Creating the Embedding Impact Toolkit

Seven months ago, the QAA-funded [Student Intrapreneur and Entrepreneur Toolkit and Community of Practice](#) Collaborative Enhancement Project launched as a collaboration between Liverpool John Moores University, University of Chester, and Oxford Brookes University. The purpose of this project was to create a toolkit and a community of practice that equipped educators and practitioners with the knowledge and confidence to embed impact into their curriculum, and ultimately, enhance the wider-scale impact of work-based learners on global issues. Where recent *Times Higher Education* critiques of business schools argue that they 'lack real-world relevance', this project aims to arm work-based learners with the knowledge, skills and competences to create real-world impact in their organisations.

In the beginning of the project, mapping exercises were completed to explore the current state-of-play with work-based learners on MBA programmes across the three institutions, with an analysis of existing MBA final projects and a series of focus groups with MBA graduates. These exercises highlighted a significant gap in knowledge relating to what real world impact is, what the global issues are, and how organisations can mobilise to tackle these issues. We then mapped out existing initiatives surrounding how impact and real-world issues can be, and are, addressed in the classroom and in the workplace, creating a repository of all resources and toolkits currently available. Building on this activity, we decided that we needed to bring our community of practice to life and bring people together for a day of knowledge exchange and co-creation.

On the 18 October 2023, an 'Embedding Impact' Sprint Day was hosted at Liverpool John Moores University, where academics and practitioners from across the UK came together to discuss these key challenges, and design materials that would form part of the 'Embedding Impact' toolkit. Materials were designed at three levels - programme, module and workshop - and every participant had a go at co-creating materials for each level. We brought in students from the BA Entrepreneurship program at LJMU to test our ideas with, and they provided critical feedback and suggestions for improvement to our toolkits.

The content of the final materials varied, from experiential learning and a complete redesign of assessment methods, to embedding the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) into the curriculum and monitoring SDG knowledge over the course of a programme. Each of the materials created will contribute to the final project toolkit, which will be available in early 2024 on the QAA website. The final toolkit will also include the repository of existing initiatives, as well as the new materials designed at the Sprint Day, and these will be made open access.

We are looking to further develop our toolkit and build our Community of Practice, so if you would like to be first in line to hear about our project updates and events, please express your interest.

We encourage you to explore feedback from Sprint Day participants below:

Senior Lecturer in Entrepreneurship

The Sprint Day was a fruitful endeavour, gathering academics and students dedicated to the Sustainable Development Goals and impactful work. This initiative effectively established a foundation for varied groups to collaborate and address complex challenges in society. Personally, it was a profoundly gratifying experience.

Principal Lecturer in Business, Management and Enterprise

Meeting with like-minded people who also want to make a real difference helps to push your limits in what you can achieve in terms of embedding SDGs and impact.

Head of Centre for Management Development & Innovation

The collaborative approach to design facilitated by the event supported me to engage with and explore impact more meaningfully than I could have achieved on my own.

Associate Professor of Work-Based and Lifelong Learning

The Sprint Day provided a great opportunity to work together with academic, practitioner and student communities to collaborate on a range of ideas to help develop the materials, but equally provides a blueprint for the diversity of communities of practice we so desperately need to tackle the mounting number of wicked problems facing society today.

BA Entrepreneurship Student

Hearing the new and innovative ways to integrate entrepreneurship into the business curriculum was nothing short of inspiring. The acknowledgement of a changing business society and approach towards learning makes me confident in the future of applied learning.

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