to the intellectual development of the student may be substantial.

Crebert et al. (2004) examined graduates perceptions of the effectiveness of the university, work placement and post-graduation employment in developing their generic skills. They found that graduates recognized the contribution university had made to develop their generic skills, but greatly valued the placement experience and subsequent initial employment. They identified the importance of teamwork, being given responsibility, and collaborative learning as important factors for effective learning. Work placement students develop a stronger vocational self-concept. They refer to Arnold’s. Findings that work placement develop greater self-confidence in real life working situations.

Blackwell et al. (2001) claim that work experience promotes independence responsibility and maturity and develops interpersonal skills. Hill (2004) claims that flexibility and transferability are among the advantages claimed for education for professional competence. Generic skills and personal attributes can be applied in contexts that will be encountered after graduation (Crebert et al. 2004).

2.5.3.4 **Enhances employability**

There is widespread agreement that work placement can help to develop employability skills and reinforce the application of vocational techniques learned in the classroom (Bennett et al. 2008; Little et al. 2006; Hill 2004; Gomez, Lush and Clements 2004; Blackwell et al. 2001). Harvey et al. for example claimed that placements are seen by employers and graduate employees as the single most significant missing element of the majority of degree programmes(Gomez et al. 2004). Blackwell et al.(2001) maintain that employers value on-the-job experience highly. They carried out four empirical studies which found that students
who experienced supervised work placement had higher employment (and lower unemployment) rates and higher self-ratings of their own command of work-related skills. They also found that graduates who had experienced work placement were more likely to become self-employed and were more entrepreneurial in their attitude. Hill (2004) adds that work placement is associated with a higher starting salary in permanent employment.

According to Auburn (2007), placement years, are viewed positively by many educators as an effective means of enhancing both employability and student learning. He presents two propositions to account for these benefits: that work placement provides the critical ingredient and also facilitates transition switch from class to work. He suggests that placement is a particularly efficacious ingredient affecting the quality of the education process and producing employable graduates. The transition switch represents a developmental process where the student progresses to the next stage of study, requiring the student to learn to adapt or adopt a changed role in the new setting.

Both processes involve learning which can have positive outcomes for the student. A more mundane explanation is offered by Little et al. (2006) who comment that placements present a ‘toe hold’ in an organization and that students who enrol on sandwich courses are de facto vocationally oriented. Auburn (2007) adds that these findings, while useful, must be used with caution and claims that they are limited and are typically achieved by comparing programmes with a work experience component with counterparts which do not. He considers this testing to be a relatively simplistic factors-outcomes approach which fails to take account of how work experience, which is only one component, interacts with the other components in a programme. He adds that the studies do not fully consider the developmental nature of higher education and fail to account for the quality of student preparation, the appropriateness of work experience itself, or the effectiveness of the debriefing process.

2.5.3.5 Inducts students into a particular culture
For many students the work placement may be the first time that they have worked within their chosen career path. In this case the new employee is introduced into a particular community of practice, such as quantity surveyors, for the first time. Lave and Wenger (1991) discussed that newcomers normally learn their craft through gradual and controlled participation in increasingly responsible tasks within a community of expert practice. This provides a means of learning which allows them to absorb and to be absorbed into the culture.
of practice. Their initial peripherality allows them to form an overview of the community’s practice. They observe the day-to-day behaviour, activities, reactions and politics of the community. They develop an increasing understanding of how, when, and about what old-timers collaborate, collude, and collide and what they enjoy, dislike, respect, and admire.

Eraut et al. (2002) have noted that ‘induction and integration’ into the workplace should ideally focus on enabling new employees to become effective workers and colleagues. They recommend that it should emphasize socialization which is the understanding the purposes and goals of the unit and the organization, their own roles and others’ expectations of them.

Students who have undertaken a formal work placement experience an easier transition subsequently into full-time employment and adjust faster to organizational norms. A quantity surveying office will typically afford exemplars of good practice and provide role model(s), ideally recently appointed graduates undertaking their professional training, who the newcomers may wish to emulate. Learning in this situation may result from a process of exposure and ‘adaptation’. They comment that, ideally, the newcomer should be exposed to a variety of contexts and situations.

2.5.3.6 **Links theory to practice and provides meaningful learning contexts**

Keating (2003) has noted that one of the main differences between work and college is the real nature of the workplace. Work placement students are employed on real projects and are required to solve genuine problems in their chosen career path. The learning is directly relevant to the learner’s goals and provides a strong incentive to learn (Blackwell et al. 2001). Sims et.al (2006) note that students see practical examples of situations they may have only heard described in lectures and consequently, their learning becomes concrete. Crebert et al. (2004) add that work placement provides students with the opportunity to reflect on the usefulness of the theory, information, procedure and skills received at university and put these into practice.

Schön (2002) notes that professional practice is often repetitive and practitioners frequently encounter certain situations or repeatedly undertake variations of certain types of projects. This allows practitioners to practise his practice and develop expectations, images and techniques and in the process develop a trained eye in what to look for and how to respond.
2.5.3.7 Colleague support for learning
Eraut et al. (2002) discuss the central role the provision of a support network plays in employees’ learning at work. This means of this support varies amongst employers and includes methods such as mentoring and coaching; rotations, visits and shadowing. They discuss how the employees’ membership of a team provides opportunities for ongoing consultation and observation allowing students to ask questions, clarify uncertainties, correct misapprehensions while simultaneously providing opportunities to learn by observing colleagues in the day-to-day performance of their duties. The group environment also provides a vital source of feedback and a source of help and advice which significantly affects the quality of the learning.

Billett (2004) argues that companies must develop workers in order to ensure their survival and that learning is central to achieving this aim. He adds that workplace learning is inherently pedagogical in developing workers’ skills. He contends that workplace learning provides a routine of participation by providing learners with opportunities to participate in goal-oriented tasks alongside and under the guidance of experienced colleagues and experts. He argues that although knowledge construction is unique to individuals, but is heavily influenced by workplace practice. Lave and Wenger (2002) observed that apprentices learn mostly in relation with other apprentices and that knowledge spreads exceedingly rapidly and effectively among peers. Consequently, they suggest that engaging in practice, rather than being its object, may well be a condition for the effectiveness of learning.

2.5.3.8 Encourages study and improves subsequent academic performance
Eraut et al. (2002) note that workplace provides a strong incentive to become self directed learners by enabling them to adopt an active role in learning from doing the work and using initiative to find out what they need to know. They suggest that managers can facilitate this process by choosing appropriate tasks and encouraging student learning initiatives.

Hill (2004) claims that sandwich students usually improve their academic performance in their final year. This claim is supported by Mandilaras (2004) who found that placements significantly increased the chances of obtaining an upper second or higher degree classification. He suggests that the placement students mature more rapidly in an often competitive and professional environment; their ambition is stimulated, and they returned to university more focused and determined to do well. Blackwell et al. (2001) support this motivational stimulus suggesting that the pull of a career direction is translated into a push
for learners to achieve the necessary grades. Mandilaras (2004) suggests that workplace responsibilities may enhance student reliability encouraging them to take coursework and exams more seriously and work more effectively to deadlines. Gomez et al. (2004) found that students undertaking a 3rd Year optional (but recommended) sandwich in a bioscience degree added 4% to final year performance and 25% of the placement students may have improved their degree classification as a result of this.

Auburn (2007) reports that students claimed many instances of learning something useful during their placement which they subsequently used or applied during their final year. He lists these as: placement experiences which linked with final year theory, particular skills which were directly relevant to final year assessments, and an enhanced work ethic which improved the student's attitude to completing assessments. Sims et al. noted that students return from work placements with a number of questions for which they then actively seek answers and their learning becomes more active (2006).

2.5.3.9 Opportunity to experience alternative career options
Little and Harvey (2006) noted that some students choose particular placements because it allows them to test whether they would like to work in that particular job. The arrangement also allows students to try out work in different sectors or specialist within an industry without committing themselves on a long term basis. For example they may obtain work with a local authority, financial institution or a multi-national company either at home or abroad; this allows their learning becomes more focussed. Little et al. (2006) add that students are frequently vague when they enter college about what a particular career entails and these placements are valuable testers which may open up new areas of interest and enable them to confirm, reject or change previous career plans.

2.6 CRITICISMS OF WORK PLACEMENT
The relative scarcity of literature related to work placement issues as they affect employers has been commented earlier and this is understandable. Employers’ immediate concerns are, after all, to run a business. Similarly academic research into work placement has concentrated overwhelmingly on the concerns of teachers and students rather than employers. Commentary on the following issues therefore has been drawn mainly from the literature dealing with student and the institutional concerns.
Consequently, the following discussion relates to common issues for the three stakeholders and has been categorised in a somewhat arbitrary manner.
2.6.1 ISSUES FOR EMPLOYERS

2.6.1.1 Work Placement is not cost effective
Little et al. (2006) question whether placement is worth the cost. They note that successful placement involves planning and resourcing from both the college and employer. They infer that employers may be unwilling to offer placements unless the student is deployed to carry out a particular task or an additional project. Cunningham et al. (2004) claim that the cost of induction and supervision of placement students represents a drain on the resources of an organisation and is seen as a barrier, particularly by small firms, to engaging in the placement process.

From the employers perspective it is suggested that putting considerable effort into a placement student is risky. Employers have no guarantee that placement students will return having completed their studies and the effort invested in training the student will have been wasted – referred to as the ‘apprenticeship equation’.

2.6.1.2 Inadequate briefing
Turnock and Mulholland (2007) argue that the placement programme must have clear aims to guide both the employer and the student. Cunningham et al (2004) stated that work-place supervisors need full briefing, and ideally, training to optimise the process. Lave and Wenger (2002) have cautioned against the risk of supervisors viewing their task as teaching, instructing and/or pushing the student rather than facilitating the achievement of the learning outcomes. Walker and Boud (1994) add that supervisors who are not carefully chosen or who are inadequately prepared or do not understand, or are not interested and involved in their role, may undermine the approach.

2.6.1.3 Inadequate student preparation
Walker and Boud (1994) identify deficiencies in student preparation as a factor which may result in an ineffective work placement. They note that difficulties arise when individual students lack awareness of the learning process, lack the required skills or are unable to learn what is needed. The student must possess adequate technical skills and personal attributes to perform successfully. Little and Harvey (2006) add that many students had very vague ideas about what the placement involves, what work they would be doing and the level of responsibility expected. Individuals experience stress or shock when entering the workplace inadequately prepared.
2.6.1.4 Discipline and ethics
According to Ashton (2004, he suggested that a ‘student mentality’ is not entirely compatible with these ideals and the differing outlooks may lead to tension. Turnock and Mulholland (2007) provide examples of irritants to employers: lack of discipline/professionalism, poor attitude, timekeeping, misdemeanour, and lack of initiative among students. It is suggested that because of the temporary nature of work placement that employers may be reluctant to discipline student behaviour regardless of the arrangements agreed with the educational institution.

2.6.2 ISSUES FOR ACADEMIA

2.6.2.1 Lacks academic rigour and validity
Hill (2004) maintains that placement occurs outside the college and that the quality of the experience cannot be fully controlled. Little et al. (2006) reports that the student experience is highly variable and occasionally unsatisfactory.

2.6.2.2 Resourcing
Little et al. (2006) note that there is little accurate data on the cost of placements from the institutions’ perspective. They point to findings that off-campus approaches are typically resource intensive in terms of staff time. It is suggested that the nature of work placement demands significant one-to-one student/tutor support in terms of arranging, visiting, supporting, assessing and debriefing the process. Supervisors may experience conflicting demands between organising and administering the placement and their other duties. Visits may be postponed, missed, cancelled or never arranged in the first place.

2.6.2.3 Are they Necessary?
Bennett et al. (2008) claim that most students receive work experience through term-time and vacation employment irrespective of whether their course has a placement component. They refer to Bennett and Kottasz’s research which revealed that 96% of a sample of 630 students worked during term time, with 60% of the students spending over13 hours per week at work. They also refer to the rising proportion of previously employed mature students and the increasing emphasis on group work and employability skills in higher education. They question whether work placement actually raises graduate employability by significantly greater extents than traditional curricula. Their study suggests that certain employers are
more concerned with ensuring that graduate shave attained basic levels of numeracy and literacy than with requiring that newcomers have completed work placements and may favour higher degree classifications when recruiting.

Bennett’s study, however, relates to the Kenyas experience, where students may not have studied Maths, or English after their KCSE examinations, whereas both subjects are taken by the overwhelming majority of Kenya Leaving Certificate students.

Bennett et al. (2008) found that 42% of employers perceived that term-time and vacation work provided experiences which were ‘just as valuable’ as formal work placement: 36% disagreed with and 24% were neutral about this proposition (sic 102%). This finding is interesting in view of the criticisms that casual work lacks structure, variety and is not assessed. They also found that 75% of employers sampled responded that academic group work nurtured leadership and interpersonal skills, although they perceived this approach as being less effective than placement. Overall, they found that employers continue to view casual work favourably when recruiting graduates and hold the work placement in high esteem.

A further consideration is whether the employability benefits transfer to subsequent employments. Little et al. (2006) conclude that while placement improves initial employability it has little effect thereafter. They suggest that the learning curve for employability skills in the initial stage of employment is steep, but rapidly levels off as learners acquire more job-specific skills whereas graduates who start without work experience quickly make up the ground.

2.6.2.4 Availability opportunities
The availability of placement opportunities depends on economic conditions. Difficult economic circumstances lead to a shortage of suitable placements and in these circumstances institutions cannot guarantee the availability of high quality placements. Optional placements may be seen as a safer option in this context and offer a greater degree of control by the institution over constantly changing economic conditions. Optional placements commit the institution to providing alternative arrangements for completing the programme (Little et al. 2006). Arrangements typically include key skills training, self-development skills strategies combined with industrial visits (McGinn 1999) or accrediting organised or ad hoc work
experience external to the programme of study (Little et al. 2006). Alternatively placements may be arranged by a university abroad.

2.6.2.5 Poor implementation and support
The purpose of work placement is to achieve defined educational outcomes and it is therefore essential that placement programmes are properly implemented to avoid negative impacts on both employers and, in particular, students. Ryan et al. (1996) note that students regarded poor and underprepared supervisors as negative features of work experience.

2.6.3 ISSUES FOR STUDENTS

2.6.3.1 Activities do not generate meaningful learning experiences
There is an onus on placement students to actively seek learning opportunities to construct their own knowledge. Barnett (1999) observes that work and learning are not synonymous. They are different concepts. Some kinds of work offer little in the way of learning opportunities. Cunningham et al. (2004) add that working per se does not guarantee [quality] learning and they note that a person may still be less than capable even after extensive work experience. Students who are placed in apparently ‘reputable’ organisations may not achieve the intended learning outcomes (Keating 2003) if they are not involved in meaningful tasks. Lave and Wenger (1991) add that novices may face difficulties such as exploitation as a source of cheap labour or working on menial or dead-end tasks which preventing participation in more worthwhile mature practice activities.

2.6.3.2 Affordability is not always benign
A supportive work placement environment is essential for successful work placement. Lave and Wenger (1991) argue that the experience may be damaging: ‘conditions that place newcomers in deeply adversarial relations with masters, bosses, or managers; in exhausting over-involvement in work; or in involuntary servitude rather than participation distort, partially or completely, the prospects for learning in practice.

Workplace economics or work pressures may result in line managers becoming reluctant to divert experienced staff from work to training tasks. Lave and Wenger (1991) describe Marshall’s (1972) disturbing study of apprentice butchers who reported that many essential skills were not learned while on placement and that much of their school teaching was irrelevant to actual practice. The apprentices reported disillusion and a sense of marginalisation from more senior apprentices, journeymen and masters. They identify a further problem when masters prevent learning by acting as pedagogical authoritarians,
viewing apprentices as novices who should be instructed rather than as participants within their community.

On the other hand learning may not be realised if their attitude is perceived as permissive rather than positively supportive. The attitudes of co-workers and managers are important factors in determining the quantity and quality of the learning experience in the workplace. Billett (2001) observes that the workplace environment is inherently competitive and that access to learning opportunities are frequently contested. He adds that participation opportunities are influenced by factors including employment standing and status. This suggests that tensions and personality clashes may arise between novice graduates, who may be protective of, and jealously guard their position from placement students who they may see as a threat; thereby inhibiting the latter’s access to learning activities. Keating (2003) suggests that this view may be alien to students who have come from college where knowledge is freely exchanged to a workplace where knowledge is often only transferred on a need to know basis. He comments that learning in the workplace rarely conforms to the ideal; the commercial and financial realities of work often preclude resources being allocated to wider learning issues.

2.6.3.3 Isolation / alienation
Keating (2003) comments that the workplace must appear strange to students experiencing work for the first time. He notes that undergraduate students typically have limited work experience, and their understanding of practice is often heavily influenced by impressions formed at college. These perceptions may be inaccurate and generate unrealistic expectations of the workplace. Students may, consequently, experience a form of culture shock where they may perceive themselves as inadequate and outsiders (Auburn 2007) performing low status tasks and yet being expected to be fully committed team-workers dedicated to achieving demanding goals frequently within very limited time frames.

Placement may, therefore, involve a significant reappraisal of the nature of work. Brew (1993) notes that most corrections are fairly readily accommodated, however occasional fundamental misunderstanding may involve what she terms unlearning which necessitate a conceptual reordering of the whole or a part of one's world view. Keating (2003) adds that this may be difficult for the student and may even cast doubt about their career choice.
2.6.3.4 Inappropriate or unfair Assessment
Successfully passing a programme is probably the most important issue for most students: the assessment is the curriculum as far as the students are concerned (Ramsden 1992). Ross (1997) points out the danger of undermining the intended learning outcomes if inappropriate assessment strategies are applied. Auburn (2007), likewise, questions whether the placement assessment methods are appropriate and the wisdom of an excessive focus by teachers on placement assessment following the students return to college. He recommends that: final year students should present their placement experiences, ideally to students in the pre-placement year; portfolios should be double marked on common agreed criteria; the panel of assessors should include members from outside the immediate school and/or representatives of the appropriate profession.

2.6.3.5 Poor Debriefing
According to Auburn (2007) the transition from the work placement back to the final year of college is an important element in ensuring positive outcomes for the work placement. He claims this aspect of the process is not consistently well managed and can leave students feeling alienated.

2.6.3.6 Experiences are not exploited in final year
The Dearing Report (1997) recommends that programmes should help students reflect upon their work experience so that they have the opportunity to integrate the practical experience with academic theory and to reflect upon, identify and consolidate the range of skills encountered.

Auburn reports instances of student feelings of frustration and alienation arising from a lack of recognition of the acquired powers they had developed, and lack of opportunity to apply the skills they had acquired during the placement because of the control exercised by the academic staff. He found that students had constructed a separation between work and college in which placement learning was perceived to have limited value in the academic setting. Walker and Boud (1994) are also critical of the perceived lack of connection between the rest of the course and the work placement. Keating (2003) reports similar experiences of students who were critical of the how the academic programme is taught and what its relevance is to work placement on return from placement. Little and Harvey (2006) reported that some students lost their appetite for academic work following their placement.
Sims et al. (2004) contend that students return to college with a fund of stories which may interest their classmates and lecturers and should be given the opportunity to voice these. They argue storytelling enables students to know what he thinks when he sees what he says and allows them to modify or correct initial statements or impressions which it is suggested, is a powerful exemplar of Schön’s process of ‘reflection in action’. Keating (2003) supports this recommendation adding that students should have the opportunity for individual and group reflection and may conduct an audit of the skills developed during placement.

2.7 SUMMARY
This literature review has demonstrated that work placement is a complex and multifaceted educational approach. The approach is underpinned by a wide range of overlapping learning theories which support the contention that effective learning is facilitated by active involvement in meaningful tasks carried out in authentic social contexts. The approach has been shown to be highly flexible in meeting the demands of a wide range of curricula designs within the further educational sector. The three-way relationship of academia with employers and students requires careful planning, implementation and resourcing if the approach is to be successful. The approach is regarded positively overall by the three central stakeholders who have reported tangible benefits from its operation. However, there remain a number of areas of concern which indicate that the approach is not without drawbacks.
CHAPTER THREE

THE RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 RESEARCH DESIGN
The research design adopted for this study is a survey design. Survey research seeks to obtain information that describes phenomena by asking people about their perception, attitude, behaviour or values (Mugenda and Mugenda, 2007). Data is collected on what is actually happening in the field of interest by asking people who have experience to reconstruct their experience (Chava and David, 1996). A survey investigates without introducing treatment or control over the interacting variables unlike scientific design. It aims at measuring the knowledge component of the phenomena by accessing feeling and actions based on past, present and future behaviours towards the phenomena (Pamela et.al 1985).

The elements of the study were selected based on practising quantity surveying services. The firms listed on the BORAQS register were chosen because their office address could be obtained for administering the questionnaires. The questionnaire were developed to solicit information from the profession who employ Quantity Surveyors (employers) and oversee their work to find out what could be done to improve production of new graduates with work placement.

A random sample was used, to generalise the quantity surveying industry, as described later in this chapter. The survey research design was preferred because of the following reason:

- Reduction in biasness: random sampling
- Anonymity leads to better answers
- Respondents have time to think and remember information as well as better suggestion on improvement to be made
- The method is cost effective
3.2 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY
The research methodology involved the following steps:

1) Conducting a literature review to identify the benefits and issues surrounding work placement.
2) Developing a questionnaire to find out the impact of work placement on early career development in Quantity Surveying profession based on Employer perspective
3) Data collection from the sampled population
4) Data presentation and analysis
5) Summary of the results
6) Providing recommendation for improving work placement programme

3.2.1 Primary data
This was obtained from own survey conducted by the researcher using questionnaires issued to the professional quantity surveying firms that were responded to. Although not relied to fully, the researcher also carried out casual interview from the firms that were willing to share personal views. Casual interview was mainly to those who had time or a major concern.

3.2.2 Secondary data
This was all the information and materials, which was obtained in the literature review on the work placement practise in professions particularly in Quantity Surveying. The works of literature included:

- Textbooks
- Professional articles and journals
- Previous researches and theses
- The internet

3.3 STUDY POPULATION
The population for this study was a number of registered firms listed in the BORAQS. Nairobi area was selected as the area of study due to convenience and limitation of time and finance. According to Mureithi (2005), Nairobi also adequately represents the situation of the country as more than 50% of the economic work force in terms of services and output in the construction industry.

To qualify for selection the firms needed have been practising in the quantity surveying industry in the last three year. The justification for a three year cut off mark was to ensure that the sampled firm has a rich organisational culture which is an important in developing
social skills. Out of the fifty one listed, thirty four firms that were listed were identified to have qualified for the three year condition.

3.4 SAMPLING
To come up with a sample, a simple random sampling technique was adopted. Lapin (1985) recommends the use of random sampling as the most important type of sample as it allows a known probability that each elementary units will be chosen. It is thus considered quite probabilistic.

The researcher chose a 95% confidence level that the response achieved will be + or – 5% of the true state of affair in the quantity surveying industry. In determining the most conservative sample size, the following formula was used

\[ n = \frac{Z^2pqN}{e^2(N-1) + Z^2pq} \]

\( N \) = size of the population.
\( n \) = sample size
\( p \) = sample proportion
\( q \) = p-1
\( e \) = tolerable error level
\( Z \) = critical normal deviate at a given confidence level worked out from the tables showing the area under normal curve. For 95% confidence level the normal deviate is 1.96.

The sample size \( (n) \) is then calculated as follows:

\[ n = \frac{1.96^2 0.05(1 - 0.05)34}{0.05^2(34 - 1) + 1.96^2 0.05 (1 - 0.05)} \]

\[ = 25 \]

(Kitutu, 2003)

Out of the 34 firms, 25 firms were selected randomly using a table of random numbers. These were listed alphabetically and given identity number 00 to 30. The following 25 identity were selected:

03, 21, 17, 18, 08, 26, 29, 15, 19, 12, 25, 07, 04, 11, 09, 13, 00, 10, 05, 23, 02, 22, 30, 02, 14
3.5 DATA COLLECTION
After considering all the available data collection techniques, the questionnaires were seen as the most suitable. This is due to the nature of the study. Gall et al. (1996) recommended the questionnaire as a convenient and most suitable instrument for data collection in a survey. He recommends this also from statistical research especially regarding social issues. This is because of various reasons highlighted as follows:

- Questionnaires reduce bias.
- Respondents have more time to think about the answers leading to better information.
- The method is cost effective

The structured system of questionnaires was appropriate as it allows data to be collected quickly, cheaply and be easily entered and analysed. The questionnaires will be administered to all the firms selected.

3.6 DATA COLLECTION PROCEDURE
The researcher introduced himself to the respondent through a letter of introduction attached to the questionnaire as shown in the appendix. This letter also let the respondent know the purpose of the questionnaires. Due to sensitivity of the study, it was necessary to assure the respondent that the information given herein was to be treated with a lot of confidentiality.

3.7 DATA ANALYSIS
Data collected was analysed through statistical methods (as discussed in chapter 4). This is aimed at revealing the employers perspective on work placement so as to develop the quantity surveying career in the present industry. Any effects were be noted and appropriate recommendation shall be passed.
CHAPTER FOUR

DATA ANALYSIS AND PRESENTATION

4.1 INTRODUCTION
The researcher set out to study the impact of work placement as a means of developing the quantity surveying career profession. The primary objective was primarily to evaluate if the work placement programme can contribute quantity surveying career from the employers’ perspective. The discussion that follows this chapter, gives the finding of the researcher as drawn from a systematic analysis and presentation of the collected data.

4.2 PROBLEMS ENCOUNTERED
The study encountered a few problems in the course of data collection. This was particularly so with regards to questionnaire administration to the quantity surveying firms. The problems are hereby described briefly:

i. Some firms management administrated with questionnaires failed to respond claiming much workload in the offices.

ii. Some firms took unreasonably long time within which they could have filled the questionnaire yet the time was a constraint those questionnaires could not be waited for, hence they were not included in the data analysis

4.3 RESPONSE TO QUESTIONNAIRES
Twenty two (22) questionnaires were administered to quantity surveying firms and out of this, seventeen (17) were returned. This translates to 77% response rate.

Table 4.1 Response to Questionnaires

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nature of the firm</th>
<th>Sampling frame</th>
<th>Sample size</th>
<th>administered</th>
<th>Number returned</th>
<th>No response</th>
<th>% response rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Quantity surveying</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: own field study march 2014
While the effect of non-response is to bias a sample which makes them different from the population from which they were drawn, that effect depends on the extent to which those not responding are biased this is systematically from the whole population (Floyd et. al. 1993). According to Murrithi (2005) for a sample element within a close geographical proximity and with standardized academic and professional qualification, chances of non-respondents being different from the whole population are almost zero. Data collected in this investigation was carried out within Nairobi; those targeted being quantity surveyors and contractors having a standardised professional training in their respective profession. Thus the response rate achieved was considered adequate and no bias was envisaged.

The researcher determined the size of the firms by number of employed staff. This is because these employees pass their skills over to the work placement students through work interaction. The figure 4.2 as below

**Table 4.2 Determination of firm size**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FIRM SIZE</th>
<th>NUMBER OF STAFF</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Micro</td>
<td>5 or fewer employees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small</td>
<td>6 to 10 employees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>11 – 20 employees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Large</td>
<td>21-50 employees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multi-site</td>
<td>50-100 employees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multi-state</td>
<td>More than 100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: own survey, 2014*

The employees referred to in this context, was the entire staff within the firm management. This is because every staff has a social impact in the interaction within the work environment though communication and assignment of duties
4.4 RESPONDENT SIZE OF THE FIRM

*Source: own survey, 2014*

From the analysis, it is apparent that Small to Medium firms (SMFs) make up of over half of firms in the industry. Among the SMFs most of them shared an insight into their thoughts and concerns about vocational work placement programs. The general background survey asked firms participating in the work placement program about the size of their firms and it was found that Small to Medium Enterprises hosted most of the work placement students. Chart 4.1 shows among the SMFs 80% provided work placement

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>PERCENTAGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Micro</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Large</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multi-site</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multi-state</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4.5 SUPERVISION AND EVALUATION

The firms were asked if they thought they were spending too much time filling out work placement paperwork. Work placement paperwork included legal forms, workplace assessment log books and program evaluation feedback forms. The research revealed that generally firms did not bother filling work placement paperwork was a concern. From chart 4.2 about 74 percent of the respondents were not concerned with the additional paperwork and did not believe it was a problem. A smaller proportion, 26 percent expressed concern. But respondent firms indicated that managing work placement processes and procedures including workplace assessment logbooks and evaluation feedback forms was important to them but that effectiveness of this service could be improved. This indicated that although enterprises did not see assessment requirements as too time consuming, they had some concerns regarding assessment and evaluation practices.

The researchers also noted that there was great inconsistency and variability in student log book, assessment and evaluation processes and acknowledge the need for improvement in these areas. Assessment and evaluation processes could be better coordinated and streamlined

Source: own survey, 2014

Chart 4.1 structure of firms hosting work placement
at the regional level. The respondents commented about it saying that most of the learning institutions do not have in place proper assessment procedures.

**Chart 4.2 supervision and evaluation**

![Pie chart showing supervision and evaluation](chart)

*Source: own survey, 2014*

4.6 Benefit and Reasons for Hosting Work Placement students

The survey revealed that firms did benefit from the program as most enterprises, 67% said that they benefited from the program. The benefits enterprises described were divided into four broad themes “the organization gained extra productivity; staff gained supervisory and other valuable skills; increased recruitment opportunities; enhanced reputation; other specific benefits” as illustrated in Chart 4.3. These findings also mirrored those noted in the literature review about the benefits enterprises reported when participating in vocational and work placement programs (Turner 2001).
The respondents felt that work placement provided and opportunity for recruiting and vetting new QS into their firms. Others viewed the opportunity as a way of improving their staff skills by way of communicating, assigning duty and mentoring. Some more firms wanted to improve their productivity by employing an ‘extra hand’ though work placement. There were also those who viewed the work placement as a social means of improving public image.

4.7 PREFERRED DURATION AND PATTERN OF WORK PLACEMENTS
When questioned about their preferred duration of work placement, firms responded they preferred one month period with 47 % with 34 % preferring two week and 20 % preferred one week block. As illustrated in chart 4.4 only 4% of firm stated they were willing to host students for a day per week. Others preferred 5 or 10 day block placements only and did not want to host students one day per week as requested by institution constituting a 3 %. This
agrees with findings by Malley et al (1999) and Strathdee (2003) that employers prefer the host student regularly and to have a longer contact period on the job during work placement.

**Chart 4.4 Employers preferred duration**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>% of preferred duration</th>
<th>0</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>10</th>
<th>15</th>
<th>20</th>
<th>25</th>
<th>30</th>
<th>35</th>
<th>40</th>
<th>45</th>
<th>50</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>One week blocks</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>15</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two week blocks</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>20</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One month blocks</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>25</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One day per week all year</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: own survey, 2014*

**4.8 REASON FOR NOT HOSTING WORK PLACEMENT STUDENTS**

Firms that did not offer any work placement were also analysed with the aim of understanding the reasons why they do not offer. These reasons were to give a view of areas to be improved on if work placement was going to flourish in developing the quantity surveying firms. The two significant reasons were mainly the cost and the office space (small firms) following the reason that students will expect a fair remuneration for their contribution to that firm or for their daily expense. In addition, bearing in mind that most placement were found to be in the small medium firms as previously discussed, the lack space has hindered those willing to host students. Others include lack of time and supervising staff for the work placement activity as analyzed in chart 4.5. These reasons form a genuine argument that will be given considerable thought in the recommendation so as to improve the situation.

Some firms reported bad experience with previous placement students owing lack of discipline and ethics. This constituted 14% while lack of time due to work load made up
18%. Few firms, 11% did not have the capability to supervise again due to work load and lack of a proper outline of the duties of the employer in the work placement.

Chart 4.5 Reason for not hosting work placement students

Source: own survey, 2014

4.9 STUDENTS READINESS AND PREPARATION FOR WORK PLACEMENT

The survey also indicated students were generally well prepared for work placement which concurs with Turner’s (2001) findings that students were well prepared for work placement and many employers were happy with their contribution to the workplace. The vast majority, 86 percent of the firms surveyed, said they were satisfied that students were prepared for work placement. Firms were also asked about what fundamentals students should bring to the workplace for a successful work placement. Their responses included “good presentation, communication skills, more confidence in their ability, show interest and willing to learn about to the quantity surveying, ability to problem solve and work semi independently, ability to listen and take instruction,”
4.10 INCREASING DEMAND AND AVAILABILITY OF WORK PLACEMENTS
The respondents were asked if they were concerned about the increasing requests for work placements, 64% were not concerned and 36% expressed concern. This shows that many employers would be happy to continue to take students; others requested a break after hosting one or two students since work placement offered an opportunity to instill skill and knowledge for the prosperity of the quantity surveying profession.

4.11 NUMBER OF STUDENT THAT FIRMS CAN HOST
When asked about the number of students that the firms can hold, a vast majority preferred one or two students. This is best explained by the earlier finding that small and medium firm are willing to offer work placement and they are limited in capacity in terms of space. The chart 4.6 shows that most firms would prefer to host two students with a 56% followed by 31% for hosting one student.

Source: own survey, 2014
4.12 EMPLOYING A TRAINEE

Firm’s response on employing work placement student 62% are engaging trainee from other firms or from themselves. Some commented that they needed to train the new employed graduates to fit into their organisation. From chart 4.7, 51% would want to employ a trainee while 49% replied no to the question of employing an apprentice. This could be because the firms may be full capacity hence they do not vacancy in their organisation.

4.13 HOSTING WORK PLACEMENT RATHER THAN EMPLOYING A TRAINEE

The prevailing condition of undergoing the academic course then engaging employment as trainee in the Kenyan curricular as opposed to undertaking work placement during the academic course was also covered. Chart 4.7 shows that over half of the respondents would want to undertake training as work placement during the curricular course as opposed to training after graduation. This could be because firm would want somebody who can fit in quickly and contribute to the productivity rather than start training which could take high cost. Firms may want the higher institution to produce ‘ready made’ student. This is echoed in the literature review.

4.14 RELEVANCE OF WORK PLACEMENT TO QUANTITY SURVEYING

64% agreed that the work placement is relevant to the quantity surveyor sector to instil the relevant skill before venturing into the job market. The chart 4.7 shows that the rest 36% did not believe that the work placement was relevant in quantity surveying.

*Chart 4.7 what employer want*

Source: own survey, 2014
4.15 PREVAILING CONDITION OF WORK PLACEMENT
The respondents were not satisfied with the prevailing condition of work placement in that students were not ready to work and learn. In addition, the log books and supervision by the academia was a strongly aired on this comments. 57% were not satisfied with the current work placement programme. This means there is need to impose strict and more regulations on the practise.

4.16 CHAPTER SUMMARY
This research was built on the preposition that there is a significant difference between graduate quantity surveyors with work placement experience and those who do not have in the work environment from employer’s perspective. Pursuant to this the researcher described the relevant of work placement and the benefits that firms earned from hosting work placement students. The respondents also expressed their preference to employ a graduate with work placement with a majority 57% willing to employ a student who has had work placement rather than train a fresh graduate as asked in item 15. To reinforce this, item 10 asked about whether firm were concerned about request for work placement, 66% were concerned. This is a clear indication that there is a significant difference between graduate with work placement to those without.
CHAPTER FIVE

Summary of findings, recommendation, conclusion and areas of further study

5.1 SUMMARY OF FINDINGS
The research was aimed at investigating the impact of work placement to quantity surveying career development in Kenya. This required an in-depth investigation to the existing condition in the quantity surveying industry on the work placement practise so as to get every view and fact necessary. This has been done through the questionnaire and data analysis in chapter four. The findings unveiled are hereby discussed.

The research found that, although a good number of Quantity Surveying practitioners feel that work placement is beneficial to their firms there is a relatively good number that do not value the work placement input in their production. The practise has been used and can be used as an early induction process into the quantity surveying practise. As indicated in chapter 4, 67 % of the respondents benefited from the work placement programme.

The quantity surveying practitioners can accommodate the student at any level within a limited prescribed duration, mostly one month, which can be agreed upon by both the firms and the school curricular. 47% preferred a one month interval as shown in chapter four.

There is a clear need of initiatives to encourage firms to engage student in work placement though seminars so as to have a reliable pool firms to cater for the increasing demand. This will also encourage those firms that do not offer work placement to make necessary change to accommodate students. There is need to sensitise firms on the importance of the work placement by reviewing the cost of the programme and create standards on the period and the space required providing work placement. This is to address the reasons unveiled which include cost, time and space with 33%, 25% and 17% respectively among others.

The participants also concurred with the literature review when asked about student’s readiness with 86% being satisfied that students were ready. On the issue of increasing demand firms were not very concerned as 64% of them not concerned and 36% concerned showing that there is need to sensitise firms on the work placement so as to contribute to the quantity surveying career growth. Firms however differed in capacity to host students with 56% taking two students at a time and 31% for one student.

5.2 RECOMMENDATION
As part of the solutions to the findings discussed this research, the following recommendations were made to improve the situation of work placement in quantity surveying career development.

Learning institutions should document and develop a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with firms clearly stating the roles and responsibilities of each partner in the work placement service in quantity surveying. Learning institutions should provide firms with concise up to date information about work placement responsibilities, including information about scope of work (tendering, contract administration, consultancy advice et cetera) and placement payment.

Learning institutions needs to provide more phone contact and support for students and enterprises during the progress of work placements. This is important as there is need to work together with the firms to better coordinate and streamline student workplace assessment log books and feedback forms. The firms need to monitor placement progress of students in the workplace by carrying out visits to the workplace. Learning institutions should also work to ensure students and lecturers have increased session for work placement induction to work placement program. This will ensure students are more work ready and better prepared to complete a successful placement.

Learning institutions should promote a more central and coordinated employers contact approaches to ensure enterprises are not bombarded with requests for work placements from multiple sources. In addition needs to ask employers through Evaluation Forms (client satisfaction surveys) if they require further information, support and site visits and be responsive to requests as a priority.

Learning institutions should continue to inform employers of preferences for short term work placements and continue to advise them that if they request placements for extended periods of time students. Learning institutions needs to also focus on matching young people at risk of unemployment and underemployment with local firms that are experiencing skills shortages and require employees, new apprentices and trainees in the quantity surveying. Learning institutions need to recruit new firms in construction industry areas in for example in project management where there is a high demand for work placements and in areas of skills shortages and employment growth.
On the part of practitioners they need to improve the supervision as well as engage more on the work placement disregarding the main imitations such as lack of space, cost and time. They should view the work placement programme as a social responsibility to the quantity surveying profession and not an economic expenditure so as to enhance the practise and equip new graduates with relevant skills.

On the other hand, students should accept the procedure and programme as well as maintain high degree of discipline and ethics when place on a firm. The students should also be enthusiastic to learn and execute duties when assigned to them. They should also accept work placement regardless of expecting a fair remuneration,

5.3 CONCLUSION
Given that Kenya is a growing economy, the construction industry is expected to change with the growing need of efficiency and reliability. Learning institutions have to engage new trends to cope with the advancement of developing skills and embrace work placement to satisfy the students’ prospective employers. This research sought to evaluate the impact of work placement in quantity surveying career development. It has hence proved that the research proposition is true, that employers would want professional training within the academic course since they prefer new entrants with work placement to those without. Therefore the research proposition is true that there is a significant difference between graduates with quantity surveying with work placement experience and those who do not.

Based on the findings discussed in chapter four, it is clear that work placement would be a relevant programme in quantity surveying profession as it has significant impact on the student’s acquisition of ‘work skills’. This is an echo of the benefits that have been enumerated in the literature review. The firms would want to induct the relevant skills from among them as revealed in the research as expressed by their perspective.

Further, the research observed that the benefits of work placement bring to the profession such as temporary employment when there is much work to assist meets production demand at peak time. The students can be called upon to perform some basic functions.

The employers (firms) have been expressed and analysed and clearly suggest improvement of the current work placement to accommodate what the firms want by utilizing the above suggested recommendation. The respondents also expressed their view on changes required
to cope with increasing demand which have been analysed in the findings and put across in the recommendations.

5.4 AREAS OF FURTHER STUDY
This research has sought to find the impact that work placement has on quantity surveying career development. However other studies that can be done on the work placement discipline include:-

1. Students and academic perspective of work placement may benefit from further investigation in the light of rapidly changing circumstances.
2. Prevailing economic conditions impact significantly on the individual’s experience of work placement, and therefore these experiences may need reappraisal as a result.
REFERENCES

Auburn, T (2007) Identity and Placement Learning: Student Accounts of the Transition back to University Following a Placement Year, Studies in Higher Education.


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Principles and procedure for students placement (2013), University of Manchester.


APPENDIX A
QUESTIONNAIRE TO QUANTITY SURVEYORS

Questionnaire Serial
No…………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………..

Date…………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………..

(Please note that the phrase “work placement” as used in this questionnaire shall mean internship or academic attachment)

Study Title: “an investigation into the impact of work placement to quantity surveying career development in Kenya”

Dear Sir/Madam,

Your firm has been selected to be included in this study and your response will be among the representatives of other firms in the quantity surveying industry.

Please fill in the blank spaces as objectively as possible. Where options are provided, tick alongside the option. For comments and explanation, use the space provided and if not enough use the back of the sheet.

Declaration: the information given is strictly for the purpose of this research only and will therefore be treated with utmost confidentiality. Your assistance will be greatly appreciated.

Yours faithfully,

Daniel Mbugua K.
APPENDIX B: QUESTIONNAIRE TO PRACTISING QUANTITY SURVEYING FIRMS

UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI
SCHOOL OF BUILT ENVIRONMENT

My name is Daniel Mbugua Kiburi, a final year student at the University of Nairobi. I am carrying out a research project on work placement to quantity surveying profession in Kenya in part fulfilment of degree course in bachelor of quantity surveying. Your contribution will pay an immense role in the realization of this research and in the determination of the conclusion of study. Any information given herein will be treated in confidentiality and for the purpose of this research only. Thank you for your cooperation

General background
1. Do you provide quantity surveying services?
   □ Yes
   □ No
   If other services are provided please specify
   …………………………………………………………………………………………………………
   …………………………………………………………………………………………………………
   …………………………………………………………………………………………………………
   …………………………………………………………………………………………………………
   …………………………………………………………………………………………………………

2. Size of Business (tick where appropriate)
   □ Micro (5 or fewer employees)
   □ Small (6 to 10 employees)
   □ Medium (11 – 20 employees)
   □ Large (21-50 employees)
   □ Multi-site (50-100 employees)
   □ Multi-state More than 100
**Work Placement**

3. Do you host work placement students?
   - Yes
   - No
   - At present
   - In the past

4. Will you continue to host work placement students in 2004-2005?
   - Yes
   - No

5. If NO what is stopping you from doing so?
   (You may tick more than one)
   - Cost
   - Time
   - Bad experience with past student
   - Small enterprise only
   - Lack of staff suitable for supervising student
   - Lack of work/variety of tasks
   - Other

6. What are the reasons for hosting work placement students?
   (You may tick more than one)
   - Recruitment/selection of employees
   - Improved staff supervision skills
   - Increased productivity
   - Providing youth with a ‘first step’
   - Personal satisfaction
   - Improved reputation in community
   - Other
   If other services are provided please specify
   …………………………………………………………………………………………………………
   …………………………………………………………………………………………………………
7. Which of the following characteristics do you prefer your work placement students to have?

- Undergraduate students
- Diploma students
- Others

If other services are provided please specify

8. What is your preferred number of work placement students per year?

(Tick one only)

- One student per year
- Two students per year
- Three students per year
- Four students per year
- Five students per year
- Other

If other services are provided please specify

........................................................................................................................................
9. What is your preferred length of time for hosting work placement students?
(Tick one only)
- One week blocks
- Two week blocks
- One month blocks
- One day per week
- One day per week all year
- Other
If other services are provided please specify

10. How are you coping with the increasing requests for work experience/work placements?
- Concerned with increasing demand
- Not concerned

11. Have you offered employment to a work placement student during 2013-2014?
- Yes
- No

12. If YES, in what capacity?
- Casual
- Part-time
- Full-time

13. Do you employ an apprentice/trainee?
- Yes
- No

14. Are you considering employing an apprentice/trainee in the future?
- Yes
- No
15. Do you prefer to host work placement students rather than employ a trainee?

- Yes
- No

16. Do you recommend work placement as a relevant practice to quantity surveying profession?

- Yes
- No

why………………………………………………………………………………………………
………………………………………………………………………………………………
………………………………………………………………………………………………
17. Were you satisfied that students were prepared for work placement?

- Yes
- No

Please explain your answer
………………………………………………………………………………………………
………………………………………………………………………………………………
………………………………………………………………………………………………
……………

18. Are you contented with the prevailing duration of work placement?

- Yes
- No

Express your thought
………………………………………………………………………………………………
………………………………………………………………………………………………
………………………………………………………………………………………………
………………………………………………………………………………………………
19. What are your recommendations for improvement to the program or other comment?
Please comment
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........................................................................................................................................
........................................................................................................................................
........................................................................................................................................