# An integrated framework for clinical education: Situating practice in the classroom

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# Statement of Originality

This thesis contains no material which has been accepted for the award of any other degree or diploma in any other university or other tertiary institution and, to the best of my knowledge and belief, contains no material previously published by another person, except where due reference has been made to the text. I give consent to this copy of my thesis, when deposited in the University Library, being made available for loan and photocopying subject to the provisions of the Copyright Act 1968.

Katherine Alison Proudfoot

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## Abstract

In a departure from traditional approaches to learning which often heighten the divide between theory and practice, this thesis proposes that the core aim of health science courses is to foster the emerging development of professional artistry to a level of competency sufficient for students to enter the workforce. The development of professional artistry is a complex, multifaceted process which requires the integration of theoretical knowledge in practice, development of a professional identity and recognition of the influence that past experience, both personal and professional, has on each student's learning and understanding of practice. Recognising the development of professional artistry as the core educational goal requires a reassessment of how best to facilitate learning. Implicit in adopting this view of learning is the recognition that the authenticity of learning contexts is essential for ensuring that theoretical knowledge is sufficiently integrated with clinical practice. The context of learning must also situate theoretical knowledge into authentic clinical scenarios in a manner that encourages role taking to foster the development of professional identity. In this thesis an educational framework is proposed that describes both individual and social processes of learning and how they combine to facilitate the development of professional artistry. The challenge of how to situate learning in authentic contexts outside of clinical placements is discussed through the development of an online learning module based on an integration of principles of authentic learning, situated learning and instructional design. The importance of learning in authentic contexts was explored by examining the influence of context on the performance of 44 psychology students and 43 speech pathology students when they independently completed the online learning module. Results indicated that exposure to the online learning module resulted in a significant improvement in test performance for speech pathology students but no significant difference in performance for psychology students. The role of collaborative learning in facilitating the development of professional artistry was also explored by examining interactions between a second-year, third-year and fourth-year student when paired with a clinical educator to complete the online learning module. Research revealed important insights into the role of socialisation and interaction in the development of professional artistry and how this process evolves as student experience increases. Future research directions and implications for education are discussed.