

# Problem

## How online courses accommodate work placements

As a researcher exploring potential post-graduate courses to take online, I kept coming across the same problem - how to manage placements for online students. My observation was that courses that had placements or projects were not being considered. because digital monitoring of learner hours was just too hard.

## Two important trends



Even before Covid-19, there was an increasing demand for online courses from short courses to full qualifications.



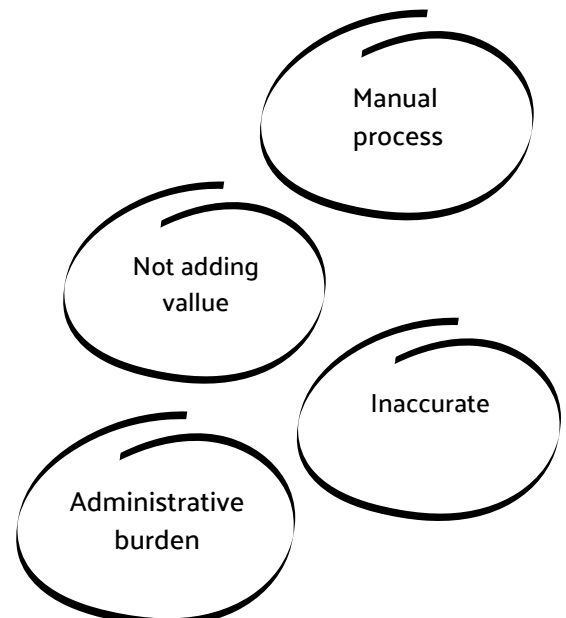
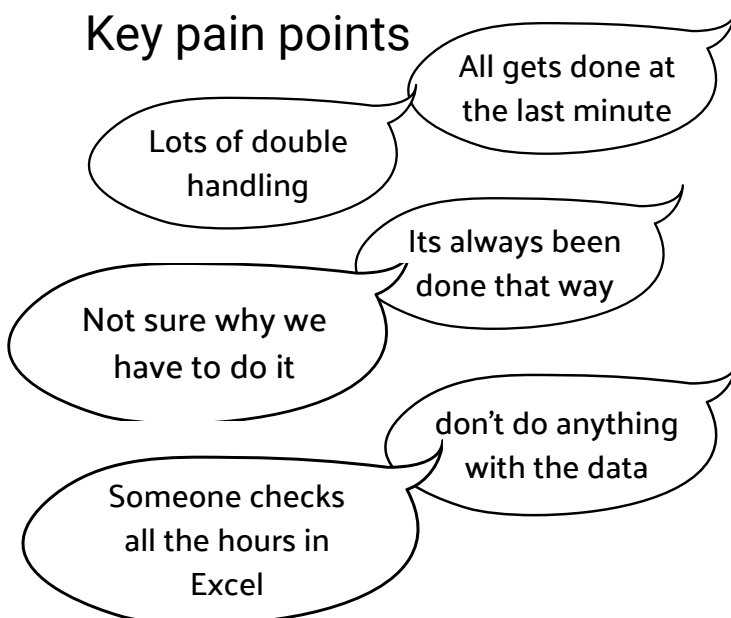
Increased demand for practical experience to be embedded so that learners can be ready to hit the ground running.

## Identify users

Drawing on my experience in higher education, training, & edtech, I went about identifying who is impacted by the problem.



## Key pain points



# Ideation

How might we.....

Simplify the process for all users?

Digitise the process for all users?

Improve the reliability of the data?

Make data valuable to all users?

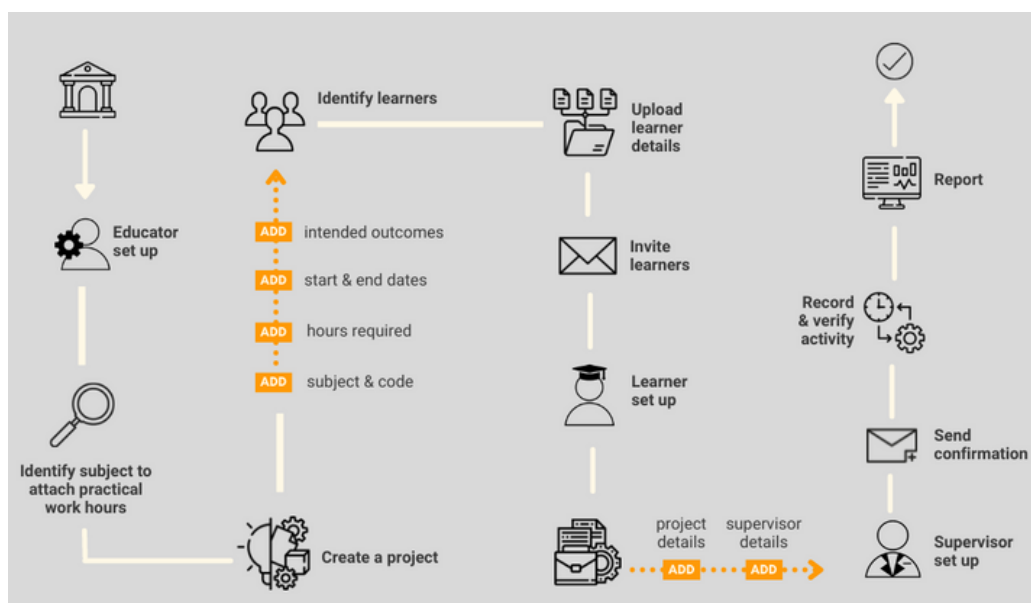
## Inspiration

During ideation, I was inspired by an app I was using to teach my daughter to drive which captures, verifies and records hours. I considered if the thinking could be re-purposed for learners.



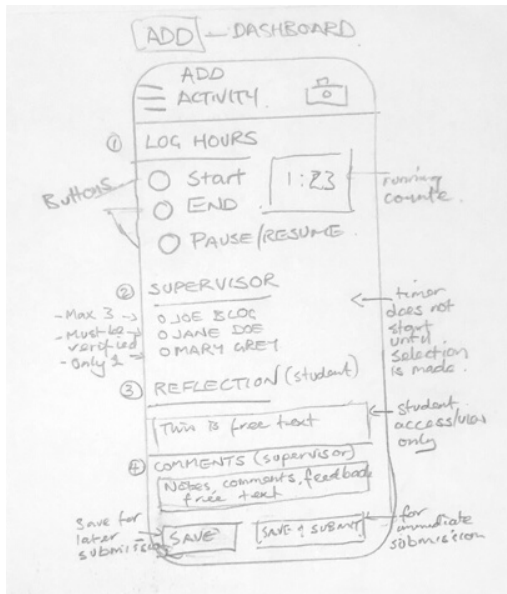
## Map out process

I created a number of flows for the users, including onboarding, different use cases and off-boarding, an overarching summary flow is presented below.



## Developing the concept

Initial hand drawings were used to scope out the functionality of each user flow. These were assessed, reconsidered, re-drawn then developed into wireframes with notes added.



## Branding

I set about creating a brand that built on the guiding principle of "simplicity". A logo was developed then a brand board was developed to drive style decisions. This supported my decisions moving into higher fidelity product stage such as buttons, icons and images.

**Logo:** The logo represents the connection between learning and application of that learning.



The blocks are discrete experiences taking different shapes and forms but all contributing to knowing more and being able to do more.

Experience is separate and different for each learner but collectively builds on itself to create a uniquely scaffolded sequence of value.

## BRAND BOARD

**Colour Palette:**



**Font Variations:**

**Headers: Roboto**

**Body: Palanquin Medium**

# BRAND IDENTITY

**Brand vision:** Making experience count

**Personality:** Simple - to navigate, to use, to integrate  
Flexible - accommodates unique circumstances  
Fun - bright, quick & easy  
Empowering - individual and collective achievement

## Words & Phrases

Work, learning, career, data  
bright, vibrant, authentic

simple, convenient, easy  
effortless, innovative

Inspiration - people:

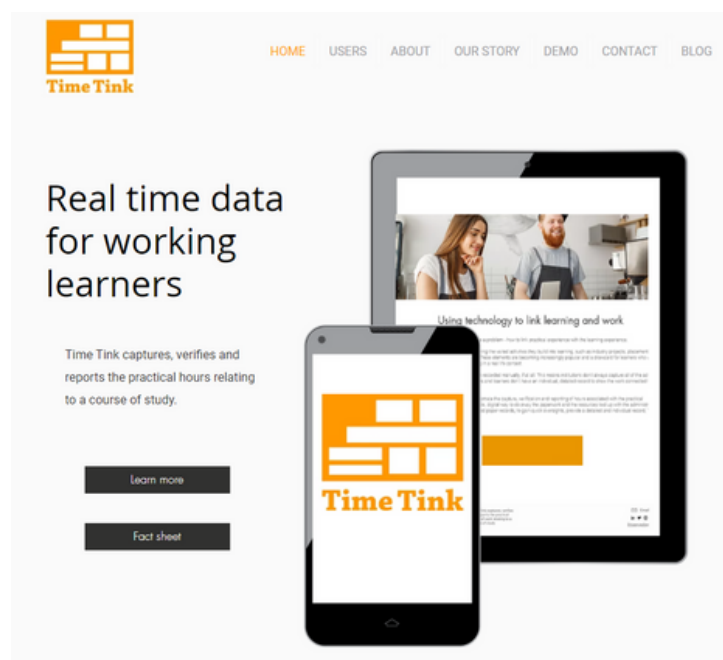


Inspiration - place:



## Creating a web presence

A website and social media were created to create and build awareness during the development and testing stages. Feedback was sought and received from those close and distanced from the project to improve the website experience. See [www.timetink.com.au](http://www.timetink.com.au) for current iteration.



# Develop & iterate

## Validate & iterate

Web-based mock ups with elements that allowed for limited user flow were developed. These were tested with a small group where I selected both users and non-users to validate the logic of user flows, layout and basic usability. The feedback from this testing was collated then I engaged a larger group of educators and edtech specialists in interviews to determine critical requirements and develop user cases.

**LOG REAL-TIME HOURS**

Add any details related to the hours you have worked then save or submit.

18:34

START PAUSE 00:00:00

00:00:00

FINISH RESUME

Attached files can be accessed by your workplace supervisor and learning supervisor

Select your supervisor for approval:

Select File

Use File Size 10MB

Comments - Notes to supervisor:

Reflections - Notes to self:

Save Save & Submit

**Time Tink** HOME HOW IT WORKS ABOUT US USERS DEMO Alana Harris

Log Activity Power Reports Dashboard My Account

**QUICK LOG**

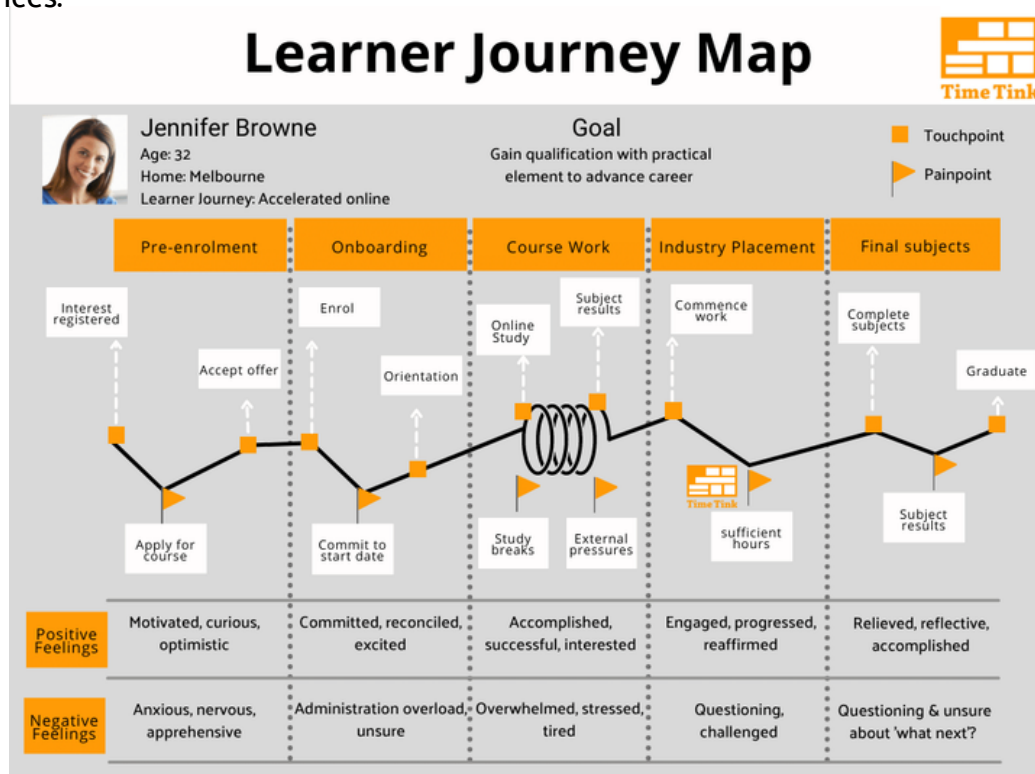
START END PAUSE / RESUME

06:00:00

When you hit End the details will appear below to submit for verification.

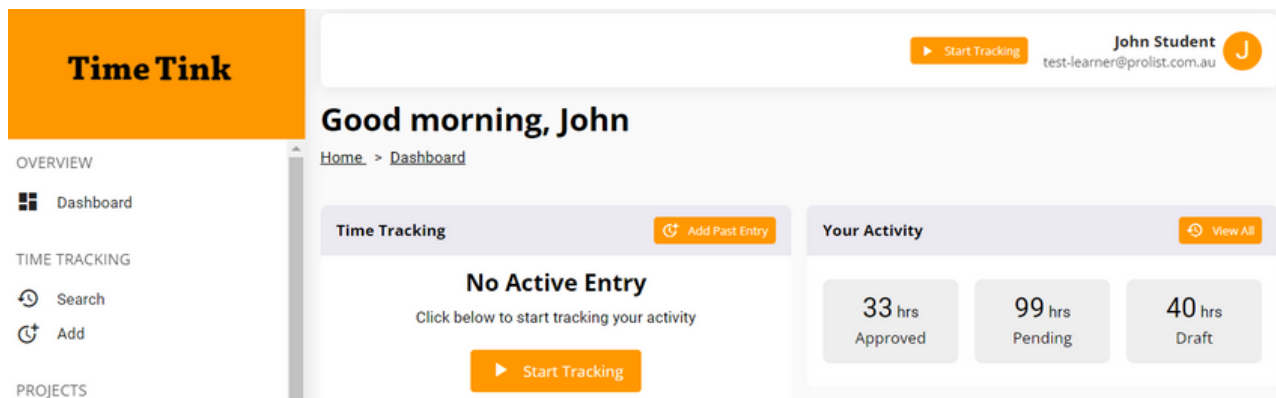
## Learner journeys & use cases

Use cases and edge cases were developed based on research and feedback from initial prototype and learner journey maps were developed for different learner types and experiences.



## Develop & iterate

Some modifications were made to the design specifications and the development of an MVP commenced. A sandbox environment was set up and the process of testing flows commenced (including onboarding, adding activities including 'live' time capture, retrospective time capture and 'block' time capture, adding attachments and reporting). Different users, different devices, and different operating systems were used, feedback was captured and fed back to the developer. The process was managed via Trello.



## Testing and refinement

### UX

Critical to the successful uptake of the platform is easy of use and value delivered (see initially identified pain points). As such, the initial user testing focus is on the learner and their engagement with the MVP. Current functionality, flow and experience are to be tested along with gathering insights into future features and functionality.

#### Phase 1 - Initial learner testing

- set tasks with learner users to examine the key workflows of onboarding, adding time activities to a project (x 3 cases) and reporting
- identify user work-arounds and sticking points to simplify UX
- can the platform be used intuitively. If not, what level of instruction is needed and what format would that take?
- compare user experience to previous experience in collecting hours (preference, ease, value)
- determine attitude toward using the platform from users - do they care?
- are there any critical functions missing?

## Phase 2 - Identify gaps and desirables

- what do learners value (own progression, gamification, leader boards?)
- identify desirable features (alternative language, reminder 'nudges')
- understand format needs for output reports (CSV, pdf, other)
- would users value a function that collates attachments and comments for a portfolio output?
- would a pre-set of hours be useful (where regular hours and days will be scheduled?)
- if there was ONE thing that this platform could do, what would it be?

Assess feedback and recommendations from initial user testing. Categorise feedback as 'critical to experience', 'desirable to experience' & 'future features'. Determine iterations required for the MVP before pilot testing.

## Phase 3 - Pilot test

- small scale test - 3 educators, approximately 20 learners
- run for 4-6 weeks
- examine platform usage and data
- present outcome of pilot to institute decision markers (including data)
- seek feedback from users and institute
- refine product, re-examine learner journeys, develop case study on findings