

AGENDA

The agenda blends rigorous intellectual inquiry (pedagogy, policy, measurable outcomes, inclusion/equity, AI/hybrid models) with unapologetic pursuit of truth, merit, and human flourishing. This completion keeps the agenda balanced and coherent: The first half covers structured, evidence-based elements of education/systems design, while the second half adds the bold, non-negotiable core—refusing to subordinate inquiry to politics, feelings, or lowered standards. Every session is designed to be immediately actionable.

DAY 1: THURSDAY, 6 AUGUST

7:45 AM – 8:30 AM Registration & Arrival Refreshments

Speed Icebreakers & Name-Tag Networking

8:30 AM – 8:45 AM Welcome & Opening Remarks

Chairperson sets the tone with a stand-up routine on why graduates need WIL more than ever

8:45 AM – 9:15 AM Opening Keynote

The Employability Ecosystem: It Takes a Village to Launch a Career

Graduate employability doesn't emerge from isolated interventions. It develops through a connected ecosystem involving education providers, employers, communities, policymakers, entrepreneurs, and students. This discussion explores how stakeholders can work together to create sustainable pathways that benefit individuals, organisations, and society.

9:15 AM – 10:15 AM PANEL DISCUSSION

Why Employers and Universities Need Couples Therapy?

A humorous but honest conversation about misaligned expectations, communication breakdowns and how to build stronger partnerships. Expect fiery (but polite) exchanges

10:15 AM – 10:45 AM Morning Coffee/Tea Break

Fuel for the trenches

10:45 AM – 11:30 AM CASE STUDY

What if Every Classroom Had an Employer in It?

BAU Company Integrated Learning...A different approach to WIL by bringing companies into Classroom

Company Integrated Learning (CIL) is an innovative model developed and implemented at Bahçeşehir University (BAU), where companies design and teach 14-week, credit-bearing university courses embedded directly into the curriculum. CIL is not an internship or a guest lecturer strategy, but a full-semester course, co-governed by faculty and taught by industry professionals, including real projects, sector tools, site visits, and formal assessments. It allows companies to fully integrate into faculty for course content creation and evaluation. It is also an opportunity for companies to reach out to high potential students for internship and employment, as well as to create student networks.

11:30 AM – 12:15 PM Celebrating the Quiet Revolution of Human-Centred Abilities that Employers Desperately Seek but Academia often Undervalue

For decades, qualifications have been the most valuable currency of employability. Today, employers increasingly seek evidence of adaptability, critical thinking, communication, problem solving, and the ability to learn continuously. This session explores the growing gap between academic achievement and workplace readiness. Discussions will focus on employer perceptions of qualifications versus capability and the rise of portfolio based hiring.

12:15 PM – 1:00 PM Gig Economy Graduates: Building Careers With Duct Tape and Side Hustles

- Creative exploration of non-traditional career paths where flexibility and multiple income streams (freelance projects, and entrepreneurial ventures) define modern success
- The shifting value of degrees in the labour market
- Adaptability, self-management, networking, digital literacy, and branding
- Understanding financial realities such as irregular income, taxation, retirement planning, and managing economic uncertainty

1:00 PM – 2:00 PM Lunch & Networking Buffet

Purposeful Mingling with a Side of Satire (Themed tables)

2:00 PM – 2:45 PM The Employability Analytics Revolution: Using Data to Improve Graduate Outcomes

- Graduate destination tracking
- Predictive analytics for career success
- Data informed student interventions
- Ethical considerations in employability analytics

2:45 PM – 3:30 PM Digital transformation and AI Meets WIL: Preparing Graduates for the Robot Takeover

- How emerging technologies are reshaping employability and why adaptability now beats perfect GPAs
- Are we teaching careers that have not been invented yet?
- Stop Teaching Subjects. Start Solving Problems
- Human skills that remain difficult to automate
- Labour market intelligence and forecasting

3:30 PM – 3:45 PM Afternoon Refreshment Break

Recharge

3:45 PM – 4:30 PM Global Graduates in a Borderless Talent Economy

Technology and remote work have transformed talent markets. Graduates increasingly compete and collaborate on a global stage. This session examines how institutions can prepare students to succeed in international and cross cultural work environments.

4:30 PM – 4:45 PM **Day closes with key takeaways and Day 2 teaser**

DAY 2: FRIDAY, 7 AUGUST

7:45 AM – 8:30 AM **Registration & Arrival Refreshments**

8:30 AM – 8:45 AM **Welcome Back!**

Quick recap with a highlights reel

8:45 AM – 9:30 AM **Keynote**

Employability by Design: Embedding Career Readiness Across the Curriculum

Graduate employability cannot be confined to career services offices. It must become an intentional outcome of curriculum design. This session explores how employability can be integrated into teaching, assessment, learning outcomes, and student experiences across all disciplines.

9:30 AM – 10:15 AM **Career Agility: Preparing Graduates for Multiple Careers Across a Lifetime**

The traditional model of one qualification leading to one profession is rapidly disappearing. Graduates are likely to change careers numerous times throughout their working lives. This session explores how institutions can cultivate career agility and lifelong employability.

10:15 AM – 10:45 AM **Morning Tea Break**

Networking or Strategic Napping — Your Choice

10:45 AM – 11:45 AM **WORKSHOP**

NTU's framework for whole Institution Work-Like learning

At the recent Global Careers Services Summit in Cape Town, Nottingham Trent University (NTU) won a Global Award recognising the work on Assessed Work-Like Experience. NTU's framework is often cited as a strong example of institution-wide employability integration, where curriculum, pedagogy, student development, and employer engagement operate as an interconnected system.

Key Questions:

- What enables successful institution-wide implementation?
- How can universities create work-like cultures?
- What are the risks of scaling such frameworks?

11:45 AM – 12:30 PM **Professional Bodies and the Missing Link Between Higher Education and Industry**

- Should professional bodies have greater influence over curriculum design?
- How can professional bodies help universities anticipate future skills demands rather than react to them?
- What would a truly integrated education-to-employment ecosystem look like?

12:30 PM – 1:30 PM Lunch & Networking

Connect and Collaborate

1:30 PM – 2:15 PM Distributed WIL: Designing Learning Across Multiple Employers and Experiences

Traditional WIL often relies on a single placement. Distributed models allow students to gain experience across several organisations, projects, and sectors

- Advantages of portfolio-based learning
- Quality assurance challenges
- Credentialing fragmented experiences

2:15 PM – 3:00 PM When WIL Gets Messy: Exploring Ethical Dilemmas, Blurred Boundaries, and Toxic Workplace Dynamics During Placements

- Confidentiality vs. Learning/Reporting Obligations
- Gifts, Favours, and Dual Relationships
- Scope of Practice and Safety
- Exploitation and Unpaid Labour

3:00 PM – 3:15 PM Afternoon Refreshment Break

Last Chance for Caffeine & Connections

3:15 PM – 4:00 PM Academic Integrity in High-Stakes Professions

- Longitudinal relationship between academic integrity violations and professional ethical breaches
- Unique challenges posed by AI tools in maintaining authentic learning and assessment
- Institutional strategies for cultivating cultures of integrity that translate effectively into workplace ethics
- Role of employers in signalling integrity expectations during recruitment and onboarding

4:00 PM – 4:15 PM Summit Conclusion