



The Impact of Employability Initiatives in Higher Education: Using Placement Confidence and Resilience as Measures

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ASET Annual Conference 2018

**Proceedings of the 2018
Placement and Employability
Professionals' Conference**

Editor: Debbie Siva-Jothy

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**25th Annual Conference
University of Nottingham, Jubilee Campus
4th – 6th September 2018**

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FOREWORD

ASET is very pleased to be able to share with you the proceedings of the ASET Annual Conference held at the University of Nottingham's Jubilee Campus, 4th – 6th September 2018. ASET's 25th Conference once again proved to be a mix of engaging, enjoyable and useful sessions. Our membership were as generous as ever in sharing the good practice that goes on in their institutions, a fact that was remarked on by the many delegates who joined us for their first ever ASET conference. We have always known that the strength of ASET is our community, and we remain proud to be the leading forum for delegates to showcase their creativity, collaborate on challenges and contribute ideas so freely. We appreciate that our membership looks to us for guidance, as an authoritative voice, to help them deliver high-quality support for their students and employers alike. By releasing two new Viewpoints, on troubleshooting and crisis management, and through the offer of five professional development taster sessions we hope that conference sent our delegates into the new academic year feeling more informed, confident and energetic!

Thank you to Dr Paul Greatrix, Registrar, for providing such an enthusiastic welcome on behalf of the University of Nottingham. We are extremely grateful to all our speakers and workshop presenters for such interesting and useful sessions. I would particularly like to thank our keynote contributors; Jane McNeil, Executive Dean for Learning and Teaching at Nottingham Trent University, Lizzie Brock and Amirah Hajat of RMP Enterprise, Lisa Gray of JISC and Maddy Woodman and Jordan Funk of Henley Business School. Our *Student Insights Panel* was an opportunity to hear from an amazing group of students about their experiences with work based learning, how we can best support and empower our students and aim to future-proof them for both their careers and lives. Our gratitude also extends to our conference sponsors; Pagoda Project, InPlace, ARC Technology, CRCC Asia and Virtual Internships and of course to our longstanding conference supporters RMP Enterprise.

A huge thank you to the ASET team of staff and Trustees, but particularly Debbie Siva-Jothy and Janet Aspinall, whose immense hard work delivers such a brilliant conference. We know that for many of you, the ASET Annual Conference is your essential date for professional development in the work based and placement learning HE sector, so we look forward to seeing you again at Conference next year.

Sarah Flynn

Chair, ASET

KEYNOTE

No fate but what we make?

Machines, centenarians and the future of Higher Education. The future doesn't get done to us: we help to make it.

Jane McNeil

Executive Dean, Learning and Teaching, Nottingham Trent University

Jane invited us to join her in some future-gazing to survey the possibilities for the next twenty years and considered:

What are the emerging trends for education, work and society?

What and how will people need to learn?

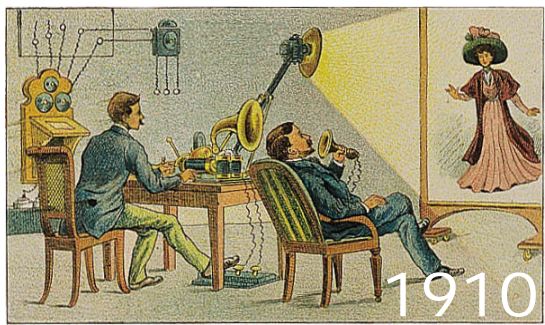
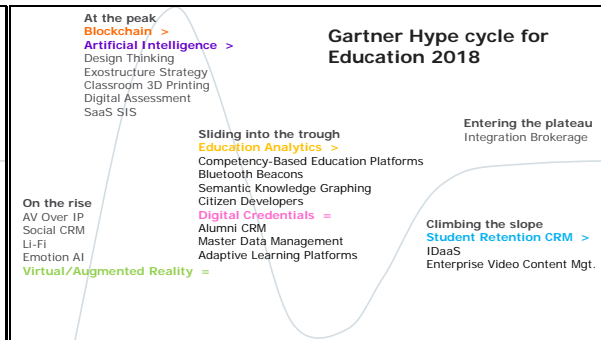
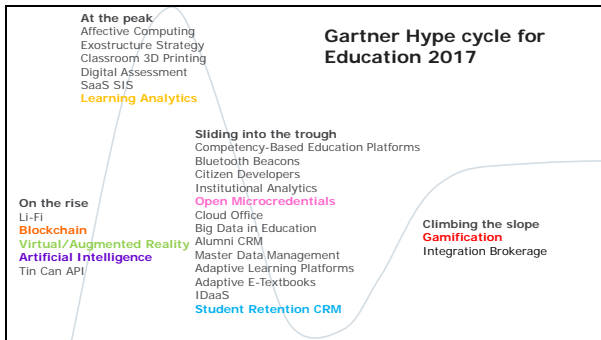
What further opportunities might there be for the integration of work and learning?

Unless the robots have taken over, of course...

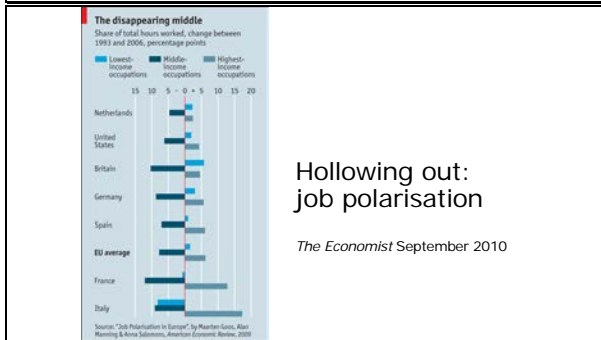
Presentation



<p>No fate but what we make? Machines, centenarians and the future of higher education</p>	<p>"mail will be delivered within hours from New York to California, to Britain, to India or Australia by <u>guided missiles</u>"</p>  <p>1959</p>
<p>"this discovery of yours will create forgetfulness...because [learners] will not use their memories...they will appear to be omniscient and will generally know nothing"</p>  <p>307</p>	<p>students "have developed the habit of dividing attention between the...preparation of their...assignments and the compelling excitement of <u>the loudspeaker</u>"</p>  <p>1936</p>
	<p>edu@2025</p> <p>Extrapolation</p> <p>EDU@2025 Richard Katz (2012)</p>
 <p>Machines</p>	<p>The future is already here – it's just not very evenly distributed.</p> <p>William Gibson</p>
	<p>Gartner Hype cycle for Education 2017</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> At the peak: Affective Computing, Exostructure Strategy, Classroom 3D Printing, Digital Assessment, SaaS SIS, Learning Analytics Sliding into the trough: Competency-Based Education Platforms, Bluetooth Beacons, Citizen Developers, Institutional Analytics, Open Microcredentials, Cloud Office On the rise: Li-Fi, Blockchain, Virtual/Augmented Reality, Artificial Intelligence, Tin Can API Climbing the slope: Gamification, Integration Brokerage Other items: Big Data in Education, Alumni CRM, Master Data Management, Adaptive Learning Platforms, Adaptive E-Textbooks, IDaaS, Student Retention CRM



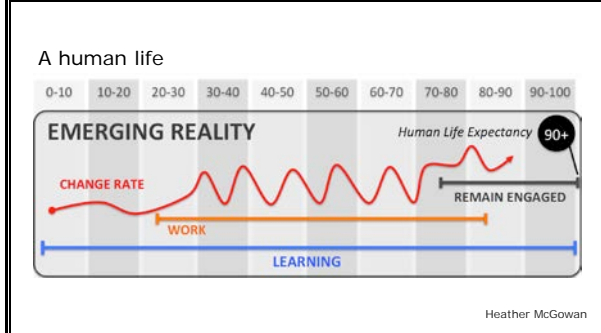
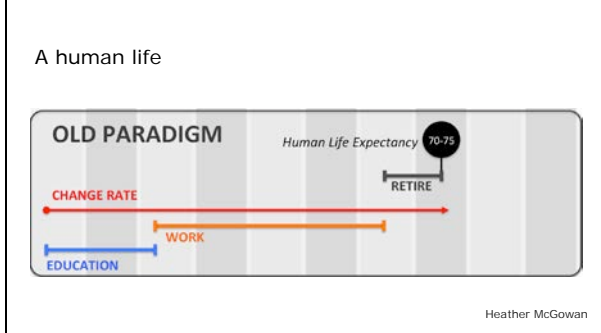
Will a robot take my job?
Everyone








"The Americans have need of the telephone, but we do not. We have a superabundance of errand-boys."
1878



Extended human longevity +
Pace of technological change
= Impact on learning
Heather McGowan





-  **Manage transitions:** change is the norm
-  **New normal:** exploring unstructured problems
-  **Needfinding:** uncovering opportunity in human need
-  **Entrepreneurial mindset:** creating and capturing value
-  **Integrated capstone:** career launch

Becker College
Agile Mindset curriculum

No fate but what we make

KEYNOTE

Exclusive Student Insights with RateMyPlacement.co.uk

What are students really thinking and feeling?

What are their thoughts on work experience and where do they want to learn about it?

Lizzie Brock

Marketing Director RMP Enterprise

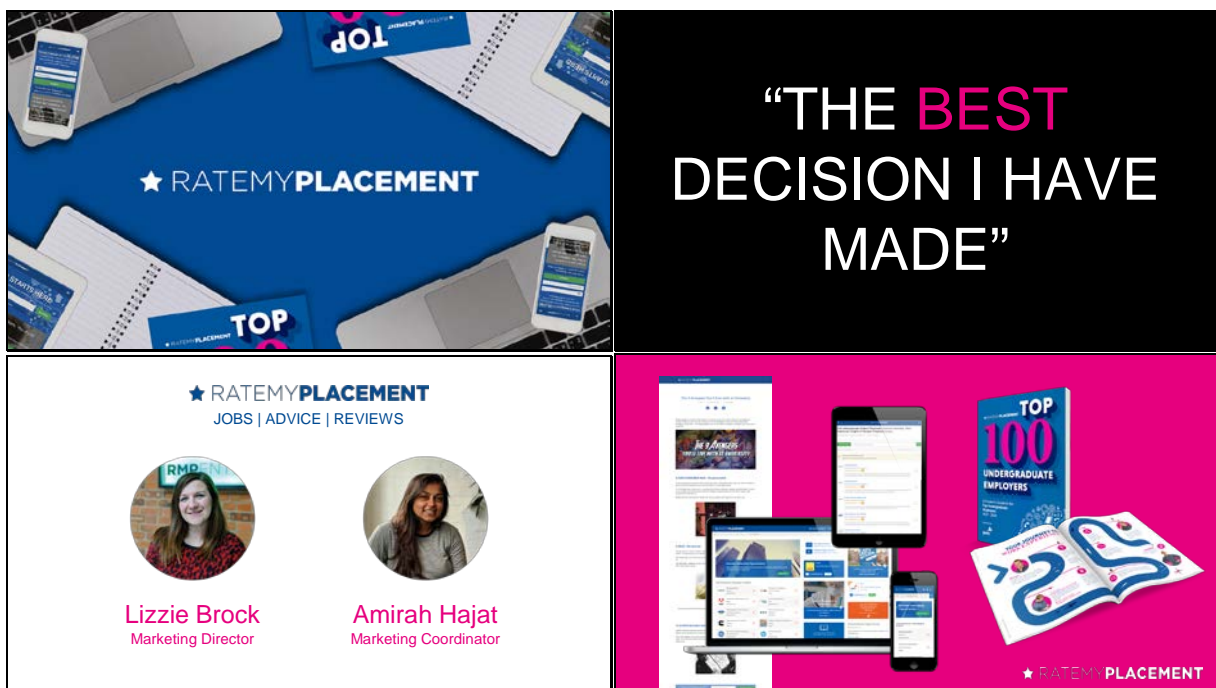
Amirah Hajat

Marketing and Events Coordinator RMP Enterprise

Lizzie and Amirah shared exclusive insights from the annual RateMyPlacement.co.uk survey ‘**Student Attitudes to Work Experience**’ and revealed key trends from the 50,000 student-written reviews on their website.

Covering topics from student well-being, attraction and engagement and what students are looking for from employers, this was a session not to be missed.

Presentation



OUR HUB
Monthly resources sent directly to your inbox

NIUE AWARDS
10 YEARS
BE RECOGNISED.
BE REWARDED.

WHAT'S GOING ON IN THE MARKET?
STUDENT ATTITUDES TO WORK EXPERIENCE
STUDENT ENGAGEMENT
INSPIRATION

OVER THE PAST SIX MONTHS..

An internship could be your golden ticket to a graduate job
Growing number of teens prefer apprenticeships to university, says charity chief
Vodafone launches programme to support LGBT+ talent
Skills shortage costing STEM sector £1.5bn
STEM skills shortages are a problem for employers, society and the economy, and cannot be addressed by government or schools alone - it is everyone's responsibility and in everyone's interests to help
NEWS REVIEW
Will work for food: unpaid interns are still often only paid expenses
ISE Report Reveals The Importance Of Internships
Students applying for internships asked whether their parents went to university, report finds

BE IT AWARDS

STUDENT ATTITUDES TO WORK EXPERIENCE

400 RESPONDENTS
97 UNIVERSITIES

62.6%	36.3%	1.1%
♀	♂	⊖


“WHAT ARE YOUR MAIN CONCERNS AT UNIVERSITY?”

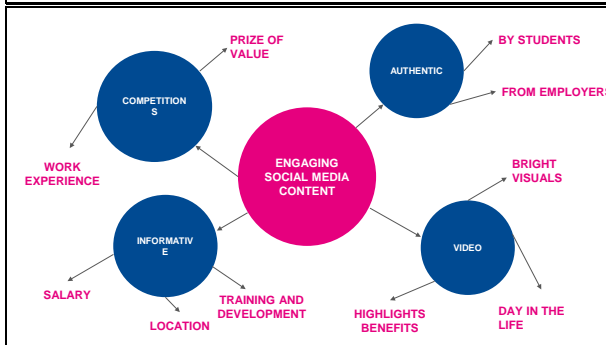
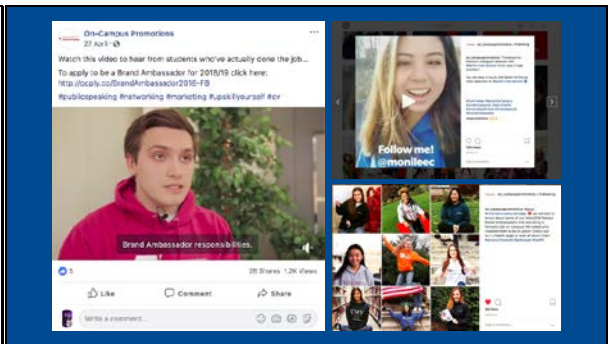
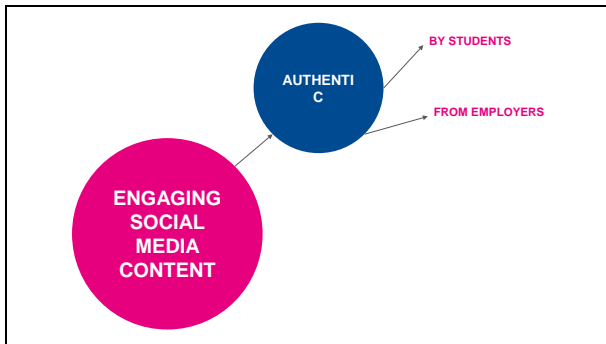
EXAMS GRADES

MONEY





<p>71% - COMMUNICATION 48% - PROBLEM SOLVING 40% - ADAPTABILITY</p>	<p>MANAGING UP DEALING WITH CONFLICT NEGOTIATING</p>
<p>4% - MANAGING UP 10% - DEALING WITH CONFLICT 11% - NEGOTIATING</p>	<p>“WHAT SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS DO YOU CURRENTLY USE MORE THAN ONCE A WEEK?”</p>
<p>87% - FACEBOOK 70% - INSTAGRAM 64% - SNAPCHAT 63% - YOUTUBE</p>	<p>“HOW OFTEN DO YOU USE THOSE SOCIAL MEDIA CHANNELS?”</p>
<p>1-3 HOURS</p>	<p>“WHICH SOCIAL MEDIA CHANNELS DO YOU RECOMMEND TO PROMOTE WORK EXPERIENCE?”</p>
	<p>71% - FACEBOOK 61% - LINKEDIN 42% - INSTAGRAM</p>



CONTENT CALENDAR

Wk	From	To	Undergraduate key dates	Key days dates	Current Semesters / What's happening in 2017/18	Campaigns	Social	Student Email	University Email	PPC
Week 1	July 30, 2018	August 5, 2018								
Week 2	August 6, 2018	August 12, 2018			1st - Welcome Back Day 1st - Welcome Back Day			Student newsletter		
Week 3	August 13, 2018	August 19, 2018	AI week Begins							
Week 4	August 20, 2018	August 26, 2018								
Week 5	August 27, 2018	September 2, 2018			Launch of schemes	1st - Welcome Back Day		Second year - 1st year time award		
Week 6	September 3, 2018	September 9, 2018	Back to uni / Festivals		ASET	1st - Welcome Back Day 2nd - International Charity Day		Student newsletter		
Week 7	September 10, 2018	September 16, 2018	Back to uni / Festivals			1st - Welcome Back Day 2nd - International Charity Day				
Week 8	September 17, 2018	September 23, 2018	Back to uni / Festivals			1st - Welcome Back Day 2nd - International Charity Day				
Week 9	September 24, 2018	September 30, 2018	Back to uni / Festivals			1st - Welcome Back Day 2nd - International Charity Day				
Week 10	October 1, 2018	October 7, 2018	Back to uni / Festivals			1st - Welcome Back Day 2nd - International Charity Day		Student newsletter		
Week 11	October 8, 2018	October 14, 2018				1st - Welcome Back Day 2nd - International Charity Day				
Week 12	October 15, 2018	October 21, 2018				1st - Welcome Back Day 2nd - International Charity Day		Student Advice		
Week 13	October 22, 2018	October 28, 2018				1st - Welcome Back Day 2nd - International Charity Day				
Week 14	October 29, 2018	November 4, 2018				1st - Welcome Back Day 2nd - International Charity Day				
Week 15	November 5, 2018	November 11, 2018				1st - Welcome Back Day 2nd - International Charity Day		Student newsletter		
Week 16	November 12, 2018	November 18, 2018				1st - Welcome Back Day 2nd - International Charity Day		Big for Festivals Report!		
Week 17	November 19, 2018	November 25, 2018				1st - Welcome Back Day 2nd - International Charity Day		Student Advice		
Week 18	November 26, 2018	December 2, 2018				1st - Welcome Back Day 2nd - International Charity Day				
Week 19	December 3, 2018	December 9, 2018				1st - Welcome Back Day 2nd - International Charity Day		Send notices to students as they approach the end of the semester!	Student newsletter	

INSPIRING IDEAS



MAIN CONCERNS

<p>WORK EXPERIENCE</p>	<p>SOCIAL MEDIA</p>
<p>INSPIRING EXAMPLES</p>	<p>SWANSEA</p>
<p><i>"My approach is just fearless. I'm not afraid to do anything"</i></p> 	<p>QUESTIONS?</p>

KEYNOTE

Surviving or thriving: digital skills for tomorrow's world



Lisa Gray

Senior Co-Design Manager, Student Experience Team, Jisc

For over 30 years Jisc has been a trusted partner and expert adviser on digital technology to universities and colleges throughout the UK. During this time our workplaces have transformed, with new graduates entering a very different career landscape than the one we would have entered. There is an expectation that in the next 20 years 90% of all jobs will require digital skills. Are we doing all we can to prepare students for this changing world? And do we need to go further, to develop digitally-savvy graduates that can shape tomorrows activities?

In this session Lisa guided us to explore what being an 'employable student' looks like in a digital age; how a five-dimensional model can help us explore whether we are truly developing digitally enabled curricula that best prepare learners for this new world; and shared current thinking around how we and our educational organisations can best enable students and staff to live, learn and work in a digital society.

Presentation

 <p>Jisc</p> <p>#digitalcapability</p> <p>Surviving or thriving: digital skills for tomorrows world</p>	<p>Jisc</p> <p>Your digital capability..</p> <p>» <i>Your digital super-power</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » What one digital thing are you really good at? What do your friends ask you to help them with? » Add in your superpower to our word cloud <p>— www.menti.com</p> <p>— Code 12 94 04</p> <p>— Add up to 3!</p> 
<p>Jisc</p> <p>Changing working landscapes</p> <p>"One million additional people are expected to be required for digital roles by the middle of the next decade. And it's predicted that within 20 years, 90% of all jobs will require some element of digital skills".</p> <p><small>Matt Hancock MP, The Right Honourable Minister of State for Digital, 2017</small></p> <p>"Graduate work is being transformed by digital technologies and data"</p> <p><small>IPPR 2017: Managing automation</small></p> <p>"Gaining cross-disciplinary digital skills is the lifeblood of deeper learning outcomes that lead to fruitful careers"</p> <p><small>Digital Literacy: An NMC Horizon Project Strategic Brief (Volume 3.3, October 2016)</small></p>	<p>Jisc</p> <p>Employer expectations</p> <p>» Employers focus above all on the attitudes and aptitudes that will enable graduates to be effective in the workplace</p> <p>— 90% of employers rated it as among the three most important factors, against 62% who rated subject knowledge</p> <p><small>CBI/Pearson Education and Skills Survey 2017</small></p>

Jisc Skills gap

» **38%** of workplaces in Europe report that a lack of digital skills is harming their business.
European Commission (2017): 'Human capital: Europe's Digital Progress Report 2017'

» **72%** of large firms are struggling to recruit workers with digital skills
ECORYS UK 2016: Digital Skills for the UK Economy

Jisc What the students are telling us


80% of HE learners feel that digital skills will be important in their chosen career...
... but only 50% agree that their course prepares them well for the digital workplace

Half of learners didn't know or weren't sure what digital skills their course required before they started it


40% agreed that they have been told what digital skills they need to improve

Jisc What does an employable student look like in a digital age?


- » Basic work readiness
- » Professional skills and knowledge
- » High level capabilities
- » Key student attributes
- » Authentic learning experiences
- » Lifelong employability in a digital world
- » Lifelong learning capabilities



Jisc 5 ways to use technology to support employability




Jisc Authentic and simulated learning experiences




- » Active and "real world" learning experiences – supported by technologies – that help to develop employability skills
- » Simulated experiences

Jisc Lifelong learning and employability




- » Self-directed personal and professional learning (planning, reflection, managing, recording, review) – supported by technology
- » (Digital) feedback and engagement with a variety of stakeholders including employers to help develop learner self-regulatory skills
- » Employer-supported / related assessment for learning
- » Recording/recognition

Jisc Digital communications and employer engagement




- » Researching, identifying and developing contacts and relationships with employers
- » Developing "digital" and "employability" identity
- » Developing "digital collateral" as evidence of student "rounded self"
- » Showcasing student "rounded self" to employers and personal clients

Jisc Digital communications and employer engagement




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- » Developing "digital collateral" as evidence of student "rounded self"
- » Showcasing student "rounded self" to employers and personal clients

Jisc Employability skills development



- » Learner skills diagnostics
- » Technology-enhanced development for skills gaps
- » Computer-aided assessment

Jisc Digital capabilities



- » Developing student technology-enhanced employability skills
- » See breakdown of digital literacies by employability skill, page 7. of the toolkit

Jisc A holistic approach to programme design and technology adoption

Jisc Establishing a common vocabulary

» Does your organisation have a common understanding of digital capability?

Jisc Introducing the digital capability framework

All available from: <http://ji.sc/Digi-cap-different-roles> <http://ji.sc/building-digicap>

Jisc An employability lens

Basic work readiness

- » Ethical and moral behaviour
- » Appearance and presentation
- » Social skills
- » Numeracy
- » Spoken and written communication

Digital capabilities

- » Basic knowledge and management of digital safety, footprint, identity/reputation, security and compliance
- » Communicating effectively and with e-etiquette with different stakeholders including employers, using a range of digital media and devices

Jisc Building digital capability into the curriculum

» How are opportunities for students to develop *their* digital capabilities integrated into the curriculum?

» <http://bit.ly/digcapcurric>

Jisc A starting point for staff and students

» The **Discovery tool**

- » A self-administered quiz about professional digital practices (in education)
- » Designed to give useful feedback including 'next steps' and links to resources
- » Reflective, informative and developmental

Jisc Institutional view

» Provides institutional leads with:

- » Overall number of completions by department
- » Scoring bands by organisation (developing / capable / proficient)
 - By department
 - High level subject areas
 - Sector comparisons for both

Jisc Benefits – students and staff

'I enjoyed using it. The report accurately recorded my strengths and weaknesses'

'I thought the data and insights it provided just based on a quick assessment was really good'

'Made me think about things in more detail, and actually assess responses'

'Did give me an idea of specific areas which would be worth working on, targeted action'

'Really useful, and I particularly like how it is relevant to skills for both my course and my future career'

'[I've] shied away from this area, so having an abundance of help/ feedback was great'

'I thought the data and insights it provided just based on a quick assessment was really good'

Jisc What's next

- » Building digital capability service, including discovery tool:
 - » Launching September 24th 2018
 - » Free (reduced) version available to staff
 - » Full version of the tool at a charge
- » New service website, providing:
 - » Pathways through the resources
 - » Access to the discovery tool & guidance

Expression of interest form ji.sc/register-digital-capabilities

Jisc Developing organisational digital capability

'The extent to which the culture, policies and infrastructure of an organisation enable and support digital practices.'
Helen Beetham (2017)

How is your organisation developing its organisational digital capability?

Beetham/Jisc 2017 model
CC BY-NC-ND

<p>Jisc In practice....</p> <p><i>"A digitally fluent institution is one that makes use of the tools and resources available to it, but it is also where a community of talented individuals are empowered and encouraged to innovate and design in new and different ways. The confidence that comes with this digital fluency is what can help drive our research ambition, our enterprise flair and our teaching creativity. Being digitally fluent enables everyone to contribute to the thing that defines us as an institution – being a place of learning, a place of discovery."</i></p> <p>Dr Ross Parry, Deputy Pro-Vice Chancellor (Digital), University of Leicester</p>	<p>Jisc What are organisations doing in this space?</p> <p>Strategic steps towards organisational digital capability</p> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <div style="width: 45%;"> <p>Step 1: Vision and intent</p> <p>Leaders identify potential for increased organisational growth, reputation, business and student satisfaction through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development of shared understanding, common purpose and goals, leading to high-level vision Analysis of gap between current and desired situation with actions and implementation plans including infrastructure considerations <p>Step 2: Support and consolidate</p> <p>All stakeholders engage to review and monitor digital capabilities developments leading to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enhanced organisational and staff capabilities Preparing students for living and working in a digital world Enhancements to quality measures Digital leaders able to inspire and enhance organisational digital capability Improved efficiency and enhanced organisational capacity in all core business functions </div> <div style="width: 10%; text-align: center;"> </div> <div style="width: 45%;"> <p>Step 3: Design and construct</p> <p>Departmental, programme and service leaders align organisational aspirations with own priorities by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understanding digital progression in relation to own practice Embedding digital capabilities in curricula and professional practice Using PDR process to support staff digital ambitions with range of support options Recognising and rewarding student and staff digital capability achievements <p>Step 4: Explore and contextualise</p> <p>Teams of staff and students develop contextualised vision and action plans by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establishing common language, goals and priorities Identifying and mapping team strengths and weaknesses against ideal or real world requirements Collaborative approaches designed to achieve desired goals Embedding digital capabilities in curricula and student-facing activities </div> </div>
<p>Jisc Latest resources</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Four new institutional case study videos: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » https://ji.sc/digicap_films » Senior leaders briefing paper on Delivering digital change: strategy, practice and process <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » http://bit.ly/jisc-leaders » How are HR departments supporting the development of staff digital capabilities? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » https://bit.ly/2lmZY4o 	<p>Jisc Community of practice</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Launched in May 2017, run twice yearly since with 100 delegates at from across FE and HE » Next event – 21st November 2018 » See our summaries of these events at: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » May 2018: http://bit.ly/digicap-cop3 » Nov 2017: http://ji.sc/community-of-practice » May 2017: http://bit.ly/2CKZu1e » Join CoP mailing list <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » www.jiscmail.ac.uk/jisc-digcap-ug <p><i>'Valuable for inspiring new ideas and making new contacts, for sharing resources.'</i></p>
<p>Jisc Follow developments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Interested in the building digital capability service? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » ji.sc/register-digital-capabilities » Follow developments <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » New service site (late Sept): digitalcapability.jisc.ac.uk » Project blog: digitalcapability.jiscinvolve.org » Communication <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Email the project team at: digitalcapability@jisc.ac.uk » Follow #digitalcapability on Twitter » Resources <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Online guide – Developing organisational approaches to digital capability bit.ly/digicapguide » Six elements framework: ji.sc/digicap_ind_frame » Employability toolkit from: ji.sc/employ-guide » Employability blog: employabilityproject.jiscinvolve.org/ » Digital capability project page bit.ly/jiscdigicap 	

KEYNOTE

Success Studio; creating a unique learner experience for careers delivery

Maddy Woodman

Careers Learning Manager, Henley Business School

Jordan Funk

Careers Administrator, Henley Business School

Everyone knows that engaging students with careers delivery is an age old issue - so Maddy and her colleagues at Henley decided to tackle this head-on! By switching topics on their head and teaching them through innovative ways such as LEGO, stand-up comedy and even cartooning, they've had a breakthrough. In this session they show us how they did this, and helped us to create our own unique sessions in just a few easy steps.

Time to get our creative juices flowing and innovate together!

Presentation

Success Studio
The alternative self-improvement movement

- Designed with the learner in mind
- Create a feeling that “Careers” was relatable and relevant – NOT the same as their experience at secondary school
- Skills set moving away from “traditional” careers sessions
- Element of gamification and sessions to be accessible to all
- Evening masterclasses with pizza and beer
- Runners up in Guardian University Awards and AGCAS Awards


Sessions have included;

- LEGO Serious Play method
- Gamified assessment centres
- Stand-up comedy
- Comedy improv
- Start a business in 2 hours
- Cartooning
- Thinking like a toddler
- MBTI
- Mindfulness/Chimp Paradox

The stealth approach

Future of work

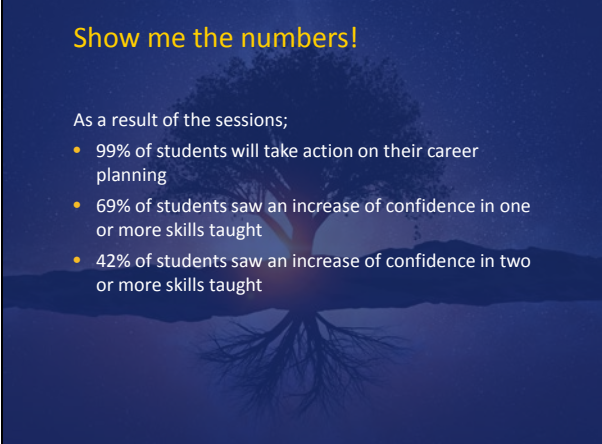
- Pro-active
- Resilient
- Able to Build Relationships
(Pasha 2018)
- Confident



Show me the numbers!

As a result of the sessions;

- 99% of students will take action on their career planning
- 69% of students saw an increase of confidence in one or more skills taught
- 42% of students saw an increase of confidence in two or more skills taught







Increase in one to one careers sessions



Increase in attendance at other careers events





Overall increase in engagement with careers





OK BUT HOW???


Design Thinking

Empathise


Define


Ideate


Prototype


Test



Empathise

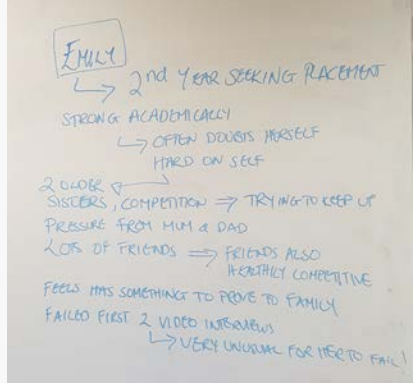


Where business comes to life 


Empathy




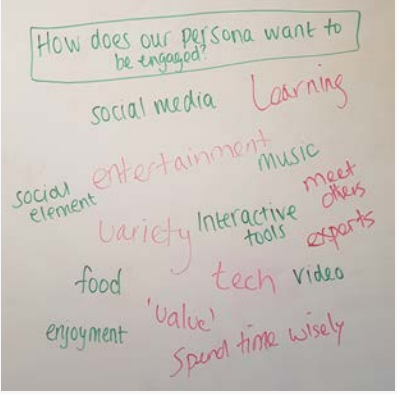



- Who is the audience for your session?
 - Open to all, but predominantly UG and PG Business students
- Personas
 - Variety of different personas, do a deep dive on each
 - Talk to colleagues, careers advisors have ideas from one-to-ones, what schools did they go to etc.
 - Always exceptions to the rules

Where business comes to life 



Emily
 ↳ 2nd Year SEEKING PLACEMENT
 STRONG ACADEMICALLY
 ↳ OFTEN DOUBTS HERSELF
 HARD ON SELF
 2 GLOBAL SISTERS, COMPETITION ⇒ TRYING TO KEEP UP
 PRESSURE FROM MUM & DAD
 LOTS OF FRIENDS ⇒ FRIENDS ALSO HEALTHY COMPETITIVE
 FEELS HAS SOMETHING TO PROVE TO FAMILY
 FAILED FIRST 2 VIDEO INTERVIEWS
 ↳ VERY UNUSUAL FOR HER TO FAIL

Where business comes to life 

<p>Task: Deep dive on one typical "persona"</p>	<p>Go to www.menti.com and use the code 93 63 81</p> <p>Write your persona's name and three attributes</p> <p>Jordan - International student, late starter, motivated</p> <p>Maddy - never goes to lectures, has part time job, competitive</p> <p>Slide is not active <input type="button" value="Activate"/></p> <p>2</p>
<p>Define</p>  <p>Where business comes to life </p>	<p>Define</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What do our students want from Success Studio? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – What they know they want, and what they don't know they want. i.e. Building relationships, resilience and proactiveness. • Mapping the problem <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – In Success Studio, our biggest barrier to increasing confidence is getting students through the door – Need to solve that problem <p>Where business comes to life </p>
 <p>Where business comes to life </p>	<p>Task: How does your persona want to be engaged?</p>
<p>Go to www.menti.com and use the code 93 63 81</p> <p>How does your persona want to be engaged?</p> <p>Games Social media</p> <p>Slide is not active <input type="button" value="Activate"/></p> <p>2</p>	<p>Ideate</p>  <p>Where business comes to life </p>

Ideate – the fun bit

- Designing Success Studio we take a skill that needs to be taught and then brainstorm ideas
- The best way to do this is “where else in the world is this skill used?”
- No idea is a bad idea, go mad!
- Tip: post-its are your best friend



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Skills

Task: Where else is “team working” skill used?


Go to www.menti.com and use the code 93 63 81


Where else is the skill "team working" used?

Results are hidden Show results

3


Prototype Test




Where business comes to life  UNIVERSITY OF NOTTINGHAM


OK so we have the basics...

Empathise Define Ideate



Prototype Test




Where business comes to life  UNIVERSITY OF NOTTINGHAM

Prototype

- Experiment!
- Develop the session and get feedback

Test

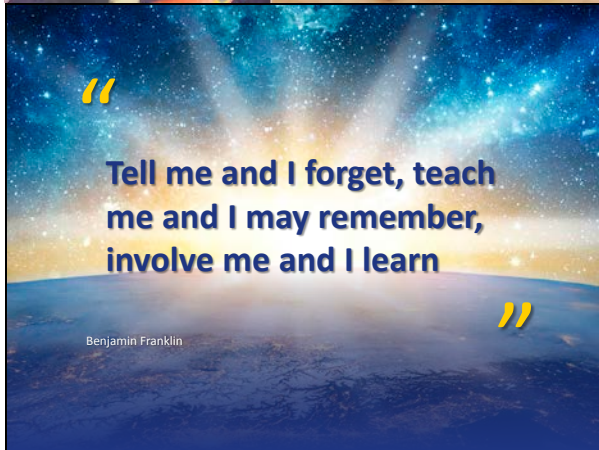
- Trial sessions
- Fail fast, learn from mistakes and improve the session
- Try different things each time to see what works best
- Collect detailed feedback

Where business comes to life  UNIVERSITY OF NOTTINGHAM

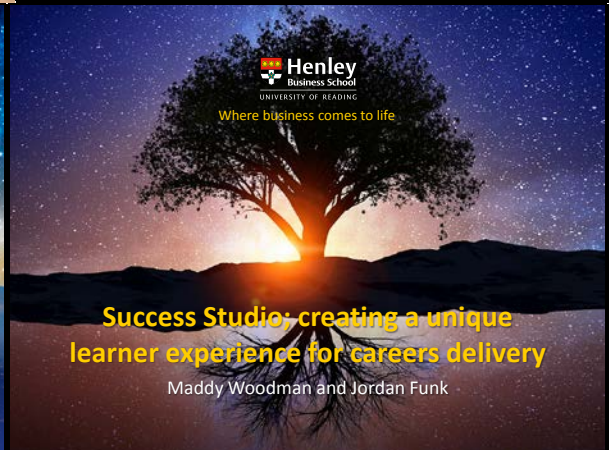


The most important thing to remember is...

Have fun, put yourself in the students' shoes, and be creative!



Benjamin Franklin



Henley Business School
UNIVERSITY OF READING

Where business comes to life

Success Studio; creating a unique learner experience for careers delivery

Maddy Woodman and Jordan Funk

ASET ON.....the Future of Work

Sarah Flynn

ASET Chair and Associate Director of Learning and Teaching (Workplace Learning and Degree Apprenticeships), Learning and Teaching Innovation Centre, University of Hertfordshire

ASET On the Future of Work took a look at the rapidly changing world of work, including reflections from ASET’s newest Trustees about what work was like when they first were employed, to how different they might imagine it to be when their young children enter the workforce. Drawing on recent UK Government research we also looked at the outcomes from the Employer Skills Survey, which highlighted the challenge of recruiting to professional roles which include advanced IT skills and complex analytical skills but also the lack of applicant interest in roles. Coupled with the insights from Future of Work Jobs and Skills in 2030 report which point towards an extended working life, the influence of generational waves in career choices, and an increase in virtualisation and remote working, it would appear that much work needs to be done to prepare graduates of the future with both the intellectual and digital capability they need – at every stage of their career. The call for greater flexibility, learning from the gig economy, brings with it an enhanced need for personal responsibility, self-management, agility and resilience - all in a time where the increased demand for mental health support for students is much reported.

Presentation

The screenshot shows a presentation slide with the ASET logo (Integrating Work and Learning) in the top right. The slide title is "Taking us back... Back in time...". Below the title is the question "What are your memories of your first ever workplace?". A Mentimeter poll is displayed with 15 responses in various colored boxes:

- Terrifying
- Being petrified of answering the phone
- Smell of deep fried food
- Was lucky enough to work with someone who became a long term mentor
- Exciting
- A great coffee machine
- Horrible green overalls
- Free lunches or dinners during my work at a motorway service station...
- Busy! I worked in a kitchen before/during Uni.
- Nerve-wracking!
- Early cold starts with a paper round
- Quiet and strict! (Library)
- Scolding/excitedly on a ladder trying to reach stock as that I could re-IB shelves. All the time!
- Sat down at my desk and my manager had put flowers and a welcome card on my desk
- Other staff playing tricks on the interns!
- Filing! Work experience at school in an accountancy firm
- My feet really hurt as I wore silly shoes and was on my feet all day. It was a stupid teenager at the time!
- Terrifying! Stuck on a Sainsbury's checkout having to make fake conversations with every customer.

At the bottom of the slide, it says "Future-proofing Placements: Sharing Success and Inspiring Innovation 4-6 September 2018 | University of Nottingham, Jubilee Campus" and "ASET On... the Future of Work Sarah Flynn, ASET Chair".

AS&T
INTEGRATING WORK AND LEARNING

Taking us back... Back in time...

What are your memories of your first ever workplace?

Wattressing in a racecourse - lots of gross mustard and horseradish!

Mean boss

Almost falling into the freezer getting frozen chicken out...

Strong tea and biscuit routine

Petty boss

Boring sundays. Bad pay. Awful uniforms.

Licking hundreds of envelopes before discovering they didn't need to be licked. Ouch.

school work experience at John Lewis. Staying the night of selling products and interacting with customers.

Struggling with the terminology (kretiko, spanakopita...)

Lots of washing up and pasties.

A corner shop. The memories are evil.

Growing up

Seen as a child who didn't know anything!

Paperwork... Everywhere!

Various student houses in Middlesbrough, in various states of unclean and disrepair...

Friendly

Very early starts and hard work for very low pay.

Burning myself on the ovens.

AS&T
INTEGRATING WORK AND LEARNING

Taking us back... Back in time...

What are your memories of your first ever workplace?

New friends

Took a pack of biscuits for the team to impress them but ended up eating them myself. #awkward

It turned out to be a really bizarre place. I can say no more...

Daunting, fun and a challenge learning how to best interact with all the different personalities.

Out of my depth, don't know how to speak to other staff, don't feel professional

Fun Interesting Tea breaks

Taking the past and making the coffee.

Painful feet from wattressing

Daunting, nervous, excited

Exciting as I was so very keen to help make a difference. Then reality kicked in.

Shopper!

Making many cups of tea!

It was better than I expected. I didn't group that I would be there. I was actually a regular customer, but then I had to be a regular customer for a while.

Being useless at stocking yogurts at a supermarket - dropped at least one every shift!

Poorly paid, terrible shift patterns, no training!

Kennel and Cottery in high school. Loved it, and they gave me a part job which helped me alot.

The smell of a McDonalds kitchen/changing room

AS&T
INTEGRATING WORK AND LEARNING

Taking us back... Back in time...

What are your memories of your first ever workplace?

100 recent ones as I am still here! I learnt from a student of the Business School to be a staff member and it took some adjustment then I thought 'There were many pros and cons but certainly I am enjoying it...

Picked on by 'grown ups'

The world's worst waitress! Too clumsy to carry several plates

My first job was when I was 10 years old. My 6 older siblings used to be the paperboy and I was tasked with getting the papers to the door. I was my mum's little helper and I was there in the bag for my siblings to deliver, as a production line.

A stuffy old room

Scary, no one was friendly and I hated answering the phone as everyone was listening.

Greasy pans - lots of greasy pans.

Enjoying being in a workplace

Lots of travelling (pre sat nav) I learnt that you're never lost, just 'temporarily misplaced'

Timed toilet breaks

Working in a lift in a department store everyone who got in said I bet this has its ups and downs

A hellish 2 weeks intensive training course in a tiny room when working at a colicentre

Sacked for being too shy

Fun and some illegal trade based on a local party that was responsible for me to go to college money from

Using the till at the bookshop and the excitement of handling all that cash

Scary place

Working in a village shop with lots of cats!

Cold, wet miserable weather & even more miserable workers!

AS&T
INTEGRATING WORK AND LEARNING

Taking us back... Back in time...

What are your memories of your first ever workplace?

Bacon sandwiches on a Friday

Went in as a catering assistant. Age 18. But was actually meant to be cleaning the floor and had to give breakfast for the whole company.

Being valued! Loved having responsibilities

My first job was a Saturday job at Debenhams. I was scared of using the till and would hide in the stock room.

Refreshing!

Brilliant team! Amazing promotion opportunities. The time of new ideas - lots of exciting new policies. Lots of travel and interesting opportunities.

Being cold! Putting fruit on top of tarts for 8 hours in a fridge.

Children can be quite difficult...

Having to hold my tongue with customers

Was sent in cellar to remove a dead rat

Stressful, lonely and poorly paid

Hot and confusing - pot washing in local b and b

Excited

Friday morning hangovers

Having to wake up early on a regular basis

Fast pace. Intimidating.

silver service

Started with a Saturday job - felt proud to get the job.

AS&T
INTEGRATING WORK AND LEARNING

Celebrating 25 years

What did work look like?

Trewins sets up shop in Harlequin Centre

John Lewis

AS&T
INTEGRATING WORK AND LEARNING

Memories of starting work...

When I first started work, every contact we worked with was saved in a folder sat on my manager's desk

We would write a letter to each employer asking them if they were to work with us again next year!

AS&T
INTEGRATING WORK AND LEARNING

Memories of starting work...

One of my first office roles was working in a busy sales office for a Tenpin bowling alley, pre computer systems, we took booking via a booking pad then blocked out the booking using squares representing time on a huge piece of paper that had all (30) lanes printed on them

We used A LOT of Tippex!

When the company brought in a computer system that would do it all and move lanes round it was amazing.... until all the company was online and they made the sales teams redundant!

AS&T
INTEGRATING WORK AND LEARNING

Memories of starting work...

When I started work for DWP I remember a tour of the office on my first day, including sights and smells of the smoking room.

I was under strict instructions that my Nokia 3310 should remain switched off and in my locker at all times!

I was also told all about the very progressive family friendly flexi policy, which meant I could swipe in and out whenever I liked - but my manager quickly reminded me that I was expected to be at my desk from 9am to 5pm and to take an hour for lunch.

On my placement...

- There was next to no security clearance or supervision
- I was given instant access to headed notepaper, and a signature stamp
- There was an electronic typewriter, but no computer for me
- I worked 60+hrs/wk, unpaid, and loved it

In my first graduate job...

- There was still no computer, no emails – lots of memos
- My graduate training programme was 6 weeks long
- I managed a team of 30 onsite, and 6 remotely
- I worked 60+hrs/wk, paid, and loved it

What are the challenges are students face now?

- Employment across numerous sectors is being automated, and this applies to the recruitment process too, where there has been a significant increase in the use of artificial intelligence (AI)
- Recruiters now record video of applicants responding to gamified interview questions. These can then be assessed by a computer running a complex algorithm...With companies looking for candidates who can show they are "passionate", "enthusiastic" and "committed", it's important to demonstrate behavioural characteristics that match their wish lists.
- That can be hard for a 21-year-old, who may not have had a **great deal of** experience. Which is why it is so important to get as **much work experience as possible** while at university, or on a gap year.

<https://amp.theguardian.com/education/2018/jul/09/how-remain-employable-21st-century-graduates?>

Future of Jobs, World Economic Forum

Time to impact industries' business models

Impact felt already: Rising geopolitical volatility, Mobile internet and cloud technology, Processing power, Big Data, Sharing economy, crowdsourcing, Middle class in emerging markets, Young demographics in emerging markets, Rapid urbanization, Changing nature of work, flexible work, Climate change, natural resources.

2015-2017: New energy supplies and technologies, The Internet of Things, Advanced manufacturing and 3D printing, Longevity and ageing societies, New consumer ethics, privacy issues, Women's economic power, aspirations.

2018-2020: Robotics, autonomous transport, Artificial Intelligence, Adv. materials, biotechnology.

Source: Future of Jobs Report, World Economic Forum

Future of Jobs, World Economic Forum

Average 35% of core skills will change between 2015 and 2020

Disruption across countries and industries	Percentage	Country/Region	Percentage
43%	Financial Services & Investors	48%	Italy
42%	Basic & Infrastructure	42%	India
39%	Mobility	41%	China
35%	Information & Communication Technology	41%	Turkey
33%	Professional Services	39%	South Africa
30%	Energy	39%	Germany
30%	Consumer	38%	France
29%	Health	37%	Mexico
27%	Media, Entertainment & Information	31%	Brazil
		28%	United States
		28%	United Kingdom
		27%	Australia
		25%	Japan
		21%	Gulf Cooperation Council
		19%	ASEAN

Source: Future of Jobs Report, World Economic Forum

Future of Jobs, World Economic Forum

Top 10 skills

in 2020	in 2015
1. Complex Problem Solving	1. Complex Problem Solving
2. Critical Thinking	2. Coordinating with Others
3. Creativity	3. People Management
4. People Management	4. Critical Thinking
5. Coordinating with Others	5. Negotiation
6. Emotional Intelligence	6. Quality Control
7. Judgment and Decision Making	7. Service Orientation
8. Service Orientation	8. Judgment and Decision Making
9. Negotiation	9. Active Listening
10. Cognitive Flexibility	10. Creativity

Source: Future of Jobs Report, World Economic Forum

Thinking about the future of work...

- I can imagine my son working from anywhere in his virtual office with the working environment around him changing from workplace to workplace. He will be able to walk into virtual meetings and emails will be a thing of the past. I can imagine a future of work where use of email is banned.
- Because of damage to our environment, I see her working in a much smaller world, using technology in smarter ways, perhaps in the environment she would like to work in drones to monitor hard to watch species or to look at the impact of pollution on particular areas. I imagine a lot of the work will take place remotely, with video feeds removing the need to travel.
- My son is quite convinced that his job will be videoing himself playing computer games and he will never need to leave his bedroom as anything he can't print with his 3D printer will be delivered to him by drone. I do think it will be very normal for him to working on a freelance basis, working remotely in a shared office space and using AI to assist him in his role.

Future of Work, a UK perspective

Four Government projected scenarios

What will jobs look like in 2030 and what skills will be in greatest demand?
Aim: Stimulate debate about how we can prepare for the future UK labour market: **by exploring four scenarios**

The Great Divide
Skills Activism
Forced Flexibility
Innovation Adaptation

Source: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/jobs-and-skills-in-2030>

Future of Work, a UK perspective

Trends shaping UK jobs and skills

- Demographic Change**
 - Ageing workforces and four-generational working
 - Growing diversity

Over the next decade the number of economically active people aged 65 and over is projected to increase by one third
- Changing work environments**
 - Increasing virtualisation and flexible workforces

1.3bn virtual workers globally by 2015
- New business ecosystems**
 - Companies as network organisations

About 40% of global CEOs expect the majority of innovation in the future to be co-developed with partners outside their organisation
- Digitalisation of production**
 - Advanced manufacturing processes e.g. smart factories and 3D printing

Near-shoring and decentralised production could lead to employment increases in manufacturing of between 100,000 and 200,000 workers by 2023

Source: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/jobs-and-skills-in-2030>

Future of Work, a UK perspective Jobs and skills in 2030



- Technology will pervade every work environment**
 - Digitalisation impacts on jobs and skills at all levels, all sectors
 - Winners and losers
 - Continuous up-skilling and adaptation fundamental
- Interconnectivity and collaboration**
 - Fluid, interconnected, network-oriented jobs
 - Challenge of developing the skills of a virtual, flexible workforce
 - Convergence between sectors, stimulates greater innovation between disciplines and leads to hybridisation of skills
- Increased individual responsibility**
 - Greater worker flexibility means individuals shoulder responsibility, including for skills development
 - Self-management skills
 - Personal agility and resilience vital, especially for young people
- An hourglass shaped, two-tiered labour market**
 - Highly skilled minority enjoy strong bargaining power, low skilled do not
 - Decline of traditional roles in middle of the skills and earnings range e.g. admin, manual
 - New jobs fill the middle ground, different entry routes and skills requirements

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/jobs-and-skills-in-2030>


Future of Work, a UK perspective Action for future skills



- Employers**
 - Attract, develop and retain world class talent?
 - Prepare for increasing workforce diversity, culturally and generationally?
- Individuals**
 - Encourage to take greater responsibility for investing in own skills?
 - Enable to jump across specialist knowledge boundaries?
- Education Providers**
 - Adapt learning programmes for interdisciplinary approach to innovation?
 - Use technology to facilitate new modes and content of provision?
- Policy Makers**
 - Enable employers to take greater control of skills system?
 - Strategy for ensuring low skilled can adapt to a shifting labour market?

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/jobs-and-skills-in-2030>

Flexibility and work life balance?



Employer skills survey 2017
August 2016
PwC Research

1/3 of vacancies hard to fill; often due to a lack of the required skills, qualifications or experience among applicants...skills disproportionately lacking for professional roles included advanced IT skills and complex analytical skills...but also lack of applicants for the role, specific issues related to the job role (e.g. unattractive terms and conditions or unsociable hours) or the employer (e.g. remote location or poor transport links)

PwC tells new staff they can choose what hours to work
PwC says the aim is to attract skilled people who don't want to be tied to traditional 9-to-5 hours.
Flexible working patterns can include anything from shorter weekly working hours, to only working for a few months a year.
PwC, which will make recruits to relevant projects rather than specific roles, hopes the move will give more diverse talent route into the firm.

PwC, one of the so-called Big Four accountancy giants, said that it decided to embrace the gig economy. In a study it carried out showed that almost 46% of 2,000 respondents prioritised flexible working hours and a good work-life balance the most when choosing a job.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/business-45353786>

The future of classrooms, workshops and drop in session for students?



'My robot makes me feel like I haven't been forgotten'
By Philipp Selzer
Technology & Business reporter
20 August 2016



The small, cute-looking robot, made by Oslo-based start-up No Isolation, sits in the classroom and live streams video and audio back to Zoe's tablet or smartphone at home. She can speak through the robot and take part in lessons, also controlling where AV1 is looking.

When she wants to ask a question the robot's head starts blinking on and off to alert the teacher. And when she's too tired or sick to participate she can turn AV1's head blue as a signal.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/business-45332710>

Student Insights Panel

This year we were delighted to host a panel of students and recent graduates to share their all-important perspectives and insights. The session explored not only how students find their experiences with work based learning, but how they fitted in to their curriculum, and co-curricular and extra-curricular work and life.

The session explored; how we balance supporting students better, how we do this whilst also empowering them to help improve their own experiences and outcomes, and how we help them to work in partnership with academic and professional services staff, all with the aim to future-proof students for their workplace and for their lives.

The Panel

Apoorva Kashyap, Michael Jennings and Christopher McCausland, Ulster University

In their final year **Apoorva** and **Michael**, with **Christopher** who was then in his 2nd year, co-founded the Ulster Society of Student Engineers (USSE). With the support of School of Engineering staff, and seed funding, the society kick-started student led activities including; an electronics workshop, a computer networking lab, an induction day for 1st years and an inter-varsity robotics competition with Noel Sharkey (Robot Wars). This led to success as *Best New Society* and 'Runner-up' in the employability-focussed award, *Best Academic and Careers Society*, in the National Societies Awards 2018. The student-staff team also won the UUSU Partnership Award for their close working relationship and focus on student development.

Apoorva recently graduated with BSc (Hons.) Biomedical Engineering + DPP. In the coming year, she will be commencing her PhD in the treatment of cancer through Low energy plasma radiotherapy at The Nanotechnology and Integrated Bio-Engineering Centre (NIBEC) at Ulster University.

Michael has recently graduated with an MEng (Hons.) Electronic Engineering + German Masters Degree. During his course, Michael spent a semester in Bavaria, at the Augsburg University of Applied Sciences, followed by a placement year with a local electronics company. He is now working as a Research Associate in the Nanotechnology and Integrated Bio-Engineering Centre (NIBEC) at Ulster and plans to start a PhD in the coming weeks.

Christopher is currently on a year-long industrial placement with Johnson Controls International, as part of his BEng (Hons.) Electronic Engineering and is planning to transfer to MEng (Hons.) Electronic

Engineering + German. Christopher won the 'Schrader Prize for Academic Excellence' and was shortlisted for the 'Outstanding Committee member of the year award' for his role with the USSE.

Raphael Poisson, *University of Central Lancashire*

Raphael was born in France where he undertook a Dueti degree at the Université de Lorraine, IUT de Metz, moving to UCLan for his final year where he graduated with BA (Hons) International Business Communication. Graduating with first class honours, he has been undertaking an Internship over the summer at UCLan working on a project to analyse the impact of a placement year on academic grades. Raphael says it is not common to take a placement year in France, but that given the opportunity, and having seen the results of his project, he would have liked to. He has very much enjoyed analysing the research and is now looking forward to embarking on a MSc Marketing Management at UCLan in September.

Shannon Stack, *University of Southampton*

Shannon has just completed the 1st year of her BSc Business Management, and will shortly be looking for a placement year role in the field of digital marketing. Shannon has a keen interest in technology and has completed a 'Summer Excel Internship' in the Placements Office at the University of Southampton as a 'Digital Content Intern', where she had responsibility for developing and creating an online learning platform for interviews. Shannon also works for the Business School Marketing Team and uses social media as a marketing tool to engage prospective students.

On-Campus Promotions Brand Ambassadors

Niara Lee

Niara has recently graduated from the University of Leicester studying Law. During her time at university, she was a Baker Mckenzie Brand Ambassador and the Solicitors Representative within the Law Society. These roles allowed her to build her employability skills through part-time opportunities and to affiliate herself with a top UK law firm. From this, she was successful in securing a place on the Baker McKenzie Spring Vacation Scheme.

Vincent Chaglasyan

Vincent is a student at LSE currently completing his Masters. He is a Brand Ambassador for Cisco for the 2018-19 academic year and has previously represented employers such as the Financial Conduct Authority, J.P. Morgan and Accenture. On completing his masters he is looking to continue his journey and start his career in the USA.

ASET BURSARY PROJECTS


2018 ASET Research Bursary

The **ASET Research Bursary** was established to provide a **funded student placement opportunity**, and to grow the body of **research** into placement and work-based learning. The bursary is open to current students or recent graduates. This year's award, our 7th, was awarded to Loughborough University:

Award Winner: **Sophie Cranston**, Lecturer in Human Geography, **Loughborough University**
 Project Student: **Emma Bates**, BSc (Hons) Geography, 2015-2018, **Loughborough University**
 Project: **International Work Placements: Linking Experiences to Future Career Aspirations**

Emma's presentation can be seen below, and her final report [here](#).

Presentation

 <p>International Work Placements: Linking Experiences to Future Career Aspirations</p> <p>Emma Bates Dr Sophie Cranston Dr Helena Pimlott-Wilson</p> <p>Loughborough University <small>#InspiringWinners since 1909</small></p>	<p>Aims</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore the experiences of students who have undertaken international work placements, and examine the impact that this has upon their career aspirations • Examine how students understand the skills learnt on placement • Discuss methodologies of best supporting students on return from international work placements <p>Loughborough University <small>#InspiringWinners since 1909</small></p>
<p>Method</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 20 University alumni • 40% female, 60% male • A range of subjects • Semi-structured interviews • Peer-to-peer interview method <p>Loughborough University <small>#InspiringWinners since 1909</small></p>	<p>Motivations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One of two groups: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 'Purposefully international' 2. 'Accidentally international' • Motivated by one of two things: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Distinction 2. Experience <p>Loughborough University <small>#InspiringWinners since 1909</small></p>
<p>Experiences</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Highly positive experiences • Experiences in the workplace • Cultural immersion • Travelling <p>Sarah, Policy role, Belgium, 2017 Graduate: "I would definitely do it again actually. I think it is just a really good opportunity to push yourself. Erm, I think I grew quite a lot...that year."</p> <p>Loughborough University <small>#InspiringWinners since 1909</small></p>	<p>Aspirations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Future work/travel abroad • Type of company • Change in career direction • Work ethos <p>Loughborough University <small>#InspiringWinners since 1909</small></p>

<h3>Skills developed</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confidence • Independence • Open-minded • Communication <p>Loughborough University #InspiringWinners since 1909</p>	<h3>Support</h3> <p>Sarah, Policy role, Belgium, 2017 Graduate: "I think if you haven't learnt how to use your skills yourself whilst on placement, and apply that to your [...] work and your degree, you have probably not learnt enough"</p> <p>Nicholas, Analyst role, Colombia, 2018 Graduate: "There is only so much that University can do – they can't hold my hand throughout the whole process [...] I had done two years of [University] already and I knew what it was about. I knew what I had to do in my final year, and I got down and did it."</p> <p>Loughborough University #InspiringWinners since 1909</p>
<h3>Support</h3> <p>Lauren, Engineering role, Malaysia, 2017 Graduate: "with having uni's like backing and having the support of the uni, it's much easier to do like a leap into a placement for a year somewhere else, as opposed to doing it when you graduate and you're all on your own, like that's, that's mainly the reason I did it"</p> <p>Loughborough University #InspiringWinners since 1909</p>	<h3>Conclusion and implications</h3> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Support strategies should respect the importance of independence to students 2. More focus on international placements and help in finding them 3. Value the quality of personal contact with Placement Supervisors 4. Utilise peer-to-peer support <p>Loughborough University #InspiringWinners since 1909</p>
<h3>Thank you</h3> <p>If you have any questions, please contact us at:</p> <p>Emma Bates: E.Bates2@lboro.ac.uk Dr. Sophie Cranston: S.Cranston@lboro.ac.uk Dr. Helena Pimlott-Wilson: H.Pimlott-wilson@lboro.ac.uk</p> <p>Loughborough University #InspiringWinners since 1909</p>	

ASET BURSARY PROJECTS

2018 ASET Summer Project Bursary

A second ASET bursary was launched in 2013, and in 2017 relaunched as the **ASET Summer Project Bursary**. Distinct from the Research Bursary, the Summer Placement Bursary offers a placement opportunity **exclusively for undergraduates**. This year's bursary was awarded to Ulster University:

Award Winner: **Laura Bradley**, Senior Lecturer in Marketing, Department of Global Business and Enterprise, **Ulster University**

Project Student: **Bryony McCormick**, BSc (Hons) Business Studies with Marketing, 2016-2019, Ulster University

Project: **Millennial Students Perceptions of Employability: Lessons for Generation X & Y Academics**

Bryony's presentation can be seen below, and her final report [here](#).

Presentation

<p>MILLENNIAL STUDENTS PERCEPTIONS OF EMPLOYABILITY: LESSONS FOR GENERATION X & Y ACADEMICS</p> <hr/> <p>2018 ASET SUMMER PROJECT BURSARY DR LAURA BRADLEY, ULSTER UNIVERSITY BRYONY MCCORMICK, STUDENT BURSARY RECIPIENT</p>	<p>CONTENT</p> <hr/> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Millennials – Who are they? • Why is employability so important? • Objectives • Methodology • Findings • Key conclusions • Who learns from this? • Next stage of the research
<p>MILLENNIALS – WHO ARE THEY?</p> <hr/> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need to develop programmes, interventions and supports to cater to their specific characteristics and needs. • Very distinct group from previous Baby Boomers and Generations X and Y. • Generation Xers stayed on average 3.4 years in a post while Generation Yers decreased to 2.7 years' tenure. • 67% of Baby Boomers actually entered their fifties in long-term employment, which is a changing future trend. (Harris, 2015). • Millennials, (Guardian, 2011) – <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seeking immediate pleasure with low boredom thresholds • Multi-taskers • Engaging in multiple roles while continually learning as they go • Millennials will change job 4 times in the ten years' post-graduation, at a minimum • By 2020 these Millennials will make up 50% of the global workforce. (PWC, 2016). 	<p>WHY EMPLOYABILITY IS SO IMPORTANT?</p> <hr/> <p>Market Led Drivers of Changing Career Trajectories</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Changes in the global economy and labour market led to increased insecurity – exacerbated by the 'one job for life' • Fewer jobs available and competition is intense • Longer career ladders compounded by the age of retirement increasing and employees expected to work until 70 thereby limiting potential in-job/career promotion opportunities • Demographic changes in global markets driving how and whom businesses recruit to meet their business needs currently and in the future • Increased automation, both now and in the future, is seeing job roles change or disappear - at least 30% of the job roles that exist in 2015 will not exist in 10 to 20 years' times. (Harris, 2015) • The location and hours of work are also no longer as rigid or fixed with the priority being productivity, efficiency and the rise of telework policies as opposed to 5 days, 9 to 5 office based • Zero hours' contracts and fragmented work roles, which are sliced into component parts to be undertaken by multiple, sub-contracted individuals, are also starting to emerge. It is also acknowledged that employers are looking at their employee's longevity in different ways • Emergence of the 'knowledge' economy where wealth and value are associated with knowledge and ideas as much as material goods - new industries emerging such as nano-technologies

WHY EMPLOYABILITY IS IT SO IMPORTANT?

Personal drivers of change

- Changing labour market is driven a generation
- Millennials now require more fulfilling careers - no longer provided by one job/career
- Millennials more inclined to satisfy their personal needs before considering the organisational needs – which is a very important recruitment and staff development consideration for organisations globally
- Portfolio careers are evidenced more frequently among entrepreneurial graduates with entrepreneurs expecting to spread their careers across multiple disciplines
- Millennials more like marketable brands with values when considered in the context of the labour market because of multiple occupations/jobs and the enhanced focus on skill sets
- Inclined towards more than one occupation/job either simultaneously or consecutively due to labour market insecurities and to reduce over-reliance on one trajectory/source of income

OBJECTIVES

The key objectives are:

1. To better understand undergraduate Millennial student's perceptions regarding employability
2. Identify the perceptions of employability among Millennial students
3. Identify employability preparedness and trends among Millennial students

METHODOLOGY

- Undergraduate students
- Face to face survey
- 396 respondents
- Stage 1 research project
- Follow up interviews

THE DEMOGRAPHICS - GENDER

Sex	Count
Male	65
Female	75

THE DEMOGRAPHICS - AGE

Age	Count
18-24	85
25-34	80
35-44	10

THE DEMOGRAPHICS – MODE OF STUDY

Mode of Study	Count
Full Time	95
Part Time	5

WORKING WHILE STUDYING

Working While Studying?	Count
Yes	85
No	15

YEAR OF STUDY

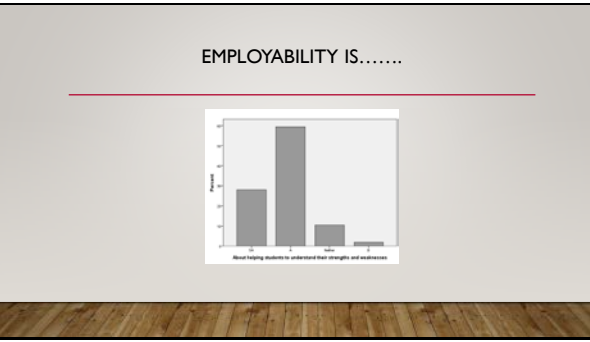
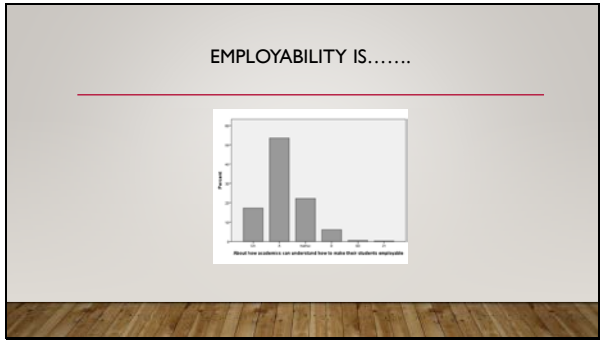
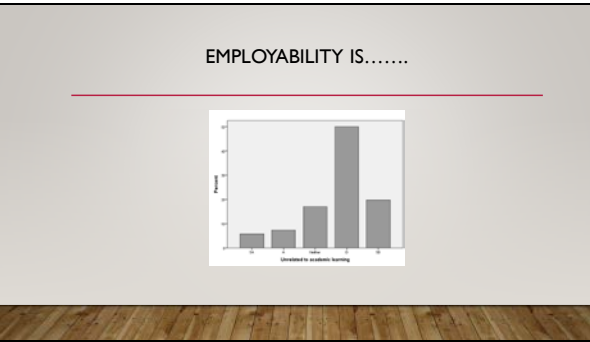
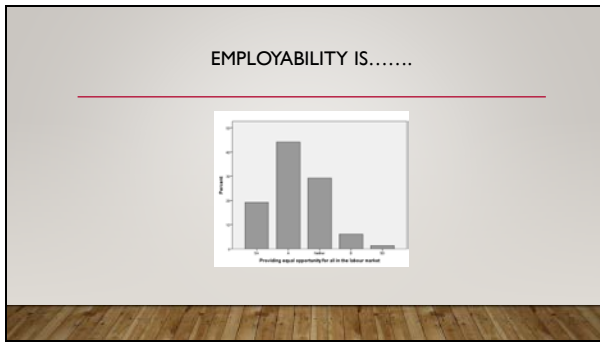
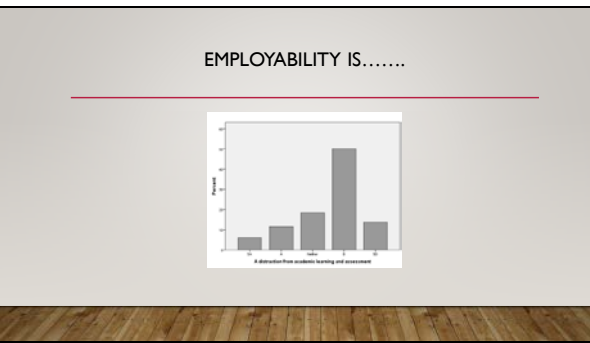
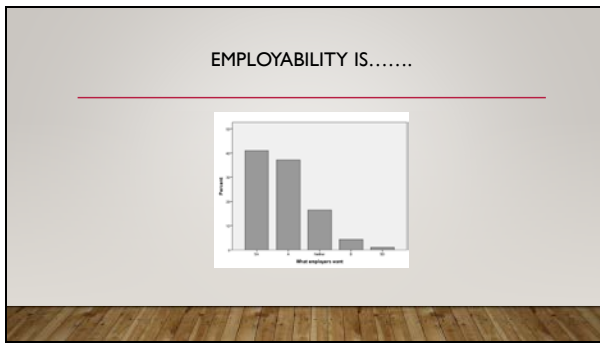
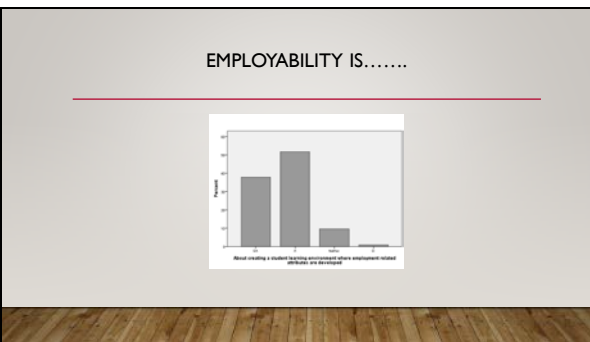
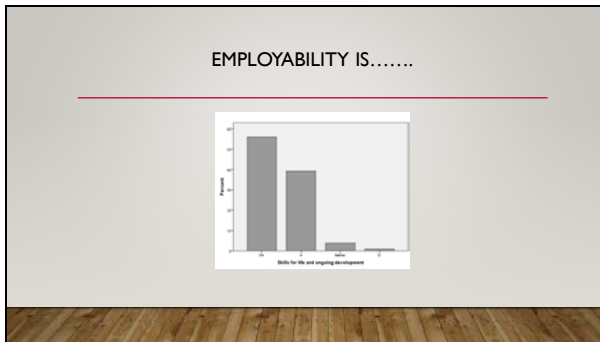
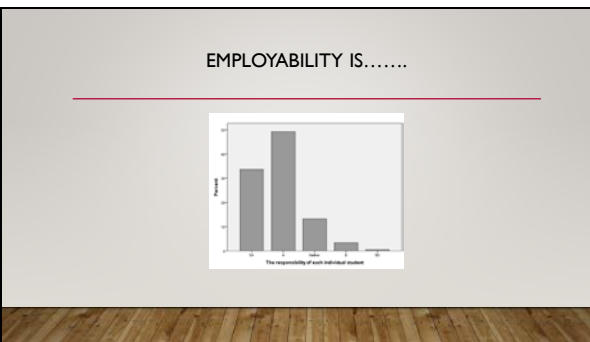
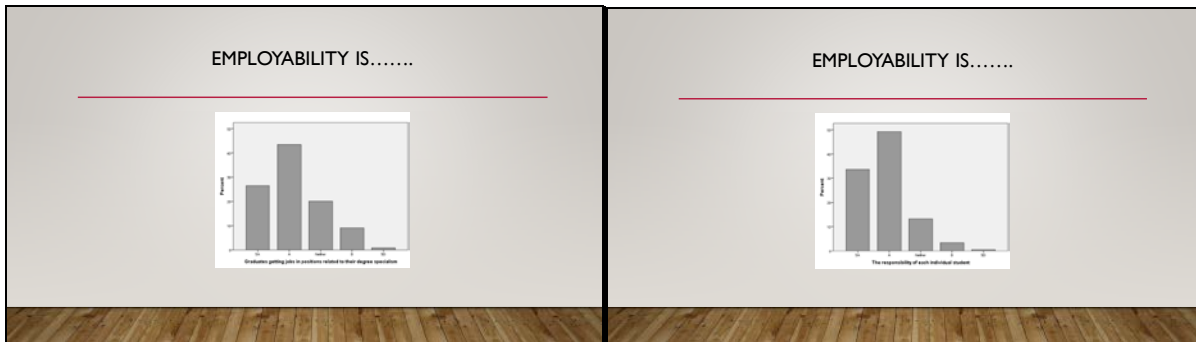
Year of Study	Count
1st Year	25
2nd Year	20
3rd Year	15
4th Year	40

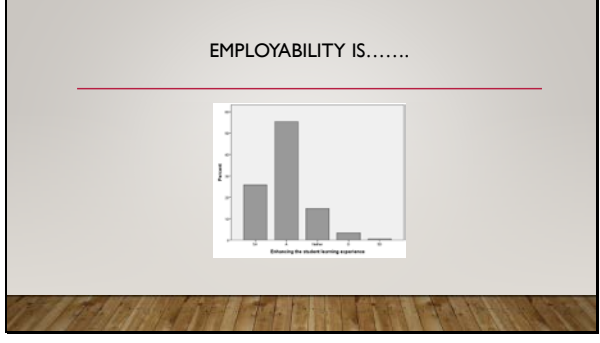
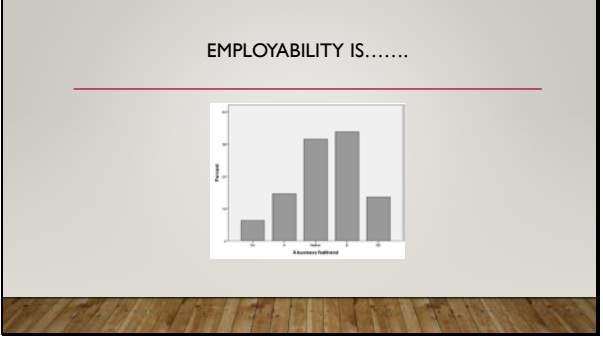
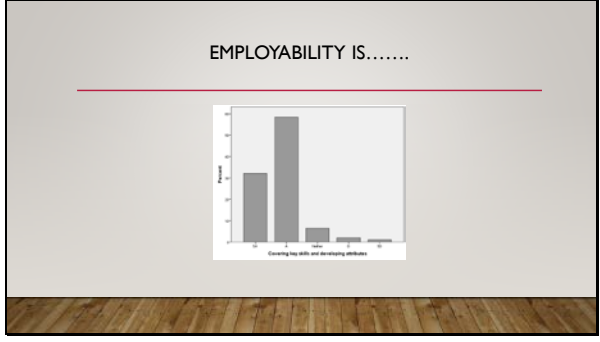
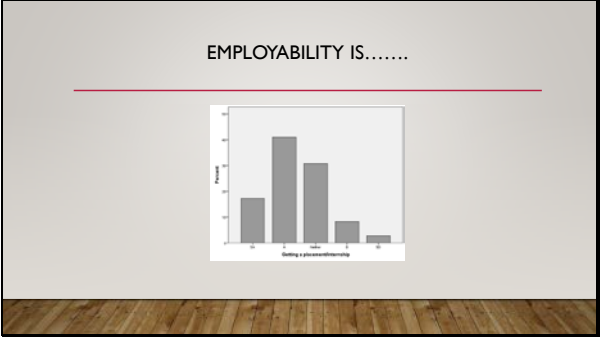
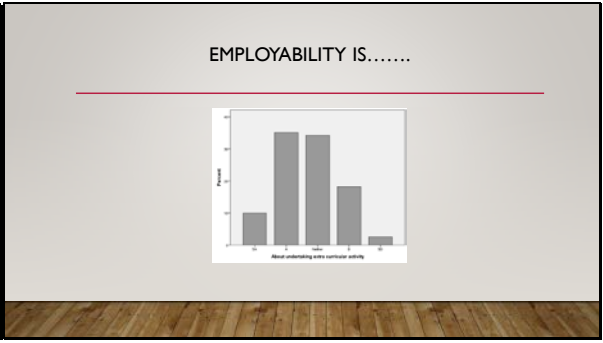
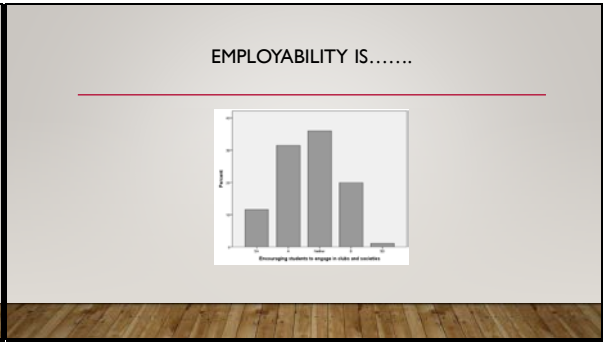
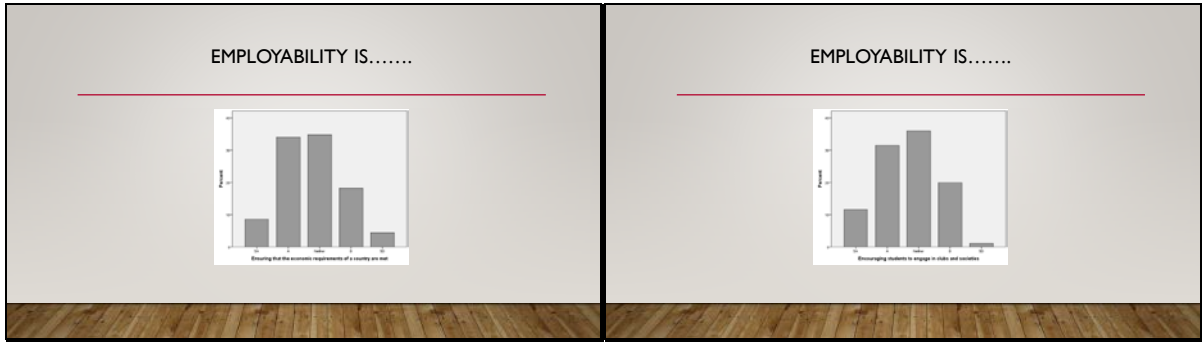
DO YOU UNDERSTAND EMPLOYABILITY

How do you understand the term 'Employability?'	Count
I understand it	85
I don't understand it	10
I don't know	5

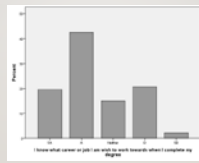
EMPLOYABILITY IS.....

For undergraduate students of all ages	Count
A set of skills	85
A set of attitudes	75
A set of experiences	10
A set of knowledge	10

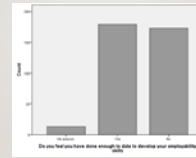




UNCERTAIN CAREER ASPIRATIONS



PERCEPTION OF EFFORT



WHAT DID WE FIND OUT? FACTOR ANALYSIS – MULTIPLE FACTORS

	1	2	3	4	5
A challenge for non-Universities has traditionally worked	0.452				
Emping the graduate market requires	0.311				
Other young customer segments	0.451				
Building very different profiles in the University to deliver the curriculum	0.451				
Working across the world of work		0.325			
Using the skills needed for the market place		0.248			
Creating the skills and developing pathways		0.224			
Enhancing the student learning experience		0.465			
Skills for work and ongoing development		0.471			
The responsibility of work-related studies			-0.717		
The responsibility of employers			-0.482		
Placing the Government agenda			-0.487		
The responsibility of non-University courses			-0.481		
The job of the Career Development Centre				-0.308	
Developing Career Development Centres				-0.481	
Focus on developing entrepreneurship activity					0.711
Continued to address learning					0.267
A challenge for students, learning and assessment					0.311
University type					0.284
A business network					0.284

KEY CONCLUSIONS

- Employability is well understood by students
- 5 key factors have emerged around – University customers, skills and experience, stakeholder responsibilities, extra curricular activities and academic link of employability
- There is consensus on value of placement
- Low numbers placed does not reflect value of placement – contradiction!
- Lack of clear direction in terms of career aspirations may be impacting employability engagement – I don't know what I want to do!
- Leaves unanswered the questions of:
 - How do we predict the likely propensity of a student to engage with placement and employability initiatives?
 - Why students do not widely engage with employability and placement interventions?

WHO LEARNS FROM THIS?

- Policy makers – employability strategists and operational objectives
- Career professionals and academic staff – embedding employability initiatives
- Higher education sector – the need for change
- Employers – move away from Generation X and Y needs and more towards Millennials

NEXT STAGE OF THE RESEARCH

- Follow up interviews
- Stage 2 survey developed with revised factors and categories
- Stage 2 - Ireland and UK wide study
- Stage 3 – Europe study participants recruitment in November 2018

ASET PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT TASTERS

Are you Fit for the Future?




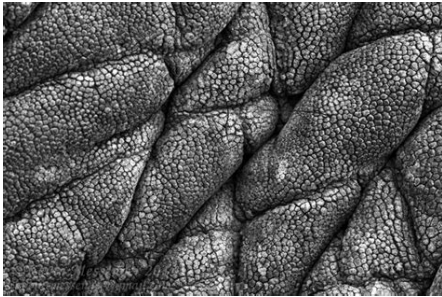

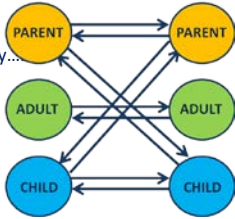
It's not just our students who need to be fit for the working world that lies ahead. These 45minute sessions were designed and presented by ASET Trustees to help delegates to think about their own development, wellbeing, recognition and creativity.




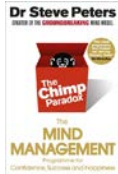



Having Difficult Conversations

Tighter budgets, increased expectations and an uncertain employment market are challenges that we face in HE. Unfortunately, these stressing factors often lead to bad behaviours by staff, colleagues and managers alike. Increasingly, the role of a placements officer is also that of a parent/carer/social worker. Conversations about how people dress, behave or smell are common place and I'm fairly sure this isn't in our job descriptions. This session will look at how we can have these necessary, but difficult conversations.

James Corbin, ASET Trustee and Head of Careers and Employability, University of Kent

Presentation

 <p>I KEEP six honest serving-men (They taught me all I knew); Their names are What and Why and When And How and Where and Who. I send them over land and sea, I send them east and west; But after they have worked for me, I give them all a rest.</p> <p>I let them rest from nine till five, For I am busy then, As well as breakfast, lunch, and tea, For they are hungry men. But different folk have different views; I know a person small— She keeps ten million serving-men, Who get no rest at all!</p> <p>She sends'em abroad on her own affairs, From the second she opens her eyes— One million Hows, two million Wheres, And seven million Whys!</p>	 <h3>Navigating Difficult Conversations</h3> <p>James Corbin, Head of Careers and Employability, University of Kent Vice-Chair ASET</p>
 	 <h3>Navigating difficult conversations</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Many reasons for needing them • No one enjoys it • Up, down, across and diagonally... • https://youtu.be/KpS8P4Trdq <p>Think about a conversation you have had, or need to have</p> 

<p>Six Honest Men</p>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who • What • Why • Where • When • How 	<p>Who</p>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are you the right person to have this conversation? • Are they the person you need to be speaking to? • If you are managing up, it is ok to bring someone else with you. • If it is disciplinary, consider an HR representative. • Remember that the person may have other issues, whether they are student, colleague, manager or employer
<p>What</p>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be clear about what you need to say in advance, at the meeting and afterwards • Be clear about what you want to get out of the conversation – bottom line. • Not everything has to be covered, or in one go. Just because you have a list, you don't have to read it all. • Remember that emotion will affect how you perceive things before, during and after. • Not everyone will react in the same way or the way you expect. • The what may be interpreted/reported differently... 	<p>Where</p>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Think about the location of your conversation. How does this play into the parent/child dynamic? • Think about potential for distraction/interruption. Telephones, people knocking on doors. • If someone is likely to get upset, are they in a suitable environment? 
<p>When –</p>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Timing is as important as location <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Think about routines – Think about the impact on their work/life balance (being fired on Christmas Eve...) – Is the conversation time critical? – Will they have someone there to support them afterwards? 	<p>Why – reasons for having the conversation</p>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This is one of the most critical and should really be done first. • The converse – what will happen if I don't do this should be asked. • Think about your motivation – this should underpin any approach. If you are trying to help them, this must be clear. If it is a disciplinary – why are you doing it?
<p>How – the medium and the process</p>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Think about the medium you use <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Face to face, Email, Text... • Noticed and wonder, conversation extenders, • How will be impacted by everything else. Should you follow up in writing? • What are the escalation points and processes? Are you sufficiently prepared. • What are the back up options if this goes wrong? 	<p>Outcomes</p>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You don't need to do everything in one go • You need to be aware of the other person's limits • Honesty and openness go a long way • Give SMART objectives for specific outcomes • Change takes more than one person • It will never be yesterday



Stress Drivers, mindfulness and some time to relax

It is important to look after our own wellbeing and remember that self-care is not selfish. This session offered delegates a chance to step back from the hustle and bustle of conference, whilst also looking at recognising their individual 'stress drivers' - the people and things that decrease their stress tolerance. The session offered simple tools and techniques to refer to, in semester 1, and some time to practice mindfulness.

Rebecca Evans, ASET Treasurer and Assistant Head of Student Placement, **University of Leeds** and **Helyn Taylor**, ASET Trustee and Employability Specialist, **Swansea University Employability Academy**

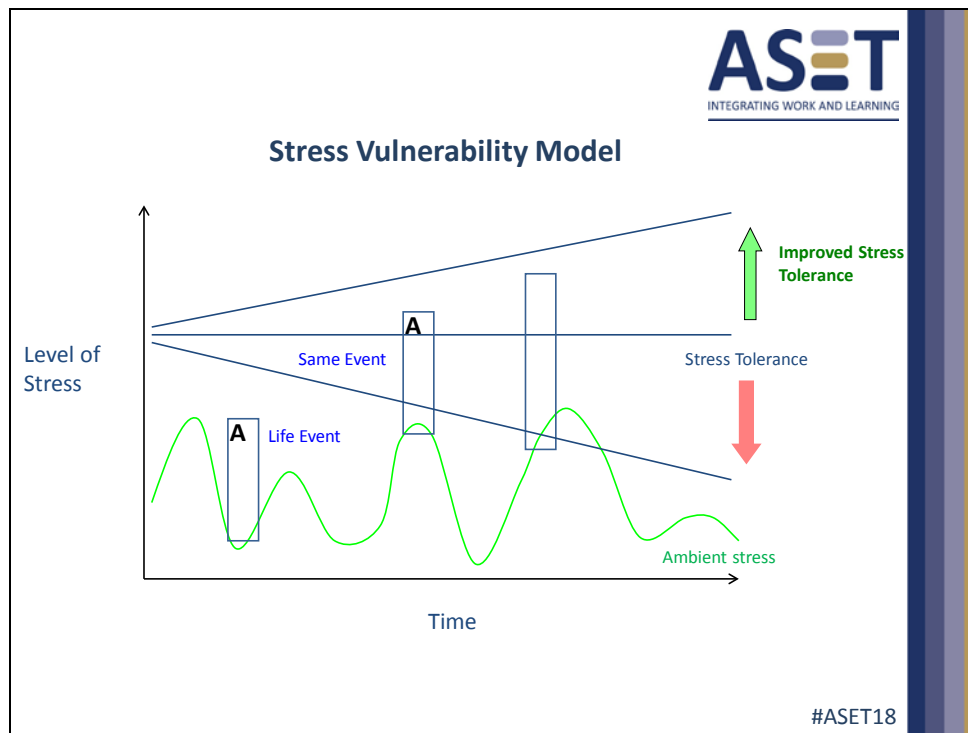
Session notes

What is stress?

'The adverse reaction people have to excessive pressures or other types of demand placed on them at work and outside work' (Health & Safety Executive)

Stress is not an illness - it is a state. However when too excessive and prolonged, mental and physical illness may develop. Work is generally good for people, provided demands and pressures are balanced with skills and knowledge, but work can also be a great source of pressure. It is important to remember that what is happening outside work can also have an impact on people's ability to perform effectively at work, or vice versa, and stress can also result from being bored and having too little to do as well as from being over worked. Stress also affects people in different ways.

The **Stress Vulnerability model** helps make sense of the daily stress we have to cope with. It shows how a build-up of stressful events can have a negative impact on health and quality of life.



- Ambient stress = daily stress e.g. paying bills, appointments, housework
- Stress tolerance level - your tolerance to stress, it enables you to cope with daily stress
- Life events - stressful events that happen at any time and are additional to daily 'ambient stress' e.g. bereavement, relationship breakdown, unexpected bill
- Changes in stress tolerance level - over the course of time this can decline resulting in an inability to cope with the ambient stress of day to day life
- New healthy levels of stress tolerance – a way of being able to cope with ambient stress and stressful life events is to recognise the need to access support

Unhelpful coping strategies - bottle up feelings, work longer hours, don't delegate, don't say no, take work home, be a perfectionist, procrastinate and avoid, don't take breaks, don't talk about it, squeeze out hobbies.

For **five effective coping strategies** and wellbeing tips visit


<https://www.mind.org.uk/workplace/mental-health-at-work/taking-care-of-yourself/five-ways-to-wellbeing>

or watch

https://issuu.com/neweconomicsfoundation/docs/five_ways_to_well-being?viewMode=presentation

Stress driver’s questionnaire - Kahler, T. (1975) identified five common drivers that motivate us, and which can be at the root of dysfunctional behaviours. These are commonly framed as the Transactional Analysis drivers, although they can be used stand-alone.

Complete a Drivers Questionnaire



Driver Questionnaire

Answer 'yes', 'no' or 'to some extent' to the following questions:

1. Do you set yourself high standards and then criticise yourself for failing to meet them?

YES	NO	TO SOME EXTENT
-----	----	----------------
2. Is it important to you to be right?

YES	NO	TO SOME EXTENT
-----	----	----------------
3. Do you feel annoyed or irritated by small messes or discrepancies, such as spots on a carpet or the wallpaper, or an ornament or tool out of place, a disorderly presentation of work?

YES	NO	TO SOME EXTENT
-----	----	----------------
4. Do you hate being interrupted?

YES	NO	TO SOME EXTENT
-----	----	----------------
5. Do you like to explain things in small detail and precisely?

YES	NO	TO SOME EXTENT
-----	----	----------------

Score 1 for yes and ½ for some extent. Total this section _____

6. Do you do things, especially for others that you don't really want to do?

YES	NO	TO SOME EXTENT
-----	----	----------------
7. Is it important for you to be liked?

YES	NO	TO SOME EXTENT
-----	----	----------------
8. Are you easily persuaded?

YES	NO	TO SOME EXTENT
-----	----	----------------
9. Do you dislike being different?

YES	NO	TO SOME EXTENT
-----	----	----------------
10. Do you dislike conflict?

YES	NO	TO SOME EXTENT
-----	----	----------------

Score 1 for yes and ½ for some extent. Total this section _____

#ASET18

The questionnaire is not a ‘personality test’, it is intended to stimulate self-awareness and indicate the kind of stress behaviour you may typically or frequently get into. Whilst our driver can sometimes be a strength, under stress it can limit our capacity to be effective. The more we understand what contributes to our stress the easier it is to identify and combat.

The session closed with guided mindfulness before clarifying some ideas and tips which can be used to support everyday practice.

The Benefits of Getting more Involved with ASET and Planning the Next Step in your Career

Achieving at institution level is brilliant, but if you feel you have more to contribute and want to share your knowledge and skills at a wider level the ASET Board offers you this and so much more. Building a new network with professionals who share the same passion and enthusiasm as you is liberating and becoming a part of the ASET board can open your eyes to opportunities you had never considered...

Vianna Renaud, ASET Trustee and Placement Development Advisor, Bournemouth University and Mohson Khan, ASET Trustee and Professional Liaison Unit Manager, City, University of London

Session notes

The aim of the session was to discuss and explore how getting further involved with ASET can provide professional benefits. By sharing their personal stories, the presenters were able to reflect upon their experiences. For both, one more experienced and one newly appointed, taking part in ASET as a Trustee had significantly changed their personal perspective. They both considered their knowledge of the sector had vastly increased since joining the Board and as a result, felt more empowered in sharing Best Practice at their home institutions. This aspect was particularly relevant to session attendees who expressed similar feelings of isolation or 'working within an island'. By taking part in ASET activities, one was able to see the bigger picture and to gain a better sense of Best Practice across the sector. This information could then be used to implement new policies or procedures.

Along with the professional benefit of taking part, another key element was that of personal empowerment. The impact on the individual can be great, particularly as confidence in their work grew by speaking to others. This informal mentoring had been invaluable for both presenters and inspired them to develop further.

Areas discussed included:

1. Personal and professional impact
2. How to get further involved with ASET
 - a. Joining ASET as a co-opt Trustee
 - b. Hosting an ASET Regional Hub
 - c. Asking the ASET team (trustees and staff) about options to be better be involved
3. Thinking about the bigger picture and where you want to be
4. Using the opportunities open to you as a trustee to pursue your own professional goals e.g. Research

UK Professional Standards Framework (UK PSF) (HEA)

The Higher Education Academy, now merged into AdvanceHE along with the Leadership Foundation and Equality Challenge Unit, has provided a framework to help develop staff (both Academic and Professional Services) in learning and teaching knowledge, skills and values. Seeking Fellowship, at Associate Fellow (AFHEA), Fellow (FHEA), Senior Fellow (SFHEA) or Principal (PFHEA) not only certifies existing skills and achievements, but can be a rewarding journey of reflecting on our own development and sign post our next steps. This taster will explore the benefits of, and routes to obtain these Fellowships.

Colin Turner, ASET Trustee and Professor of Engineering Education, Ulster University and

Brian Byers, ASET Trustee and Employability Services Manager, Ulster University

Presentation

UK Professional Standards Framework (UK PSF) (AdvanceHE - HEA)
 Professor Colin Turner PFHEA
 Brian Byers SFHEA

Areas of activity

- A.1 Design and plan learning activities and/or programmes of study
- A.2 Teach and/or support learning
- A.3 Assess and give feedback to learners
- A.4 Develop effective learning environments and approaches to student support and guidance
- A.5 Engage in continuing professional development in subjects / disciplines and their pedagogy, incorporating research, scholarship and the evaluation of professional practice

Core knowledge

- K1 The subject material
- K2 Appropriate methods for teaching and learning in the subject area and at the level of the academic programme
- K3 How students learn, both generally and within their subject / disciplinary areas
- K4 The use and value of appropriate learning technologies
- K5 Methods of evaluating the effectiveness of teaching
- K6 The implications of quality assurance and quality enhancement for academic and professional practice with a particular focus on teaching

Professional value

- V1 Respect individual learners and learning communities
- V2 Promote participation in higher education and equality of opportunity for learners
- V3 The evidence informed approaches and the outcomes from research, scholarship and continuing professional development
- V4 Acknowledge the wider context in which higher education operates recognising the implications for professional practice


Areas of Activity (A1 – A5)

- Design and plan learning activities and/or programmes of study
- Teach and/or supporting learning
- Assess and give feedback to learners
- Developing effective environments and approaches to student support and guidance
- Engage in continuing professional development in subjects / disciplines and their pedagogy, incorporating research, scholarship and the evaluation of professional practice


Core Knowledge (K1– K6)

- The subject material
- Appropriate methods for teaching and learning in the subject area and at the level of the academic programme
- How students learn, both generally and in the subject / disciplinary area
- The use and value of appropriate learning technologies
- Methods for evaluating the effectiveness of teaching
- The implications of quality assurance and enhancement for academic and professional practice with a particular focus on teaching

Professional Values (V1 – V4)



1. Respect for individual learners and diverse learning communities
2. Promote participation in higher education and equality of opportunity for learners
3. Use evidence-informed approaches and the outcomes from research, scholarship and continuing professional development
4. Acknowledge the wider context in which higher education operates recognising the implications for professional practice




Categories of Fellowship



- AFHEA - Associate Fellow
- FHEA – Fellow
- SFHEA – Senior Fellow
- PFHEA – Principal Fellow

Associate Fellow – AFHEA – Descriptor 1




Demonstrates an understanding of specific aspects of effective teaching, learning support methods and student learning. Individuals should be able to provide evidence of:

- Successful engagement with at least two of the five Areas of Activity
- Successful engagement in appropriate teaching and practices related to these Areas of Activity
- Appropriate Core Knowledge and understanding of at least K1 and K2
- A commitment to appropriate Professional Values in facilitating others' learning
- Relevant professional practices, subject and pedagogic research and/or scholarship within the above activities
- Successful engagement, where appropriate, in professional development activity related to teaching, learning and assessment responsibilities

Individuals able to provide evidence of effectiveness in relation to their professional role(s), which, typically, will include at least some teaching and/or learning support responsibilities. This teaching and learning role may sometimes be undertaken with the assistance of more experienced teachers or mentors. Typically, those likely to be at Descriptor 1 (D1) include:

- Early career researchers with some teaching responsibilities (e.g. PhD students, GTAs, contract researchers/post doctoral researchers etc.)
- Staff new to teaching (including those with part-time academic responsibilities)
- Staff who support academic provision (e.g. learning technologists, learning developers and learning resource/library staff)
- Staff who undertake demonstrator/teach-in roles that incorporate some teaching-related responsibilities
- Experienced staff in relevant professional areas who may be new to teaching and/or supporting learning, or who have a limited teaching portfolio

Fellow – FHEA – Descriptor 2




Demonstrates a broad understanding of effective approaches to teaching and learning support as key contributions to high quality student learning. Individuals should be able to provide evidence of:

- Successful engagement across all five Areas of Activity
- Appropriate knowledge and understanding across all aspects of Core Knowledge
- A commitment to all the Professional Values
- Successful engagement in appropriate teaching practices related to the Areas of Activity
- Successful incorporation of subject and pedagogic research and/or scholarship within the above activities, as part of an integrated approach to academic practice
- Successful engagement in continuing professional development in relation to teaching, learning, assessment and, where appropriate, related professional practices

Individuals able to provide evidence of broadly based effectiveness in more substantive teaching and supporting learning roles(s). Such individuals are likely to be established members of one or more academic and/or academic-related teams. Typically those likely to be at Descriptor 2 (D2) include:

- Early career academics
- Academic-related and/or support staff holding substantive teaching and learning responsibilities
- Experienced academics relatively new to UK higher education
- Staff with (sometimes significant) teaching-only responsibilities including, for example, within work-based settings

Senior Fellow – SFHEA – Descriptor 2



Demonstrates a thorough understanding of effective approaches to teaching and learning support as a key contribution to high quality student learning. Individuals should be able to provide evidence of:

- Successful engagement across all five Areas of Activity
- Appropriate knowledge and understanding across all aspects of Core Knowledge
- A commitment to all the Professional Values
- Successful engagement in appropriate teaching practices related to the Areas of Activity
- Successful incorporation of subject and pedagogic research and/or scholarship within the above activities, as part of an integrated approach to academic practice

Individuals able to provide evidence of a sustained record of effectiveness in relation to teaching and learning, incorporating for example, the organisation, leadership and/or management of specific aspects of teaching and learning provision. Such individuals are likely to lead or be members of established academic teams. Typically, those likely to be at Descriptor 3 (D3) include:


- Experienced staff able to demonstrate, impact and influence through, for example, responsibility for leading, managing or organising programmes, subjects and/or disciplinary areas
- Experienced subject mentors and staff who support those new to teaching
- Experienced staff with departmental and/or wider teaching and learning support advisory responsibilities within an institution

Senior Fellow – SFHEA - continued



- Successful engagement in continuing professional development in relation to teaching, learning, assessment, scholarship and, as appropriate, related academic or professional practices
- Successful co-ordination, support, supervision, management and/or mentoring of others (whether individuals and/or teams) in relation to teaching and learning

Principal Fellow – PFHEA – Descriptor 3




Demonstrates a sustained record of effective strategic leadership in academic practice and academic development as a key contribution to high quality student learning. Individuals should be able to provide evidence of:

- Active commitment to and championing of all Dimensions of the Framework, through work with students and staff and in institutional developments
- Successful, strategic leadership to enhance student learning, with a particular, but not necessarily exclusive, focus on enhancing teaching quality in institutional, and/or (inter)national settings
- Establishing effective organisational policies and/or strategies for supporting and promoting others (e.g. through mentoring, coaching) in delivering high quality teaching and support for learning

Individuals, as highly experienced academics, able to provide evidence of a sustained and effective record of impact at a strategic level in relation to teaching and learning, as part of a wider commitment to academic practice. This may be within their institution or wider (inter)national settings. Typically, those likely to be at Descriptor 4 (D4) include:

- Highly experienced and/or senior staff with wide-ranging academic or academic-related strategic leadership responsibilities in connection with key aspects of teaching and supporting learning
- Staff responsible for institutional strategic leadership and policy-making in the area of teaching and learning
- Staff who have strategic impact and influence in relation to teaching and learning that extends beyond their own institution

Principal Fellow – PFHEA - continued



- Championing, within institutional and/or wider settings, an integrated approach to academic practice (incorporating, for example, teaching, learning, research, scholarship, administration etc.)
- A sustained and successful commitment to, and engagement in, continuing professional development related to academic, institutional and/or other professional practices

<p>Applying for Fellowship</p> <p>ASET INTEGRATING WORK AND LEARNING</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some institutions offer internal schemes, you should check this first. • Otherwise you can apply directly to AdvanceHE, you may be able to avoid application fees using an internal accredited scheme. • You will need to make a clear claim that you meet the descriptor you choose, so consider the evidence base carefully. • You will need referees / advocates also. You may need them, depending on category, to be internal or external, and you may need them also to have a category of Fellowship. • There may be variations in internal accredited schemes, so you need to consult this in detail. • In making a claim, be careful to be explicit about what you did, why, how, and about the impact of your work. • Be sure to consult and reference the pedagogical literature. 	<p>Exercise</p> <p>ASET INTEGRATING WORK AND LEARNING</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider which descriptor is most appropriate for your application, D1– D4 • Pick a partner • Discuss, with them, how you feel you meet the dimensions of practice requirements (Areas of Activity, Core Knowledge and Professional Values). • Write them down, it's easy to forget important things in your evidence base. • Remember to think broadly about your work and these dimensions. • Help your partner explore where the evidence may lie. • Can you identify gaps? If so, are these gaps in experience and capability, or evidence. If the latter, what do you need to do to secure this evidence.
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Lego – we’re serious about play!

Have you ever been to a meeting where just one, or maybe two voices are heard? Do you ever wonder why some people (including yourself) can’t or won’t speak up when new ideas, products or services are being developed? We have a solution to getting *every* voice heard – it’s all about Lego, specifically, Lego Serious Play (LSP).

Francesca Walker-Martin, *ASET Vice-Chair and Senior Lecturer, Lancashire School of Business, University of Central Lancashire (UCLan) and LSP Approved Facilitator*

In this session delegates were introduced to a different way of communicating, using hands (Lego build) and metaphor.



Exploring Employability at Nottingham Trent University: developing meaningful work experiences in every course

Sara Jones - on behalf of ASET Conference Sponsors, Quantum IT

Nottingham Trent University
sara.jones@ntu.ac.uk

Abstract

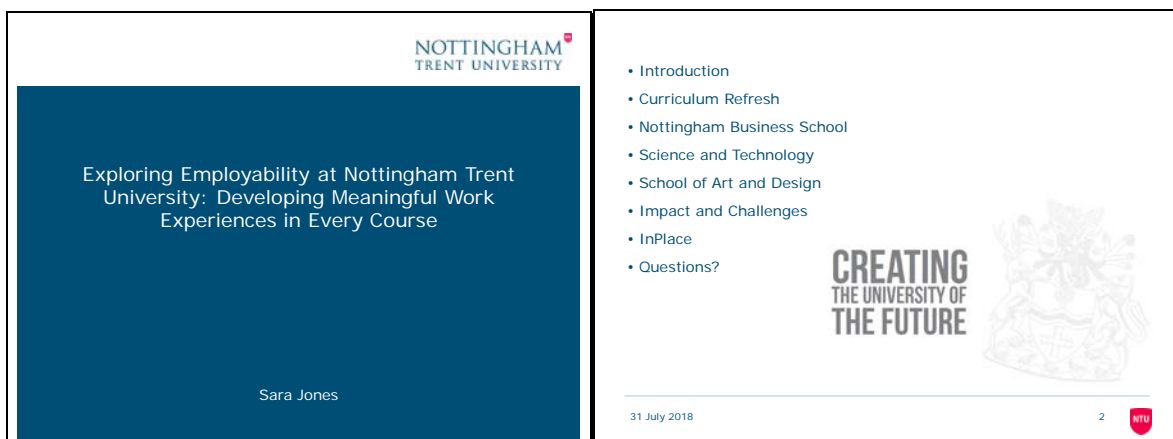
By 18/19 all students enrolling at Nottingham Trent University will develop relevant professional attributes gained through meaningful work placement or experience embedded into the design, learning, and assessment of every course. The Curriculum Refresh Project involves working with all schools to investigate the varied approaches taken by the schools to meet the brief set out from the “Creating the University of the Future” strategy.

This presentation, outlines 3 key schools and their different methods. The Nottingham Business School, taking a school-wide approach to embedding Work-Based Learning into curriculum, Science and Technology, taking a clustered approach and The School of Art and Design who have taken this course-by-course.

I will discuss the impact of the changes on the employability team; how we are meeting the increased demands, tracking placement information and working in a more cohesive manner as a team. The employer facing team are in the process of relocating offices into a space with Events, Alumni and Partnerships, Local Engagement and Commercial Services [PLECS] team to foster a collaborative working environment.

InPlace is now in its fourth year at NTU and is utilised for all placements that are assessed at a university wide level. InPlace underpins all processes used within Employability and the CR project is looking at ways in which these processes can be developed.

Presentation





WINNER UNIVERSITY OF THE YEAR

THE AWARDS 2017



31 July 2018 3 NTU

Curriculum Refresh **CREATING THE UNIVERSITY OF THE FUTURE**

Expectations Course Road Maps Events Case Studies Help NTU Strategy **NTU**

Curriculum Refresh Framework


Employability

All students will develop relevant professional attributes gained through meaningful work placement or experience embedded into the design, learning, and assessment of every course.

31 July 2018 4 NTU

NOW Learning Room

Nottingham Trent University




Curriculum Refresh - Employability Support

31 July 2018 5 NTU

Nottingham Business School


- School-wide approach
- Core module "Employment and Enterprise", 20 hours work experience and 20 hours Continual Professional Development (CPD)
- High volumes of students, 1200 to 1400
- Formal placement, volunteering, part-time work, business competition / challenge, or consultancy project
- Action Learning Workshops to help them make the connection between theory and practice
- InPlace and how to administer this?



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School of Science and Technology

- All BSc courses offer an optional sandwich route
- Short placement option, a minimum of 6 weeks
- Ensuring the implementation of work-based learning by delivering a range of work simulations, live employer-led projects and shorter placements.



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Forensic Science



31 July 2018 8 NTU

School of Art and Design


- Vocational courses have employer-led projects, work experience and simulations included as part of their course requirements
- Unpaid placements
- Possible sandwich option to all students
- Appropriateness of the InPlace system to manage the work experience?



31 July 2018 9 NTU

Impact and Challenges


- The need to scale up our operations and work effectively and foster a collaborative working environment
- Relocation of offices to foster a collaborative working environment
- Exploring the level of support each course requires; it is not a one size fits all approach
- Increase in employer led style of work
- None commercial staff managing employer relationships




31 July 2018 10 NTU

InPlace

- InPlace is now in its fourth year at NTU
- Utilised for all placements that are assessed at a university wide level.
- InPlace underpins all processes used within Employability
- Highly configurable
- Able to work with Quantum to deliver solutions to our needs
- Management tracking
- Ability to interface with other systems, such as CRM



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Any questions?



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Launching a new WBL unit alongside an established (optional) Diploma placement year: differences, challenges and learnings from staff and students

Sally Bain and Zoe Hinton

London College of Fashion, University of the Arts, London
S.Bain@fashion.arts.ac.uk
Z.Hinton@fashion.arts.ac.uk

Abstract

This workshop will highlight the different challenges and experiences of staff and students when the long-established and successful Diploma in Professional Studies placement year (DiPS) in the Fashion Business School at LCF had some potential competition from a new embedded work-based learning unit.

The DiPs placement year has been popular with students, but not all of them want to take an extra year to attain their degree. Valuable work experience could be offered as part of the curriculum, thereby including all students. So the Industry Experience Project (IEP) was launched as an 8-week 40-credit unit in 2017-18 into Year 2 of the 4-year integrated Masters course - MSc Strategic Fashion Management.

Issues needing to be addressed were notably about management of the two – especially as the LCF Careers department was not involved in the sourcing of placements / H&S management of IEP. Also about how the two were positioned and communicated ... so one did not detract from the other.

This workshop presentation will also review the different platforms used to engage the students. We will share the student views and where we are now, and discuss what new challenges await as more courses plan such WBLs.

Presentation

DiPS and IEP:
 Launching a new WBL unit alongside an established (optional) placement year ... differences, challenges and learnings from staff and students

Sally Bain and Zoe Hinton Fashion Management,
 Fashion Business School, London College of Fashion

Introduction

This workshop will highlight the different **challenges** and **experiences** of **staff** and **students** when the long-established and successful **DiPS** in the Fashion Business School at LCF had some potential **competition** from **IEP**, a new embedded work-based learning unit.


DiPS (Diploma in Professional Studies) – the optional, established, Placement Year. Taken between years 2 and 3. Across FBS (and other UAL colleges).

IEP (Industry Experience Project) – the new WBL unit for integrated Masters degree Strategic Fashion Management

ual: london college of fashion | B fashion business school

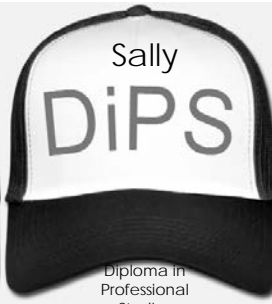
IEP and DiPs

Unit Leaders



Zoe
IEP

Industry Experience Project



Sally
DiPS

Diploma in Professional Studies

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Key Learnings

- Students perceived IEP and DiPS as complementary and not competitive. Also it has not affected student applications to DiPS from current year 1.
- Different approaches:** Students appreciated the DiPS process more because of the way IEP was managed.
- Getting enough IEP placements (29) was manageable via contacts ...** but larger cohorts potentially more challenging?
- Logistics to make IEP happen were challenging,** particularly admin support (risk assessment)
- LCF Careers gave minimal support, and at a distance
- IEP experience (and academic work) for students should be beneficial for DiPS.

Consideration for the future ...
similar WBL unit being introduced to 3 other big courses

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Making a difference



Attainment is a key objective at LCF / UAL

- Some decline in placement engagement on BScFM (though high among MSc students)
- Some 70% of FBS students are not getting that work experience
- 2016 research: why not do DiPS ... 80% said 'I just want to finish my degree'
- SO ... embed an 8-week WBL unit into the curriculum

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Student feedback - WHY?

- I chose to do IEP because *working would be more beneficial than doing another research report unit* [...] and gives you the experience on your CV. This is growing more and more important to have as many experiences as possible.
- I wanted to do PR and DiPS was harder to do in this area with PR agencies not paying. *So for me I could do PR for IEP and do something else for DiPS*
- I picked the course because of IEP and DiPS. I would rather have a longer time at Uni and have a lot more experience coming out of it than other people [...] *I feel I will look like the 'full package'*.
- The only people I know who aren't doing DiPS are the older students, as they are *worried about getting out of Uni at a younger age* - that's the only reason that I would think not to do it.

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Positioning

IEP - this year MScScFM

- 28 students / 28 internships
- 17 companies
- 29 roles
- Careers at a distance
- Internships provided
- Opportunity for a short period of work experience to enhance industry knowledge

DiPS - all FBS

- 420 cohort ... 143 applied/approved (34%) then 74 placed = 53% conversion
- 118 companies
- 200+ roles
- LCF Careers full support (ie Careers Live + newsletter + tutorials)
- Placements advertised
- Accredited Diploma award

Students not doing DiPS will gain first hand industry knowledge. Students doing DiPS can use it to prepare and support their experience

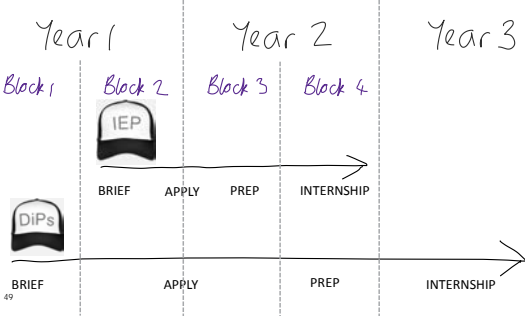
IEP is like a mini-DiPS really. It's another opportunity to get experience

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Organisation

Year 1 Year 2 Year 3

Block 1 Block 2 Block 3 Block 4



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Student Feedback – Organisation

* The best thing about IEP was how easy Zoe made it for us to get the placements, so we literally signed up. I think if it was the same process as you have for DiPS then a lot more people would have dropped out or not have got internships. *

* The way it is you could work on finding a DiPS placement while you had the IEP placement given to you. *

* For me it was really much harder finding a [DiPS] placement [...] but going through that process helped me really try hard. *

* For DiPS the process for getting a placement gives you real life experience as it makes you realise how hard it is to actually get a job, and makes you thankful that you're getting one now. It helps a lot as it puts your life into perspective, which I think everyone needs, a bit of a wakeup call. *

ual: london college of fashion | B fashion business school

Resources

IEP

- Refers back to employability skills + People unit for support
- Students are given a database of roles to apply for in a short time frame
- Careers involvement only at a distance- admin is managed by course teams
- Out on internship- x3 tutorials(2 managed remotely via skype)

DiPS

- Special DiPS sessions (mostly industry)
- Students apply, interviewed then approved
- Careers support to get placement / ongoing
- Out on placement – 2 visits, proposal + feedback, tutorials
- Returners lunch + debrief
- NEW! PlaceMates

All students have employability skills sessions Years 1 & 2 + People unit Year 2

Resources

IEP

- 365 was successful in terms of communication
- Work emails + 2 Skype tutorials + 1 optional tutorial

DiPS

- 365 group did not work
- Work emails + phone calls + 2 Formal Visits inc line manager + 1/2 optional tutorials
- Community: DiPS returners want a Christmas networking party

** I've linked my email to my phone so that I can see it very easily. Now it's a normal thing to check my emails every day. **

** Having notifications on the UAL App would be a great improvement **

** For IEP we had 2 Skype interview, once a month and I think that's enough and if you wanted more you could have as much as you want. **

Academic Attainment DiPS x 5 years to 2016/17

25% of students undertook the DiPS placement year

89% of DiPS students achieved a first / 2.1 degree

44% of non-DiPS students achieved a first / 2.1 degree

Academic Attainment DiPS : Student Views

** DiPS was certainly the best experience for me to grow and mature as a person. Without the DiPS experience I don't know if I would've achieved the same grades because it taught me so much and the written report was such a helpful pre-dissertation project. **

** I have just accepted the Allocation Analyst position at TJX in their Canada HQ - an opportunity I owe largely to the work experience gained over my placement year. **

Academic Attainment IEP Year 1

100% of students secured an internship on the IEP unit

77% of IEP students achieved above a C grade (15% A)

100% of IEP students completed their internship (8 weeks)

Academic Attainment IEP : Student Views

** ... it's more beneficial to learn in the working environment because everything finally comes into play and you can better understand what you're learning. **

**Having that contact (provided for the company) was really good, really helpful and enabled me to have that experience that I might not have been able to do otherwise. **

** It just really builds your confidence and the skills that you have learned from prior work experience – you feel so much more competent. **

What work experience does for you – student evaluation:
"It's a good slap in the face ...!"

Thank you for listening!

Interactive Discussion

How can WBL be less resource-intensive so this IEP model is more scalable??

Next year in the Fashion Business School, 3 other BA courses will offer a 6-week WBL unit... with some 200 students involved.

What the students said as key problems:

Getting placements: *"With our small group, Zoe and other tutors used their contacts to almost place us all. I think doing that for 100 students would be really, really hard."*

Industry Relationships: *"If everyone has to do it then some students who don't really want to do it or are quite lazy could go in and the company could be like 'what is this? We want somebody who is actually going to do something'"*

Future-proofing placements: the importance of local opportunities for placement students

A case study from Brighton Business School, University of Brighton

Clare Forder and Julie Fowlie

University of Brighton
c.l.forder@brighton.ac.uk
j.fowlie@brighton.ac.uk

Abstract

The government's new Industrial Strategy (BEIS, 2017) and the business plan from the Office for Students (2018) include specific focus on universities' engagement with local economies and workplaces in the context of the graduate labour market. As placements provision in most higher education institutions (HEIs) has always featured roles in local companies, we suggest that switching the focus from graduates to placement students could offer a useful collaborative opportunity for local businesses to articulate what they want from future employees. Brighton Business School (BBS), University of Brighton has seen growing student demand for local placements and an increase in the number of placements offered by local companies, prompting academic and professional staff to consider a more systematic approach to expanding the school's portfolio of local placements and its engagement with local employers. This paper will present a case study centred on the steps taken at BBS to improve provision, respond to student demand, and engage more productively with local businesses. It will highlight the lack of literature on local placements and demonstrate findings which echo existing research. It will also explore original outcomes such as how for some students local placements offer a convenience value but for others they are part of committing to living and working locally after graduation. The paper concludes with a set of recommendations for replicable practice at other HEIs, including mapping the extent of relationships with local employers and building on successful placements to increase opportunities.

Introduction

A wide variety of industrial placements has always been on offer and in demand at Brighton Business School (BBS), University of Brighton. Students can apply for roles in large, well-known national or multinational firms, seek positions in small to medium enterprises, undertake a placement abroad, or volunteer. Providing their placement meets criteria set by the Business School, they are free to apply for the roles that appeal most. Typically, students are keen to work for household names and are often drawn to working in London, either by relocating or by commuting.

In recent years, however, there has been a small but noticeable increase in the number of BBS students seeking and securing placements in local companies (21% in 2016 rising to 32% in 2018). This positive upward trend is timely and benefits from further exploration within the context of new national strategies. Before looking more closely at the mechanisms of local placements at BBS, it is useful to explore the current discourse on localism.

Localism and the new UK Industrial Strategy

Given renewed attention in the government's recent Industrial Strategy (BEIS, 2017), the theme of localism, or prioritising the local, provides a foundation for the new initiatives and developments intended to revitalise the UK economy in the coming years. The document highlights local level skills development, productivity, and growth as priorities, and draws upon higher education as a cornerstone for improvements in these areas. Although not new roles, HEIs in particular are to play a key part in the provision of higher-level skills needed by employers in local areas, as well as in collaborations with businesses to help students understand the practical relevance of their courses (BEIS, 2017: 100). However, in view of the focus on harnessing local strengths (BEIS, 2017: 11), Ball (2018) argues that this requires a shift in thinking at institutional level, where it is imperative that awareness of our local economies and social contexts is increased in order to understand the contributions HEIs can make locally.

In response to the concept of 'place' as one of the main elements of the strategy (BEIS, 2017: 214), Ransom (2017) states that local growth can be promoted and strengthened by collaborations between employers, universities, and other stakeholders. The key facets of these partnerships, he argues, include increasing employer demand for graduate employment, and a better matching of graduate skills with employer demand at the local level. He recommends monitoring and addressing local skills gaps to ensure the best possible candidates are matched to available opportunities but makes no suggestion as to how this might be achieved. With HESA (2016) data from the Destination of Leavers of Higher Education (DLHE) survey indicating that nearly 60% of 2016 graduates went on to work in the geographical area in which they studied, and with the new business plan from the Office for Students listing as a strategic outcome that graduates leave higher education with the knowledge and skills that will contribute to their local economies (OfS, 2018:10), local employment appears much sought-after by students and much in demand by the government. The challenge, therefore, is twofold: how can HEIs help drive local employer demand for graduate employment, and how can they contribute to addressing local skills gaps?

Focus on placements

We suggest that one way of doing this is through applying these concepts to industrial placements (i.e. the year in industry students can undertake during the third year of their degree). Moving the focus back one step from graduates to placement students could offer a useful collaborative opportunity for businesses to articulate what they want from future employees, and for universities to produce eventual graduates who can match this. Placements can offer a vital period for employers to think about what is required locally *before* students enter the graduate labour market, and the placement year could therefore be designed, with support from the university, to help close local skills gaps, develop or improve links between HEIs and employers, and increase productivity and growth with a long-term goal of providing new roles for future graduates once their studies are complete. Such engagement with local business seems increasingly beneficial and may also go some way to answering the shift in thinking advocated by Ball (2018). We outline later in this paper some of the steps taken at BBS to help local companies consider placements more keenly and discuss what more could be done in this area.

In addition, notwithstanding the current national agenda on localism within which (under)graduate employment forms an important concern, we should not ignore changes in the context of industrial placements which may be propelling students to seek local opportunities. As the High Fliers (2014: 35) report indicates, a decade ago placements were offered as a means of helping students decide which career sectors they wanted to work in and what that might be like. Now, most employers offer placements with a view to recruiting graduates. Students are very aware of the importance of demonstrating their employability and endeavour to pursue options that best enable them to enhance this (Wilson, 2012). Therefore whilst attempting to further develop the university-employer dimension of the local context, we must also respond to the changing needs inherent in the student-university and student-employer relationships, as without these, the former becomes a moot point. As we will demonstrate below, as much as focusing on local placements can benefit local companies, this can also be of extreme value to students themselves. First though, we address the usual barriers to and drivers of industrial placements and provide a profile of placements at BBS.

Typical barriers to and drivers of industrial placements

To provide context, we first examined the existing literature on students' decisions to undertake an industrial placement, exploring whether or not local placements featured as either a barrier or driver to undertaking a year in industry. Starting with potential barriers, the literature reveals ample reasons as to why a student may decide not to do a placement. Morgan (2006: 11) finds that undergraduates already working part-time may not be interested in placements and that those who

want to graduate quickly are not keen to add a further year onto their studies. Echoing this, Bullock *et al* (2009) also find that many students want to continue their studies without a break and note a further barrier in the form of students believing they already have enough work experience through part-time work, summer internships, gap years or other. In addition, they discover (2009: 487-9) that lack of confidence, risk of fracturing friendship groups, student housing decisions, the demands of taught courses, and lack of information about placements all contribute towards students' decisions not to undertake a year in industry. Adding to this already extensive list, Aggett and Busby (2011: 109) cite, amongst similar factors already mentioned: unsuccessful applications, disinterest in available placements, doubt that a placement can be found, and being no longer interested in the industry.

Whilst referring to similar barriers, Balta *et al* (2012: 401) conversely find a variety of drivers or motivations for undertaking a placement year. These include employability and skills enhancement, the possibility of improving academic grades, gaining experience that may not be available from the course, testing or trying out particular roles or industries, and also the chance to take a break from academic life. In support of these findings, Smith *et al* (2015: 4) demonstrate that the students in their research also used 'career clarification', alongside earning money, as the main motivations for pursuing a placement. Allen *et al* (2013) also reveal that the students they interviewed understood that their career prospects may be damaged if they did not seek a placement. What is striking is that whether barrier or driver, local placements do not seem to feature.

These findings are not new but for the purposes of this paper they indicate an interesting gap in the literature. Aside from Morgan (2006) none of the studies mentioned above makes reference to how finding a local placement might mitigate some of the barriers indicated by students or how a local role itself might be a motivating factor in students' decision-making processes. Considering how at least three barriers (existing part-time work, housing concerns, social issues) could potentially be alleviated or even removed by opting to work locally, there is perhaps a great deal to be said for increasing and better promoting local links between universities and employers. Morgan (2006: 11) briefly touches upon local placements in stating that they have less stringent entry requirements in comparison to larger employers but while this may be true in the context of his research, we have found that this is not always the case.

Brighton Business School context

Providing their overall first year mark is 60% or above, all students at BBS are eligible to undertake a placement in their third year. Each year, approximately 40% of the second year cohort studies one of the four-year degree pathways which automatically include a placement year. If students in this

group do not wish to do a placement or do not end up securing one, they can transfer onto the three-year route. Similarly, students who are enrolled on a three-year degree can opt to undertake a placement if they desire. Additionally, those three-year route students who perform well in their first year will be invited by personal letter to change to the management pathway. In total around 40-55% of the eligible cohort typically succeeds in obtaining a placement.

BBS has a placements office which offers information, advice, and guidance to those looking for placements. An online platform (www.jobteaser.com) provides a 'one-stop shop' for second years, and includes a placements portal through which they can search and apply for placements in the UK (after roles are uploaded by members of the placements team) or beyond (typically roles uploaded by other companies using the site). Only paid positions are advertised. Users are encouraged to complete a profile, upload their CV, and make use of the resources area, which contains downloadable documents on how to write CVs and cover letters, prepare for interviews, create a LinkedIn profile, and practise psychometric tests. The platform also incorporates an appointment booking system whereby students can arrange meetings with the appropriate placements advisor for their course. In turn, placements advisors can make notes about the appointment and track students' attendance at the appointments.

Additionally, the placements office sustains direct links with a number of companies, both local and national. In some instances BBS is the preferred supplier of placement students to these companies. The overall portfolio of companies worked with and placements available to students reflects the wider university's core values well: *inclusivity* – all eligible BBS second years are supported in their placement search and there is a wide range of available roles; *sustainability* – the placements office maintains existing employer-university relationships whilst creating new ones in order to continually broaden the scope of opportunities for BBS students; *creativity* – displayed not only in the type of roles available but in the flexibility offered to students to help manage their placement year; *partnership* – the efforts made by the placements team to develop long-term, successful employer relationships that help make a positive difference.

Narrowing this further to the specific objectives set out by BBS, the placements office responds to the need to widen participation of the student cohort in the placements process by offering a broad and diverse range of employability-related activities and by establishing a team of placement mentors drawn from returning placement students. Furthermore, placements staff are fundamental in the early steps towards improving such graduate outcomes as measured by the DLHE survey. By striving to find and promote high quality placements which provide sufficient levels of leadership, responsibility and management, BBS students are increasingly better placed to use their placement experience as a stepping stone to a professional or managerial level career (Lowden *et al*, 2011).

By the end of the academic year 2017-18, 1,265 placements had been uploaded to the placements platform. Of these, just over 5% were local opportunities (with 'local' in this context defined as the geographical reach of the areas covered by Local Enterprise Partnerships). It is interesting that while this figure represents only a small proportion of the total roles advertised, students who have secured one of these opportunities represent 32% of the total number of those undertaking a placement in the 2018-19 academic year. This is up from 24% in 2017-18 and 21% in 2016-17. We explore later on in this article some of the drivers for this increase but turn first to one of the new interventions piloted by the placements team to support this growth in demand for local roles.

New local placements fair: responding to student demand

Prompted by the factors outlined above, as well as a relatively low turnout at the school's annual November placements fair featuring large, well-known companies, the placements team saw a gap in their usual provision of employability and placements activities. In February 2018 they piloted a new small-scale event aimed at increasing provision of local placements and encouraging students to further engage directly with local employers. Eight local companies offering a total of 18 placements were invited to participate. Seven of the eight agreed to attend, although unfortunately two dropped out on the day. Nonetheless, representatives from five companies offering 13 placements were available to discuss opportunities directly with students. Industries represented by the companies attending included recruitment, accounting, events, manufacturing, and digital marketing. The placement roles available included marketing, accounting, business development, web analyst, and account manager. It should be made clear at this point that the placements on offer were also advertised beyond BBS, meaning a student from any university could apply. Adopting a much more informal approach than previous events, this one differed in timing, location, and context. Rather than repeating the same all-day structure as the annual placements fair, this event was offered as a twilight session from 5-7pm, in the Business School itself as opposed to the across-campus building typically used for placements fairs. Refreshments were provided, which aided the sense of this being a more social occasion, potentially serving to create a more relaxed environment. Additionally, all students who had indicated to the placements team that they were looking to work locally were sent a personalised invitation to the event, although it was also open to anyone wishing to take part. Students were encouraged to dress smartly, bring fresh copies of their CVs, and to engage with the employers about their companies and their roles. Understanding that some may be reticent to do so, the school's team of placement mentors, some of whom had worked for the participating companies the previous year, were also on hand to chat with students or to make introductions.

New local placements fair: benefits to employers

Of the 77 targeted invites sent to students who had expressed an interest in working locally, 50 students (65%) took part, making this one of the placements team's most well-attended events. Set against traditional placements fairs, where attendance can be unpredictable and smaller companies cannot always rely upon a steady supply of interested students, this event guaranteed employers a targeted and engaged audience. This meant that almost every employer-student interaction had the potential to result in a positive outcome for both parties.

In addition, at the end of the evening members of the placements team held a short debrief with each of the companies, during which submitted student CVs were reviewed and potential candidates identified. The knowledge of the students held by the placements team paired with the initial impressions gained by the companies aided this filtering process. In short, employers were able to draw upon much more information than just a CV before making decisions about whom to interview. Consequently, time spent on recruiting and ensuring that their chosen candidates were the best fit for the roles was reduced.

The success of this pilot activity is best measured by the final outcome: all 13 placements offered by the participating companies were eventually filled by BBS students who had attended the event. Whilst an achievement in and of itself, Wilson (2012) outlines the importance of university engagement with small and medium-sized companies for a number of reasons: helping with recruitment, embedding a skills supply chain between universities and local businesses, and networking with the business community to maintain an "efficient innovation ecosystem" (2012: 2). Importantly, creating new placement destinations resulting in good experiences is also key to generating repeat placements and developing further collaboration (*ibid*, 38). The Business School's ability to match supply and demand in the local context provided an opportunity for local employers to meet a high volume of candidates specifically interested in local roles. Added benefits, including a more informal setting than usual and direct support from the placements team, proved equally beneficial. That all available positions were secured by BBS students suggests that the event could be the first in a number of steps taken by the Business School to future-proof local placements for our students. Looking to build on this success, we next conducted some further research into BBS students' attitudes towards local placements.

Research design

To further explore our students' thoughts on local placements a small-scale qualitative research project was conceived with the aim of trying to pinpoint why BBS was seeing an increase in the

number of students looking for roles in local companies. Initially an online survey was considered as a way of capturing the necessary data for the research. However, concurrent projects revealed difficulty in gathering sufficient responses via this method, so it was decided that a written questionnaire sent by email might be more successful. One might be surprised as to why this would be the case but having questions appear directly in the body of an email rather than relying on participants to open an email and follow a link proved a more reliable instrument. After a pilot version, and following ethical approval, the questionnaire was sent, in accordance with convenience sampling methods (Denscombe, 2014: 41), to 56 students either on a local placement in the academic year 2017-18 or who had completed one the previous year.

A response rate of 39% was achieved with 22 students either answering a short, qualitative email questionnaire or asking to answer the same questions in a face-to-face interview. Of the 22 respondents, 18 replied by email, two attended individual interviews and two participated in a small group interview (this was intended as a larger focus group but three students dropped out on the day).

Data analysis

All interview data were transcribed *verbatim* and then in conjunction with the written responses were analysed in line with the thematic coding procedures as summarised in Glaser and Strauss' (1967) Grounded Theory approach. All comments and answers underwent an inductive process of coding during which emergent themes were identified. Following repeat analysis were codes were further refined, initial theory was constructed from the data, rather than attempting to fit them to any pre-defined hypothesis. Reliability of the study and validity of the process were assured by the authors performing coding and analysis procedures independently of each other yet arriving at comparable themes.

Results

Participants were asked the following questions:

- Why did you want to work locally?
- Did you look specifically for placements in/around Brighton and Sussex?
- What other locations did you consider, if any?
- Is working locally after graduation important to you?

The data gathered from responding students illuminate an array of reasons why they opted to secure a local placement. Individual motivations include, conversely to the literature already examined above: saving money, being able to concentrate on studies without having to travel far for

interviews, and viewing placement opportunities as exciting and high quality. However, some significant themes emerged across a more substantial number of responses. These can be categorised into two broad topics, *feeling settled* and *feeling connected*.

Taking the theme of *feeling settled* first, the key factors reflected in students' comments were characterised as follows in Table one. Each respondent was given a number to preserve anonymity; therefore "R1" stands for "Respondent 1" and so on.

Key Factors	Example comments
Wanting to remain in an attractive location	<i>Brighton was always my first choice of location...[it] is perfect between the coast and city life (R4).</i> <i>I love being so close to the seaside (R10).</i> <i>The location is a massive attraction (R17).</i>
Being able to work near home (although not as a result of particular commitments)	<i>It is only a 7 minute walk from my front door (R4).</i> <i>My placement is in a really convenient location (R1).</i>
Being able to continue with current way of life/not having to make substantial changes to lifestyle	<i>I don't have to change much as my only focus will be getting to/from work...nothing else changes (R1).</i> <i>I wanted to continue with my part-time job and carry on playing for my football team (R5).</i> <i>I wanted to work locally because it meant the only change I would experience was working 9-5 (R7).</i> <i>I live in Brighton, so it was a matter of convenience (R8).</i>
Retaining a sense of familiarity	<i>I am familiar with the area which helped me adjust to the working lifestyle (R6).</i> <i>I want to work locally...as I am more familiar with my surroundings (R9).</i> <i>I wanted to stay in a city which is familiar to me (R10).</i>
Mitigating anxiety (over commuting, moving, housing, making friends)	<i>I won't know what I'm doing. It would be pointless to start again (R2).</i> <i>I was quite anxious about the process of moving to a new city for a new job, especially not knowing anyone...(R6).</i> <i>Working in London, for example, would stress me as it is unfamiliar to me (R9).</i>

Table one: key factors of *feeling settled* theme

These factors can be drawn together to form a central driver we have termed "convenience value". For these students, a local placement means they can maintain their status quo and not make drastic changes in terms of relocating, commuting, navigating a new city and so on. They are steered

by ease, familiarity, and the ability to alleviate the anxieties that could potentially prevent them from seeking or securing a placement at all.

Table two lists the key factors which determine our second theme of *feeling connected*:

Key Factors	Example comments
Being able to work near home (for family or specific commitments)	<p><i>I already live at home and commuting to work in a local area would be efficient for me (R5).</i></p> <p><i>[My] significant other was local to Brighton and I didn't want to put a strain on the relationship by moving (R6).</i></p> <p><i>I have my friends here, who are like my family (R12).</i></p> <p><i>I live with my partner so I have payment and housing commitments (R15).</i></p> <p><i>Working locally was the only option for me as I have built a life here with a partner, house and friends (R16).</i></p>
Planning to work locally after graduating	<p><i>In the early stages of my career I would like to work near to home (R3).</i></p> <p><i>Staying in Brighton would be amazing if possible after graduation (R4).</i></p> <p><i>I would still like to enjoy my time with my parents and family whilst I can as I live at home (R5).</i></p> <p><i>Working locally after graduation is important to me (R8).</i></p> <p><i>I would only consider working further out...if the company offers flexible working...(R15)</i></p> <p><i>I want to remain [in Brighton] for a least a couple of years (R16).</i></p>
Retaining a "support system"	<p><i>It would be ideal to spend my placement in a city that has taught me so much and a place I felt comfortable in (R11).</i></p> <p><i>I did not want to move away and lose this support system (R12).</i></p> <p><i>My partner moved here so we could be together and she has also built her life around work and friends here (R16).</i></p>

Table two: key factors of *feeling connected* theme

The factors comprising this theme reflect more of an active desire to work locally rather than it simply being a convenient option. For many, the motivations for finding a local role are linked to family or friendship ties, with only a brief hint at financial obligation. Interestingly, many of the participants whose responses prompted the "convenience value" driver did not express interest in working locally after graduation. Conversely those who demonstrated feeling more connected to their local area also tended to have plans to continue working there area after university. Essentially,

as well as feeling connected, the responses reveal a certain level of forward thinking hence we have termed this driver as “connected and committed”.

Discussion and recommendations

In providing further insight into why students opt for local placements, our findings echo those found by other researchers such as Morgan, 2006, Heaton *et al*, 2008, and Balta *et al*, 2012 who state that placement students are often less willing to travel, take risks or relocate for their placement. In line with Bullock *et al*'s (2009) findings about housing issues and fracturing friendships, our students also voiced similar concerns. These findings are typically located in the contexts of students choosing not to do placements. However, our research finds that students can use these negatively-framed reasons as positive drivers for seeking a placement, for example, if they do not want to commute they do not give up on the idea of a placement but instead focus their search on roles that are easily accessible. It is clear that the part “local” has to play when encouraging students to undertake a year in industry is important.

It is also evident however, that “local” as a mitigating factor is not without challenges. First, as we have referenced, a shift in thinking at institutional level is required in order to harness local strengths (Ball, 2018). At BBS we have started this process by refocusing our attention on our local placement providers as outlined above but this is just a first step. Second, fully understanding the needs of local employers is essential in order not only to meet supply and demand but to create it. Increased student demand for placements cannot be satisfied if local employers do not offer suitable or sufficient opportunities. As Atfield *et al* (2009) explain, HEIs must capitalise on successful placements and build lasting relationships with local businesses. Employers welcome pro-activity from HEIs as they can see the opportunities that exist if a greater connection between universities and local employers can be developed (*ibid*, 93). University placements teams must be ready to capitalise on this.

Nonetheless, we have also found a variety of additional drivers not identified in the existing literature. These range from relatively passive factors such as students enjoying their location and wanting to retain a sense of familiarity, through to active drivers such as being able to work near home and sowing the seeds for early career plans. We suggest that it is for these reasons that student demand for local placements is increasing. That the current agenda surrounding industry and local economy is focused on localism will work in our favour if we can, as Wilson (2012) reminds us, create new placement destinations and facilitate skills supply chains between universities and employers.

We conclude by contending that there is real value to moving a step back to focus on placement students rather than graduates as a means of responding to the demands of localism and responding to the objectives laid out in the new Industrial Strategy (BEIS, 2017). Working to further embed local opportunities into HEIs' placements provision will therefore provide a platform for future-proofing placements. With limited research into the value of local placements, our initial findings go some way to potentially transforming students' perceived barriers to placements by using them as drivers to working locally. As such, we lay out below some recommendations for moving forward:

- Recommendation 1: in the context of placements, map the extent of the HEI's relationships with local businesses and how these may be further developed or even established for the first time;
- Recommendation 2: identify previous successful placements in order to maintain the existing HEI-employer relationship and grow the potential number of positions the company may offer;
- Recommendation 3: provide networking opportunities bringing local employers and students together to discuss available roles in a more informal setting;
- Recommendation 4: make explicit the ways in which students' perceived barriers to undertaking a placement can become drivers for finding local positions.

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The Impact of Employability Education Initiatives in Higher Education: Using Placement Confidence and Resilience as Measures

Laura Bradley, Darryl Cummins, Denise Mac Dermott, Glenda Martin, Shauna McCloy, Rachel Shannon, Christine Wightman

Ulster University
lmbradley@ulster.ac.uk

Abstract

Employability skills are needed in addition to subject specific knowledge to support graduates in their career choices and employment. Placement is widely recognized as a key facilitator of graduate employability skills and employment with an expectation that students will have more than an academic qualification (degree) to secure employment (Yorke, 2006; Saunders and Zuzel, 2010). A large body of literature has emerged outlining the key attributes and skills a typical graduate should possess and why, (Harvey et al, 1997; Little, 2001; Lees, 2002; Holden and Jameson, 2002; Rothwell and Arnold, 2007; Wiley, 2014). Despite the acknowledged value of placement the number of students undertaking placement has decreased, year on year, across a number of disciplines which is challenging for Higher Education Institutions (HEI's), (Saunders and Zuzel, 2010; Docherty, Jones and Sileryte, 2015). Various initiatives are used to enhance uptake of placement. This paper presents one such initiative involving the scaling-up of two co-curricular 5-credit point modules to Year 1 and 2 undergraduate students. Delivery of the pilot commenced in September 2017. The project is being evaluated against short, medium and long-term measures. To date, student confidence and resilience has increased for those engaged with the initiative across three time points.

Key Words

Employability, Work-based learning, Placement, Resilience, Learning Gain, Curriculum Design

Introduction

The Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) launched the 'Addressing Barriers to Student Success' programme (2017) to tackle inequalities in progression and attainment for Black Minority Ethnic (BME) students, students from lower socio-economic backgrounds, students with disabilities, mature students and students engaged in part time programmes at university. Tackling these inequalities directly contributes to widening access, improving retention rates and supporting students to achieve their potential by progression to employment. This resonates with research conducted by the Executive Office (2016) which identified lack of relevant work experience, a lack of employment opportunities, low levels

of confidence and self-esteem as significant barriers to participation and progression in education and employment.

The share of students from low socio-economic groups entering Higher Education has been on an upward trajectory in recent years (Raffe and Coxford, 2015). In addition to socio-economic status, there are a range of other inhibiting factors which students experience, including caring responsibilities, living with disabilities, care leavers and families where there is no previous history of parental higher education. Osho (2018) posits it is essential to create relatable learning experiences which are strengths based and acknowledge the unique lived experiences of students. A Higher Education Strategy for Northern Ireland (2012-2020) concurs detailing the Department of Education's commitment to ensuring access and opportunities within Higher Education irrespective of personal and social backgrounds.

Ulster University is delivering an intervention as part of the HEFCE programme, and through this aims to address inequalities in graduate employment outcomes. The intervention consists of the delivery of two co-curricular 5-credit point employability modules to three cohorts of students, with a discrete focus on students from low socio-economic backgrounds (WP), which form 37% of Ulster's student population. In the context of this study, WP is defined as those students that live in the lowest ranked areas of deprivation in Northern Ireland as categorised by the Northern Ireland Multiple Deprivation Measure (NIMDM). Ulster's intervention has embraced the concept of student centred engagement in recognising the diverse range of student learning needs. To support and encourage maximum engagement the delivery team utilised a range of active learning pedagogies. This included inquiry-based learning, flipped classroom and employer collaboration.

Ulster's intervention is being evaluated against short, medium and long term measures. This paper presents a snapshot of findings from the short-term evaluative measure, a confidence and resilience survey, and assesses differences in distance travelled between WP and non-WP student groups targeted through the intervention. A comparative analysis between the intervention and a control group is also presented.

Literature Review

Employability in the Modern World

Increasingly, with the progression of time, challenges in terms of economic development and a congested and competitive global graduate labour market are the reasons why, amongst other factors, higher education is no longer considered the only foundation stone for economic development and labour

market growth and achievements, (Saunders and Zuzel, 2010). It is now argued that employability skills drive economic development and boost national wealth (Little, 2003; Naidoo, 2003; Cranmer, 2006; Tomlinson, 2008). In fact the issue of employability skills as the key influence on graduate recruitment and selection is widely endorsed with employers arguing that distinguishing based on higher education credentials is no longer feasible or possible (Brown and Hesketh, 2004; Tomlinson, 2008). Tomlinson (2008) summarises this situation stating that ‘the stakes for graduate employment appear to have risen and the markers changed’, (pp. 51). Employability development is a necessary achievement along with discipline knowledge whilst undergraduate students complete their academic journeys. However employability remains a challenging area of concern for Higher Education Institutions, in particular, the initiatives and mechanism used to develop this, (Thompson, Clarke, Walker and Whyatt, 2013). The focus traditionally to develop employability has been the sandwich year or placement. However this has also become increasingly challenging and difficult. It would appear that there is no ‘silver bullet’ to deliver employability skills development in the current labour market.

Placement as a Valuable Tool

Employability skill development is a requirement in addition to subject specific knowledge and ‘different academic programmes in different universities are adopting various strategies by, for example, offering work-experience, work-related learning and employability skills modules’ (Saunders and Zuzel, 2010: [online]). Placement is widely recognized as being a key facilitator of graduate employment with the expectation that students will have more than an academic qualification (degree) to secure employment (Harvey, Geall and Moon, 1998; Yorke, 2006; Saunders and Zuzel, 2010). A large body of literature has emerged outlining the key attributes and skills a typical graduate should possess, (Harvey et al, 1997; Little, 2001; Lees, 2002; Holden and Jameson, 2002; Rothwell and Arnold, 2007; Wiley, 2014). Despite the acknowledged value of placement and work related skills development the number of students undertaking placement have decreased (Saunders and Zuzel, 2010). Little and Harvey (2006) note, although providing a dated perspective, that the move to optional placement offerings, despite providing a valuable learning experience for students, was due to the diversity of student bodies. In essence the authors argue that mature and international students may be unable to undertake placement whilst other students may be unable to secure placement in growing and new industries such as creative technologies. In addition they note that the move to optional placement was driven by student desire for options when considering their academic and career paths. The diverse student body is also growing due to increasing numbers of students accessing higher education through widening participation pathways, (Keane, 2016). With the diverse student cohorts comes additional new challenges affected uptake – students can now elect to undertake placement or not. Ball, Collier, Mok and Wilson (2006) recognized there is a trend

whereby placement demand was traditionally high but demand is falling. In fact the reduced student engagement with placement and greater numbers of students accessing higher education through a widening participation pathway support the need for the research presented in this paper. It is necessary to consider interventions not only based on crude measurements such as numbers attending or employed but to assess impact from the point of view of students directly. This study seeks to address this.

Challenges of Students from Widening Participation Backgrounds

Widening participation has traditionally been referred to as access by all – where those who are least likely to access higher level education are supported to aspire to achieve the necessary grades to progress to higher education, (McCaig, 2015). It has involved multiple strategies by policy makers and higher education providers ‘to improve the access to, and participation of, a wider range of students at university, specifically those from disadvantaged backgrounds’, (Budd, 2016 [Online]). In fact the author went onto to conclude that those students from more disadvantaged backgrounds are less likely to perform well during and post-graduation. This is an ongoing (and escalating due to the increasing numbers entering higher education through the widening participation route) challenging area because those from lower socio economic backgrounds are less likely to achieve similar education levels to those from more affluent and higher socio economic backgrounds. In fact, it has been recently noted that ‘the performance of pupils and students from low-income backgrounds continues to be the most troubling weakness in our education system’ (Ofsted, 2015 [Online]). This further supports the need for the research outlined in this paper.

Furthermore, the debate has moved to graduate outcomes as opposed to simply accessing higher education according to Keane (2016). The argument is now that those from disadvantaged backgrounds and the higher education providers are being measured not simply on number of students applying and completing but also in terms of their graduate outcomes. Employability becomes an even greater challenge and priority for these groups. As Keane (2016) argued for ‘the need for HE to move beyond a metrics-based conceptualisation of WP, towards an equality of outcomes approach, which requires core supports that are relevant for all, and not just 'traditional', student groups’, (130). This echoes Blundell et al (2005) who argued that, despite having employability interventions and modules, students from disadvantaged backgrounds progressing into employment is often difficult and beset with challenges. In fact Houghton and Mashiter (2017) concluded that supporting WP students progression into employment is often neglected due to their need for additional support which ultimately requires significant additional costs both human and financial. As such the research presented in this paper attempts to address this issue further and examine if a specific intervention has the same impact on students regardless of their socio-economic background.

Description of the HEFCE Intervention

This paper outlines a very significant challenge for most HEIs and forms part of a larger, longitudinal project. Business Industry and Higher Education Collaboration Council (2007) acknowledge career readiness among graduates and undergraduates is supported through building student confidence, (Billet, 2011; Clinton and Thomas, 2011). Linked directly to this issue of confidence is resilience. Resilience is a complex phenomenon with Garmezy and Masten (1991) defining resilience as ‘a process of, or capacity for, or the outcome of successful adaptation despite challenging circumstances’, (pp. 459). Resilience and confidence can therefore directly impact, either positively or negatively, upon an individual’s personal and professional skills, (HEA, 2013). In fact, resilience and confidence are not only important for graduate employment but impact upon employability skills development initiatives such as placement engagement. Furthermore, various personal factors including student backgrounds and groupings could potentially have an impact on needs, engagement and aspirations in terms of placement uptake and success, (Mountford-Zimdars et al, 2015). This inspired HEFCE to launch a programme to tackle the causes of these disparities. The programme is supporting 17 collaborative institutional projects. These projects will particularly benefit those student groups affected by differential outcomes including, for example, students from lower socio-economic and minority ethnic backgrounds. The results will also be generalisable to the broad undergraduate student body. The project measures link to the HEFCE funded pilot projects on Learning Gain where Ulster is a partner institution exploring career readiness as a measure of learning gain.

Study Background

Ulster University is currently delivering a HEFCE funded project and is working alongside partners including Birmingham City University, City, University of London and Aston University. The project aims to reduce the gap in graduate employment outcomes between different student groups and to achieve this each partner institution is scaling-up and re-focusing existing proven employability engagement initiatives – this paper outlines an initiative at Ulster University for undergraduate students and assesses its impact using a short-term evaluative measure.

The initiative has been designed to discreetly embed two co-curricular 5-credit point employability modules delivered in partnership with academic staff, employability consultants and employers. The co-curricular modules have been designed to secure maximum student participation and engagement using active learning pedagogies such as flipped classrooms and employer-led activities. Following analysis of institutional data on graduate employability outcomes and socio-economic profile, students across three programmes were targeted to participate in the intervention. Students were required to participate in

three face-to-face classes followed by a 1-1 placement consultation which facilitated assessment and feedback processes. Module content focussed on developing students' careers aspirations and creating strategies for securing work placement opportunities. Students were also presented with a programme of wrap-a-round support including; CV clinics, interview workshops and placement advice sessions. Active student engagement with the module was positive at 83%.

The project's evaluation will explore how embedded targeted interventions can impact on students in the short, medium and long-term in terms of placement and graduate employment outcomes. The following section will present a methodology and findings from the initiative's short-term evaluative measure, a questionnaire which aimed to track changes in students' confidence and resilience.

Methodology

This paper represents an initial snapshot of the findings from the short term evaluative measure, a paper-based questionnaire completed by Year 2 students, on a 4-year degree programme (including an optional sandwich year) targeted through the intervention (n=382). The students targeted to participate in the intervention were drawn from three programmes in the Ulster Business School within Ulster University (BSc Hons Marketing, BSc Hons Business Studies, School of Global Business and Enterprise). These programmes were selected following analysis of institutional data on graduate employability outcomes, placement uptake and WP demographic profile over recent academic years. Of the students targeted through the intervention, 39% were categorised as WP.

The questionnaire aimed to assess student confidence and resilience in areas relating to placement readiness and consisted of 14 attitude statements which required responses on a Likert scale (Appendix 1). The questionnaire was developed collaboratively between the project partners and research consultants from Warwick Economics and Development. The statements aimed to assess students' confidence and resilience related to:

- Preparedness
- Responding to setbacks
- Confidence
- Awareness of Employability Skills and Career Options
- Possession of Employability Skills and Abilities
- Placement Application

The questionnaire was administered on three occasions to each of the cohorts throughout the delivery of the intervention, at start, middle and end points. The questionnaire achieved an average response rate of 77% across the three time points. Data acquired through the questionnaire was stored, managed and analysed in SPSS. Of those students that completed the questionnaire, 38% were WP, which closely reflects the profile of the target sample (39%).

To further assess the impact of the evaluation, the questionnaire was administered to a group of Year 2 students in the Ulster Business School registered on a 4-year degree programme (including an optional sandwich year) that had not received the employability intervention (n=51). This questionnaire was administered at one time point only, at the end of Semester 2, to facilitate comparison to the intervention group's end-point data (T3).

Key Findings

This section presents findings from the short-term evaluative measure, the confidence and resilience questionnaire. Results to the attitude statements are arranged under the key areas explored in the questionnaire.

Figures presented in the tables represent the proportion of students that agreed with the attitude statements, i.e. selected 'agree' or 'strongly agree', unless otherwise stated. Results for all student respondents are presented across the three time points, denoted as T1 (starting point), T2 (mid-point) and T3 (end point). Results for the WP and non-WP student groups are also presented.

Preparedness

Students' general preparedness for the placement application journey was explored using the attitude statement: *I am prepared for a range of placement/graduate level recruitment and selection processes*. As displayed in the table below, just under half (48%) of the achieved sample agreed with the statement at the beginning of the intervention. This figure increased to 83% at the end of the intervention, marking an increase of 35 percentage points. Notably, WP students indicated higher levels of preparedness at the start and end points compared to their non-WP counterparts.

<i>I am prepared for a range of placement/graduate level recruitment and selection processes</i>			
	T1	T2	T3
All	48%	68%	83%
WP	56%	68%	87%
Non-WP	43%	68%	81%

Results for the control group indicated that they were less prepared for the placement/ graduate recruitment and selection process than the intervention group, with just 51% in agreement with the statement.

Responding to Setbacks

The questionnaire included two attitude statements that focused specifically on dealing with setbacks encountered during the recruitment and selection process. Students firstly responded to the statement: *When working on my career goals, I put in maximum effort and work even harder to find a solution, if I've suffered a setback.* As displayed in the table below, at the beginning of the intervention over three-quarters of students (77%) agreed with this statement, and this figure increased by 11 percentage points upon completion of the intervention. WP students displayed greater gains in distance travelled with an increase of 16 percentage points between the start and end of the intervention compared to an increase of 7 percentage points for the non-WP group.

<i>When working on my career goals, I put in maximum effort and work even harder to find a solution, if I've suffered a setback</i>			
	T1	T2	T3
All	77%	78%	88%
WP	76%	84%	92%
Non-WP	79%	74%	86%

The control group were much less likely to respond positively after experiencing a setback, with 63% in agreement with the statement compared to 88% of the intervention group.

Students' ability to overcome barriers and setbacks was further explored with the statement: *I proactively seek support to overcome barriers during the recruitment and selection processes rather than trying to cope on my own.* Just under two-thirds (65%) of students agreed with this statement at the end of the intervention, which represented an increase of 25 percentage points from the starting point. Analysis between the sub-groups revealed that the WP students were more likely to agree with this statement at the beginning and end of the intervention compared to their non-WP counterparts.

<i>I proactively seek support to overcome barriers during the recruitment and selection processes rather than trying to cope on my own</i>			
	T1	T2	T3
All	39%	55%	65%
WP	41%	61%	70%
Non-WP	37%	51%	63%

The control group were less likely to seek support when dealing with challenges, with just 43% of the group agreeing with the statement compared to 65% of the intervention group.

Confidence

The students’ confidence was explored through a number of attitude statements. Firstly, students provided their views on the statement: *I predict I will perform to a high standard during placement/graduate level recruitment and selection processes*. Across all groups, agreement with this statement increased by 20 percentage points, with the students displaying very high levels of confidence in their performance at the end of the intervention (86%). Notably at the beginning of the intervention, WP students were less likely to agree with the statement than the non-WP group (61%/ 69%). However, the WP group demonstrated higher gains, with 89% in agreement at the end point, marking an increase of 28 percentage points.

<i>I predict I will perform to a high standard during placement/graduate level recruitment and selection processes</i>			
	T1	T2	T3
All	66%	73%	86%
WP	61%	77%	89%
Non-WP	69%	70%	85%

Findings for the control group indicated that their confidence in performing to a high standard during the placement/ graduate recruitment and selection process was significantly lesser than the intervention group, with just 61% in agreement with the statement.

Students’ confidence was further explored through the following statement: *I am confident I will secure a graduate job or continue into further study when I graduate which matches my skills, interests and values*. The results presented in the table below indicate significant gains made between the start and end of the intervention for all students, with an increase of 27 percentage points. The WP and non-WP groups showed gains of 29 and 26 percentage points respectively, with the end-point result for WP students higher than that of their non-WP counterparts (83%/ 78%).

<i>I am confident I will secure a graduate job or continue into further study when I graduate which matches my skills, interests and values</i>			
	T1	T2	T3
All	53%	67%	80%
WP	54%	69%	83%
Non-WP	52%	64%	78%

Findings for the control group indicate significantly lower levels of confidence around securing a graduate job or continuing into further study compared to the intervention group, with just 65% of students in agreement with the statement.

The students were asked to indicate their levels of confidence in securing an industry placement. There was a significant increase in this measure (23 percentage points) between the start and end point for the entire cohort. Analysis between the sub-groups revealed the WP students had higher levels of confidence in securing a placement (81%) at the culmination of the intervention compared to their non-WP counterparts (74%), and made greater gains overall.

<i>How confident are you that you will secure an industry placement¹</i>			
	T1	T2	T3
All	54%	67%	77%
WP	54%	69%	81%
Non-WP	53%	65%	74%

The control group showed significantly lower levels of confidence in securing an industry placement, with less than half of the group (47%) stating they felt ‘confident’ or ‘very confident’.

Students’ confidence was further explored through the following attitude statement, *I believe I can effectively present myself professionally to an employer during recruitment and selection stages*, with results presented in the table below. Starting-point results were markedly higher for this statement than the other confidence statements, with over three-quarters of students (77%) in agreement at the beginning of the intervention. Notably at the mid-point the proportion of students in agreement decreased by 3 percentage points, before rising to 82%. The WP students recorded high levels of agreement at the beginning of the intervention, which remained largely stable throughout. Conversely, the non-WP students commenced the intervention with lower levels of agreement but displayed higher levels of distance travelled compared to their WP counterparts with 84% evidencing agreement upon completion of the intervention.

<i>I believe I can effectively present myself professionally to an employer during recruitment and selection stages</i>			
	T1	T2	T3
All	77%	74%	82%
WP	79%	79%	80%
Non-WP	75%	70%	84%

¹ The following scale was used for this statement: Not confident; Slightly confident; Confident; Very confident. Results presented in the table are for those students that selected ‘Confident’ or ‘Very confident’

Results for the control group indicated that their confidence in presenting themselves professionally to an employer mirrored that of the intervention group, with 82% of these students in agreement with the statement.

Awareness of Employability Skills and Career Options

Students’ awareness of the employability skills and abilities required to be successful in their placement and graduate job application journey was explored through two attitude statements. Results for the first statement, *I am aware of the skills and abilities that placement/ graduate level employers seek*, are presented in the table below. At the beginning of the intervention just over half (57%) of the entire group displayed agreement. However, at the end of the intervention this figure increased sharply to 93%, an increase of 36 percentage points. Analysis between the sub-groups revealed minor levels of variance (94%/ 93%) at the end point, with the WP group making greater gains throughout the course of the intervention (+39 pp).

<i>I am aware of the skills and abilities that placement/ graduate level employers seek</i>			
	T1	T2	T3
All	57%	81%	93%
WP	55%	81%	94%
Non-WP	59%	80%	93%

A high proportion (80%) of the control group were aware of the skills and abilities required by employers, however this figure was notably lower than the end point figure recorded for the intervention group (93%).

Students were also asked to respond to the statement *I am aware of the necessary skills and attributes I need in order to be continually successful in my future career*. At the beginning of the intervention, students displayed higher levels of awareness (70%) compared to the previous awareness attitude statement. For the entire group there was a significant increase in awareness (26 percentage points) between the start and end of the intervention. Sub group analysis revealed that while the WP students had a lower starting point (66%) than the non-WP group, they travelled a greater distance (30 percentage points).

<i>I am aware of the necessary skills and attributes I need in order to be continually successful in my future career</i>			
	T1	T2	T3
All	70%	87%	96%
WP	66%	89%	96%
Non-WP	72%	85%	95%

The control group had significantly lower levels of awareness of the skills required for career success, with just 76% of students in agreement compared to 96% of the intervention group.

The students' views on feeling informed about their career options and the identification of career goals were assessed through the statement: *I am informed about my future career options and have clear careers goals*. Results for this statement recorded the highest levels of distance travelled between the start and end of the intervention, with an increase of 50 percentage points for all students. Analysis between the sub-groups reveal minor differences at the starting point, however WP students were more likely to agree than their non-WP counterparts (82%/ 78%) at the end of the intervention.

<i>I am informed about my future career options and have clear careers goals</i>			
	T1	T2	T3
All	30%	57%	80%
WP	29%	58%	82%
Non-WP	30%	55%	78%

The control group felt considerably less informed about their career options and were less likely to have clear career goals, with just 53% of students in agreement with this statement compared to 80% of the intervention group.

Possession of Employability Skills and Abilities

Students were asked to indicate if they encompassed the skills and abilities required to be successful in securing placement and succeeding in their career. Results to the first statement in this section: *I possess the skills and abilities that placement/graduate level employers seek*, are displayed in the table below. The majority of students (94%) were in agreement at the end of the intervention, marking an increase of 30 percentage points from the beginning. No notable differences between the WP and non-WP groups were observed.

<i>I possess the skills and abilities that placement/graduate level employers seek</i>			
	T1	T2	T3
All	64%	74%	94%
WP	66%	74%	94%
Non-WP	62%	74%	94%

The control group were less likely to signify possession of the skills and abilities that placement/ graduate employers seek, with just 61% in agreement with the statement.

Linked to the above statement, students were asked to what extent they: *Possess the necessary skills and attributes to be continually successful in my future career*. The majority of students (89%) agreed with this statement at the end of the intervention marking an increase of 23 percentage points, and minimal differences were observed between the WP and non-WP groups.

<i>I possess the necessary skills and attributes to be continually successful in my future career</i>			
	T1	T2	T3
All	66%	74%	89%
WP	64%	71%	90%
Non-WP	66%	75%	89%

The control group were less likely to indicate possession of the skills and attributes needed to have a successful career than the intervention group, with just 75% in agreement with the statement.

Placement Application

Students provided their views on the importance of placement and likelihood of placement application through two attitude statements. Results to the first statement: *In your opinion, how important is placement to securing a graduate job?*, are presented in the table below. The majority of students stated that placement was either important or very important to them at the beginning of the intervention (95%). Notably the proportion of students in agreement marginally decreased at the mid-point (92%) before peaking at the end of the intervention (97%). Sub-group analysis revealed that WP students were marginally less likely to state that placement was important at the beginning of the intervention compared to their non-WP counterparts (93%/96%), however at the end of the intervention the vast majority felt that placement was important (97%).

<i>In your opinion, how important is placement to securing a graduate job²</i>			
	T1	T2	T3
All	95%	92%	97%
WP	93%	90%	97%
Non-WP	96%	94%	96%

The control group held similar strong views on the importance of placement towards securing a graduate job, with 82% in agreement with the statement.

² The following scale was used for this statement: Not important; Slightly important; Important; Very important. Results presented in the table are for those students that selected 'Important' or 'Very important'.

At the culmination of the intervention, the vast majority of students (92%) stated that it was either likely or very likely that they would make a placement application. Analysis between the sub-groups revealed that WP students experienced greater gains during the intervention, with an increase of 7 percentage points compared to 1 percentage point for the non-WP group.

<i>How likely are you to apply for placement opportunities³</i>			
	T1	T2	T3
All	88%	90%	92%
WP	85%	90%	92%
Non-WP	91%	91%	92%

Despite high proportions of the control group emphasising the importance of placement in securing graduate employment, these students indicated that they were much less likely to apply for placement opportunities (63%) than the intervention group (92%).

Summary of Key Findings

- All attitude statements displayed positive gains in confidence and resilience throughout the intervention. While it is not possible to attribute these gains solely to the intervention, it is worth highlighting that results for the control group were overall considerably less favourable.
- Highest gains were recorded for students feeling informed about their career goals and options, awareness of employability skills and preparedness for the placement/ graduate recruitment and selection process.
- Students demonstrated high levels of confidence in their ability to perform in the placement/ graduate recruitment and selection process at the end of the intervention. While overall, these confidence levels followed an upward trajectory, it is worth noting that students displayed high initial levels of confidence in their ability to present themselves professionally to employers, and these levels remained high throughout the intervention.
- Notably the end point results for the statement which explored students' views on seeking support to overcome barriers was relatively low in comparison to other statements, with just 65% of students in agreement.
- Students displayed strong gains in the employability skills, abilities and attributes they possess. These results are an indication that students either acquired new skills through the intervention

³ The following scale was used for this statement: Not likely, Maybe, Likely, Very likely. Results presented are for those students that selected 'Likely' or 'Very Likely'.

or elsewhere, or alternatively, have gained greater appreciation for the employability skills and abilities they hold.

- Students displayed very favourable attitudes towards the importance of placement and the likelihood of applying for placement throughout the course of the intervention.
- For the majority of attitude statements, WP students displayed greater gains and showed higher final levels of confidence and resilience than the non-WP group.

Conclusion

This paper has summarised the impact of Ulster University's employability engagement initiatives with 'hard to reach students' detailing the positive short term evaluative outcomes. Further evaluations of medium and long term gains will be published in follow-up phases as data becomes available on placement uptake, student learning journey and the graduate outcomes survey.

The differential between the student groups (intervention group versus the control group) clearly demonstrates the significance that engaging with the initiatives had in terms of student's self-confidence and resilience. From the attitudinal statements those students identified as WP evidenced greater learning gains including higher levels of confidence than their non-WP peers.

Drawing on these initial outcomes, we are confident that longer term results will provide the opportunity to disseminate best practice in employability interventions informing the 'what works?' debate from a student centred perspective.

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It's no big deal...but it's not ideal – Capitals and Compromise: Understanding students' experience of unpaid work

Eileen Cunningham

Salford University
e.a.cunningham2@salford.ac.uk

Author's request - This paper includes original work which will soon be submitted for a PhD. Please ask for permission from the author before citing this work.

Abstract

A degree is no longer enough to guarantee graduate career success (Tomlinson 2008) so work experience (internships, work placements, volunteering and other such activities undertaken, locally and internationally) increasingly provide a way to meet requirements of graduate employers. However, many such opportunities are unpaid, low paid or are created by personal and family contacts, all of which can further disadvantage individuals with less social, cultural and economic capital (Bourdieu 1986).

Whilst the Higher Education & Research Act (2017) put students at the heart of higher education, researching the student perspective often takes the form of quantitative surveys focusing on outcomes rather than experiences and offering limited insight into stories behind the statistics.

This qualitative research seeks to understand, interpret and present the lived experiences of students across north-west UK universities who have undertaken work experiences. It illustrates the everyday challenges and opportunities they encounter and how they make the most of their experiences within a fast-changing and unfamiliar context. The research considers how practitioners can best prepare and support students to find intrinsic meaning in their experiences as well as something to add to their CV.

Introduction

A degree alone is no longer enough to guarantee graduate career success (Tomlinson 2008) so work experience increasingly provides a way to meet skill requirements and demonstrate competitive edge in selection for graduate jobs. This experience may take the form of internships, work placements, work experience, volunteering and other activities and may take place locally, nationally and internationally. However, many such opportunities are '*unpaid, unadvertised and unfair*' (Sutton Trust 2018) often facilitated by personal and family contacts, all of which can further disadvantage individuals with lower levels of social, cultural and economic capital (Bourdieu 1986).

Whilst the Higher Education & Research Act (2017) and the resultant creation of the 'Office for Students' purports to place students at the heart of higher education, researching the student perspective often takes the form of quantitative surveys (such as the National Student Survey and Destinations of Leavers

of Higher Education) focusing on outcomes rather than experiences and offering limited insight into the stories behind the statistics.

This qualitative research seeks to understand, interpret and present the lived experiences of a sample of students across north-west UK universities who have undertaken unpaid work experiences. It illustrates the everyday challenges and opportunities they encounter and how they make the most of their experiences within a fast-changing and often confusing labour market context. The research considers how practitioners can best prepare and support students to find intrinsic meaning in their experiences beyond enhancing their CV.

The presentation is the culmination of my doctoral research and focuses mainly on students who have accessed university as a result of widening participation measures, many being the first in their family to go to university and/or from lower socio-economic groups. This cohort were amongst the first cohort of students to undertake a degree which would leave them with debts of around £44k.

Rationale for the study & my professional background and interest in this field

I am a Chartered Occupational Psychologist, Careers Adviser and Lecturer in Social Policy so my research is naturally interdisciplinary and practitioner focused with the objectives of practical recommendations as well as theoretical understanding. My concern for this topic arose when I was a Careers Adviser in a sixth form college where I observed how students were strongly encouraged to apply for university in order to meet college targets and how the steep increase in student finance was normalised.

Context The political, economic, social, technological, legal and ethical context of these students is paramount to the understanding of their experience. My research presents a review of policy and social discourse at the time of their entry, study and graduation. Social policy decisions and market conditions relating to higher education, work and careers guidance have impacted strongly upon this group with both intended and also unintended, unforeseen consequences. Many big data surveys spell out the negative impact, particularly upon lesser advantaged individuals (for example, inequality of outcomes based on gender, ethnicity, disability and geographical location). This research, whilst acknowledging this context also seeks to uncover success stories – what kind of support and intervention strategies have had a positive impact?

Theoretical framework

The research is underpinned by the philosophy of Heidegger (1953) and contemporary phenomenological scholars such as Van Manen (1990) as well as theories from Sociology relating to capitals as a mediator between structure and agency (Bourdieu 1986, Giddens 1984). Concepts from the fields of Career Studies and Psychology such as ‘boundaryless career’ (Arthur 1994), ‘planned

happenstance’ (Krumboltz 2009) and ‘psychological contract’ (Rousseau, 1995) also help to explain ways in which students and graduates navigate their transition to the world of work.

Methodology – this is a qualitative research project using interpretive phenomenology which aims to deeply explore, understand and represent structures of experiences which may be common whilst also acknowledging dimensions which may be more unique and atypical.

A purposive sample of twenty-four students and recent graduates from three north-west universities were selected to participate in a semi-structured interview. Interviews were transcribed verbatim and analysed using NVivo software.

Findings – The research highlights overall themes, illustrating them with insightful quotes from participants then translating this into pragmatic strategies for students, graduates, HE professionals and policy makers. The themes are organised around existentials of lived experience: self (corporeality), others (inter-relationality), world (spatiality), time (temporality) and things (materiality) (Van Manen 1990). I discuss how unpaid work is a pervasive aspect of student life with both positive and negative implications for physical and psychological wellbeing and the sacrifices and the compromises the participants described in balancing time and money between studies, home and work. This unpaid work can take many forms, including and beyond the obvious internships and work experience: -

Types of unpaid work

Obvious forms	Less obvious forms
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Internships ■ Work experience ■ Work placements ■ Volunteering ■ ‘Opportunity not job’ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Caring responsibilities ■ ‘Above and beyond’ labour ■ Underemployment ■ Emotional Labour ■ Digital Labour ■ ‘Labour-towards-employment’

Social relationships and information technology are presented as pivotal to the way in which students access, learn from, cope with and mobilise opportunities. Some positive benefits of unpaid work experiences are also highlighted where students span boundaries, expanding their horizons and applying their knowledge and skills in a range of contexts before settling into a career.

Although it is difficult to summarise rich themes into key points some of the most significant observations were:-

- i. Participants generally found purpose in their unpaid work placements which often went beyond the instrumental 'CV building', some even describing it as 'life-changing'.
- ii. They balanced the physical and psychological discomfort of sacrifices with the optimism of long-term gratification, i.e. they were prepared to work unpaid at this stage of their life/career but expected it to be a transitional arrangement.
- iii. Many of the participants reported episodes of mental health issues such as anxiety or depression (during or as a result of work experiences) however, they also often described how they had overcome them.
- iv. Other people were highly influential both in facilitating opportunities and supporting and inspiring the participants during them. The participants often talked about real relationships rather than 'network contacts'.
- v. Participants supported the concept of boundaryless careers as crossing spatial, temporal and sectoral borders. This was often beneficial to the participant and also to the host organisation.
- vi. Notions of 'dream job' and 'career misery push' were commonly described where work-based experiences helped them to more clearly define what they did or didn't want in their future career.
- vii. Despite most of the participants being 'non-traditional' students (e.g. new universities, first in the family, other WP criteria) many of them were successful in attaining first class degrees and top graduate roles. This may, at least in part, be attributable to initiatives within their universities which aimed to give them an advantage (Funded Ethical Placements, Employability module & Launchpad Leadership Programme).

Recommendations and future research – the aim of phenomenological research is not merely to find answers but to raise questions and stimulate debate which has led me to further explore career-decision-making and graduate regional mobility. A key area for further research is engaging with career and HE professionals to understand their experiences of supporting students and graduates in work-based learning. Based upon evidence of good practice, my professional experience/reflections and suggestions of graduates about the things that would have most helped them I suggest some very practical principles and strategies which HE practitioners may find helpful:-

- i. Unpaid work experiences can be highly valuable to students and graduates, not only in helping them to become more 'employable' but also in more fundamental ways which

prepare them to be adults and good citizens – locally, nationally and globally. However, appropriate and timely support is needed in order to help them to make the most of these experiences.

- ii. Careers advisers and university tutors are well placed to provide and to signpost help so need to be aware of the wider context and activities of individual students and be impartial and person-focused. Services driven purely by targets or employer needs may fail to address the longer term and wider implications.
- iii. Students need to be aware of and begin to develop a range of life-skills which will help them in the world of work but are also more generally relevant, for example, information literacy, cultural competence, financial management, problem-solving and decision-making.
- iv. The DLHE survey has recognised that graduates can take a while to settle into a first career – an observation also made in this research - so Further and Higher Education should also emphasise long term progression and that success can mean more than just a ‘graduate job’ and high salary.
- v. Wellbeing is a key issue which could perhaps be better addressed with preventative rather than just remedial services (of course this is easier said than done). Coaching techniques which help the student to develop self-efficacy could be used by placement mentors, careers advisers and tutors

Conclusion and personal reflections

Phenomenological research does not strive to be generalizable to a wider population but instead to capture a snapshot in time of particular experiences, however, there are many facets of the descriptions and interpretations which may strike a chord amongst recent graduates and those who work to support them. This research took place during a time of seismic change in Higher Education and the ways in which individuals made sense of their situations and navigated their course towards the world of work was, for me, fascinating and humbling. As a Psychologist most of my previous work has involved statistics and numerical data and so learning about qualitative research and how it can beautifully complement and supplement big data and surveys has been particularly affirming and enlightening. As this is my current PhD research - a topic close to my heart and uppermost in my mind - I welcome comments and discussion with conference delegates so that we may continue to support students and graduates in their workplace learning and career transition

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It's all about culture: Challenges and Successes in developing a Framework for Employability

Denise Thyer and Mark Jones

Swansea University
dd.thyer@swansea.ac.uk
m.a.c.jones@swansea.ac.uk

Abstract

How can we best prepare students for the next step of their career? In this talk, we present some possibilities – After the development of innovative employability modules, this presentation will use student and academic feedback to demonstrate how bringing employability and academic subject knowledge together can prepare students not only for their next steps but aspire them to continuously develop themselves.

This session will share good practice of embedding employability, looking at the unique challenges and successes of employability and placement modules. It will allow participants to gain an understanding of practices used including high level experiential and critical reflective learning. The interactive element will allow them to have first-hand experience of tools used in the intensive boot-camp used to prepare students for their placements. We will present feedback from students, academics and employers regarding their experiences of the modules. This feedback will demonstrate how developing diverse employability skills and a critical reflective mindset within placements can support greater confidence and success for transition to employment and skills for life generally.

Presentation

 <p>Swansea University Prifysgol Abertawe</p> <p>It's all About Culture: Challenges and Successes in Developing a Framework for Employability</p>	 <p>Ms. Denise Thyer Director of Employability College of Human and Health Science</p>  <p>Mr. Mark Jones Director of Employability College of Arts and Humanities</p>
<p>#Embedding Employability #It's all About Culture @HumanandHealth @SwanUniCOAH @SwanseaUni</p> <p>Today's Focus</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Getting to know one another • Explore employability perceptions • Our framework for embedding employability • Putting it into practice • Student / Employer feedback / Academic • Challenges and risks • Learning exchange & take away messages 	 <p>Getting to Know One Another!</p> <p>Speak to the people around you and try to find answers to the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who has made the longest journey today? • Find the weirdest thing anyone has eaten. • What is an atidaephorbia a phobia of? Closest guess wins (Google not allowed!!) 



THE FAR SIDE By GARY LARSON

Andriophobia: The fear that somewhere, somehow, it's about to erupting you.

So What Does Employability Mean to You?!!

- On your smart phone/tablet or laptop please go to:
- Socrative Student
- Classroom - THYER




"Employability is not the same as gaining a graduate job, rather it is a role and of the skills between occupations, thus remaining being a job role." (Yorke, 2004)

Employability is primarily a static measure of employment. (DLHE, 2016)

"91% of UK careers staff felt that academic staff shared responsibility of the career experience." (Yorke, 2004)

Employability: **Employability is not the same as gaining a graduate job, rather it is a role and of the skills between occupations, thus remaining being a job role.** (Yorke, 2004)

More than half of major employers (UK) say **employability is only relevant to 7% of their graduates.** It is more important now than ever before in light of a positive attitude. (Yorke, 2004)

An on-going developmental process that benefits from active reflection. **Employability is primarily a static measure of employment.** (Yorke, 2004)

"A set of attributes, skills and knowledge" underpinned by a positive attitude" (CBI NUS, 2011)

- "Employability is not the same as gaining a graduate job, rather it is about the capacity to function successfully in a role and be able to move between occupations, thus remaining employable throughout their life" (Yorke, 2004)
- "DLHE in its current form is primarily a static measure of employment... Not a measure of employability" (Norton, 2016)
- "91% of UK careers staff felt that academic staff shared responsibility for employability" (BIS Pilot No 40 Supporting Graduate Employment 2011) It is a university-wide responsibility (Yorke, 2004)
- Employability = Career development learning, experience, degree subject knowledge, generic skills, emotional intelligence. (Pool & Sewell, 2007) Graduate outcomes is a key factor for TEF
- More than half of major employers (UK) say graduates are not "work ready" (Times, 2013) "It is more important now than ever before in light of the world graduates are entering" (Yorke, 2004)
- An on-going developmental process that benefits from active reflection. "A set of attributes, skills and knowledge" underpinned by a positive attitude" (CBI NUS, 2011)



Kolb, SEA & HEA a match made in reflection!

Curriculum Embedding




Curriculum Embedding



INCLUSION
All students, regardless of location, situation, programme or mode of study, should have equitable access to opportunities to enhance their employability, make successful transitions and manage their careers. (HEA, 2016, p. 5)

Careers & Employability is compulsory for all students enrolled on H&SC at all levels 4-6

Enhancing Employability (Level 5) allows students of all backgrounds to gain valuable work experience by including a work placement in students' academic timetables.

Curriculum Embedding



ENGAGEMENT
Developing a shared understanding and view of employability in any given context will facilitate staff, employer and student engagement. Students can subsequently engage proactively in seeking to develop an individual in the areas of focus being highlighted. (HEA, 2016, p. 5)

Academic modules developed using university-wide framework: My Career Journey.

Timetabled sessions introduce students to opportunities available through University and wider community.

All awards linked to assessment

Curriculum Embedding



COLLABORATION
Collaborative approaches to learning and teaching can enrich and inform the curriculum and support graduate employability. Collaboration between HE and business provides opportunities, informs the curriculum, and should be a key feature of your approach to employability. (HEA, 2016, p. 5)

Academic modules delivered collaboratively between academic staff, SEA, careers advisors, Discovery (volunteer society), Internationalisation Office, and local employers.

It's all About the Culture



- University Strategy Board
- Placement Organizations
- University Management Board
- College Employability Committee

In Practice



Infusing courses with employability skills: A work placement example from Psychology



What do Graduate Employers Want?

Skill	Share of graduate roles which have this skill	Share of employers who train graduates on this skill
Managing up	50%	59%
Dealing with conflict	50%	73%
Negotiation/influencing	50%	89%
Commercial awareness	50%	85%
Resilience	50%	72%
Business communication	50%	88%
Self-awareness	50%	85%
Time management	50%	78%
Problem-solving	50%	84%
Interpersonal skills	50%	84%
Teamwork	50%	84%

National data from the Institute of Student Employers (2017)

Our own data

- Regional Data (Wales)
- Online Survey
- CHHS in collaboration with COAH and SEA
- Respondents 62
- Mix of public, private and third sector

100% Swansea University
1920-2020
100 Years
What do Graduate Employers Want?

On a Regional Scale

Values Vs Skills

- Yes, more so than skills
- Yes, but not as important as skills
- No, values do not influence hiring decisions
- Yes, as important as skills
- No, but they may influence final hiring decisions

Importance of Values

Why a Work Placement Module?

- Providing opportunities for career exploration
- Filling in the skill gaps
- Presentation ✓ Interview ✗ Effective Communication ✗
- Group work ✓ Team work dynamics ✗
- Research informed self-reflection
- A psychologist in the real world
- What do businesses want?

Module Aims

- Learn Skills – Week of Teaching**
Develop students understanding of the application of various concepts, values and ideas related to employability
- Develop Them - Get Experience**
Enable students to identify and develop key transferable employability skills through a short work experience placement
- Reflect on Them - Assessment**
Reflect critically on practical experiences gained and challenges experienced, and the impact it may have on their future employability.
Identify & develop their knowledge and work related skills gaps and translate these into achievable personal learning outcomes.

Boot-camp - 35 Hours of Theory

Syllabus

- Self-management
- Problem solving
- Team-working
- Business and customer awareness
- Communication
- Interview skills
- Reflective practice
- Psychological literacy

Placements – 70 Hours of Experience

- Students are placed with local public, private and third sector companies and organisations.
- They must complete 70 hours of work experience.
- One full day a week for 10 weeks
- Timetabled Thursdays – but expected to be flexible
- Students are welcome to secure their own placements
- All placement settings are risk managed
- All students must complete DBS checks
- Complete timesheets

How it works

In Action

Personalised Placement Learning Record (PPLR)

- PPLR forms 100% of the assessment for the module.
- Write up/further developing in-class exercises and tasks (Nominal word count 2500)
- Reflective account of mock interview 500 words (Compulsory word count)
- Reflective account of work placement 2000 words (Compulsory word count)

Student Feedback



"During my work placement with Gwalia I worked on a project for homeless young people called Ty Tom Jones offering them access to affordable, safe accommodation, education, training, employment and volunteering opportunities. I had the chance to work shadow Support Workers and supervise new projects. When my placement ended I applied for a role as a Part Time Support Worker and I got it!"

Amy Burgess



Doing more group work was good because people had loads of experiences to share which was great! The week made me realise more about myself regarding skills and how I can use them in future interviews and placements work.

The tasks helped me with critical thinking

The tasks helped me learn how to apply theory to practice

The days were long, but the group activities made it engaging and interesting.

"If you are considering the module then I would definitely advise you to take up this opportunity! It's a great way to learn about skills you didn't know you had and pick up new ones!"

"JUST DO IT!"

"Do it, it's worth getting the experience while you can."

"The reflections were harder than I thought, but taught me a lot about my own strengths and weaknesses"



Advice for other students

"My placement was at the Big Issue, I worked with vendors to support them in how to sell the Big Issue and to encourage them to see it as a worthwhile job. Initially I was apprehensive about the placement, but the experience made me realise a lot about myself and that I'd like to work with vulnerable people in the third sector. My advice - don't let initial apprehensions get in the way."

Ed Kendal

Placement Provider Feedback

"We have very well established work experience programmes developed over the past 12 years. But this was the first time I had a student from a Psychology Dept, and I have to say I was impressed with the quality of the student. I think the student is planning to do a MRes in my group for next academic year."

Seokyoung Chung, Medical School

I found the experience to be very worthwhile and enjoyable and very rewarding as a placement provider. Really good to pass on knowledge that we have gained over the years. The student was very polite and respectful and inquisitive and all that was required of them they fully met and exceeded.

Joseph De-lacey - Alabare



100% of providers were satisfied with the student's performance and would happily take more in the future

Not satisfied Satisfied

Placement Provider Feedback

The student was interested, committed and engaged with both her small group facilitator and us as a team. She attended every session and the experience seemed to be meaningful, informative and of benefit to her. Throughout the module I noticed an increase in confidence with the student which was good to witness

Julie Perrins- Sycamore Project / Transition

Skill Development

Were students able to demonstrate the following skills?



Skill	Yes	No
Communication	100%	0%
Teamwork	100%	0%
Problem Solving	100%	0%
Self-reflection	100%	0%
Time Management	100%	0%
Organisation	100%	0%

Academic Feedback

"We were initially met with resistance, especially from the mature students, but have had extremely positive feedback from all participants. Some have made a conscious decision to change their pathways after placements, reevaluating plans saving time, money and heartache. From a teaching perspective the benefits far out way the drawbacks: it's great to see first year's progress from having no clear aim to third years with a clear action plan."

Dr. Jodie Crowall, Associate Professor
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QEZ5sMmLQU>



Challenges & Risks

Admin & management <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Three-way contract • Timesheets 	Communication & Leadership <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Excellent team work • Positive relationships with placements • Failed placements
Student expectations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Professional conduct • Preparation & training for realistic expectations • Minority of students • Failed placements 	Collaborative culture <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Across department, college & university • Academic support • Professional services support • Careers support



The Learning Exchange

4 Key messages from us

1. The embedding of employability needs to be an across University activity with across department collaboration and inclusivity
2. Engaged students are a central collaborator and partner in successful inclusive employability development
3. Vocational experiences, reflective practice, critical thinking and an entrepreneurial and employability mind-set are the outcomes of an engaging & innovative employability model
4. Employability can be valued by the student just as highly as their degree programme for future life success

Using Socrative - Please leave us a message
 Classroom - Thyer




Questions?



Ms. Denise Thyer
 01792 602292
d.thyer@nottingham.ac.uk

Mr. Mark Jones
 01792 606264
m.jones@nottingham.ac.uk



Engaging videos for placement learning – working with our student interns

Rob Jack

University of Southampton
r.jack@soton.ac.uk

Abstract

This workshop will engage participants in activities to help create engaging, successful videos which enhance placement learning.

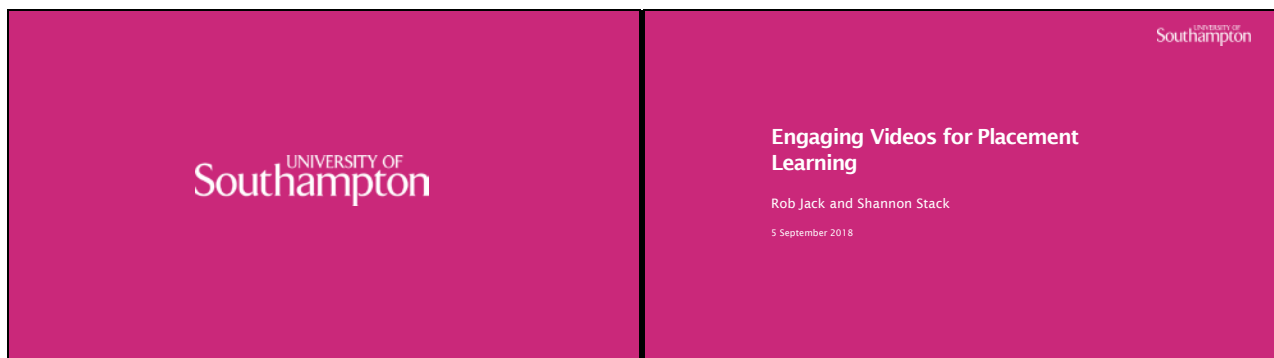
As learning technology develops and student engagement in ‘traditional’ lectures drops, many of us are turning to video to enhance our teaching in pre, during, and post-placement modules. Video offers an effective way to reach students who are not attending face-to-face sessions, who may be off-campus, on placement, or reluctant to attend another employer talk.

With so many tools and techniques on offer, getting started on producing educational videos can be challenging. For those who have already produced video resources, how do we know if they are really adding value to placement learning?

This question is explored in this workshop, which examines best practice in educational videos. We will explore the use of video in Southampton Business School’s placement preparation module, focusing on a recent summer internship which has reviewed and updated our existing video content.

Participants will be engaged in activities to support the development of new or existing video content, including methods of producing effective videos with limited resources. We will also propose a post-placement collaborative project to engage colleagues in the creation of shared content.

Presentation



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Southampton

SESSION OUTLINE

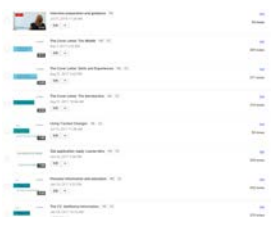
- How we use video
- Benefits of video resources
- **Brainstorm: suitable topic for a video**
- Types of educational videos
- Features of good videos
- **Storyboarding: video for placement learning**
- How to create videos
- **Future collaboration**

3

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Use of video in our placement preparation course

- Year One module to ensure students are "application ready"
- Online learning alongside fortnightly face-to-face sessions
- Video used to cover basic (or boring!) teaching, allowing more interactive lectures
- 60 videos covering the application process, placement approval, and health and safety
 - 6000+ views in 365 days
 - Average view duration 2:28/64%




4

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Benefits of video resources

- Reuse year-on-year
- Students can complete at own pace
- Cover simple topics out of class
- Reach students off campus
- Easy way to engage employers



5

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Task: identify a suitable topic for video

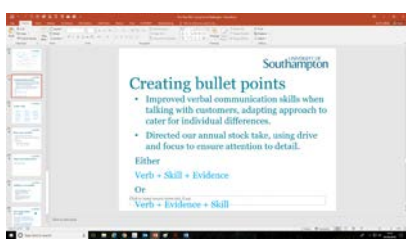
Using sticky note brainstorming!

1. The problem to be examined:
 1. Students on placement face challenges in the workplace. Identify one of the challenges which could be covered by a video and sent to students on placement
2. Write as many ideas down as possible – one idea per sticky note. SILENCE! (1 minute)
3. Read out your notes (2 minutes)
4. Have any other ideas emerged? Can you merge ideas? (1 minute)
5. Vote for the idea to take forward – two votes per person (1 minute)

6

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The screencast video




- Easy
- Quick
- Personal
- Can use images or drawings to demonstrate

7

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The talking head video



- Easy
- Quick
- Personal
- Good for feedback or reflection

8

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The recorded lecture video




- Easy
- Quick
- Long
- Not suitable for interactive lectures

9

UNIVERSITY OF
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The interview video



- Good for employer engagement and insight
- Edit to keep the best bits
- Quick to record (but long to edit?)
- Need a good subject and open questions

10

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The animation video




Engaging
Time-consuming
Needs talent (or expensive!)

11

UNIVERSITY OF
Southampton

The hybrid video

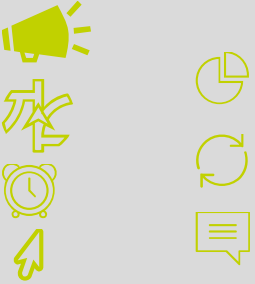


- Videos combining elements of different video types are easy to produce, engaging, and impactful
- Combine a teacher presence with professional input and demonstrations

12

Features of good video

- Signaling – make students aware of important parts
- Segmenting – put information in chunks (or separate videos)
- Weeding – eliminate unnecessary aspects
- Match modality- align content with topic
- Keep it short – 7 minutes or less
- Conversational style
- Speak with enthusiasm
- Interactive features



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Task: storyboard a video

Produce a rough outline of a video covering the topic you identified earlier

1. Consider the learning outcomes that the video should address (what does the learner need to learn)
2. Think about what video type(s) best suit your topic
3. Create an outline using the storyboard sheets
4. Does your video need any interactive activities?

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How to create videos

Resources to get started

- Check your institution's existing resources and software
- 'Lightworks' – free video editor
- 'Microsoft Expression Screen Capture' – record your screen
- Pexels.com for royalty-free images
- YouTube for tutorials
- Remember – we are not producing a blockbuster!
- Consider offering internships – valuable experience

15

Proposal: a collaborative project



- Today we have started to think about how to create effective videos for placement learning
- Our students have shared experiences and challenges in the workplace
- We can collaborate to start producing resources to address these challenges
- Support each other in creating videos
- Share the workload and success

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YOUR QUESTIONS

Rob Jack
r.jack@soton.ac.uk
02380 595 133

The 'e-factor': Anglia Ruskin Business School Intern Programme

Donna Franklin and Margarita Harris

Anglia Ruskin University
donna.franklin@anglia.ac.uk margarita.harris@anglia.ac.uk

Abstract

Anglia Ruskin Business School established an intern programme in 2014. It is built on three cornerstones: a personal mentor; a 'vital skills' training package and work experience opportunities which facilitate students working as collaborators. The aim is to give our students the best possible opportunity to raise awareness of, and develop their skill-set and knowledge of employability...and build their own 'e-factor'!

The intern student community covers all business disciplines and is open to all undergraduates, postgraduate, PhD and foundation students within the Business School. The eight-month programme complements academic teaching, and fosters positive peer influence.

The delivery team, the Student Engagement team, won the Anglia Ruskin Vice Chancellor's Award in May 2016, and later won a CATE Finalist Award (2016) from the Higher Education Academy for its contribution to student experience, engagement and employability.

Through the lens of this scheme, we invite delegates to discuss how we measure the impact of these kinds of employability initiatives which aim to secure work placement opportunities and graduate roles for our students. We will also explore how we can future-proof our students for known (and unknown) future work/life challenges.

Presentation

  <p>Business School Intern Programme The future of Employability <i>–the 'e-factor'</i></p> <p>Donna Franklin, Student Engagement Manager Margarita Harris, Student Experience Coordinator</p> 	 <p>Community & friendships</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Engaged & passionate Ambassadors  
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Anglia Ruskin University

Cornerstones

Personal mentor Vital skills training

Graduate attributes: collaborative, imaginative, ambitious

LAIBS INTERN PROGRAMME

Anglia Ruskin University

Adaptability

...the quality of being able to adjust to new conditions

LAIBS INTERN PROGRAMME

Anglia Ruskin University

Relationships

1/3 of our intern mentors are Business School alumni

Connect with us to discuss how you can inspire our next generation. Complete the online form: laibs@anglia.ac.uk Email: alumni@anglia.ac.uk or visit anglia.ac.uk/laibs

Inspire the next generation

LAIBS INTERN PROGRAMME

Anglia Ruskin University

LAIBS INTERN PROGRAMME

Anglia Ruskin University

Training package

Benefits: regular interaction, community, support & investment in students

- Effective communications
- Digital literacy
- Personal brand
- Commercial awareness
- Networking masterclass
- Creative problem solving
- Volunteering 'give back'
- Fundraising opportunities

LAIBS INTERN PROGRAMME

Anglia Ruskin University

Positive value and impact

*"The intern programme encouraged and allowed me to be proud of who I was as a person, and made me confident to see my weaknesses as strengths. It was this **confidence** and **passion** which I believe greatly helped in gaining a placement"*

Emma Scriven
Marketing placement (M&S)

LAIBS INTERN PROGRAMME

Anglia Ruskin University

Positive value and impact

*"The intern programme encouraged and allowed me to be proud of who I was as a person, and made me confident to see my weaknesses as strengths. It was this **confidence** and **passion** which I believe greatly helped in gaining a placement"*

Emma Scriven
Marketing placement (M&S)

LAIBS INTERN PROGRAMME

Anglia Ruskin University

Universal, adaptable skills

Syeda Shah
Student Experience Manager in Pakistan
Intern of the Year (2015)

*"I teach my students all those skills which I learned from the Intern Programme... **communication skills, team-building skills and confidence building.**"*

*I want to thank you, the entire team of the Intern Programme for making me a better person and allowing me to polish my skills in such a way that I can **succeed in every part of life**"*

LAIBS INTERN PROGRAMME



Anglia Ruskin University



THE World University Rankings 2018 Top 350

Enhance graduate skills...






Benefits:


- Students
- Peers
- Faculty
- University
- Local community









Anglia Ruskin University



THE World University Rankings 2018 Top 350




CATE Finalist Award 2016



Higher Education Academy

What next?...



- ★ Collaborative
- ★ Imaginative
- ★ Ambitious

Exploring and developing education and employability for future work life through triple helix collaboration and placements

Helen Gansmo

NTNU University, Trondheim, Norway
helen.gansmo@ntnu.no

Abstract

In this paper, I will argue for the importance of exploring and developing education and employability for future work life through triple helix collaboration and placements. Drawing on a case study of an intern placement program for students in the humanities – Humanities in Practice (HiP) - conducted at the Norwegian University of Science and Technology between 2012 and 2018, the paper will elaborate on some success stories on diversification in the range of work based and placement learning opportunities. I will argue that the experiences from these success stories should serve as an invitation to discuss the role of faculty in developing education and employability for future work life.

Introduction

In 2001 The Norwegian University of Science and Technology (NTNU) in Trondheim, Norway, established the compulsory subject Experts in team (EiT) in response to work life demands arguing that students need to learn interdisciplinary teamwork skills. The industry raised this demand in a time characterized by increasing focus on interdisciplinary problem solving and merging of different knowledge cultures in research, teaching and industry. Establishing a compulsory interdisciplinary team- and project-based subject for all master students at NTNU opened several opportunities for dialogues with the industry. Since 2005 the credit bearing internship placement program Humanities in practice (HiP) has been offered to master students at the Faculty of Humanities as an alternative to the compulsory subject EiT. The design of HiP responded to research on employability as well as observations that humanities students were struggling with identifying their subject specific identity.

This paper is based on materials and results from several empirical studies of the HiP programme conducted between 2012-2018 and a case study of state efforts to stimulate collaboration between Higher Education Institution (HEI) and industry. The empirical material was constructed using a mixed methods approach and consists of:

1. Records of participatory observations conducted by 200 HiP master students. These students were placed in a total of 70 enterprises and made daily records in the form of field notes of their experiences over the entire period of 3 weeks.

2. Several surveys, one per year, investigating the experiences of the 200 students as well as representatives from the 70 enterprises.
3. In depth interviews with representatives from rural entrepreneurial hubs about their experience of assisting local enterprises in setting up cooperation agreements with students.
4. In depth interviews with administrative representatives from NTNU about their experiences with setting up collaboration between students and work life.

HiP attains project partners and recruit master students who are grouped in teams of 3 students with different disciplinary backgrounds in the humanities. The students are trained to prepare for a 3 weeks placement period ending with a public conference. The practical aspects of the HiP placements are quite similar to the Good Practice Guide (Wilson 2009): All parties involved – Higher Education Institution (HEI), student, and employer – are stimulated to work together before, during and after the period of work-based learning. The HiP professor builds the academic and basic procedural requirements into the course at the design and validation stage, covering learning outcomes, criteria for exemption, preparation for work-based learning, and details of assessment and accreditation. These are communicated to the students at appropriate stages from recruitment through to preparations for, completion of, and debriefing from, the work-based learning. The HiP professor and assistants provide academic and administrative support for the students to optimise the preparation for and implementation of the experience. The students are given and accept responsibility for cooperating as necessary in the process of finding and delivering a suitable end product from the work-based learning, meeting the HEI requirements including assessment, while also operating as an effective ambassador for HiP and the university in all dealings with the employer. The students are encouraged to take every action necessary to get the most out of the learning experience, such as relating learning to the course/module, building transferable skills, and using the opportunity to consolidate career planning. The employers are invited to think through the reasons for taking a group of work-based learning students and ensure that the students recruited will be progressively developed rather than overwhelmed. HiP looks for employers regarding students as good value for money rather than cheap labour, and who in all respects treat them in the same way as other employees. In all regards the employer should work with the student and HiP to enable the learning experience to take place.

The primary aim of HiP is to provide students with relevant work experience and increase their awareness about their competences, possible areas to apply their competences, and ease the transition from studies to work life.

One of the secondary aims is to highlight the value of humanities in work life through offering NGOs, public services and private enterprises possibilities to employ master students as resources in their day to day business.

The other indirect HiP aim is to inspire potential curricular revision through providing faculty dialogue opportunities and input on potential research opportunities/new collaborative partners, potential (new) career paths for their students as well as input on developments in (perceived) need for skills in work life. The idea is that curricular revision might aid the students in expanding their career possibilities, as well as inspire new collaboration between the industry and the university in research projects. Representatives from the industry often express that they need to be both updated on and contribute to research in order to keep their business afloat, but struggle to do so because they lack the time and knowledge needed to explore and digest potentially relevant academic texts, as well as cultivate relationships with relevant researchers.

In order to contribute to these indirect goals, we have taken several measures to forgo traditional format in the humanities and thereby 'flip' the experience of learning. The students are encouraged to practice outreach and popular science dissemination of results. First, by writing feature articles as an alternative to the traditional written scientific report. Secondly, by describing their placement experiences to an audience of interested business partners and university staff, as well as friends and family, and future students at the annual HiP conference, which replaces the traditional oral exam at the end of the programme.

Framing HiP: Triple Helix and internship placement programmes for students in the humanities

Increased cooperation between employers and education has long been a goal for educational policy in Norway as well as internationally, partly due to awareness about the necessity to ease the transition from student to employee (see for instance Norwegian Whitepaper St.meld nr. 44 (2008-2009), and Brandt. et al 2008). The transition from student to employee has been shown to be particularly difficult for students from the humanities (Spiewak 2007, Cambreleng 2009). In this context, Koschorke (2007) argues for the importance for students who major in the humanities to demonstrate the relevancy of their skills in relation to corporate goals like reducing costs. For instance, by demonstrating how such goals are tied to understanding and respect for other cultures and languages, and there is some evidence that close cooperation between universities and enterprises seems to increase the employability of graduates from the humanities (Louvel 2007).

American universities have long offered students in the humanities internship placement programmes (Kaston og Heffernan 1983, Jones 1983), and have used the feedback generated from those programmes to innovate the curriculum (Goynes and Grover 1976). In doing so, they managed to increase the recognition for the contribution that skills in the humanities add to corporate goals (Kaston og Heffernan 1983, Jones 1983). For instance, by highlighting how training in the humanities is geared towards the development of strong skills in writing, analysis and communication, something that business leaders felt that students from the natural sciences often lack (Jones 1983). Recently, internship placement programs for students in the humanities have also gained popularity outside of the U.S due to an understanding that they provide students with much needed real-world experience to the benefits of the students, as well as the universities and to the industry (Coco 2000).

OECD (2018) recently investigated the higher education system in Norway. Even though the education system is regarded as successful and the labour market is robust, OECD warns that globalization and technological change are transforming the economy and in turn the skills needed, and hence recommends a strong government role in steering the education system towards greater labour market relevance, for instance through more collaboration between HEI and industry. The Triple Helix of university-industry-government relationships describes the shift from a predominantly industry-government dyad in the Industrial Society towards an increasingly more triadic relationship between university-industry-government in the Knowledge Society. The thesis is that the potential for innovation and economic development in a Knowledge Society lies in a more prominent role for the university. The anticipation is creative renewal arising within each of the three institutional spheres of university, industry and government, as well as at their intersections through the hybridization of elements from university, industry and government to generate new institutional and social formats for the production, transfer and application of knowledge (Etzkowitz and Leydesdorffer 2000). Within this setting, universities experience increased interest for research collaboration from industry, but also that the government and industry challenge the role of the universities in terms of questioning the employability of the students.

The idea is that internships placement programs will benefit students with the opportunity to further develop the knowledge and skills they have acquired during their studies by applying them in a corporate setting (Hindmoor (2010). This practical application of theoretical knowledge gained through studies is often describe in positive terms by students, as well as faculty, and corporate representatives (Pedro 1984), and several studies investigate students' experiences with internships (see e.g. Rothman (2003), Williams and Alawiye (2001), Parilla and Hesser (1998)). Yet, despite their growing popularity,

only very few studies describe the causal relationship between benefits for the stakeholders, and internship placement programmed for students in the humanities.

Narayanan et al. (2010) identify the different roles of the three stakeholders students, university, and business—and propose a multistage model of determinants of effectiveness based on indications of the importance of considering the respective roles of the multiple actors and of the internship process in explaining student satisfaction. Examining students' and employers' expectations towards internships Knemeyer og Murphy (2002) find that internships are an increasingly essential component of the educational preparation, and are often viewed as a win-win situation for both the intern and their employer(s). Thompson (2016) argues that much of the research into higher education and its role in work-based learning, and especially in supporting undergraduate students on placements, has focused on longer-term internships and sandwich courses. Research has also concentrated on subject areas that have traditionally been associated with the above, for example business, health and engineering. By contrast, the aim of Thompson's study was to gather data from students on a much shorter period of placement categorised as a 'short project', as part of their social sciences programmes. Thompson further argues that the social sciences and humanities more generally have not been discussed to any great extent within the context of research on placement or work-based learning. Thompson concludes that even a relatively short period of structured placement can be of significant benefit to students and provide them with an opportunity to assess their career direction and gain valuable experience.

What can HiP teach us about the promises and pitfalls of intern placement programs for students in the humanities?

In this case the Government is represented by the county and their regional innovation hubs working to stimulate innovation for instance through establishing collaboration between local enterprises and research/HEI. They acknowledge the importance of collaboration, but find that they spend a lot of energy convincing the enterprises to partake and they also struggle with opening the right doors at the university. The main challenge seems to be to establish collaboration for collaboration's own sake. When the collaboration instead is established based on an identified challenge or knowledge gap they tend to be more successful with linking enterprises to HEI. However, their experience also highlights that the triple helix model pays little to no attention to the fact that different groups within the university may have interests that are in conflict with one another. The triple helix model may be seen to assume that the interests of students as well as faculty members, including teaching staff, are unproblematically aligned with the goals and interests of universities, which this case study demonstrates is not always the case.

Since private enterprises often have been seen to regard humanities majors as less employable than candidates regarded as contributing more directly to company revenue, the indirect aim of HiP is also to create successful encounters between humanities students and employers normally not hiring candidates with humanities majors in order to expand the work market for humanities students. Partly by coincidence, it has occurred that some of the placement liaisons have been humanities majors themselves. They nevertheless tell that having HiP students in their (techno) company has made the other employees aware that humanities majors actually can contribute and also made themselves more aware about the relevant competences other humanities majors than their own may offer.

For instance, one representative from an enterprise argued that the completed tasks done by the HiP students “might as well have been done by engineers”. This is of course not to say that students in the humanities need to mimic the skills of engineers to appear relevant in a work life context. Rather this should be interpreted as an expression of the surprise representatives in the industry sometimes express when they realize that the skills that they attribute to a particular kind of university education, are in fact also skills that other types of students learn too, including students in the humanities. Or in the words of one of the placement liaisons: “I truly believe it is a precious discovery, both for the students themselves and for our company, that the humanities offer valuable competence for private enterprises.”

Thus, HiP not only answers to industry demands, but also challenges the homosocial reproduction ideas of the industry and established ‘truths’ about students from the humanities through demonstrating in practice the value that students from the humanities bring to interdisciplinary workplace settings, and that they are valuable in all kinds of organizations.

Seen from the student perspective it seems as if HiP has succeed in enabling students to develop interdisciplinary teamwork skills and entrepreneurial mind sets through flipped learning opportunities offered by internship placements in a broad variety of public organizations and private corporations. The successful outcome for the students is for instance described as follows by one philosophy major: In just 3 weeks we managed to make Aalberg Audio more visible to the world, and at the same time, we with our background from the humanities, were able to contribute to making them more competitive in a very critical phase of their start up business phase. As a philosophy student I have learned that my skills and competence within text analysis, logic and dissemination have made me capable of conducting what we as a group have labelled humanistic intelligence work. We soon realized that we could debunk the myths about the uselessness of humanities outside of academia. The placement project demonstrated how good methodology, openness and communication skills can create ties between

different disciplines, and that we can be successful together with entrepreneurs. The interdisciplinary collaboration was the main reason for our successful contribution.

In this context, the flipped learning opportunities provided by the students' placement in enterprises has been key. First by delegating the responsibility for formulating goals in learning to the enterprises and the students. Second, by creating opportunities for active learning in situated practice where the professor facilitates rather than teaches. Third, by enabling the students to learn in collaboration with each other and to share their experiences collectively.

In addition to permeating the learning experience, flipped learning extends to the final exams as well. Instead of a closed oral exam at the end of the placement period, HiP arranges an open conference where the student groups describe their placement experiences to an audience potentially consisting of friends and family, future students, interested business partners and university staff. Additionally the students are encouraged to write a feature article for the regional newspaper or other relevant media describing their work life learning experience, or they can choose to write a final report. About half of the student groups choose to write for a newspaper and more and more of these articles are being published (see for instance <https://www.adressa.no/meninger/kronikker/2016/02/13/Unge-jenter-i-verdensklasse-12138165.ece> , <https://blogg.svt.ntnu.no/humanistiske-arkitekter/> , <https://vimeo.com/86260942>). These public contributions from the students are important towards the indirect aims of HiP regarding on the one hand broadening the potential career paths for humanities majors by increasing acknowledgement of their relevance, and on the other hand contributing to curricular revision by offering feedback from industry to faculty.

Dialogue opportunities between teaching staff and industry is often seen as lacking. When the university is regarded as a unified entity in triple helix collaborations teaching staff is often omitted from the collaboration because students are regarded as complete representatives of the university or as the most eager partners (Aas 2018). Further, the notion that placements programmes are resource intensive forms of learning is famously well established (see also OECD 2018), making it a less tempting option for teaching. Hence, HiP has put a lot of effort into making the experiences of the students and industry partners public and easily accessible also for busy teaching staff. Nevertheless, teaching staff's resistance towards collaborative partnerships manifests in a variety of forms. For instance, a lack of participation in the HiP conference, lack of engagement with the program, as well as lack of interest in new forms of collaboration with the industry that does not involve the production of a thesis (Aas 2018). Many of the teaching staff are also critical towards the placement program. Both because it takes time

from what they perceive as “the real and important” academic work, and seemingly because they are reluctant to learn about what students learn and accomplish through their internship placements. Meaning that in effect, only the administrative staff and students represent the university as stakeholders in the triple helix collaboration.

However, resistance was sometimes overcome after teaching staff in the humanities started to engage with the internship placements, even in cases where they had initially expressed reluctance against participation and engagement of any form. For instance, one of the teaching staff at NTNU who was initially reluctant to participate expressed that “oh, there is a lot of exciting things here (in the student’s experience from placement) and now I have a whole new understanding for how knowledge in foreign language is made useful in the industry which I can apply in my teaching.”

HiP’s goal is to inspire potential curricular revision which might aid the students in expanding their career possibilities. As well as to inspire collaboration between the university and the industry in new research projects. However, the full realization of this goal is only feasible if the teaching staff engages more, for instance by learning about what the students experience in their placement period, and by learning about what the employers say about the student contributions as well as their own future needs. This is particularly important since the government and industry are increasingly challenging the role of the universities in terms of questioning the employability of the students, particularly in the humanities. Additionally, when students and university administration are advocating for more collaboration with industry, we need to explore the resistance of the faculty and its potential causes if we are to realize the goal of understanding how university teachers can be encouraged to take on a more prominent role in the triple helix. At this point, we still lack a real understanding of why teaching staff in the humanities resist engagement with placement programs. One possible reason could be that there is not a clear ‘win’ for teaching staff who are also researchers if the project is not directly connected to their own research agenda. The universities are struggling with capacity issues. Since the curriculum is often set and well-established, and since work-based learning partnerships may not be seen as a key role for HEI, a major reform towards work-based learning components requires resources HEIs may not have. This may potentially increase the resistance from faculty further since it requires monitoring of the skills students gain through the experience as well as a careful selection of placements to ensure they align well with the curriculum (OECD 2018).

However, other alternative explanations are possible too. Perhaps the resistance is not caused by disinterest, or fear of changing the way one works or collaborates with the industry, but by self-

preservation in an increasingly demanding and competitive work-environment as also argued by OECD (2018): There are few incentives for academic staff to partner with employers. Since career progression in academia favors research over teaching this may be discouraging engagement. Potential powerful incentives could hence be to include employer engagement as a criterion in academic staff performance evaluation, followed by reduction of teaching time to allow for more experiments with curricular revision, as well as more internal and external recognition of such efforts.

Conclusion

HiP has succeed in enabling the students to develop interdisciplinary teamwork skills and entrepreneurial mindsets through the flipped learning opportunities offered by internship placements in a broad variety of public organizations and private corporations.

Through continuous dialogue with the industry HiP also challenges work life expectations of (future) education by demonstrating through practice in interdisciplinary workplace settings that students from the humanities are valuable in all kinds of organizations.

This study demonstrates that internship placements of master students from the humanities provide clear benefits to all involved stakeholders and that the triple helix collaboration is highly valued by all stakeholders who choose to be involved. Thus, these experiences warn us against an understanding that posits that only applied sciences like engineering, law or economics are able to contribute to the immediate corporate revenue and surplus. Additionally, it teaches us that the benefits of a given collaboration between industry and the university is defined in and emerges through mutual learning processes and thus serves as a warning against responding to more short-term demands from industry about the need to delimit the amount of possibilities for students to pursue higher studies in the humanities.

However, this case study also shows that faculty staff in the humanities seem to resist the idea of engaging with internship placement programs. Even if this resistance does not seem to delimit the success experienced by participating students and enterprises, it is nevertheless potentially delimiting further benefits that the university, the faculty, the students and the industry stand to gain from establishing more collaborative practices, dialogue and situated experiences of engagement which may strengthen the (perceived) relevance of humanities education. It would hence be interesting to study if and how faculty creates other collaborative practices with industry partners less resource consuming but potentially equally or more rewarding than internship placements.

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<https://www.sussex.ac.uk/webteam/gateway/file.php?name=asetcodeofpractice-version21-000.pdf&site=332> **Editor's note: This publication has been superseded by:**

Wilson, J., Flynn, S., Loescher, A., Ward, T., Siva-Jothy, D. (2013). ASET Good Practice Guide for Work based and Placement Learning in Higher Education. <http://www.asetonline.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/09/ASET-Good-Practice-Guide-eWBPL.pdf>

The Placement Effect – Raising the bar in academic achievement
Does a 48-week placement increase the chances of a higher degree classification?

Raphael Poisson, supervised by
Francesca Walker-Martin and Vicki O'Brien

University of Central Lancashire
fdwalker@uclan.ac.uk
vlo-brien@uclan.ac.uk

Abstract

Purpose: The purpose of this paper is to investigate whether or not students who undertake a 48-week placement achieve a better degree classification than full time students. This research takes into consideration factors such as previous academic achievement, gender and ethnicity.

Methodology: The dataset analysed was provided by the whole school of Business from the University of Central Lancashire. The data was taken from seven years in a row, between 2010 and 2017. The dataset included the grades, ethnicity, date, gender and the type of degree studied by the students. Once sorted, the dataset was composed of 1325 students: 184 placement students and 1141 full-time students.

Findings: The results show that better students are more likely to undertake a placement year. However, placement students benefit from a higher grade improvement between their second and final year than full-time students. Female students outperform male students, but male students benefit more from a placement year. White students have higher grades than BAME students, and they are more likely to undertake a placement year. Nevertheless, BAME placement students tend to perform as well or slightly better than white placement students.

Practical Implication: Direction for further research would involve investigation of the BAME students' motivations for undertaking a placement year and reason for not undertaking it. Furthermore, some courses did not have any placement students, thus it would be interesting to discover why this is the case.

Originality: This research analyses a huge database collected from seven years in a row. The length of the placement is 48 weeks. This study does not only compare the final year results of students but their evolution as well as other factors such as gender and ethnicity.

Introduction

Unemployment rates have always been a concern in the United Kingdom. In April 2018, the unemployment rate was around 4.2%, and the most impacted population was between 16 and 24 years old, with an employment rate of 11.4%. It has always been difficult for a student that has just graduated to enter into the working world, because a degree in itself is not a guarantee of improved employment. It is challenging to be competitive in the working world directly after university. Therefore, many

universities offer the opportunity to undertake a placement year in order to make their degrees more applicable to the working world.

A work placement is defined as “Placement A period of work experience, paid or unpaid: which is undertaken as an integral part of the student’s programme, and where the student is enrolled at the HEP during this period, and where there is a transfer of direct supervision of the student to a third party” (ASET, 2016). Many universities have now included this kind of experience in their degree scheme just between the second and final year of the courses. The duration of a placement year is decided by the university. On average, a placement year should be between 30 and 48 weeks.

This experience is possible in many courses, such as business, sciences, computing, etc. In exchange of an extension of their period of study, the students gain experience, contacts and information that may be useful during their final year of studies and their career.

A lot of research has been conducted in order to analyse the effect of a placement year on a students’ employability (Bowes and Harvey 1999; Little and Harvey 2006). The term “employability” used to summarise all the skills and abilities that allow someone to be employed (Cambridge Dictionary, 2018). Furthermore, Harvey (2003) emphasised that employability is about developing abilities and skills rather than just job-getting skills. Moreover, Andrews and Higson (2002) analysed the key skills and competences required by business employers, and they stated that “Throughout the study it was evident that both graduates and employers valued the experiences and knowledge gained during work placements, internships and other part-time employment”.

In addition to those studies, some research has been conducted with the purpose of analysing the impact of a placement year on the academic performances of students. Having a better degree classification can be a real difference in the working world, especially for the students seeking their first graduate employment.

Firstly, the literature review of this paper will analyse the existing research about the impact of a placement year on academic performance Secondly, this research will investigate the impact of previous academic achievement on placement and grades, and then it will focus on the impact of the gender on placement and grades. To conclude, this literature review will examine if having a Black minority ethnicity background has an impact on the placement and grades.

1. Literature Review

1.1 The role of work placement in academic performance

Work placements help students to enter into the working world, thanks to the essential skills and competences that they learn throughout this experience. If the correlation between placement year and employability has been largely studied, and is now proved by evidence, it is not the case for the connection between placement year and academic achievement. Unfortunately, this topic has received relatively little attention from the researchers. This link between placement year and final-year grades is important because most graduate employers require at least an upper second class degree, thus an academic advantage is very valuable in order to enter into the working world (Bowes and Harvey, 2000). Mandilaras (2004) claimed that students undertaking a placement year were significantly increasing their chance of obtaining at least an upper second-class degree. Furthermore, Hall (2016) analysed the academic performances of biomedical students and claimed that “Students graduating from the research placement (‘sandwich’) degree schemes were 3.5 times more likely to achieve a first-class degree, compared to those graduating from the standard 3-year schemes in the same year” (Hall, 2016, p.33).

It is possible to undertake a placement year in the majority of courses offered by the Business School at the University of Central Lancashire. Thus, it is clear that the populations studied by the research are very diverse. Researchers have investigated different areas such as Accounting (Megat and Ismail, 2015), Biomedical (Hall, 2016), Bioscience (Gomez et al., 2004), Psychology (Reddy and More, 2006), Design (Ceschin et al., 2017), Engineering (Mendez, 2008; Mendez and Rona, 2009), Management (Brooks, 2012), Computing (Patel et al., 2012), Economics (Mandilaras, 2004; SurrIDGE, 2009), and Property Management (Mansfield, 2011). Almost all the research concluded that there is a positive correlation between work placement and academic achievement.

Duignan (2002) is one of the rare researchers that claimed that the placement year had no impact on academic performance. His research analysed the academic performance of two cohorts of business undergraduates, and he concluded that there were no academic differences regarding the improvements of the final-year grades between a placement student and a full-time student. An important issue with his research is that the type of study conducted did not control the essential problem, which was that students may have some predispositions in the process of deciding whether they wanted to undertake a placement year or not. Nonetheless, Duignan (2002) alleged that several factors such as family illness, bereavement, and income problems could have affected his results, nonetheless it was not possible to analyse the impact of this kind of factors with the data used for this

research. The researcher did not take into consideration important factors as socio-economic background and prior academic achievement.

The positive impact of the placement year has been analysed in several studies with the purpose of understanding the reasons of this correlation. Patel et al (2012) suggested three key reasons for this improvement:

- The first reason was related to the skills gained by students that undertook a placement year. According to Anderson and Krathwol (2003), this work experience might enable the student to gain and develop cognitive skills such as analysis and synthesis, and Akhurst (2004) suggested that the skills and attributes gained by the students during a placement year benefited their academic performances. Reddy and Moores (2006) added that students could have used these skills learned throughout the placement year to fare better with their assignments during their final year: “The benefits identified by students support the evidence above that placement experience leads to better final year skills, and suggest that professional level employment experience can contribute to several aspects of final year success.” (Reddy and Moores, 2006, p.559).
- The second reason was due to the connections between the working world practice and the theory knowledge learned at university. The student that undertook a placement year had a better understanding of this link (Morgan, 1997)
- The last reason was that placement year improved students’ maturity and motivation. (Morgan and Turner, 2000). Mandilaras asserted that: “It is possible that the placement experience enables the students to mature more quickly than they otherwise would. Spending a year working in often competitive environment makes them realise that their future professional development is - to a certain extent- related to their academic performance. Hence, as their ambitions is stimulated, they come back to university more focused and determined to do well” (Mandilaras, 2004, p.480). Rawlings et al. (2005) claimed that the students’ motivation could have been improved because of the placement on itself, or because the maturity gained during this extra year.

As the length of a placement year depends on the university, it is difficult to find more information about it in the literature. Almost every study does not indicate the duration of the placement year that the students undertook. The research conducted for this paper will analyse the data from The University of Central Lancashire, which offers a 48-week placement scheme.

1.2 The impact of previous academic achievement on placement year and academic performances

It has been demonstrated by the first part of the literature review that placement seems to have a positive impact on academic performance. During their final year, placement students seem to be more driven to succeed, more motivated, they attend classes regularly, they have more confidence and they interact more with their lecturers (Jones et al, 2017). However, many studies conducted about placement year were just a vague comparison between the final-year grades of placement students and the final-year grades of full-time students. Only a few researchers took into consideration some factors such as the previous achievement of the students.

Gomez et al. (2004) analysed the impact of a placement year on the academic performance of bioscience students. The researchers were not able to find if the “best” students were more likely to undertake a placement year than full-time students. “With the relative paucity of studies providing evidence for the academic benefits of placement and the consequent reliance on anecdotal observation, it has been difficult to determine the validity of the following supposition: That it is the more academically-gifted students that go on placement” (Gomez et al., 2004, p.380)

The research conducted by Duignan (2003) studied the cohort of business students and especially their academic performance. He compared the average grade of placement students with the average grade of full-time students. He concluded that even if the relationship between placement year and academic performances was complex, students who chose to undertake a placement year tended to be more academically competent than full-time students. Later, Helen et al (2011) found that placement students had a tendency to have statically higher second year grades than full-time students. However, the difference did not cross a classification boundary. Furthermore, Foster and Higson (2011) analysed seven cohorts of students and their research established that better students were more likely to undertake a placement year. Moreover, Brooks (2012) stated that the second-year grades of placement students were generally higher than the second-year grades of full-time students. The research conducted by Arsenis and Flores (2016) investigated the factors that helped a student to secure a placement. They found that first-year grades had a significant impact on the likelihood of securing a placement. This study can be an explanation about why the literature seems to affirm that students with better academic performance tend to undertake a placement year. If the students with less good academic performance cannot secure a placement, it could explain why students with better competences are undertaking a placement year.

From another standpoint, Jones and Higson (2011) analysed a large database of 6430 students from two different universities in order to discover if “better” students were more likely to undertake a placement year. They concluded that: “engaged” students are more likely to choose to do a placement” (Jones and

Higson, 2011, p.30). However, the researchers did not describe their use of “engaged” students, and did not give any detail about their statistics.

The literature tends to say that better students are more likely to undertake a placement year, but the research conducted by Foster and Higson (2011) concluded that it is not the more academically gifted students that benefit the most from the academic improvement caused by a work placement.

1.3 Gender

“There is a popular assumption that the “issue” of girls’ achievement has now been resolved and that the issue is now boys’ achievement. However, as we will see issues of inequality still exist in the classroom for both boys and girls.” (Knowles and Lander, 2011, p.81). The impact of gender on education has always been a controversial topic that has attracted numerous researchers. The report published by The Department of Education (2007) explained the theories of this “gender gap”. Style of learning, level of reading, motivation, influence of the peers, etc. were some reasons given by this report to explain the differences between genders regarding their education. General statistics seemed to indicate that females outperformed their male peers at different stages of the school system. Furthermore, their academic performance tended to be higher and obtained post-school qualification in a higher number than males. (Steinmayr and Spinath, 2008; Gibb et al, 2008; Matthews et al, 2009; Voyer and Voyer, 2014).

The literature concerning gender and academic performance tends to show a significant difference between male and female subjects. Some research that analysed the impact of a placement year on the academic performance of students had also investigated whether gender has an influence on the final year grades or not.

Gomez et al (2004) analysed the academic performance of bioscience students and included the gender of their participants as an important factor. Their research concluded that female students had better academic performance. Furthermore, the researcher investigated the impact of a placement year on final-year grades in order to discover if female students benefited more than male students, and they did not find any significant difference; both male and female benefited from a placement year and improved their academic performance. In addition, SurrIDGE (2009) argued that gender had an effect on the first-year grades, but was not significant during the second and final year. He claimed that the effect of a placement year was the same whether the student is a male or a female. Later, the research directed by Patel et al (2011) led to the same conclusion. Their research found that there was no significant difference due to the gender of the subject.

On another hand, the research conducted by Mansfield (2011) claimed that males and females did not benefit equally from a placement year in terms of academic performance. This research studied the effect of a placement year on the final year grade for surveying degree programs. The researcher analysed the academic performance of 417 students and concluded that the male subjects of this research had a higher final-year mark increase than female subjects.

1.4 Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic

Black, Asian and minority ethnic inequality, BAME or BME, is an important subject on the United Kingdom's government agenda. In order to fight against inequality, the government has launched the "BME 2020 Challenge". The objectives are to increase the employment of BME workers by 20 percent, to increase the number of BME students by 20 percent, to increase the proportion of BME undertaking apprenticeships, to award 20,000 more start-up loans to BME people, and to increase the diversity in services such as the army and police. This shows that BME inequality is still a hot topic for the British government. These kinds of inequalities can have different outcomes, but the literature review of this research will only focus on the access to higher education for people with a BAME background, their academic performance and their professional life.

University has always been the principal element of higher education. In 2014, the research conducted by Nodel al (2014) reported that the applicants from a BAME origin were less likely to be accepted to a university, despite other factors such as academic attainment, school attended or family social class. The article written by Doku (2018) disagreed with this study and came to the conclusion that Black, Asian and minority ethnic groups were over represented in higher education, nevertheless they are less likely to go to university that are considered "top end" and had higher earning for graduates than their white peers. It showed that Black, Asian and minority ethnic groups were disadvantaged within higher education.

Most universities claim that they have adapted in order to increase diversity and fight against inequality, but there is still a gap between the grades of white students and BAME students. The likelihood of a white student obtaining a first or upper second-class degree is 15.2-percentage point higher than BAME students. According to a study conducted by the United Kingdom's government in 2007 and another one conducted for the Higher Education Funding Council for England, the ethnicity variable was statistically significant and had a real impact on the students' grades (McDuff and Barefoot, 2016). "This refers to the growing problem where students from "BME" or "BAME" backgrounds are less likely than their white peers to get first or upper second-class degrees. This effect persists (at varying levels for students from different ethnic heritages) after you take into consideration socioeconomic background, entry grades, and a host of other factors." (Doku, 2018)

Even the working world is subject to be unequal toward the Black, Asian and minority ethnic groups. For example, PWC analysed its data and revealed that BAME workers earned on average 13 percent less than white workers in their company (BBC News, 2017). Furthermore, when the BAME students graduated, it was more difficult for them to find a full-time work. Hall compared the statistics and discovered that 61.5 percent of white students entered full time work whereas only 53 percent of BAME did (Hall, 2018). Furthermore, the Black, Asian and minority ethnic graduates earned on average 23.1 percent less than white graduates for the same work (Bright Network, 2018).

1.5 Conclusion

This literature review was useful because it allowed the researcher to identify different gaps in the placement literature. The research conducted for this paper will analyse the impact of a placement year on the academic achievement, but this study will be different from the other research in several points. First, the researcher will only analyse the impact of a 48-week placement, which is more precise than the other studies that have been conducted. Secondly, the data that will be used has been collected over a period of 7 years in order to assure the accuracy of the results. Thirdly, the data will be collected not only in a field of the university but in the whole School of Business at the University of Central Lancashire.

The data will be analysed in order to discover if a placement year has or does not have an impact on the final year grades. It will also check if different factors, such as previous achievement, gender, or having a BAME background has an effect on the grades before and after a placement year.

This research will hopefully shed light on these questions and inspire future researchers to study this subject.

2. Methodology

2.1 Design

In order to achieve the objectives of this study, secondary data were provided by the school of business of the University of Central Lancashire (UCLAN). The database was a record of the 8386 students who graduated between 2010 and 2017. The file recorded by the university contained a range information including degree studied, degree classification awarded, grades, gender, and ethnicity. Once the data was sorted, only 1325 students were relevant to be a part of this study. In total, this group was composed of 184 students who had undertaken a placement year and 1141 full-time students. Several testing methods could be used in order to analyse the data. The two methods most used seem to be the ANOVA and the ANCOVA testing method. For example, the research conducted by Mansfield

(2011) used an ANCOVA testing method and the research conducted by Reddy and Moores (2016) used an ANOVA testing method.

The analysis of variance, also called ANOVA is a testing method that uses variance to compare the means of two or more groups. It measures the variation between and within groups. ANOVA determines whether the differences are significant or if it is simply due to random errors. The ANOVA method uses both linear and non-linear models. The ANOVA method can be a one-way ANOVA (only one factor is investigated) or a two-way ANOVA (two factors are investigated simultaneously).

The analysis of covariance, also called ANCOVA is a testing method that uses covariance to evaluate if the means of a dependent variable are equal across levels of a categorical independent variable. It is an extended form of the ANOVA analysis that does not take into consideration the effects of one or more interval scaled variable. The ANCOVA method uses only linear model.

The research is analysing the grades, the gender, the ethnicity, and the previous academic achievements for placement and full-time students. The variables used are independent, thus, the ANOVA method seems to be the most suitable method.

2.2 Research Study

This research was conducted in order to evaluate the impact of a placement year on academic performance. According to the literature, two hypotheses and two research questions could be formulated:

- H1: Placement students tend to perform better than full-time students during their final year.
- H2: Placement students perform at a higher level than other full-time students during their first two years of university.

- RQ1: Does gender affect the results of placement students?
- RQ2: Does ethnicity affect placement students?

3. Results

The database provided by UCLAN was analysed in order to answer the different hypotheses and research questions formulated in the previous part of this paper. The raw data compounded a large number of students who undertook a degree between 2010 and 2017 in the school of business at UCLAN. The data were sorted using excel and then were exported into IBM SPSS.

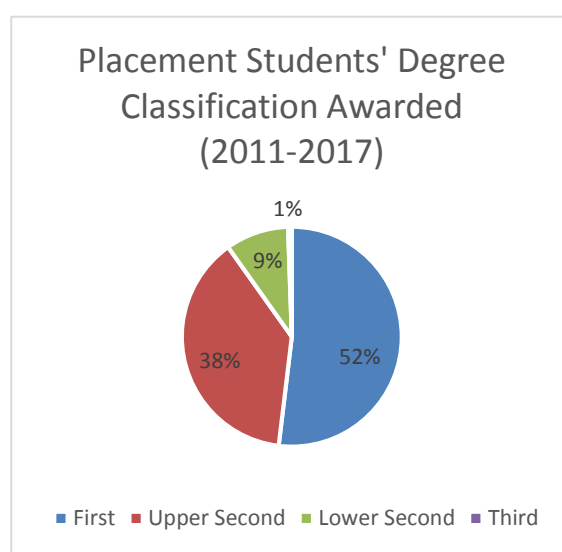
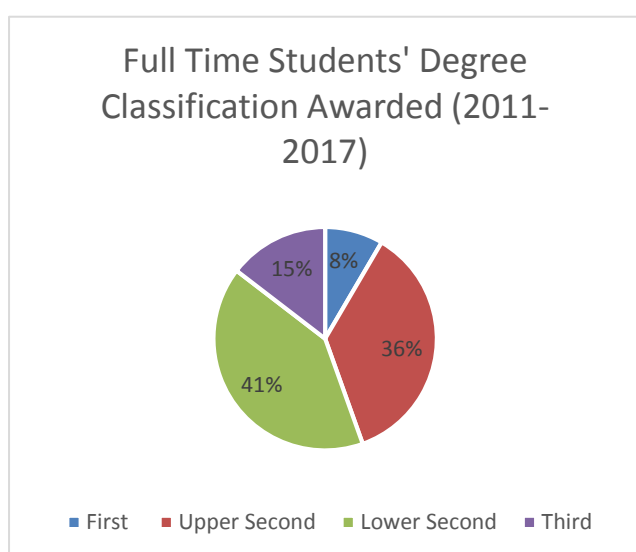
Not all the courses were offering the possibility to undertake a placement year. In order to have a valid comparison between placement students and full-time students, only the courses and the years that

had placement students were analysed. Therefore, the final dataset was compounded of 1141 full-time students and 184 placement students.

3.1 Comparison of Final-Year Results

This research only used the final year grade to award the degree classifications. A first-class degree was awarded if the candidate marked at least 70%, an upper second-class degree requires grades between 60 and 69% and a lower second-class degree was given for an average grade between 50 and 59%.

Table 1. Degree Classification Awarded (in %).		First	Upper Second	Lower Second	Third
Year of Graduation		First	Upper Second	Lower Second	Third
2011	Full Time	/	45%	52%	3%
	Placement	23%	55%	23%	0%
2012	Full Time	7%	44%	39%	11%
	Placement	17%	74%	9%	/
2013	Full Time	3%	38%	38%	21%
	Placement	41%	59%	/	/
2014	Full Time	8%	31%	46%	15%
	Placement	56%	34%	9%	3%
2015	Full Time	8%	50%	27%	15%
	Placement	65%	29%	6%	/
2016	Full Time	9%	31%	46%	15%
	Placement	74%	23%	3%	/
2017	Full Time	18%	40%	27%	16%
	Placement	69%	15%	15%	/



Graphs 2 and 3: Students' Degree Classification Awarded

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics of the Final Year Grades

Final year Grades	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean		Minimum	Maximum
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
					Full Time	1141		
Placement	184	68.61	6.15	0.45	67.72	69.50	45.28	80.33
Total	1325	60.07	8.34	0.23	59.62	60.52	36.50	82.93

Tables 1 and 2 show the degree classification awarded by UCLAN between 2011 and 2017 and the general statistics of the degree classification. First, table 2 shows that the placement students had a higher average mark than their peers. Their average grade was 68.61 when the full-time students obtained a score of 58.69. There was a difference of 9.92 points. In addition, the standard deviation was more important for the full-time students than the placement students. That means that the grades of the full-time students were further from the mean than the grades of the placement students. The lowest grade awarded to a full-time student was 36.50 whereas the lowest mark awarded to a placement student was 45.28.

Furthermore, 52% of the placement students were awarded a first class degree while only 8% of the full-time students earned this degree classification. There is less than 1% of placement students that were awarded a third-class degree, but more than 15% of the full-time students got a third-class degree. Globally, placement students were awarded with a higher degree classification than their peers.

Table 3: One-Way ANOVA Analysis

APM	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	15578.836	1	15578.836	269.371	.000
Within Groups	76514.614	1323	57.834		
Total	92093.451	1324			

Table 3 presents the results of the ANOVA analysis that was conducted on the final years of placement and full-time students. The statistical significance (Sig.) rejected the null hypothesis. Therefore, placement years had a real effect on the final year grades of placement students.

3.2 Comparison of previous academic achievement

The analysis conducted on the first year and second year’s academic achievement of the full-time students and the placement student showed a real difference between those two categories.

3.2.1 First Year Results

Table 3a: First Year Degree Classification

Year of Graduation		First	Upper second	Lower Second	Third	Fail
2011	Full Time	5%	22%	42%	30%	/
	Placement	3%	62%	31%	3%	/
2012	Full Time	/	25%	46%	29%	/
	Placement	7%	52%	37%	4%	/
2013	Full Time	3%	27%	44%	25%	/
	Placement	29%	46%	21%	4%	/
2014	Full Time	5%	22%	53%	21%	/
	Placement	11%	37%	53%	/	/
2015	Full Time	5%	37%	37%	20%	/
	Placement	15%	46%	38%	/	/

Graphs 4 and 5: Student’s First Year Results

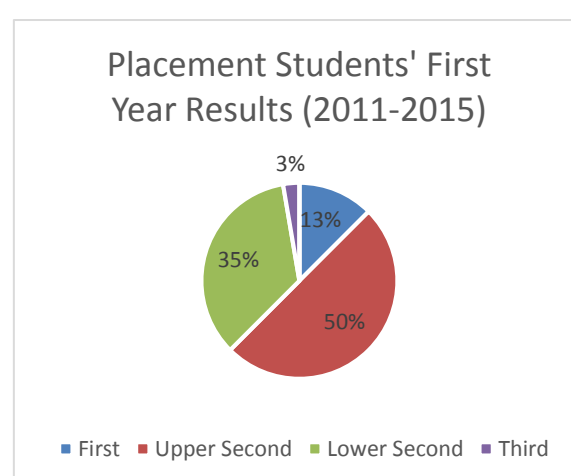
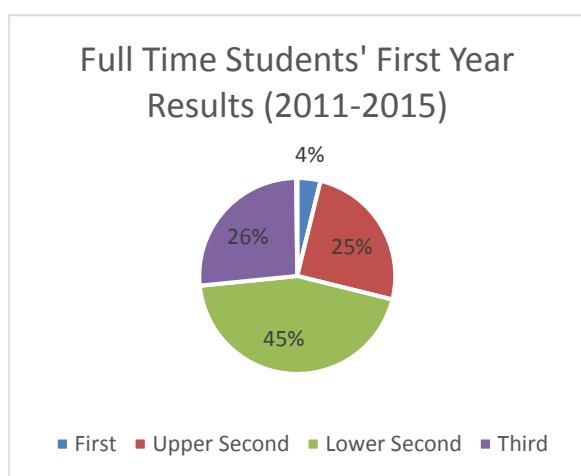


Table 4: Descriptive Statistics of the First Year Grades

First Year Grades	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean		Minimum	Maximum
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
Full Time	1001	56.42	7.93	0.25	55.93	56.91	39.50	88.75
Placement	112	61.91	6.81	0.64	60.63	63.19	47.67	79.67
Total	1113	56.98	7.99	0.24	56.51	57.45	39.50	88.75

Tables and Graphs 3 and 4 show the first year results of the placement students and the full-time students between 2011 and 2015. The average grade of the placement students was higher than the average grade of the full-time students. There was a 5.49 point difference between those two means. The lowest grade awarded to a placement student was still higher than the average grade awarded to a full-time student.

Furthermore, 13% of the placement students had an average mark equal or higher than 70% whereas only 4% of the full-time students had an average mark equal or higher than 70%. The proportion of results between 60% and 69% was higher for the placement students. In addition, 50% of them obtained an average grade between 60% and 69% where 25% of the full-time students obtained this mean.

3.2.2 Second-year results

Table 5: Second Year Degree Classification

Year of Graduation		First	Upper second	Lower Second	Third	Fail
2011	Full Time	2%	31%	44%	22%	1%
	Placement	/	75%	25%	/	/
2012	Full Time	4%	26%	43%	27%	/
	Placement	6%	52%	35%	6%	/
2013	Full Time	1%	25%	51%	23%	/
	Placement	7%	62%	28%	3%	/
2014	Full Time	4%	31%	46%	18%	/
	Placement	13%	81%	6%	/	/
2015	Full Time	5%	35%	44%	16%	/
	Placement	30%	52%	17%	/	/
2016	Full Time	7%	29%	40%	24%	1%
	Placement	25%	50%	25%	/	/

Graphs 6 and 7: Students' Second Year Degree Classification

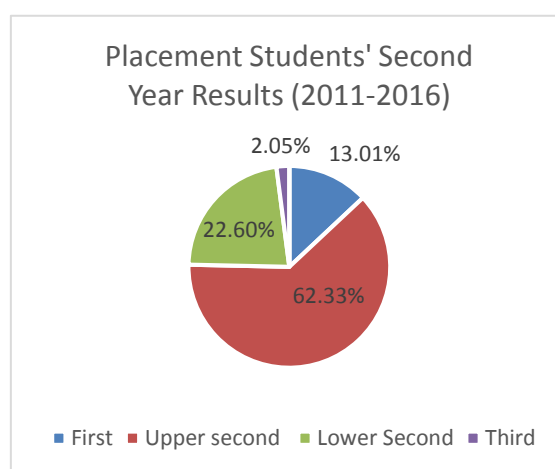
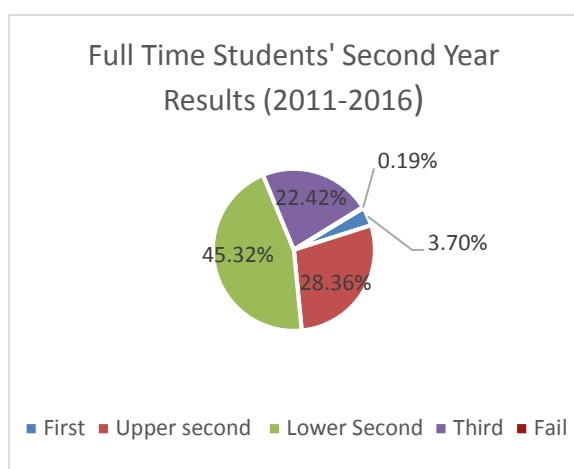


Table 6: Descriptive Statistics of the Second Year Grades

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean		Minimum	Maximum
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
Full Time	1026	56.25	7.56	0.24	55.79	56.71	38.80	80.60
Placement	146	63.70	6.25	0.52	62.68	64.72	47.83	80.00
Total	1172	57.18	7.80	0.23	56.73	57.63	38.80	80.60

Between 2011 and 2016, 13.01% of the placement students had an average grade of more than 70% whereas 3.70% of the full-time students had this classification. Furthermore, 28.36% of the full-time students had an average mark between 60 and 69% where 62.33% of placement students' results were in this category. The largest result obtained by the full-time students seems to be in between 50% and 59% with a population of 45.32% of the full-time students.

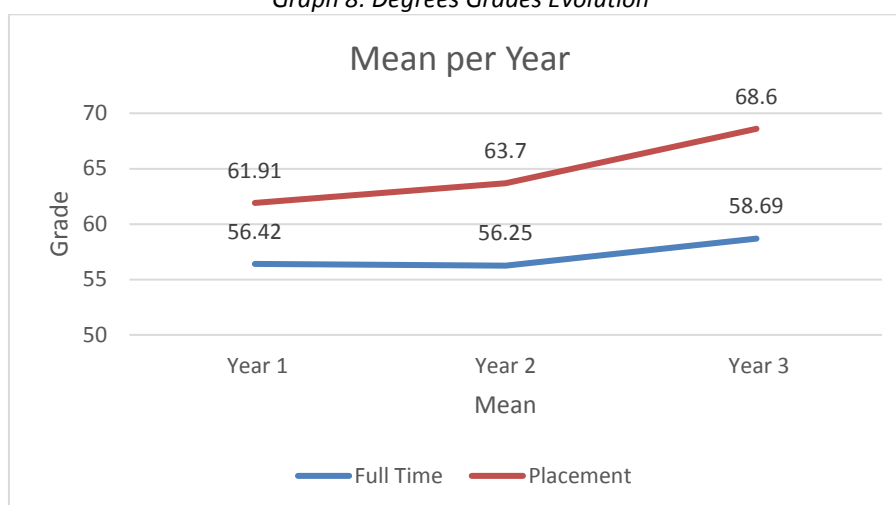
3.2.3 Grades' Evolution

Table 7: Degrees Grades Evolution

Type of Degree	Mean Year 1	STD Deviation Year 1	Mean Year 2	STD Deviation Year 2	Mean Year 3	STD Deviation Year 3
Full Time	56.42	7.93	56.25	7.55	58.69	7.21
Placement	61.91	6.21	63.7	6.25	68.6	6.15

Evolution	Y1-Y2	Y2-Y3	Y1-3
Full Time	-0.3%	4.3%	4.0%
Placement	2.9%	7.7%	10.8%

Graph 8: Degrees Grades Evolution

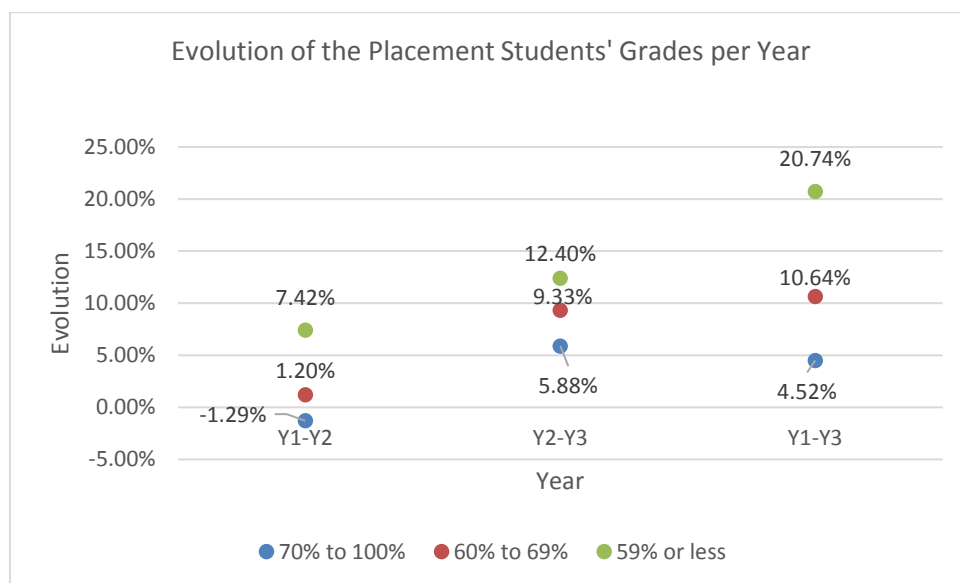


Tables and Graph 7 are an analysis of the evolution of the grades between the first and the final year of the full-time students and the placement students. The graph shows the difference between the grades of the two groups of students. Both types of students had better grades during their final year but the evolution throughout their studies was not equal. The placement students' grades had the biggest evolution. The rise was around 2.9% between the first and the second year, and 7.7% between the second and the final year for the placement students. The grades of the full-time students increased only between the second year and the final year. Their rise was about 4.3%.

Table 8: Evolution of the Placement Students' Grades per Year

	Y1	Y2	Y3		Y1-Y2	Y2-Y3	Y1-Y3
70% to 100%	73.05	72.10	76.35	70% to 100%	-	5.88%	4.52%
60% to 69%	64.25	65.02	71.09	60% to 69%	1.20%	9.33%	10.64%
59% or less	54.74	58.80	66.09	59% or less	7.42%	12.40%	20.74%

Graph 9: Evolution of the Placement Students' Grades per Year



The grades of the placement students evolved differently regarding the first year average grade. The students with an average grade of 59% improved their grades by 20.74% between their first year and their final year. The students with an average grade between 60% and 69% had an increase rate of 10.64%, and the students with an average grade equal or more than 70% had an increase rate of 4.52%.

3.3 Gender

Graph 10: Gender and Grades Overlap

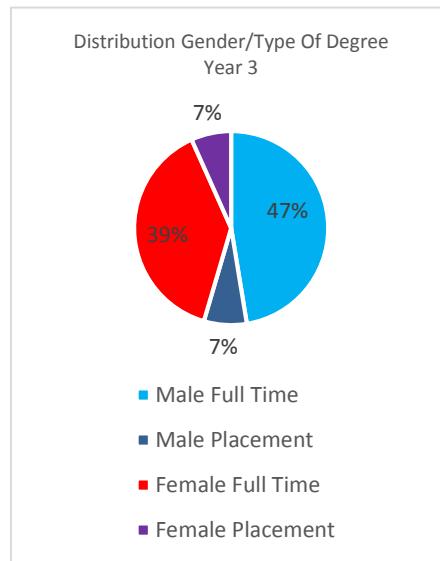
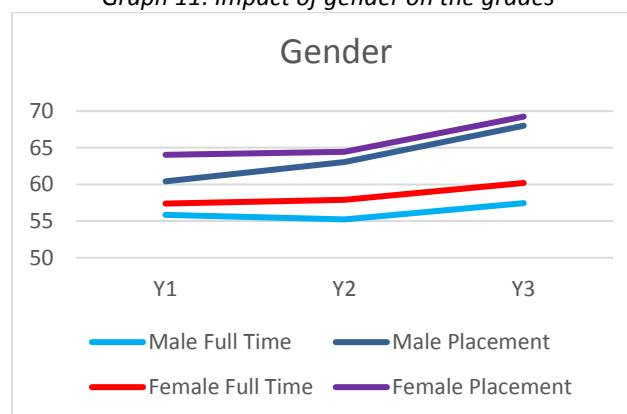


Table 9: Impact of gender on the grades

Gender	Type of Degree	Mean Y1	N year 1	STD Deviation Y1	Mean Y2	N Year 2	STD Deviation Y2	Mean Y3	N year 3	STD Deviation Y3
Male	Full Time	55.86	632	7.94	55.23	636	7.44	57.45	631	8.17
	Placement	60.42	66	6.75	63.04	78	6.94	68.01	95	6.92
Female	Full Time	57.39	369	7.83	57.91	389	7.47	60.2	516	7.1
	Placement	64.04	46	6.39	64.46	68	5.29	69.25	89	5.16

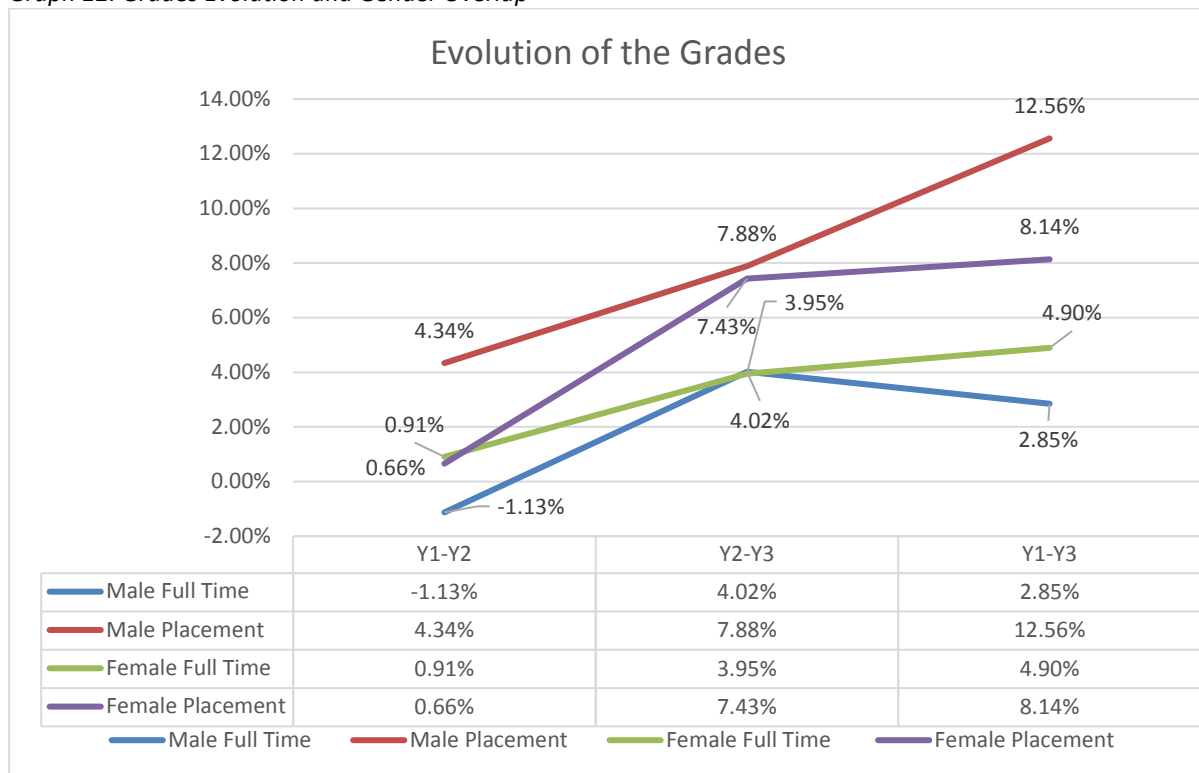
Graph 11: Impact of gender on the grades



Gender seemed to affect the students on different perspectives. The first graph shows that there were as many male students that undertook a placement degree as female students. However, the gender had an impact on the grades of the placement students as well as on the grades of the full-time

students. Female students generally performed better than their male peers, whether they undertook a placement year or not.

Graph 12: Grades Evolution and Gender Overlap



The graph 12 is the analysis of the evolution of the grades regarding the type of degree and the gender of the students. The students' grades were different regarding those variables. Even if the female students seemed to perform better than the male students, the placement male students had a better increase rate than the placement female students. On average, a placement male students improved his grade by 12.56% between his first and his final year, whereas a placement female student increased her grade by 8.14% between her first year and her final year. However, the full-time female students improved more between the first year and the final year than the full time male students.

3.4 Ethnicity

Table 10: Grades and Ethnicity Overlap

Ethnicity		Mean	Std. Deviation	N
White	Full Time	61.16	7.48	563
	Placement	68.58	5.99	158
	Total	62.78	7.81	721
BAME	Full Time	56.34	7.40	588
	Placement	68.77	7.15	26
	Total	56.87	7.80	614
Total	Full Time	58.70	7.81	1151
	Placement	68.61	6.15	184
	Total	60.06	8.34	1335

Graphs 13, 14, 15 and 16: Student's Ethnicity and Type of Degree

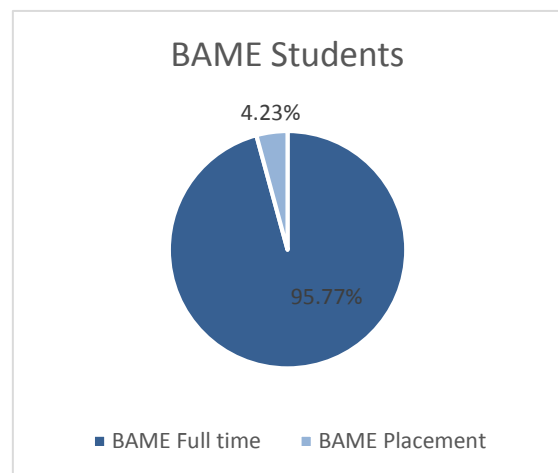
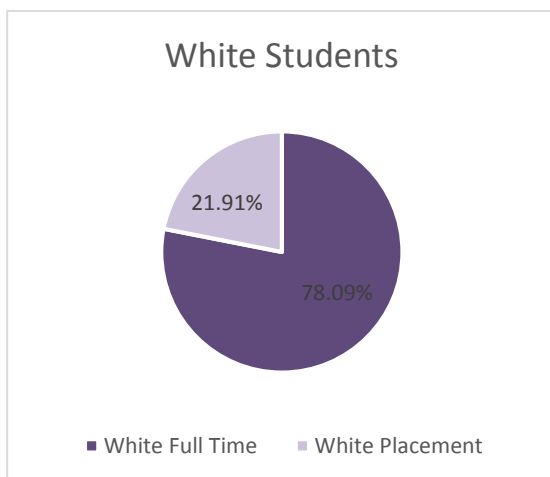
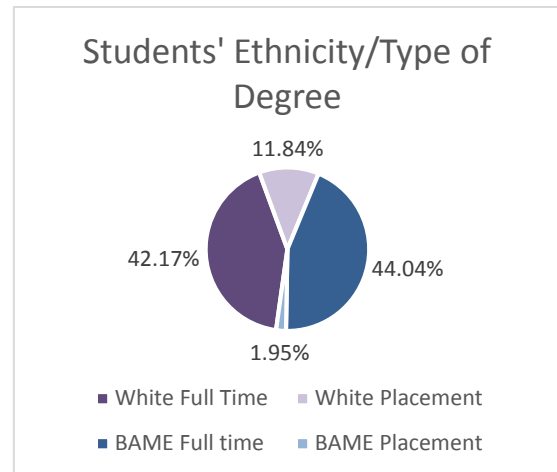
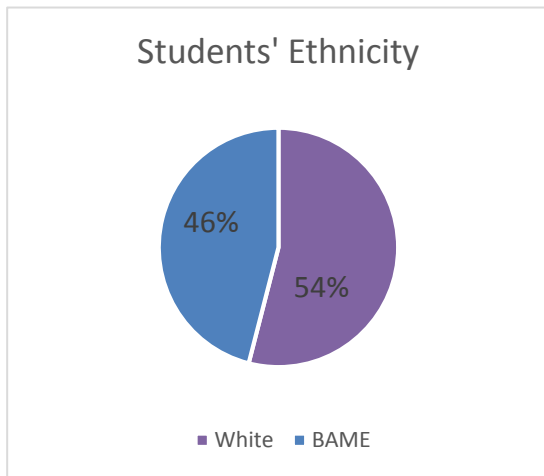


Table 11: Two-Way ANOVA

Dependent Variable: Final Year Grades

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	22259.702 ^a	3	7419.90	140.16	.000
Intercept	1345572.508	1	1345572.51	25416.98	.000
ETHNICITY	444.887	1	444.89	8.40	.004
Type of Degree	8164.171	1	8164.17	154.22	.000
ETHNICITY * Type of Degree	517.641	1	517.64	9.78	.002
Error	70463.011	1331	52.94		
Total	4908840.205	1335			
Corrected Total	92722.713	1334			

a. R Squared = .240 (Adjusted R Squared = .238)

Table 10 and Graphs 13, 14, 15 and 16 showed that between 2010 and 2017 they were 46% of students from a BAME ethnicity, and 54% of students from a white ethnicity. Despite an important number of BAME students (588), only 4.23% of BAME students undertook a placement year whereas 21.91% of the white student did. There was also a real difference between the average grade of the white full-time students and the BAME full-time students. The average grade of white students was 4.82 points higher than the average grade of BAME students. Surprisingly, the BAME students who undertook a placement year performed slightly better than the white placement student, and significantly.

4. Discussion

- H1: Placement students tend to perform better than full-time students during their final year.

This study has statistically established a relation between placement year and final year grades. Placement students appear to have a better degree classification than full-time students. The placement students studied for this research obtain on average 9.92 more points on their final year grades than their peers. The proportion of placement students graduating with a first or an upper second-class degree is significantly higher for placement students. Within the 7 years analysed for this research, fewer than 1% of placement students graduated with a third-class degree, whereas 15% of the full-time students graduated with this degree classification. Therefore, research agrees with the literature. Most of the researchers agree that there is a positive impact of a placement year on academic performance (Reddy and More, 2006; Mansfield, 2011; Magat and Ismail, 2015). However, this view disagreed with the research conducted by Duignan (2002) which claimed that a placement year had no impact on the academic performance.

The research hypothesis is confirmed by the results of this study.

- H2: Placement students perform at a higher level than other full-time students during their first two years of university.

The second hypothesis is the most important question of this research. The first hypothesis shows that placement students perform better than full-time students, but it is important to know if it is due to the placement year or due to their academic performance. If only the best students undertake a placement year, it is normal that they perform better than full-time students. This research has analysed the increase of the students in order to discover if the grade difference between placement students and full-time students is due to their placement year or if they are just more academically gifted.

The results of this study show that students who undertake a placement year perform generally better than full-time students do. In addition, placement students improve better than full-time students do during their first and second year. Duignan (2003) and Foster and Higson (2011) came to the conclusion that better students are more likely to undertake a placement year. This research completes the research conducted by Helen et al. (2011) that found that placement students have higher second year grades than full-time students.

Furthermore, the study conducted for this paper claims that even if better students tend to be more likely to undertake a placement year than their peers, it is not the most academically gifted students that benefit the most of this kind of experience. The research shows that students with a lower Grade Point Average (GPA) / Average Percentage Mark (APM) in their first and second years improve at a higher rate than their peers. Thus, this research agrees with the study conducted by Foster and Higson (2011) that discovered the same phenomenon.

The research hypothesis is confirmed by the results of this study.

- RQ1: Does gender affect the results of placement students?

Now that the two hypotheses have confirmed that a placement has a positive impact on the grades, it is interesting to analyse factors that can also affect the academic performance of students.

The results of this study confirm that the inequality between male and female students still exists (Knowles and Lander, 2011). The data analysed for this research shows that female students are academically stronger than their peers. Full time female students perform better than full time male students and have a better increase throughout university. SurrIDGE (2009) and Patel et al (2011) claimed that gender has only an effect on students' first year grades but the results of the research conducted for this paper shows that gender impacts students' first year grades as well as their second and their third year. Furthermore, this research found that female placement students perform better than male placement students, but male placement students have a better increase after their placement year than female placement students. It means that a placement year has a greater benefit to male students than female students. This research disagrees with Gomez et al (2004) who tried to analyse this subject and were not able to say if male and female benefited equally from a placement year, and the research conducted by Mansfield (2011) that claimed that males and females were not benefiting equally from a placement year.

The results of this research shows that gender affects the results of all kinds of students, even after a placement year.

- RQ2: Does ethnicity affect placement students?

This study claims that ethnicity has a real impact on grades and on the student's decision to undertake a placement year. Only 4.23% of the students with a BAME background undertook a placement degree in comparison to 21.91% of students with a white background. This important difference can have two principal reasons. The first one could be that BAME students are unwilling to undertake a placement year, and the other one could be that BAME students have some difficulties finding a placement. Unfortunately, this research did not analyse the type of data that could answer this question. However, this study found that BAME students are academically weaker than white students. BAME students were graduating with an average grade of 56.87 in comparison to 62.78 for white students at. This significant difference can totally change the degree classification awarded. These results confirm the existence of a gap between white students and BAME students (McDuff and Barefoot, 2016). However, the research conducted for this study found that BAME students that undertook a placement year tend to be achieve slightly higher grades than their white peers. Placement years may benefit more BAME students than white students. The results of this research found that the ethnicity is an important factor that affects placement students as well as full-time students.

5. Conclusion

This study demonstrates that placement students achieve better academic performance than full-time students. When the two groups of students are compared, it is clear that placement students outperform full-time students. Thus, a placement year has a real impact on the degree classification awarded by the university. This study shows that even if placement students tend to be better during their first two years of university, a placement year triggers an important improvement of the grades. Furthermore, this research highlights that the most academically gifted students are not the ones that benefit the most from a placement year. Students with lower results in their first and second years improve more through this kind of experience. Therefore, in addition to other benefits provided by a placement year such as better employability, gaining skills and contacts, etc. it is now proved that a placement year has a positive correlation on the final year grades.

Moreover, this study analysed the impact of other factors such as gender and ethnicity. Both of those factors have an influence on grades, whether on full-time students' grades or placement students' grades. Even if female students outperform male students, they are not the ones who benefit the most from placement year. Male students benefit from a higher increase rate than female students after a placement year. Ethnicity is also an important factor. There is a significant difference between the proportion of BAME students and white students that choose to undertake a placement. BAME students tend to achieve

lower grades than white students, but the BAME students that undertake a placement year achieve the same (and in some cases slightly higher) grades than white placement students.

In conclusion, a 48-week placement has a positive impact on academic performance, and therefore increases the probability of being awarded a better degree classification. Moreover, other factors such as previous academic achievement, gender and ethnicity are significant and must be taken into account.

6. Limitation

This study is limited by several factors. First of all, the grades analysed were taken from different years (between 2010 and 2017). It is possible that some courses have had some changes between those years. This study could not take into consideration changes such as changes within modules or changes within the teaching team.

Secondly, some changes occurred within the academic regulations. The University of Central Lancashire has two different ways to calculate the degree classification. The first one only uses the grades from the final year, and the second one is a mix of the grades from the second year and the grades from the final year. UCLAN always use the method that gives the best degree classification to the student. The research undertaken for this report only takes into consideration the first method, because it is the one that is used in most of the cases.

Thirdly, the dataset used for this research was missing some data. The dataset was from 2010 to 2017, and the researcher did not have any information about the first year and the second year of the students that undertook a placement year between 2010 and 2011. However, the data used for this research was accurate and trustworthy. Thus, the conclusion of this study are reliable.

7. Recommendations for Further Research

This research answered important questions about the impact of a 48-week placement on grades, but some questions still need to be answered. This research was one of the first to analyse the ethnicity as a major factor regarding undertaking a placement year and the academic performance. In the discussion section, the researcher suggested two possible reasons to explain the results of this study regarding the BAME students. It would be interesting to discover why BAME students are less likely to undertake a placement year than white students, and to analyse the factors of their grade increase. Furthermore, during this research, the researcher spotted some degrees that did not have any placement students. It would be interesting to discover if this happened because of a lack promotion from the teaching team or because of a lack of motivation from the students. The relation between the placement year and employability is largely analysed by many researchers, but there are other impacts of such experience on students that need to be analysed.

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Placements: Supporting Students and Managing Risks

Jamie Bettles and Clare Harding

ASET Conference Sponsors, Pagoda Projects
jamie.bettles@pagoda-projects.com
clare.harding@pagoda-projects.com

Abstract

Insurance? Liability? Health & Safety? Emergency Support? There are so many unglamorous, yet essential considerations when sending students on overseas placements. The aim of this workshop is to discuss ways in which professionals and institutions can minimize risk, simplify processes for students and employers and encourage more students to take placements overseas, knowing that robust support mechanisms are in place.

Presentation

INTRODUCTION
 2017 **INTERN VIETNAM**
 2007 **INTERN CHINA**
PAGODA PROJECTS
 BEYOND WORK EXPERIENCE

HEALTH & SAFETY WORKFLOW

- BOOKING**
 BOOK YOUR PLACEMENT
 OFFER A VISA INVITATION
 PROVIDE CONTACT INFORMATION
 PROVIDE A PASSPORT PHOTO
- APPLICATION**
 WITH YOUR PASSPORT PHOTO
 PROVIDE A PASSPORT PHOTO
 PROVIDE A PASSPORT PHOTO
 PROVIDE A PASSPORT PHOTO
- PRE-DEPARTURE**
 GET YOUR VISA
 PROVIDE YOUR PASSPORT
 PROVIDE YOUR PASSPORT
 PROVIDE YOUR PASSPORT
- ARRIVAL**
 WELCOME FROM LOCALS
 WELCOME FROM LOCALS
 WELCOME FROM LOCALS
- ON PROGRAM**
 RECEIVE YOUR PASSPORT
 RECEIVE YOUR PASSPORT
 RECEIVE YOUR PASSPORT
- DEBRIEF**
 DEBRIEF YOUR EXPERIENCE
 DEBRIEF YOUR EXPERIENCE
 DEBRIEF YOUR EXPERIENCE

SELF CARE PLAN

QUESTION	EXAMPLES	MY ANSWER	
HOBBIES	What do you do normally to help you relax? What do you like to do when you're in a good mood? What can you do that will help you through difficult days? What three qualities would your friends describe you as?	Reading/Netflix/going out with friends/playing football Let anything you enjoy doing so you don't forget about it if you don't have it great. Taking more breaks/taking on easier tasks/feeling something familiar etc.	
VALUES AND EXPERIENCES	What is the biggest unknown for you in China/Vietnam? What would you like to achieve during your time in China/Vietnam? Have you ever had a difficult time away from home/on holidays? If so, how did you manage it?	Fun, being hard working, thoughtful, shy, stressed, anxious, funny, sociable, introverted	
HOME/FAMILY	Who normally helps you if you are having a hard time? When you consider those you would consider the person if you are having a hard time? Is there anything anyone you need to avoid if having a hard time?	Friends/other interns on place/family members/teachers Don't forget WeChat has a video call function! Staying in bed all day/topping going out/drinking too much alcohol/avoiding friends	

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

- APPLICATION FORM
- MENTAL & PHYSICAL HEALTH DISCLOSURE POLICY
- PHONE INTERVIEW GUIDELINES
- BOOKING FORM - TERMS & CONDITIONS
- SELF CARE PLAN
- LINKS TO DIGITAL RESOURCES
- INSURANCE COVER SUMMARY
- ACCOMMODATION QUALITY POLICY
- CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION DISCLOSURE FORM
- INTERNSHIP QUALITY POLICY
- ORIENTATION CHECKLIST
- CHECK IN FORM
- RISK ASSESSMENT & EMERGENCY PROCEDURES
- FEEDBACK FORM

DOCUMENT TOOLKIT ON PAGODAPROJECTS.COM/PARTNERS

STUDENT SUPPORT

- What can go wrong?
- Putting the supporting documents into action
- Emergency support procedure
- What can you do for your students?

INSURANCE & LIABILITY

SHORT TERM INTERNSHIPS

Students' travel insurance policy covers public liability, should their actions lead to someone else's injury, including instances on place at their internship. If the student is injured whilst on place at their host company, the student's medical treatment and in extreme cases repatriation and ongoing medical treatment in their home country are covered by this policy, if they decide that the host company, or somebody employed by the host company, was at fault for their injury, they are entitled to take legal action against the host company. Their travel policy should give students some coverage for such legal fees.


From the host company's point of view, they would be responsible to ensure they have a suitable public liability policy in place to protect them for any necessary legal fees and compensation in the case of such a claim by an intern. It's important to point out that the company's public liability policy would apply, because western student interns are not employed by the host company, so the liability cover is therefore not employer's liability, but public liability, as the student is technically a visitor on their premises and not an employee of the company.

DISCUSSION

ARE THERE BARRIERS WHICH STUDENTS FACE WHEN REGISTERING AN OVERSEAS PLACEMENT WITH YOU?

HOW DO YOU COMPLETE A RISK ASSESSMENT FOR OVERSEAS PLACEMENTS?

CAN ANYONE SHARE A SUCCESS STORY RELATED TO SUPPORTING STUDENTS ON AN OVERSEAS PLACEMENT?

A collage of four images: a group of students holding a banner, a group of people in a meeting, a group of students looking at a laptop, and two men working at a computer.

Creating the Dream Team: Disrupting the Status Quo- Creating innovative ways to engage students, academics and employers to facilitate work-based learning opportunities

Catherine Teehan Joanne Jenkins and Alice Burke

Cardiff University
teehanc@cardiff.ac.uk jenkinsj6@cardiff.ac.uk burkea7@cardiff.ac.uk

Abstract

Professional Services staff working in a central careers department have often reported struggles when connecting with academic schools to enhance the employability of students. Alongside this is the struggle to ensure students are engaged in the process. In addition to these struggles, the Shadbolt Review published in May 2016 highlighted an issue with employability and Computer Science. The review reported Computer Science as having the lowest employability rate of all the STEM subjects.

At Cardiff University, the school of Computer Science and the Central Careers team have been working together to develop a range of activities and events to encourage engagement from students and new working practices and processes to ensure engagement from academics. The results of this have led to a 7% rise in employability for 2016/17 and saw a change in geographical destinations to match the Welsh Government agenda. The new collaborative approach saw a 69% rise in student engagement with Careers and Employability for the same year with 300 work experiences completed.

Presentation



Who are we?

- ▶ Catherine Teehan
- ▶ Placement Officer & Careers Champion
- ▶ School of Computer Science



- ▶ Alice Burke
- ▶ Work Experience Project Officers
- ▶ Careers & Employability – Futures Connect Team



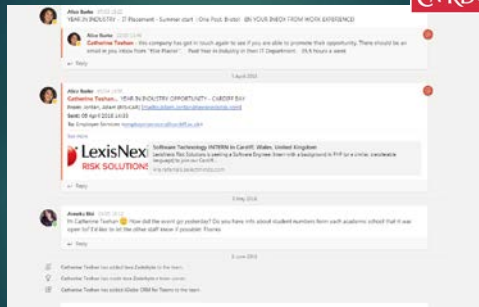
- ▶ Joanne Jenkins
- ▶ Business Partner
- ▶ Student Support & Wellbeing



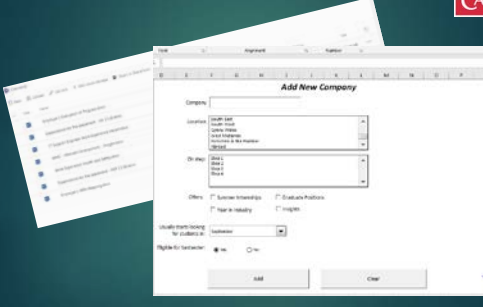
How we created the 'Dream' Team

- ▶ Bonded over a love of foodand gin!!
- ▶ Joint employer visits
- ▶ Referrals
- ▶ Sharing of services / resources / calendars
- ▶ Creating new resources to support collaboration
- ▶ Developing an understanding of what we each do
- ▶ Using 'Teams' to create a truly collaborative workspace

Teams – Keeping in Touch



Teams – Sharing Resources



How do we promote employability?

- ▶ Work Insights – up to 70 hours (usually unpaid)
- ▶ Paid Internships – 2 –15 weeks (usually summer)
- ▶ Work-based Dissertations – 10-12 weeks paid/unpaid
- ▶ PGR Insights – 2 weeks group research project
- ▶ Year in Industry – 9-12 months paid
- ▶ Visit Days to industry
- ▶ Lunch & Learn
- ▶ Employer-led / careers workshops
- ▶ Targeted Careers Fairs
- ▶ Networks – usually with pizza & beer!!

The Statistics

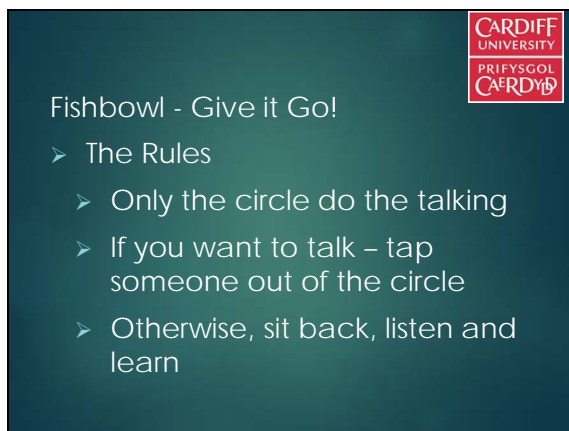
- ▶ Over 300 employers through the door in the last 2 years
- ▶ Matched the WG agenda with 69% placements in Wales
- ▶ 7% increase in employability in 1 year
- ▶ 69% rise in student engagement with careers in 1 year
- ▶ 40% increase in students securing placements
- ▶ 70% placements secured are a direct result of our employer networking events
- ▶ Over 200% increase in MSc placements

What does this look like

- ▶ A series of workshops
 - ▶ Advice on applying for jobs
 - ▶ CV building
 - ▶ Interview skills
 - ▶ LinkedIn masterclasses
 - ▶ Talks from people in industry etc.
- ▶ Student & Employer Networking events
 - ▶ 'Speed Dating' with employers
 - ▶ 'Blind Date'
 - ▶ 'Fishbowl' discussions
 - ▶ 'Soap Box' Challenge
- ▶ Careers Champion & Placement Officer with an 'Open Door' policy

Lunch & Learn





Large scale assessment centre simulation: probably the largest in the UK if not the world! How did UH make the vision a reality? And what would work at your institution?

Judith Baines

University of Hertfordshire
j.baines@herts.ac.uk

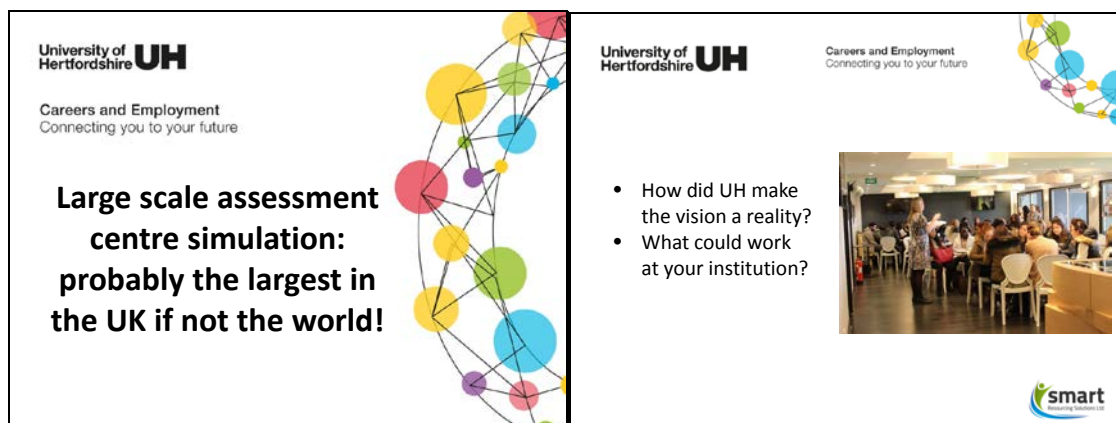
Abstract

Do you think that students may see the long process of applying for placements as a barrier to participation? Do you think they may be lacking in confidence in tackling assessment centre type activities? Do you think that it benefits students to have employers participate in simulations? If so, these are compelling reasons to consider running assessment centres simulations. But what can you do within the resource that you have? Join our session to hear about our experience in setting up an award winning scheme at UH with 2035 students due to participate over 8 days in November 18. But we will also tell you about our highly successful internally run Fast Tracks for up to 200 students. Discussion will consider how you can go about looking at this for your institution within the resource and structure that you have

In our workshop, we'll review:-

- How we engaged senior management to ensure support and growth of the scheme
- How Smart Resourcing Solutions and Careers staff supported students and staff through the process and how important partnership working was success
- How we run our smaller scale but successful Fast Tracks

Presentation



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How did UH make it a reality?

- Inspiration
- Gaining 'buy-in'
- The pilot
- Partnership working
- Scaling up
- Impact
- Influencing at a senior level
- Future aspirations
- An invitation




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Inspiration




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Gaining 'buy-in'



- Influencing key stakeholders
- Securing the budget

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The Pilot


- 400 Business students
- Watford football club
- What went well
- What didn't!

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Partnership Working



- Thank you to everyone involved in organising and helping to run this event. 700 students who now feel confident to pursue employment opportunities is a great achievement. This will hopefully help our employability metrics, but most importantly it will be one more way in which we transform the lives of our students. (Dean of Business School)
- This was a major effort involving several groups. Sophie and Anna's leadership was excellent and they and their teams ensured a very complex event ran very smoothly indeed. Ali, thank you for joining as an assessor all day and giving our students the benefit of your expertise. To Janette, Anne, Tim, Simon, Gerlinde, Peter, and Lynne, thank you for volunteering your time and for supporting the students at each stage. Together, we created an event that has already had a strong positive impact on our students. (Lecturer Humanities)



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Scaling up

- Student feedback
- Accommodating change
- Supporting the schools

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Impact – student numbers





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Impact

Following the pilot in 2016 there was an increase in students (who had taken part in the assessment simulation) securing placements with desirable employers:

- Tourism: 39% increase
- Marketing: 30 increase
- Events: 8% increase




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Impact

Stats from the 2017 Assessment Centre

In the pre and post assessment centre survey, students were asked how confident they felt about applying for graduate projects / industry placements

Pre-assessment survey	Post-assessment survey
24% felt unconfident	5% felt unconfident
58% felt somewhat confident	42% felt somewhat confident
15% felt confident	43% felt confident
4% felt very confident	
10% felt very confident	



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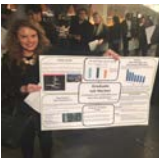

What the students said ...

"I enjoyed the interview the most as I was very nervous at the start, but as I went in I did really well and also got offered a job"

"I feel a lot more confident now with the whole process and how it may be set out in the future. I wouldn't feel like I've been thrown into the deep end at a real one"

"I enjoyed the group task the most as it was the most challenging but also had a realistic feel to it"

"The experience was fabulous, as it helped me to learn how it is best to be employable with companies in the future. All the activities were very useful, as it gave me a chance to test various abilities to see my strengths and weaknesses of being a successful applicant when applying for jobs"


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Impact

ise. Development Awards Winner 2018

ise. Student Recruitment Awards 2018 Finalist

TEF Gold Teaching Excellence Framework



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Influencing at a senior level



The whole morning, - team working, presentations and interviews were of the highest calibre and our students were blessed to have such high quality, intense development and feedback from experienced 'real world' professionals, I doubt they will ever experience such a transformational morning in their future careers.

Robert Voss, my fellow governor and I made a point of expressing our admiration of the assessment training initiative at the university governors board meeting this afternoon and asked that our appreciation be recorded and minuted. (Tony Hughes, Governor at the university)

Lord-Lieutenant of Hertfordshire: Robert Voss



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Fast Tracks

Half day session with employers and careers advisers:

- Ice breaker
- Interview practice – different types of interview
- Group exercise
- Info on deadlines and vacancies

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What the students said ...



Helpful to kickstart my placement search

This workshop was fantastic. I loved the practical exercises


Session was extremely useful and has helped ease some worries

Really glad I came, learnt a lot from the recruitment process

A very interactive and informative session

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What the employers said ...

Really enjoyed being part of the fast track sessions. Was able to give them some real life examples of how to get the best out of interviews and applications.
Enterprise Rent a Car

The number of students we were able to interact with was great. **FDM**

The students had the chance to ask questions and get answers from us and the careers advisers. Many of the students walked out confidently after the session and I had a talk with one of the students about my placement and she was very interested. **Computacentre**

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Student feedback summary

- **19.5%** of the 190 students selected that **they were not confident** in the knowledge of the recruitment process by selecting option 4 of 5 on the confidence scale **before they attended the session**
- *However..*
- **85%** of students that attended then selected that they were confident in the knowledge of the recruitment processes by selecting option 4 of 5 on the confidence scale **after they attended the session**

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Discussion points

- What would you need to do to get one of these schemes off the ground?
- What barriers or challenges might you face?

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Expect the unexpected



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Discussion point

- What can you go back and so now for next year?

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Invitation

Join us at one of our award-winning Assessment Centre Simulations

5th – 8th November
19th – 22nd November

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Thank You

[www.smart-resourcing-solutions.com / enquiries@smart-resourcing-solutions.co.uk / ask@herts.ac.uk](http://www.smart-resourcing-solutions.com/enquiries@smart-resourcing-solutions.co.uk/ask@herts.ac.uk)

a.levett@herts.ac.uk

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‘You say potato, I say potahto’. An exploratory account of meaningful work experience from an academic perspective

Sarah Gibbons and Cassie White

Nottingham Trent University
sarah.gibbons@ntu.ac.uk

Abstract

As part of Nottingham Trent University’s Strategic Plan, all NTU courses are systematically designed to ensure that the curriculum provides a high-quality learning meeting both internal and external benchmarks. A key part of this plan is that all students will develop relevant professional attributes gained through meaningful work placement or experience embedded into the design, learning, and assessment of every course.

This paper explores the concept of ‘meaningful work experience’ from an academic perspective and aims to develop a deeper understand of perceptions across the University at this key strategic time. Nine semi-structured interviews were carried out across three faculties at Nottingham Trent University.

Exploring the concept of ‘meaningful work experience’ using the research questions enabled the literature to be structured thematically relating to; the employability agenda within Higher Education (HE); the position of work experience within the employability agenda; terminology used in relation to work experience and the pedagogic rationale for the inclusion of work experience in the curriculum.

Analysis of the data demonstrated differing perspectives between participants on some of the key themes identified, for example the spectrum of what counted as work experience and the terminology employed. Participants identified one of the main differentials between work experience and ‘meaningful work experience’ being the opportunity to bring the discipline to life and apply theory to practice. Acknowledging that ‘meaning’ can be constructed in many ways, what is considered meaningful could be categorised into five key themes relating to;

- The job/ activity students are undertaking;
- The students’ rationale for their experience and how it related to their future aspirations;
- The course requirements – whether the experience needed to be discipline related;
- The systems in place – protocols/ Health and Safety/ tracking data;
- Reflection – unpicking the experience and linking it to their future.

There were a wide range of considerations to identify whether an experience was meaningful with a need for students to provide justification for their choice.

Participants were clear on the pedagogic rationale for inclusion of work experience into the curriculum but the line between this and the benefits were blurred. Benefits were clearly identified and were cohesive cross all subject areas with some identifying additional benefits for academics. This research provides an insight into current issues faced by academic colleagues and professional services working to embed quality work-based or work-related learning in curriculum.

Introduction

“That kind of education which fits men to perform their duties in life is not got in ... schools, but at home, in the counting house, in the lawyer’s office, or the camp, or on-board ship, in the shop or the factory” (The Economist, 1850 cited in Shepherd, 1998)

Debate regarding the role of work experience within education is longstanding and in the current climate, undertaking quality work-based or work-related learning is a cornerstone of many Universities’ employability strategy. As part of Nottingham Trent University’s Strategic Plan, all NTU courses have been systematically designed to ensure that the curriculum provides a high-quality learning; meeting both internal and external benchmarks. A key aspect of “curriculum refresh” is that ‘all students will develop relevant professional attributes gained through meaningful work placement or experience embedded into the design, learning and assessment of every course’. Early in their studies, students are engaged in learning core employability skills and undertake career planning activities. Each course at NTU now includes a range of different opportunities for all students to translate theory to practice in a range of relevant work-like contexts, undertaking work that is held to professional standards. Later in the course, all students will undertake a synoptic assessment allowing students to combine learning in relation to their employability from a range of activities and experiences, and which requires a significant element of self-reflection in relation to their future employability aspirations.

Other Universities are also approaching the skills development of their graduates from a top-down, curriculum-led mandate. For example, Southampton Solent University aims to ensure all courses enable students to develop transferable or key skills (Andrews and Russell, 2012) and The University of Nottingham has also expressed a desire to increase the number of local, national and international opportunities for their students (University of Nottingham, 2015).

Employability

First coined by PriceWaterhouseCoopers in 1998 (Holmes, 2013) the concept of employability came to the forefront with the development of the Understanding, Skilful practices, Efficacy beliefs and Meta-cognition (USEM) model by Knight and Yorke (2003a). They defined employability as “a set of achievements – skills, understandings and personal attributes – that makes graduates more likely to gain employment and be successful in their chosen occupations, which benefits themselves, the workforce, the community and the economy” (Knight and Yorke, 2003a). Whilst this model is useful for its holistic approach to employability, there is still some debate around the concept of employability within the Higher Education sector and whether it should be driven by skills and attributes (Cashian et al, 2015).

More recently, research by Moore and Morton, (2017) discusses emerging ideas about “job readiness” and identifies soft skills or “21st century skills” as important abilities that will shape the contribution graduates are able to make to their profession. Such skills include communication, critical thinking, teamwork and creativity.

In summary, employability is about being able to contextualise skills rather than just having lists of skills; for example, having relevant skills and knowing when and how to employ them (Pegg et al., (2012).

Work Experience

The purpose of work experience is to enable those in full-time study to understand the ‘world of work’, develop their transferrable skills and see theory operate in practice (Green et al, 1999 cited in Guile and Griffiths, 2001).

Work experience is seen by many as a key way of developing a student’s graduate employability (Pegg et al, 2012) and an emerging trend is for employers to use work experience as an extended interview leaving those without experience unlikely to progress through the selection process (High Fliers, 2015; UCAS, 2015).

The Dearing Report (1997) highlighted a need to expose students to a work setting and allow them to experience the working world (Auburn, 2007) with the Lambert Review (2003) further suggesting work experience “was universally regarded as an important way of developing employability skills and business awareness” (HEFCE, 2011).

The Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) (2011) defined work experience as “a specific, organised period of work by a student for an employer, paid or unpaid, the chief purpose of which is educational ... [and] ... integral, related or unrelated to the students’ course” (HEFCE, 2011). However, as differing models of engagement, length of experience and alternative opportunities develop, other definitions may be more relevant. The Association of Sandwich Education and Training (ASET) (2013) suggested a broader term “work based and placement learning” as a way to encompass the breadth of opportunity available to students, irrespective of their level or mode of study.

What counts?

The spectrum of ‘what counts’ as work experience begins with company open days, taster experiences and work shadowing moving through internships and ending with the longer-term placements and work-based learning (ASET, 2013). However, the terminology used to describe work experience is subject to continuing debate.

Traditionally, one of the most common ways of undertaking work experience was through a sandwich placement; a 1-year supervised period of work in the penultimate year of undergraduate study (Auburn, 2007; ASET, 2013). However, with wider changes in student profile and access to HE (Blake and Summers, 2007) combined with added costs of extending the duration of study, the figures suggest a decline in the number of UK students taking up sandwich placements (Little and Harvey, 2007).

Much of the research relating to work experience and placements in Higher Education has focused on sandwich placement and longer-term internships (Thompson, 2017) with less attention being paid to shorter periods of placement and the much under researched area of learning on placement (Murakami et al. 2009). Thompson, (2017) suggests that even a relatively short period of structured work experience would benefit the student and provide opportunities to gain valuable experience and assess their career direction.

It could be argued that any job is work experience and that part-time work still enables students to see theory in operation in the work place (Watts and Pickering, 2000). However, referring to part time work as ‘lower quality’, subsistence work, HEFCE (2011) argue its primary purpose is to “provide income ... [and] often not related to educational study”.

Questions remain as to whether extracurricular activities therefore count as work experience with Clegg et al. (2010) suggesting they should be considered as they contribute positively to students' employability. For example, some NTU student roles e.g. The Collaborative Engagement and Retention Team (CERT) mentors and student ambassadors are validated on a students' HEAR report and students use these experiences to enhance their portfolio of skills (Watts and Pickering, 2000). Both described activities involve induction and formal training as part of the role.

Many students undertake work experience whether or not their course includes a formal opportunity. Bennett et al. (2008) asks whether specific curriculum based work experience significantly enhance a students' employability over and above their other paid employments? An interesting distinction here is the consideration of meaningful. For example, what about a final year undergraduate student working shifts in a call centre to supplement their loan? Would it be classed as meaningful work experience if the student was on a business-related course looking to go into management, or would the value be perceived to be less if they were training to be an engineer? Questions emerge around whether this is related to their study and subject; whether it can be meaningful work experience and if so, how is this interpreted by the student, academic and employer.

Work experience allows students to develop work-specific skills but there is no guarantee this links to the generation of personal transferrable skills (Shepherd, 1998). Indeed, according to Smith and Martin (2014), having a work-based placement is no guarantee that the student will develop their learning and knowledge. There is an assumption amongst published literature that work experience opportunities are environments where students can learn and develop in a straight forward way (Guile and Griffiths, 2001). Consequently, to transfer knowledge to new situations, students need support to develop their learning beyond a demonstration of their capability and need to understand their environment, their place within it as well as their interactions (Smith and Martin, 2014).

It would be beneficial for Universities and professional services to work with students & consider the perceived benefits of work experience to maximise the learning opportunities. For example, is the work experience helping the student to address a skills deficit? If so, a wide range of relevant work experience opportunities including volunteering could be explored further. Ideally, preparatory work carried out pre- work experience should include some form of skills audit to help identify areas

for personal development rather than encouraging students to do 'more of the same' type of work experience.

Work experience and the curriculum

Part of the success of work experience is the way that students recognise and demonstrate to employers that their work experience has been sustained over a period and that it relates to their career development rather than a haphazard portfolio of experiences that do not link together (Hinchliffe, 2013; Raelin, 2010). It is therefore paramount that when embedding work experience into the curriculum, there needs to be a personalised rationale and it is important that students are aware of the link between what they are doing and the benefit to their employability (Knight et al., 2003, cited in Pegg et al., 2012).

A key pedagogic question in relation to the development of meaningful work experience is how you ensure the transfer of knowledge from one situation to the next? (Thornton Moore, 2010). This development only occurs when working closely with the student to allow them to reflect. When this transfer is made explicit to students, reflection can be achieved (Helyer and Lee, 2014; Perkins and Salomon (1989) cited in Thornton Moore, 2010). Unless this skill development and transfer of knowledge is teased out there is little evidence that this experience is any more beneficial than part-time work (Thornton Moore, 2010). The generation of a shared understanding of the pedagogic rationale will have implications for how this transition to and from work experience is managed and how the transfer of understanding is acknowledged and sustained. What is important is how the knowledge the student gains transfers from one situation to the next and is articulated and understood by the student moving forward. Part of this reflective work would come after the work experience has been completed and therefore away from the workplace.

It is therefore essential that we recognise that a set period of work experience or placement may not be the best approach for all students and alternatives to work experience through carefully scaffolded work experience opportunities may afford real progress and development.

It is commonly agreed that the effectiveness of work placements in the curriculum need to be evaluated (NTU, 2015a; Auburn, 2007; Knight and Yorke, 2003b) but this is not without challenge. There is no common understanding of what constitutes work placements, or agreement on their purpose and therefore any evaluation is unlikely to be consistent. A successful pedagogic approach is one that is not piecemeal, is broader than just single modules with a need for an employability

strategy that “comes from years, not semesters; through programmes, not modules; and in environments not classes” (Knight and Yorke, 2003b).

Data Collection Methodology

Using a case study approach with an interpretivist standpoint, semi-structured interviews were conducted with nine participants in matched roles across three academic subject areas within Nottingham Trent University.

Participants were asked for their understanding of the term work experience and how they felt this differentiated from ‘meaningful work experience’. The interviews, lasting approximately 40 minutes, also explored the benefits and challenges involved in the inclusion of work experience into the curriculum.

Qualitative data was generated through these interviews. The researcher used an interpretative approach throughout lending itself to “theory-generating, explorative research ... a desire to find out what is going on” (Henn et al, 2009, p.253-254). Grounded theory analysis seeks to find “relationships between concepts once the data has been collected [and] involves the interpretation of data” (Grix, 2010, p.167). This method of analysis recommends the categorisation of data by identifying themes; adding notes to supplement these; categorising them according to their relative importance to the aims and objectives of the research before seeking to develop understandings and emerging conclusions (Denscombe, 2014). Data was therefore coded and common themes identified (Henn *et al*, 2009). All names, job titles and subsequent transcripts were anonymised and where this was not possible, additional permission was gained from the respondents concerned.

Findings

What counts as work experience?

Figure 1 represents the range of experiences that participants felt could be considered work experience.



Figure 1 – What counts as work experience

When asked what work experience meant to them, participants all questioned the difference between this and 'school-like' work experience where pupils were sent to a local company for two weeks to typically "answer phones and type on a computer". The difference was suggested to be that the higher education work experience was more like a placement. Participants talked about a "broad church" or "broad term" with the range of opportunities being "quite vast".

Participants identified it as "anything to gain experience of work [and] undertaking some real-world experience" and they talked about "being in the workplace, fulfilling all the normal ways of working [and] experience work in the real world". In the interviews, two participants discussed students undertaking experience of work; gaining an insight into the workplace and having exposure to the workplace. From this initial interview analysis, work experience can therefore be seen, at a basic level, as an experience of the workplace.

There were many discrepancies between answers and some felt volunteering was/ could be work experience. Another participant considered unpaid work to be work experience. What is not clear is whether the participants in this study considered volunteering to be different in nature to unpaid work. The motivation behind volunteering may, in some cases, be seen as altruistic rather than self-interest, however it could be argued that even though the motivation may differ, the results seen could be considered the same in this context.

The terms sandwich, internship and placement were all identified as work experience opportunities however, three participants did not use these terms in their classification of work experience opportunities. Internships were only used by one participant although the terminology used to explain 'internship' was not clarified within the interviews. Only one participant considered a student working on their own business to be work experience. This was an interesting difference and potentially students in this area of study are more likely to work for themselves upon graduation and therefore it is a more accepted route to employment.

All participants included part-time work or paid work as work experience and one participant went on to identify the valuable skills it allowed students to develop. In some cases, it was felt that part-time work allowed students to develop transferrable skills and enabled them "to talk about a time that has been challenging [which] you could pick up from a few weeks stacking shelves in ASDA".

Not work experience

Participants were also clear about what did not count as work experience (**Figure 2**) and all felt that work experience needed to be more than just a “brush up with employers” or a “taster”.



Figure 2. What does not count as work experience

Whilst acknowledging that these opportunities may allow students to see theory in practice, one participant felt these were “*a pale alternative*” and only allowed for a “*synthetic application*” of theory to practice. Another believed it was not work experience unless students were generating a tangible output; either a physical task or the development of skills as opposed to observing the work-place. The role within the workplace was also identified as being important and one participant stated it did not count as work experience if you were treated as a guest as you were not therefore experiencing the ‘real-world’.

Table 1 – Contrasting Opinions of work experience

Counts	Doesn't
Taster (Faculty C: Respondent 2)	Taster (C:3)
Simulations (A:1)	Simulations (B:3)
Case Studies (A:1)	Case Studies (B:3)
Inside the curriculum (B:1)	Not inside the curriculum (B:3)
Shadowing (A:1, B:3)	Shadowing (B:1)

Table 1 shows interesting contrasting opinions when it comes to the classification of work experience. Across the different academic disciplines, there was discrepancy with some considered simulations and case studies to be work experience whereas others considering these to be “synthetic applications” rather than ‘real-world’ experiences.

Differences are also evident between participants from the same subject area with “shadowing” counting for some but not others. Whilst the opportunities are all, at a basic level, about students

being in the workplace there are variations in both the terminology employed and the appropriateness. As one participant stated “all is worthwhile, some is more relevant”.

Published literature also identifies that there is no common agreement of the term ‘work experience’ and what it might include, something confirmed by this research. What can be considered work experience is much broader in this research than has been suggested in the literature and whilst ASET (2015) and High Fliers (2015) provide a spectrum of opportunities, they do not consider voluntary work, part-time work or working on your own business as part of this spectrum.

At a basic level, participants considered work experience to be literally ‘experience of work’ and therefore they included these areas. Clegg et al. (2010) identified campus based cultural and sporting activities as well as volunteering extra-curricular opportunities that contributed positively to a students’ employability. Other than volunteering these were not incorporated into the spectrum by participants however some participants did raise concerns about those students who may not be able, for a variety of reasons, to undertake a period of work experience. Perhaps these need to be considered as a viable alternative?

The inclusion of taster events and work shadowing into the spectrum from the literature was contested by some participants who felt these to be pale alternatives to getting involved in the work place. In the main, participants acknowledged that ‘something was better than nothing’ which is borne out in the literature.

Interestingly many participants were not wholly positive about work experience with concerns about students gaining no value with organisations saying, “there’s the photocopier and a week later you are still standing there” or “stuffing envelopes” arguing that this could be seen as “free labour” or being “potentially exploitative”.

Meaningful Work Experience

Participants identified the differentials between work experience and meaningful work experience to be an experience where there is an opportunity to “bring to life the discipline” and talking about “the application of their theoretical knowledge”. Two participants linked the experience to the development of a students’ aspirations, being related to the subject area or working within the Industry.

It became evident whilst coding that the terms ‘meaningful’, ‘relevant’ and ‘credible’ were being used interchangeably. As one participant usefully pointed out “meaningful is constructed in so many different ways”. For example, meaningful to whom; students, organisations/ employers, academics, HEI’s? Each stakeholder will give a different answer depending upon the circumstance. Indeed, whose responsibility is it to provide the meaning? Some participants suggested this rests with the University whilst others argue that it is the students’ responsibility.

Participants suggested for an experience to be meaningful for students it should:

- Have clear objectives which are set before students go out and are shared with employers
- Have boundaries
- Be based on a wider rationale
- Be over and above the mundane day to day activities
- Be purposeful and mutually beneficial
- Demand a level of thought
- Be graduate level developing graduate attributes - i.e. the aims and outcomes relate to a skill set the student is developing
- Have a purpose, be about recognition and be associated with a course of study
- Be of a specific time in duration
- Make a difference
- Really stretch them; change their world view; empower them; be something outside of their comfort zone
- Include a period of reflection at the end

One participant was clear that meaningful work experience was not about a role where you would be backfilling, covering or a narrow experience. Several participants identified that the experience was still meaningful even if students decided that was not what they wanted to do, or did not enjoy their time feeling that students will have learned about themselves and meaning came because of that.

The length of time was also identified as an important factor in deciding meaningful with two participants identifying 6 weeks as a minimum requirement for an experience to be considered as such.

Suggestions from participants could be categorised into five key themes relating to:

- The job/ activity students are undertaking;
- The students' rationale for their experience and how it related to their future aspirations;
- The course requirements – whether the experience needed to be discipline related;
- The systems in place – protocols/ Health and Safety/ tracking data;
- Reflection – unpicking the experience and linking it to their future.

In judging what is meaningful, suggestions included the need for students to rationalise their choices as well as reflecting on their experience using this to plan. Smith and Martin (2014) concur suggesting students to be able to transfer their knowledge effectively they need to understand their environment and their place within it.

Key to the success of work experience is the way that students demonstrate to employers that their work experience has been sustained over a period and that it relates to their career development rather than a haphazard portfolio of experiences that do not link together (Hinchliffe, 2013; Raelin, 2010). Some participants shared these concerns in discussions that a series of short experiences with no rationale or link will not prove effective in allowing students to develop their future graduate employability.

Pedagogic Rationale/ Significance

Participants gave varying responses in relation to the pedagogic significance and rationale for the inclusion of meaningful work experience into the curriculum. These can be characterised in the following ways; the desire to see 'real world' application of theories and concepts within their subject area; the inclusion of an external element; awareness of learning styles and the benefits. One respondent had undertaken research with sector groups to "ask them what work experience means to them [and] what fits well into their industry" and then consequently asked themselves "who we want to produce at the end of their course" developing their courses around these precepts. Feeling that they "owed it to their students" another respondent noted that there was "less value in graduates leaving with all the theory in their head but with no outlet to apply it". Echoing this, other respondents wanted their students to be able to apply theory to practice and "understand the context" of their subject. Others felt that a period of experience in the workplace allowed students to engage with theory and to "recognise that theory might not actually map to the 'real world'" but would allow the discipline to be brought to life".

Respondents suggested work experience was a good way of introducing an external element to the course, broaden horizons and engage with the local community. They espoused the benefits of work experience allowing students to play to their learning style strengths acknowledging that “everyone learns in a different way” and focused on action-led experiential learning. These participants both work at the ‘coal-face’ and will have therefore encountered the benefits of this type of approach. When discussing the pedagogic rationale, a few participants discussed instead the benefits of the inclusion of a period of work experience leading the researcher to suggest that these participants view the rationale and benefits interchangeably. Participants noted students:

- have a different work ethic and come back transformed
- Develop both aptitude and attitude having a new perspective on the subject
- Can walk the walk and talk the talk and are ‘credible’ graduates

There were blurred lines between the pedagogic rationale for and benefits of work experience; something not identified within the literature. The terms have been used interchangeably by many participants and therefore this distinction cannot be said to relate to role or background. This similarity could again be down to terminology. It might be explained by the disparate knowledge bases between subject areas. Is the term ‘benefit’ used in a practical way for a student audience and ‘pedagogy’ limited to the relationship between theory and practice for an academic audience? Alternatively, it might relate to a lack of theoretical foundation in an underdeveloped area.

Benefits

Participants described work experience as being “good for you” and one explained ‘we started saying [to students] it’s great because we think it’s a bit like eating your greens’. There is anecdotal evidence amongst participants that students ‘come back different people’ and participants linked this to the benefits of the inclusion of work experience into the curriculum. Mason, Williams and Cramer (2006, cited in Holmes, 2013) comment on this lack of evidence with Holmes (2013) arguing that this assumption has been perpetuated within the literature.

According to Driffield et al, (2011) two main assumptions are made about the value of work placements. The first is that placements have been found to make a student more employable (Hadfield, 2007; Phillips, 2007) and the second is that placements improve the final classification of degree. Indeed, large scale analysis of attainment in higher education carried out by HEFCE (2009) supports the link between placement and degree outcomes however there is a suggestion that it is

previous academic performance rather than the placement year that matters (Green, 2009). Driffield et al (2011) asks the important question “do placements lead to better marks, or do better students choose placements?”. There is now however a need for evidence based practice to measure the potential benefits of work experience and in particular, the impact on the student in terms of self-awareness, motivation and the application to learning.

Participants articulated the benefits of the inclusion of meaningful work experience into the curriculum in three ways; benefits to the students; benefits for the organisation and benefits for academics. Two participants noted the benefit to the organisation of having “talented graduates” within the organisation.

Commenting that students “would not see any drawbacks”, work experience allows students to test the role and/or organisation, see if they like it and explore options in a tightly monitored and controlled way. One participant noted grades improved when students had a period of work experience with another noting that full-time students do not perform as well in their final year as those who have had a prolonged period of work experience.

Participants noted the work readiness and skills development of students post a period of meaningful work experience. Students could define and distinguish themselves in their CV; knew how to behave understanding the rules and conventions; developed their confidence in leading and negotiating projects; developed maturity and understanding of the discipline of work and were better organised with better prioritisation skills. Interestingly two participants talked about the development of ‘softer things’ noting these used to be called soft/ transferrable skills.

Challenges

Overall the challenges in embedding work experience articulated were mainly mechanistic rather than pedagogical where participants focused on the systems; ensuring there were sufficient opportunities; the resource and time it took and enabling students to go on work experience and reflection afterwards. Some participants raised concerns about the saturation point in the local community of the number of appropriate work experience opportunities available, wanting to ensure quality was not compromised.

Several participants were concerned about winning over the “hearts and minds” of those academics who feel the subject integrity is lost with this inclusion, part of the wider debate into the purpose of

Higher Education (Walker and Boni, 2013). What is not clear from another's comments on "finding space in the curriculum" is whether this is a pedagogic issue or a mechanistic one. Finding time in an already full curriculum is a key challenge for all courses.

Participants identified that there are students for whom a little extra help is necessary; whether it is ring fencing opportunities or flexibility in expectations to consider those unable to take up opportunities. It is important to recognise that a 'one size fits all' expectation is not viable. Participants also acknowledged those who already had a period of work experience (potentially mature students) and may not benefit from additional time in the workplace. It should also be remembered that extensive time and effort is required by students in some areas to source and secure a placement and the impact of a negative overall outcome for some may deter future engagement and detract from the original aim of a developmental and positive experience.

All of participants operating at the 'coal-face' across the subject areas commented upon the time commitment involved in managing these experiences within the curriculum. They acknowledged managing relationships with external organisations was time consuming and something they were expected to do alongside their normal day to day role. It is important that these concerns are managed moving forward. Participants felt work experience was a real benefit to the student body but that it needed to be alongside real reflection of the value of these experiences. Having a set of experiences had no meaning unless students were supported to make sense of them all pull them all together (Smith and Martin, 2014).

Limitations

When conducting interviews, the researcher did not consistently probe participants' answers when they talked about key terms – i.e. sandwich; placement; internship; summer work; volunteering and instead assuming their meaning. The researcher could not therefore make a true comparison between terms and these were not consistently understood across subject areas or indeed individual participants.

Due to timescales involved data collection compromised of only nine participants and it is not claimed that these responses are a true representation of the subject area or the whole University. Therefore, these results should be considered as a preliminary insight.

Conclusion

This paper set out to explore how the concept of meaningful work experience was understood and practiced by academics in the context of higher education. It shows there remains no common agreement of the term 'work experience' but results demonstrated a broader interpretation of work experience than found in the literature. Results throw further light on the literature with additional reflections for how to ensure work experience is meaningful, categorised into five key themes. The discussion identified the need for additional research to ensure a shared understanding of key terminology utilised. These findings perpetuated assumptions that work experience is key to developing employability and evidence based practice is required to measure the potential benefits. There is a need for a "common language that can be spoken by any student, any employer and any university" (Rich, 2015).

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Understanding our students' experiences of attaining and completing their work placements

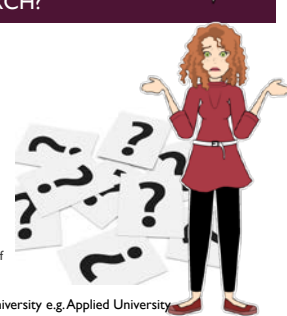
Charlotte Rowley

Sheffield Hallam University
C.Rowley@shu.ac.uk

Abstract

In Events Management at Sheffield Business School we have seen an increase in the number of students engaging with industry, through placements and summer internships. This appears to be a trend across the HE sector, along with a rise in tailored shorter experiences counting towards a sandwich degree. This workshop explores the challenges of students during their work placement and the barriers to accessing these opportunities. It will explore; the expectations versus realities of their industry, the impact that work experience can have on them both personally and professionally and explore barriers such as finances and disability. There is a lot of evidence to support the benefits of a placement year or work experience (Aggett and Busby, 2011; Smith, Smith, Caddell, 2015). Work experience is often seen as a desired, if not essential criterion in applying for graduate roles. However, with the increased student engagement with employers comes an increasing number of issues, including the expectations of students from their employers (Barron, Maxwell, Broadbridge, and Ogden 2007; Neill and Mulholland, 2003). This workshop aims to provide an understanding of our student's experiences, so we as University staff can support our students in gaining and making the most of their degree and work experiences.

Presentation

<p style="text-align: center;">UNDERSTANDING OUR STUDENTS EXPERIENCES OF ATTAINING AND COMPLETING THEIR WORK PLACEMENTS.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">EXPECTATIONS, REALITY, BARRIERS, AND CHALLENGES FACED BY STUDENTS IN EVENTS MANAGEMENT DURING WORK EXPERIENCE & PLACEMENTS</p> <div style="background-color: #4b0032; color: white; padding: 5px; margin-top: 10px;"> <p>CHARLOTTE ROWLEY SENIOR LECTURER & COURSE LEADER IN EVENTS MANAGEMENT SHEFFIELD HALLAM UNIVERSITY C.ROWLEY@SHU.AC.UK</p> </div>	<div style="background-color: #4b0032; color: white; padding: 5px; margin-bottom: 10px;"> <p style="text-align: center;">WHY DO THIS RESEARCH?</p> </div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Events Management practical subject-learn by doing ▪ Placement tutor & work experience tutor managing an intranet site for work experience ▪ 120 credit bearing hours of work experience ▪ Optional placement year ▪ Increase in students opting out of placement ▪ Increase in students resigning from placements 20+ 2015/16 ▪ Increase number of students unsure of their degree choice post experience <div style="text-align: right;">  </div> <p style="font-size: small;">Competitive Advantage for Student & University e.g. Applied University</p>
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JUSTIFICATION OF STUDY

- Lack of research in our area-although research in related subjects.
- Complex job market- various roles, sectors, long hours, etc.
- Increasing competition & skills gap (Smith, 2017)
- To understand the barriers for students in gaining work experience/placements in our sector
- To understand the common issues faced by students during a placement or work experience
- To understand how we can improve as a University in support and curriculum design for students & employers to ensure a better experience for all involved

SKILLED GRADUATES?

- Skills gap increasing: hospitality, digital, & marketing all affected (Smith, 2017)
- Increasing competition between students 26 Universities offering placements as of 2017 (UCAS, 2017)
- DLHE 15-16= 71% of graduates were in posts classified as professional employment (HESA, 2017)
- Benefit of placements widely acknowledged (Aggett and Busby, 2011; Smith, Smith, Caddell, 2015)
- Work experience is the most vital experience on which graduate based their career choices and there is simply no substitute (Mahanon & Quinn, 1995; Abudullah, Zahari, Mat, Zain, & Darani, 2015)
- Change in student choices upon return

PROBLEMS ARISE WHEN STUDENTS: DON'T APPLY/DON'T ATTEND/DO RESIGN

The future:

- Degree apprenticeships?
- Apprenticeships?
- Applied Universities?

EMPLOYERS WANTED!

LITERATURE FROM HOSPITALITY & TOURISM SECTORS

Topic	Authors
Expectations/perceptions	• Perceptions of glamorous vs reality of job (Barron, Maxwell, Broadbridge, & Ogden, 2007) • Complain to University if it fails to meet their expectations (McMahon & Quinn, 1995) • Student expectation however value seen upon graduation (Neill and Mulholland, 2003)
Rewarding experience for all parties	• It should be rewarding for all involved (McMahon & Quinn, 1995; Parker, 2010; Smith, Smith, & Caddell, 2015)
Competition	• Increasing competition for placements & graduate roles in the Hospitality, Events, Tourism sector (Abudullah, Zahari, Mat, Zain, & Darani, 2015; Aggett and Busby, 2011; McMahon & Quinn, 1995; Smith, Smith, & Caddell, 2015)
Lack of training/responsibility	• Being just another pair of hands (McMahon & Quinn, 1995) • Menial/boring role (Rok, 2013) • Lack of training (Abudullah, Zahari, Mat, Zain, & Darani, 2015)
Hours & job suitability	• Are the students right for the job & long hours (McMahon & Quinn, 1995) • Perception of long hours for low wages/lack of reward (Abudullah, Zahari, Mat, Zain, & Darani, 2015; Barron, Maxwell, Broadbridge, & Ogden, 2007) • Most students did not mind the hours (Rok, 2013)
Management/support	• Lack of appreciation (Barron, Maxwell, Broadbridge, & Ogden, 2007) • Clear appreciation & mentoring = positive outcomes (Parker, 2010; Session, 2007; Smith, Smith, & Caddell, 2015) • Frustration at the expectation they would always be available (Rok, 2013) • Placement students can be seen as a solution to staffing problems & cheap recruitment (Smith, Smith, and Caddell, 2015). • Link/Placement tutor & mentor key to success (Abudullah, Zahari, Mat, Zain, & Darani, 2015; Parker, 2010)
Generational differences	• Baby boomers, gen X & Y all different working styles/expectations (Zopiatis, Krambia-Kapardis, & Varnavas, 2012) • Expectations change (Barron, Maxwell, Broadbridge, & Ogden, 2007)

RESEARCH METHOD & RESULTS

- 2017-Online questionnaire distributed to SHU Events Management students currently on placement/who have completed the placement year, 22% response rate
- 2018- Online questionnaire distributed to SHU Events Management students who have completed some form of work experience, 7% response rate
- Distributed via email and social media related to our course
- Questionnaire looked at the general student populations experience during their placement year and work experience including the challenges faced and barriers to work experience
- Interviews currently underway



HAS YOUR WORK EXPERIENCE BEEN: PAID, UNPAID OR EXPENSES?

Category	Percentage
Mostly unpaid	42%
A mix of paid, unpaid & expenses	32%
Mostly paid	21%
All paid	5%

- 95% of students have undertaken unpaid work experience at some point
- Sectors which students perceive to have the highest number of unpaid roles: Charity, Festivals, & Arts/Cultural
- Sectors which students perceive to have the highest number of paid roles: Business events, Pharmaceuticals, Venue based
- 57% of students had been put off work experience because they were unpaid

STUDENT EXPECTATIONS

WAS YOUR PLACEMENT WHAT YOU EXPECTED? (2017)

Response	Percentage
Yes, the role was what I expected	40%
No, it wasn't what I expected	15%
Some of it was what I expected	39%
Other	6%

HAS YOUR WORK EXPERIENCE BEEN AS EXPECTED? (2018)

Response	Percentage
Yes, the roles have been what I expected	24%
No, the roles haven't been what I expected	5%
Some of the roles have been what I expected	71%

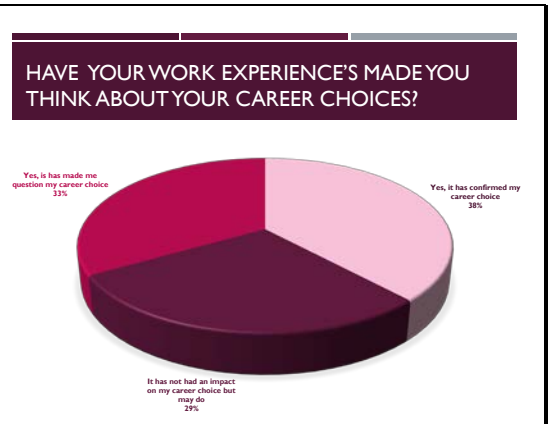
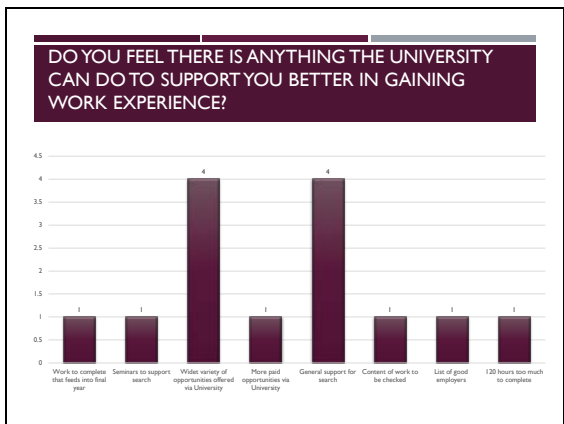
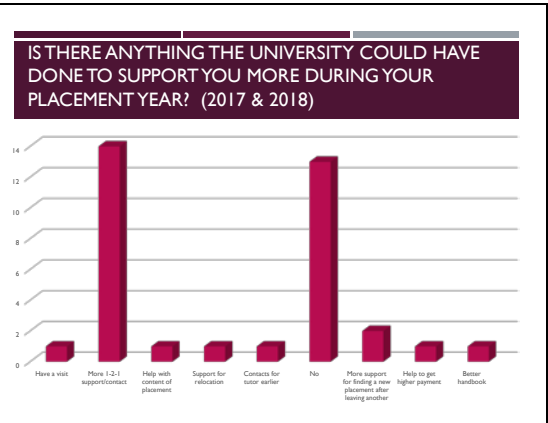
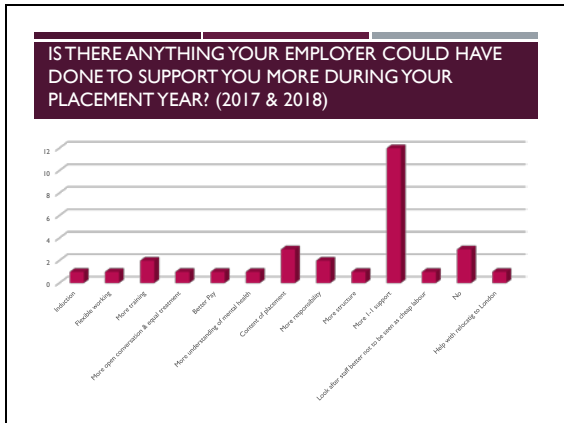
2017 (placement)	2018 (work experience)
• 27% hours more than expected	• 5% hours were more than expected
• 88% had irregular shifts with little notice	• 40% had irregular shifts

CHALLENGES FACED DURING PLACEMENT (STATEMENTS IN RED CAME UP IN 2017 & 2018)

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unsociable hours • Long hours • Lack of training 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of management appreciation • Exploitation "cheap labour"
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management leaving creating more work • Time management • Living abroad currency, conditions, etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of support • Loss of work • Meeting various stakeholder needs • Work not as expected
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Person challenges: confidence, work life balance assertiveness • Being made redundant • Shift changes • Moving home • Unprepared to start placement • Long commute 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Other staff believing they're above "intern" • Volume of work • Customers Expectations • Lack of recognition/Underappreciation • Difficult clients • Expectations

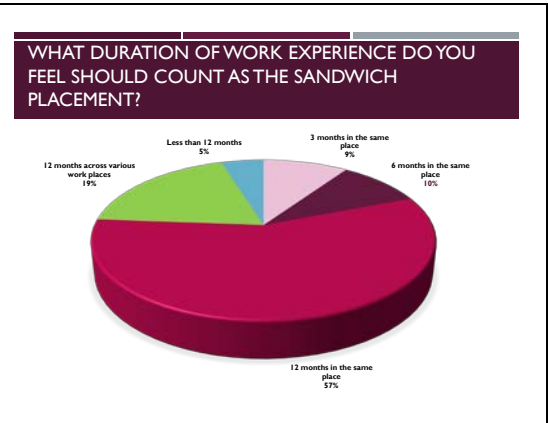
CHALLENGES FACED DURING WORK EXPERIENCE (STATEMENTS IN BLUE ECHO THAT OF CHALLENGES FACED ON PLACEMENT)

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not fitting in • Disliked the work • Long commute • Long hours • Workload • Unsure of how to speak to managers • Lack of Training/Unprepared • Work wasn't as expected • Personal challenges • Difficult Clients • Difficult manager or colleagues



WHAT ARE YOUR IMPRESSIONS OF THE SECTOR/INDUSTRY AFTER COMPLETING WORK EXPERIENCE?

- Become to realise how fast changing it is evolving
- Brilliant
- It's a lot broader than I imagined.
- Exciting
- Busy and fast paced
- There is a much bigger range to the industry than I was originally aware of - and a lot of supporting jobs (suppliers) that may appeal in the future
- Really good, I didn't realize how important events are to so many companies
- I still have a great love for the sector
- I feel I will enjoy the work when I am give more responsibility.
- Fun
- Very excited for a future in events, I have realised there is a difference between being an events manager and a venue manager
- Work related, it's easier with good organisational skills
- You need to be dedicated and have a passion for the industry, in terms of long hours and late nights you just need to embrace it to get the experience
- I have been put off by the lack of organisation in a lot of companies in this industry.
- It's a good industry but some parts of it is deeply influenced by politics.
- People often take you for granted as it's free work experience but they also give you hospitality or waiting jobs as they think that's what I'm looking for. They don't always give you the experience you want as I got the impression they think I'm too young or not qualified enough.
- Stressful
- Good but long hours and regularly unpaid overtime



HOW WELL DO YOU KNOW YOUR STUDENT COHORT?

Thinking about your students build a generic profile of them (you have hand outs to help you):

- Age?
- Previous experience?
- Background?
- The industry-rights of passage?
- Aspirations?

Additional question:

- Does this affect their experiences?

THE SHU EVENTS COHORT (MAJORITY)

YOUR STUDENT'S JOURNEY

Now use the tube map template think about the journey's your students take make a notes of your thoughts, opinions, ideas, issues, etc. you identify through their journey

Instructions: Think of the above tube map as your student's journey. Give each circle (station) a name e.g. start degree, placement, etc. In the notes section jot down any thoughts, ideas, issues you identify with this stage.

EXAMPLE SHU EVENTS STUDENTS

DISCUSSION

- Please find two people from different universities and discuss the following?

Do you have any thoughts or experience on:

- How to support the millennial cohort, expectations, etc.
- How to move forward work experience from being seen as something as unpaid to paid
- Do you feel your students have equal access to all opportunities? If not, why not?
- What duration do you class as a sandwich degree at your institution and do you feel this should change?

RECOMMENDATIONS BASED ON RESEARCH FINDINGS

- An opportunity where possible to see a schedule or work pattern
- Work toward better pay/rewards
- Work with employer for better notice for shift changes or change in hours
- More contact points or transparent contact plan for students
- Detailed job descriptions
- More help with relocation
- Continue to understand our student culture
- Consider the accessibility to opportunities for all students-implications of applied subjects
- Code of conduct for employers
- Continue to look at duration for a sandwich placement

Thank you, any questions?

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Supporting learner achievement and engagement with placement(s) – sharing insights from an accelerated Business Management degree

Richard Howarth, Emily Ramsden and Jane Scivier

Nottingham Trent University

Richard.howarth@ntu.ac.uk Emily.ramsden@ntu.ac.uk Jane.Scivier1@ntu.ac.uk

Abstract

This workshop will share some timely insight(s) from a 3 year accelerated sandwich/placement degree and should be relevant to those interested in other ways of integrating ‘placements’ within undergraduate courses and further supporting learner engagement with the placement process. The course was launched originally launched 20 years ago and was re-validated in 2013. Whilst there is policy/funding support, it is still relatively unique. At the time of its re-validation, a pre-existing 1 Year in-Company route, was formally integrated within the course framework (alongside the original 2 Year in-Company route). The 1 Year in-Company route is, essentially, an accelerated sandwich/placement degree (3 years study with one year of experience integrated with study through work-related learning). Members of the team involved in the course over its lifetime/journey thus far will share insights to its ‘set up’, modelling and design to note benefits from designing (compulsory) ‘placements’ into courses. The team, and others involved more recently, will also offer insights from multi agency/stakeholder approaches to supporting learner engagement in placement processes and work to connect learners with placements/roles/organisations.

Presentation

The presentation slide is divided into two main sections. The left section has a dark red background and contains the ASET logo and the title of the workshop. The right section has a light grey background with a white grid pattern and contains an overview of the workshop's focus, context, process, content, and summary.

ASET

Supporting learner achievement and engagement with placement(s) – sharing insights from an accelerated Business Management degree

Dr Richard Howarth, Emily Ramsden and Jane Scivier, Nottingham Trent University and Nottingham Business School

Overview of the workshop

- Focus - BA (Hons) Business Management (in-Company) at NBS, NTU
- Context – ‘accelerated’ degree underpinned by work-based and experiential learning
- Process – multiagency work-stream to support and engage learners with placement(s)
- Content – working to engage learners through structured (underpinned) sessions etc
- Summary – wrapping it up!

Question 1....

- What do we need to do to ensure success (of the system outlined – Eg by CMI)?

Overall flow..

And outcomes..

Question 1.... Part 2....

- Lots of understanding of Why? And What?...
- but what about HOW?
- How do these things get done/how are they done
 - and how are learners supported here (to develop the ability to become more employable)
- And how do we (really) support the success of this system (and our course)
- It starts with recognizing and understanding:
 - Where we (each) are coming from
 - What we bring
 - What we can share

NTU (NBS) Employability Approach

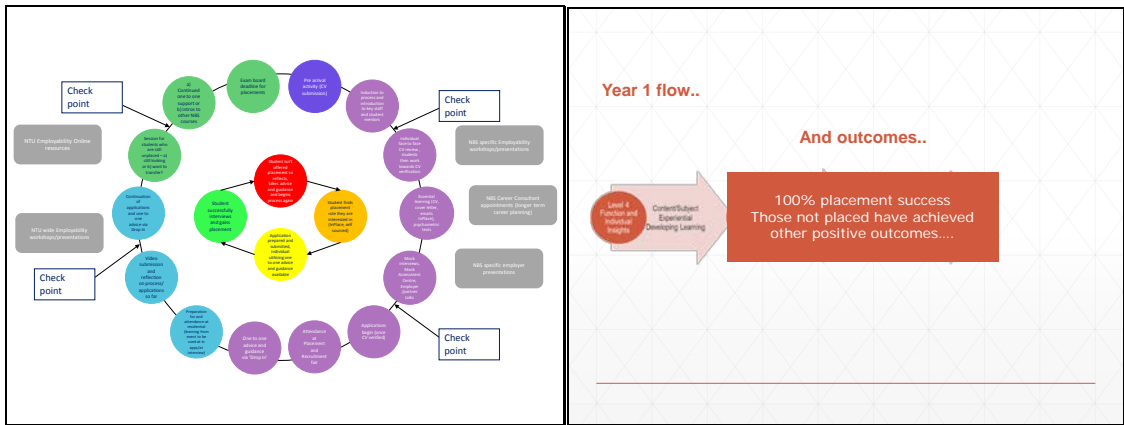
- Outlining the approach...

NBS 'Standard' Placement Delivery Model...

What did we do?

- Outlining the approach...

Our new (actual) BA Business (In Company) placement delivery model...



The Sustainable Success Habit®

“The capacity to self-manage, self-coach, grow and articulate talent (capabilities, attitudes and behaviours) for sustainable employability and career.”

- The Sustainable Success Habit® consists of two elements:

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Purpose of The Sustainable Success Habit®

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The Sustainable Success Habit®
Faithful Servant Sacred Gift

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The Sustainable Success Habit®
Faithful Servant Sacred Gift

(Passion)
Sustainable Success = Talent + Luck!

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The Sustainable Success Habit®
Faithful Servant Sacred Gift

Success =
↙
Goal/Outcome

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The Sustainable Success Habit®
Faithful Servant Sacred Gift

Sustainable Success =
↙ Outcome ↘ Journey/Safari

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+

The *Sustainable* **Success Habit®**
Faithful Servant Sacred Gift

(Passion)
Sustainable **Success = Talent**_{gap.} + *make* **Luck** *a habit!*

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Setting an outcome: Let's consider a typical task and a *Sustainable* **Success Habit®** approach

- Find a *specific* placement
- Understand the placement and organisation so that a well crafted and targeted application can be generated
- Attend the workshop with:
 - Role specification
 - Information on the company and role

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Benefits and Impact of Activity

- Know and understand the organisation and role at a sophisticated level of granularity
- Know and understand themselves better in respect of the specific role and organisation
- In a better position to make a targeted application that works at the level of shared values, behaviours and purpose
- In a better position to articulate their congruence with the organisation and role at all stages of recruitment process

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2018/19

- Stand alone uncredited module
- Targeted eResources to support module and reduce cognitive load
- Targeting hard to reach students due to presenting characteristics and behaviour(s)

Conclusions and Wrapping Up...

- (C) Ability – to become employable and succeed – connects what we do
- Shared story, structure and narrative
 - Course team and employability
 - And also with the learner and other learners (Eg Final Year)
 - Investment and buy-in (based on our own idea of 'success' and the 'outcome')
- Scaffold and theory / modelling to support
 - What we do but also how we do it
 - Resources, access and check points along the way
 - On-going process / system – not linear
- Conversation is fundamental
 - Underpins (and links to the developing internal conversation too)

Questions?

Building capital through student placements: The case of Languages for Business

Jo Gregory and Neil Hughes

University of Nottingham
j.gregory@nottingham.ac.uk
neil.hughes@nottingham.ac.uk

Abstract

This paper focuses on the *Languages for Business* placement programme delivered at the University of Nottingham. This initiative, which started in November 2016, has a number of objectives including providing placement opportunities for students with language skills and intercultural knowledge, offering support to Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises (SMEs) in the East Midlands, and demonstrating the positive impact that language departments can have on different stakeholders in the community. In addition to explaining the original rationale and funding, the paper will outline the main contours of the *Languages for Business* project. These include the profiles of the students; the specialist skills they provide; the size of the companies involved (many of which can best be described as micro-companies); the nature of the projects students complete (based on clear briefs determined in consultation with the employers); the timescales involved; the student support mechanisms in place and the opportunities the project provides for academic recognition. The paper will also evaluate the projects' impact from the perspective of: the companies and students involved; the staff responsible for delivering it and the academic department they work in. There will be a particular emphasis on the employability benefits for students and the commercial gains for the companies based on an appraisal of feedback from both constituencies.

Introduction

Since Britain's decision to leave the EU and to pursue a more independent role on the global economic and political stage much attention has been focused on the role that Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises (SMEs) will play in the post-Brexit landscape. Carlos López Gómez (2017), for example, goes as far as stating that the success of the post-Brexit UK economy depends, above all, on SMEs capacity to address three key challenges: a large trade deficit, poor productivity and low levels of innovation. (<http://www.cam.ac.uk/research/discussion/opinion-the-uks-post-brexit-economy-hinges-on-small-businesses-and-innovation>). The extent to which SMEs are capable of fulfilling the role assigned to them in the post-Brexit landscape depends on a number of factors. As

López Gómez (2017) himself points out, for example, SMEs are just as blighted as other parts of the UK economy by low output per worker ratios compared to their European competitors.

Another challenge SMEs face, particularly in the context of trade, concerns the language skills and cultural knowledge deficits they will need to overcome if they are to achieve both their and the wider economy's international ambitions. This is the theme of *Born Global*, a British Academy funded project on language skills for employability, trade and business. In it, the authors explain why language skills and cultural agility are essential competences for business and provides data to support the claim that this is an area of considerable SME weakness in the UK. This weakness is compounded, they argue, by the 'crisis in languages' in UK education that has seen enrolments in language courses, at all levels of education, with the exception of primary, fall dramatically over the last 20-25 year. This is leading to a significant fall in the supply of graduates with the high-level foreign language competence that business needs.

In current circumstances, prior to Brexit, one obvious solution open to SMEs would be to recruit native speakers with the necessary language skills and cultural knowledge they need to operate successfully outside the UK. However, with the UK's impending withdrawal from the Single Market and the limits this will place on freedom of movement, it is likely to be more difficult to employ foreign nationals with the necessary skills for SMEs to compete effectively in international markets. Given this, it is important to find alternative solutions capable of helping SMEs breach this important skills and knowledge gap.

This paper sets out one possible approach developed by a team located in the School of Cultures, Languages and Area Studies (CLAS) at the University of Nottingham. Funded, somewhat ironically, by the European Structural Investment Fund (ESIF), *Languages for Business* supports the language and cultural needs of SMEs in the D2N2 (Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire) region by providing access to a pool of students, both undergraduate and post-graduate, with high-level skills in a range of languages and in-depth knowledge of the countries and cultures within which these languages are spoken. Participating students may have acquired such skills either through years of study and periods spent living abroad or because they are native speakers.

The investigation is divided into 5 parts. Whilst the first explains the funding context within which the initiative arose, the second focuses on needs with particular emphasis on the needs of SMEs and start-ups in the D2N2 region. In part 3, in an attempt to exemplify the extent of the language and culture deficit these companies face, the paper presents research data from a survey conducted with

companies across the region. This section also looks at the rationale for setting up the project from both the perspective of students and the university school within which it is located- Cultures, Languages and Area Studies (CLAS) at the University of Nottingham.

Part four sets out the most important operational aspects of the initiative including how the placements are sourced, the structure of the projects, student recruitment and the support and monitoring procedures set in place by the project team. It also explains the basis upon which students can undertake placements i.e. on a voluntary basis, for credit or alternative recognition via the Nottingham Advantage Award, which rewards extra-curricular activities. Part five discusses some of the issues, challenges and obstacles faced since the initiative was set up. These relate to the project's location within the Humanities, a discipline traditionally reluctant to engage with the private sector, and opposition to the project from a small cohort of post-graduate students unhappy about the unpaid nature of the placements. In the conclusions, the authors provide an initial appraisal of *Languages for Business* and explain the steps taken to diversify the project in new directions.

Funding Context

As explained in the introduction, *Languages for Business* was set up primarily to address the concern that SMEs, both in the East Midlands and more widely, are struggling to maximise the commercial opportunities available to them through international trade due to a lack of language skills and cultural knowledge of key international markets. While businesses acknowledge that having a language strategy and cultural expertise are essential in allowing them to develop new markets and consolidate existing commercial relationships overseas, investment in acquiring these skills often falls to the bottom of a long list of priorities, particularly for SMEs.

In an attempt to help companies in the D2N2 region bridge this important knowledge and skills gap, a language-focused project, led by CLAS, was included in a much larger European Structural Investment Fund (ESIF) bid by a University of Nottingham led consortium that also includes Nottingham Trent University and Derby University. The resulting [Enabling Innovation](#) programme currently provides support to over 2000 SMEs over a three year period by helping them, “to innovate, explore new ideas, and unlock their growth potential”.

SME needs

As a prelude to action, *the Languages for Business* project team sought to survey the terrain for foreign languages within the SME community in the East Midlands. The survey looked at a number of issues relevant to the project including SME approaches to foreign trading, the importance attached to international business communication and the concrete strategies they currently deploy in facilitating international business communication. In addition to data on the issues outlined above, the research team took the opportunity to gauge business opinion on the international trading climate post-Brexit.

In terms of data collection, it was decided at the outset that telephone contact would be likely to offer the most effective means of collecting survey data as it was felt that it would offer the best way of finding the most appropriate respondent within a targeted enterprise. Moreover, it was felt that telephone calls would allow the researcher to maintain the initiative as much as possible, making the survey harder to ignore by prospective respondents. It was hoped that these two aspects in combination would help to drive up the response rate – something that is a major risk in surveying enterprises that can be extremely busy and often under-staffed.

From a sample of 134 local SMEs, 24 enterprises were successfully surveyed, yielding a response rate of around 17.9%. In terms of sectors, 9 were manufacturers, 8 were cultural enterprises, and the remaining 7 were other enterprises (mainly service providers of various types). Nearly half of the enterprises surveyed were small in revenue terms, turning over less than £1 million annually. Analysing the businesses in the survey in terms of foreign-generated revenue reveals that the majority (around 60% of enterprises surveyed) derive approximately a quarter of their annual turnover through international trading. Around a third of the businesses in the survey sourced the majority of their revenue through direct trade in international markets, including two businesses for whom foreign revenue accounted for over 75% of the total revenue stream. Finally, while all businesses in the survey traded overseas, not all of them generated revenue abroad. Four of the enterprises in the survey (all in the cultural industries) adhere to business models based on direct importation of foreign products, which are then retailed in the UK. This can, and does, involve high levels of foreign trading and close relationships with foreign suppliers, but generates no foreign revenue.

The survey identified a number of issues of concern that will need to be addressed if D2N2 located SMEs are to contribute to the post-Brexit success of the UK economy. The first is a marked over-reliance on English as a medium of communication in international trade. Out of the total number of

instances that an important foreign market was named by a given business, English was the language used to conduct international trade in 64% of them. The next most frequently cited languages used for foreign trade by the businesses in the survey were German, Spanish and French, which were used in six, three and two percent of the total number of important foreign markets cited by the SMEs surveyed. The reliance on English as the primary means of communication was particularly apparent in the context of customer service delivery, where only 4% of the companies surveyed reported usage of languages other than English.

The second worrying issue is a sense of pessimism amongst the companies surveyed about their ability to grow the international dimension of their businesses. Thus, despite a favourable regulatory environment, unprecedented levels of government support, low interest rates, and a return to growth, particularly in Europe, SMEs in the D2N2 region still show some reluctance to engage in international trade- only 16% of the companies surveyed stated that revenue generated in overseas markets would increase in the future.

The survey results also provided evidence to corroborate the view that business is being lost because of the UK's lack of foreign language skills. Thus, 16% of the companies surveyed felt that they have or may have lost opportunities to win contracts due to a lack of linguistic and cultural competence. This finding mirrors evidence presented elsewhere about the UK economy as a whole. For example, in its 2013 report, the Select committee on Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises of the UK House of Lords stated that: "there are significant commercial benefits (to SMEs) to addressing the language issue and adverse consequences if it is ignored (Road to Success, p.60). It too found evidence to support claims around language skills and business success. Thus between 10 and 18% of the 8,000 SMEs it surveyed saw a lack of language skills and cultural knowledge as a "barrier to exporting". According to ForeMan-Peck, such a language skills deficit amounts to a 'tax on business' and estimated that in 2005, "the minimum possible gains from optimal investments in languages was £9 billion."

One of the reasons for the relatively poor overseas trading performance of companies taking part in the survey is the absence of a management strategy to address their language and cultural deficits. Of the companies surveyed, 80% stated that there was no such strategy in place.

Benefits to students

Of course, the programme has not just been set up to benefit SMEs. It also offers students the opportunity to gain valuable work experience and develop employability skills within the context of an increasingly competitive graduate jobs market. Whilst in the past, the School of Cultures, Languages and Area Studies has been successful in offering its students general work placement opportunities, it has had less success in furnishing opportunities with an explicit language and cultural focus. To address this, *Languages for Business* works exclusively with SMEs that are either already operating internationally or have plans to do so, and that require practical language support to help them achieve their goals.

When deciding on the suitability of projects, the *Languages for Business* team consider:

- Whether the project will enhance student employability by offering an opportunity to develop knowledge, experience, self-confidence and skills in real world contexts;
- Whether the skills developed are of direct relevance to students' studies. For example, does the project provide a context for them to use their languages and/or develop specific skills in areas such as translation
- Whether the students are undertaking a clearly defined project using skills that would not otherwise be available to the company.

In terms of the academic school within which the initiative is located, CLAS, *Languages for Business* provides an opportunity to address key goals in the areas of impact, diversification of external links and career enhancement opportunities for the staff members involved in its delivery. They are also a vehicle for contributing to key university objectives such as making a positive contribution to the wider community within which the university is embedded and its important internationalisation agenda.

Project Operation

The project team have used a number of different strategies to source placements. By far the most important has been through its relationship with the East Midlands office of the Department for International Trade (DIT), which refers SMEs looking for the type of short-term language and culture support *Languages for Business* specialises in. In particular, the DIT has referred a number of local SMEs looking to 'test the water' via preliminary research before deciding on whether to enter a new international market. The service has also been promoted at various networking events, for example, the breakfast events organised by the University's Ingenuity Network. In addition, promotional events have been held across the city, at venues such as the [Broadway](#) cinema and the

[Nottingham Contemporary](#). Finally, the service has been promoted through large-scale, country specific events such as *Routes into China*, where the opportunity to benefit from a student placement is offered as a follow up to all businesses attending.

Interested companies complete an enrolment form (part of the funding criteria) and then meet with the *Languages for Business* Project Manager to ascertain the type of support they are looking for, the language skills they require, whether they prefer a native or non-native speaker and whether the placement will be in-company or remotely-located. If the latter, companies are required to agree to regular supervisory meetings to ensure students gain maximum benefit from their placements in terms of developing employability skills. This leads to the drafting of a role profile, which is used to advertise the placement to students. The profile includes information about the hours, place of work, type of work, and information about the company. It also states the aims of the placement and the outcomes for the student in terms of the skills and experience they stand to gain including commercial awareness, communication skills and problem solving.

In general, the placements run from October to December or between February and April. That said, there is a lot of flexibility. Companies with a particular interest in Chinese language skills, for example, often benefit from the help of international students studying on the Chinese/English Interpreting & Translation MA where they have availability over the summer months before completing their studies in September. The placements require a time investment of between 40-50 hours in total, with the students allocating approximately 7 hours a week to their project. The days and hours are flexible and are agreed between the student and the placement partner. It is made clear to companies that students have commitments in terms of their studies, and that should take priority, at the same time, students undertaking a project are asked to let the project team know, and the company they are working with, if they feel they are unable to complete the placement, or are having any issues. Students go through a recruitment process, in the form of sending a CV and cover letter, and are asked to attend an interview either at the University or the place of work. Companies are asked to provide feedback to unsuccessful candidates to help them in future applications

As regards the support students receive while they are on placement, this happens at all stages in the process. When advertising the placements, students are informed of the support they can receive from the University Careers & Employability Service in terms of making an application, or preparing for an interview. Successful candidates then attend a pre-placement briefing with the

project manager, at which they receive information about health and safety, legalities, and how they can obtain support while they are on placement. The students can also gain accreditation for their work by linking the placement to the Cultures, Languages and Area Studies (CLAS) accredited work placement module, the CLAS NAA work placement module, or the newly set up NAA Languages for Business module. The Nottingham Advantage Award (NAA) is an extra-curricular cross campus award, which is supported by employers and is included on a student's degree transcript. The projects are also available to students wishing to take them on a voluntary basis, however, this has led to concerns amongst a particular cohort of students, which will be discussed below.

The projects students have undertaken whilst on placement include: Research into potential markets including possible routes to market; formation and implementation of an international social media communications plan; translation work either written or verbal and providing cultural expertise such as advising on business etiquette in a particular region. One of the main focuses of *Languages for Business* placements has been translation. Students undertaking such work have faced a range of challenges when translating company content into the language of the target market including how to translate slang, plays on words, puns and the type of idiomatic expressions common in advertising and publicity material. Commenting on this in his placement feedback, Richard, a BA French and Hispanic Studies student, who completed a placement with East Midlands-based vein cannulation specialists, Vein Train remarked:

“As translators, we've all experienced moments where we have to tackle something that's just... untranslatable. Whether it be an idiom, a pun or wordplay, or a specific cultural reference only understood by speakers from that country, it is the job of translators to unpick these conundrums so a target audience can understand”.

In terms of specific examples, Power of 2 Publishing, an educational publishing company based in Nottingham, recruited a team of 3 students to investigate if there was a market for their after-school Maths products would translate in France, Spain and Germany. The team's findings resulted in the company's decision to pursue Germany as a potential market. They also felt that discovering that the Spanish market was currently underdeveloped and not worth exploring, was also a positive result, as it had saved them a lot of wasted time and money.

Challenges

Since setting up *Languages for Business*, the project team has faced a number of challenges. One of the main issues has been its location within a School, Cultures, Languages and Area Studies, that traditionally has had little experience of developing initiatives in collaboration with the private sector. To address this, it was decided to prioritise the recruitment of a Project Manager with first-hand knowledge and understanding of university/business relations. The successful candidate's experience, developed over 10 years across a number of areas spanning marketing, student recruitment and careers, has been crucial to the project's success. Her extensive experience in the University's Careers & Employability Service, where she has been responsible for developing relationships with employers, both locally and nationally, has been of particular relevance.

Another issue the project team has faced stems from concerns amongst a particular group of postgraduate students that take exception to the fact that as well as for credit, the placements are available on an unpaid voluntary basis. The students feel that this raises a number of issues. These include: devaluation of language students' knowledge and skills; that undertaking a placement could be a distraction from participants' undergraduate studies; that some students might be excluded from the programme on economic grounds and that *Languages for Business* fails to respect a principle followed by alternative University of Nottingham placement programmes i.e. that internships should be paid.

In an attempt to reassure the students concerned, *Languages for Business* has sought to explain the reasons why the placements can be undertaken both for credits and on a voluntary basis. The project team has also explained the steps taken to help students overcome any economic impediments to taking part in the initiative, including a commitment to cover all travel expenses incurred during the placement.

As regards impact the placements are having on students, it was explained that at 50 hours, the projects are relatively short and designed to provide participating students with the opportunity to complete a 'real life' task that allows them to use their language skills and cultural knowledge within a commercial context, often for the first time. In terms of allowing students to complete placements on a voluntary basis, it was explained that whilst the project team is sympathetic to their concerns, that adherence to the principle that placements, if not taken for credit, should be paid would limit the opportunities available to students. This is due to the fear amongst businesses of the financial and bureaucratic burden that such a condition would impose upon them. This is particularly true of the type of small family and micro-businesses that the project commonly works with. For such

companies, many of which have no prior experience of working with universities or taking students on placement, the absence of such obstacles has been an important incentive.

The project team has also emphasised the experiential value to students of taking part in the initiative, which in their estimation, far outweighs any potential remuneration value. Whilst critics of student internship and placement schemes disparage this claim arguing that it is often invoked to justify what amount to unstructured and unsupervised placements comprised of menial tasks, the project team feels that it is legitimate in the case of *Languages for Business*.

As the following examples of feedback from participating companies demonstrate, the projects are of strategic importance to the companies and the support provided by students has enhanced their international business:

“The outputs have been excellent and have led to an increased/improved relationship with the partner-company and ultimately increased profitability and sales. The knowledge of the French culture and language that the placement offered was immensely valuable. In short the placement was very worthwhile.” (Pressac Communications Ltd)

“The placement has really built our profile in Japan, with **** doing a lot of research into the press, stores, social media and influencers, and reaching out to these people to introduce our brand. This is something as a non-Japanese speaker we could never do so it’s making a massive difference to our brand.” (Derby-based lifestyle brand, Four Three Six)

“The work placement gave us a much greater opportunity within the Chinese market ... [The student] helped us to understand what the market is looking for, and made comparisons with other companies to ensure we remain competitive. She is a keen learner, enthusiastic, and an attribute to the University. I have no doubt our newly translated website will enhance and increase the success of our company. Thank you ... and UoN” (Simplex Knitting)

The ability to have such a significant impact is for obvious reasons, very attractive to students and is one of the reasons why they have been willing, even if on an unpaid basis, to take on the challenge as exemplified in the following examples of student placement feedback:

“The placement is really a great opportunity for me to apply what I've learnt during my course. I've got the chance to translate the products from English into Mandarin, help the

local business to source for Chinese suppliers in China, and to practise my English communication skills. It's really great to know how an online business is operated and I'm really glad that I took part in this placement."

"As part of this placement I have improved my resilience and communication skills. I feel that having this experience will allow me stand out to employers when I graduate and it has given me a taste of what it is like to apply translation skills learned in lectures to a business. I would highly recommend this placement to anyone wishing to put their language skills into practice."

"This placement was very useful to add to my experience in a professional context linked to something I've been studying. I've been able to gain more knowledge of networking and other fields, and I would definitely recommend doing such a placement in your final year."

Conclusion

This article has set out some of the problems facing SMEs as they seek to rise to the challenge posed by Brexit. One of the biggest concerns is the impact it will have on SMEs ability to recruit native language speaking staff with the skills they will need to compete effectively in international markets. This issue is exacerbated by the 'crisis in languages' in the UK that has seen enrolments in language courses fall dramatically over the last 20-25 years and, as a consequence, significant falls in the supply of graduates with high level foreign language competence graduating from universities.

This context provides the rationale for the initiative outlined in this paper. To date, *Languages for Business*, has helped address the language and cultural needs of some 19 SMEs via a programme of placements. For the companies, ranging from micro-businesses to larger SMEs operating in sectors such as manufacturing, tech, hospitality, fashion, marketing and education, there have been a number of benefits. Feedback from the participating companies highlights the relevance and importance of the support our students are providing which has lead to: increased sales; input into strategy; new market entry; improved communications and the strengthening of client relationships and brand and profile enhancement.

In addition to helping such companies achieve important business objectives, the placements have provided students with opportunities to: utilise language skills in a professional environment; enhance their communication skills, both written and verbal, and provided international students

the chance to gain valuable work experience in a British company. Students have also used the research skills they have developed throughout their studies to investigate potential international markets or routes to market. The languages the companies have required support with include French, Spanish, Japanese, and Russian with a particular focus on German and Chinese. In the cases of 6 additional companies, where *Languages for Business* has been unable to address their needs directly, we have helped them to find alternative support within the University (Postgraduate Placements, Unitemps).

The project has also been important for the School of Cultures Languages and Area Studies, helping to develop links with the private sector and with government departments and agencies responsible for supporting international trade such as the DIT and also business peak organisations such as the Chamber of Commerce. As a consequence, there is clear potential to exploit the initiative as an REF impact case study, in particular, given the endorsement *Languages for Business* has received from leading national figures in Higher Education languages. For example, Bernadette Holmes MBE, who is an Adviser for UK School Language Policy and Director of Speak to the Future, the National Campaign for Languages, described it as, “spot on and cutting edge!, So exciting!”. Recently, the *Languages for Business* team has started to diversify into new areas. For example, as the project has evolved, the project team has become increasingly aware of the interest in the Chinese market and the need for support to help SMEs achieve their commercial objectives in that part of the world. To this end, on July 2, 2018, a workshop titled *Routes into China: market opportunities and potential for SMEs* was delivered to interested SMEs in the D2N2 region.

Despite its impressive results, the project team have found it difficult to secure the funding necessary to sustain the initiative into the future, and it remains to be seen (at the time of publication) if alternative backing can be found. Whilst a number of options have been mooted, there has been no firm commitment from either the Faculty or School within which the initiative is located or from alternative sources within the University. This raises the distinct possibility that the many gains set out in this article will remain short-lived and that SMEs across the region will have to rely on their own resources to achieve their international goals.

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Matching International Students' Placement Expectation and Experience: an institutional case study

Marcellus Mbah

Nottingham Trent University
Marcellus.mbah@ntu.ac.uk


Abstract

Student placement and employability has become a key focus in United Kingdom (UK) Higher Education (HE) sector. This has been exacerbated by the rising cost of Higher Education and heightened expectations for universities to demonstrate value for money. The return on investment in Higher Education for several university students can take varying forms and one of these is employment upon completion of studies. Whilst so much has been written in the literature on the subject of student placement and graduate employability (Rae, 2007; Flier, 2015), much of this is centred on the UK domicile learner. The context of international students, that is overseas students and those from other European countries, is given less attention, in spite of their growing numbers in UK HE (Naidoo 2007). The dynamics underpinning the placement experience of international students need to be understood. Drawing on a survey conducted with 41 international students and focus group discussions at a UK based University, this session unveils the necessity of meeting the placement expectations of international students by suggesting key drivers.

Presentation



Universities under increasing pressure to demonstrate value for money



"Already overburdened, lecturers may buckle under a reformed system that places student satisfaction above all other measures" Campbell, 2016

26 September 2018 3 NTU

The case of international students

WHERE DO INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS STUDY AROUND THE WORLD?

2nd
The UK is the second most popular destination in the world for international students.




Figure 1: Share of international student enrolments (2020 countries only), 2015




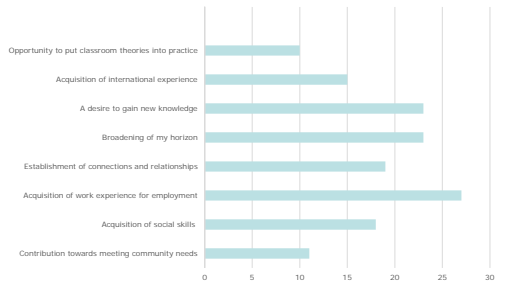
Figure 2: Number of international student enrolments, 2015 (2014)

1	United States	907,251 (829,412)	+9%
2	United Kingdom	430,833 (436,734)	-1%
3	Australia	294,438 (286,048)	+3%
4	France	236,409 (229,323)	+3%
5	Germany	228,754 (219,542)	+4%
6	Russia	226,431 (213,347)	+6%
7	Canada	176,903 (184,274)	-5%
8	Japan	131,980 (133,085)	-1%
9	China (People's Republic of)	123,427 (108,311)	+13%
10	Italy	85,418 (87,544)	-2%

(Source: Universities UK, 2018)

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The number of respondents who strongly agreed with the following expectations prior to placement



Expectation	Experience
Opportunity to put classroom theories into practice	~10
Acquisition of international experience	~15
A desire to gain new knowledge	~22
Broadening of my horizon	~25
Establishment of connections and relationships	~20
Acquisition of work experience for employment	~28
Acquisition of social skills	~18
Contribution towards meeting community needs	~12

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Comparing expectation and experience



■ Experience ■ Expectation

❖ Only 13 respondents (31.7%) indicated that they were strongly satisfied with how they placement went.

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The issues

- ❖ *Lack of information about the work placement and visa rules*
"UK domicile students are very informed but for international student, it is even more important that the work placement is explained because of the visa restriction" – a focus group participant
- ❖ *Culture differences*
"If you're not used to the English culture, you will not get the best placement experience because this unawareness limits you" – a focus group participant
- ❖ *Lack of academic preparation and work experience prior to the work placement*
"university is sometimes separate from the real world such that whatever the university teaches might not be relevant in real life
"The lack of work experience creates a barrier to obtain what might be considered a good placement or the choices that might be available" – a focus group participant
- ❖ *Loss of academic writing ability upon return from placement*
Some participants noted that not attending a placement would have been preferable to the loss of academic writing ability which they felt could potentially negatively affect their final degree classification and ability to secure an ideal graduate role

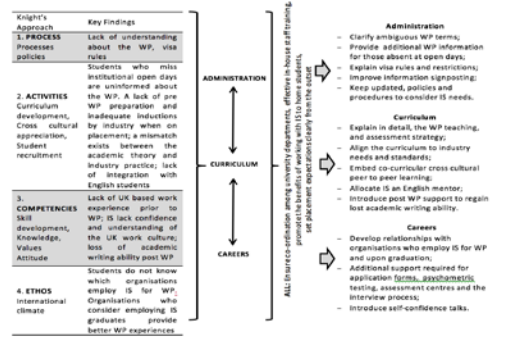
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Adopting Knight's 4 approaches to internationalisation

Approach	Description
<i>Process Approach</i>	The process approach frames internationalization as a process which integrates an international dimension or perspective into the major functions of the institution. Terms such as infuse, integrate, permeate, incorporate are used to characterize the process approach. A wide range of activities, policies and procedures are part of this process.
<i>Activity Approach</i>	The activity approach describes internationalization in terms of categories or types of activities such as curriculum, scholar/student exchange and technical cooperation.
<i>Competency Approach</i>	The competency approach looks at internationalization in terms of developing new skills, attitudes, knowledge in students, faculty and staff. The focus is clearly on the human dimension not on academic activities or organizational issues.
<i>Organizational Approach</i>	The fourth approach focuses on developing an ethos or culture in the university or college that values and supports intercultural and international perspectives and initiatives. This last approach is closely linked with the process approach.

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A support Framework - administrative, curricular and career service activities to enhance the IS WP experience



Key Findings:

- 1. PROCESS**
Processes
Lack of understanding about the WP, visa rules
Students who miss institutional open days are uninformed about the WP. A lack of pre WP preparation and inadequate inductions for industry when on placement, a mismatch exists between the academic theory and industry practice; lack of integration with English students
- 2. ACTIVITIES**
Curriculum development, Cross cultural appreciation, Student recruitment
Students lack of integration with English students
- 3. COMPETENCIES**
Skill
WP is lack confidence and understanding of the UK work culture; Values
Attitude
Students do not know which organisations employ IS for WP. Organisations who consider employing IS graduates provide better WP experiences.
- 4. ETHOS**
International climate

Support Framework:

- ADMINISTRATION**
 - Clarify ambiguous WP terms;
 - Provide additional WP information for those absent at open days;
 - Explain visa rules and restrictions;
 - Improve information signposting;
 - Keep updated, policies and procedures to consider IS needs.
- CURRICULUM**
 - Explain in detail, the WP teaching, and assessment strategy;
 - Align the curriculum to industry needs and standards;
 - Embed co-curricular cross cultural peer to peer learning;
 - Allocate IS an English mentor;
 - Introduce post WP support to regain lost academic writing ability.
- CAREERS**
 - Develop relationships with organisations who employ IS for WP and upon graduation;
 - Additional support required for application forms, assessments, testing, assessment centres and the interview process;
 - Introduce self-confidence talks.

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PlacementPAL: working with students as partners (SAP) on an innovative method for supporting students on work placements

Caroline Doolan and Suzanne Nolan

University of Suffolk
c.doolan@uos.ac.uk
s.nolan@uos.ac.uk

Abstract

This paper will outline the PlacementPAL (peer-assisted learning) project and how it was used to engage students-as-partners (SAP) in developing an innovative support mechanism for work-based learning. Further, it will offer insight into how the creation of the PlacementPAL mobile web application influenced the researchers in their understanding of SAP, including the successes and challenges faced.

PlacementPAL is an interdisciplinary project, piloted in two diverse programme areas: Radiography and Oncology, and Events and Tourism Management. The aim of this paper is to share critical reflection on the project and its objectives, in particular focusing on the how the diverse range of placement experiences have impacted the usage of the app, as well as the overall results. It will critically evaluate the experiences of the researchers – lecturers in their respective fields – exploring how the project, and future innovations, can engage SAP to ensure that they are fit for purpose and the future.

Introduction

This paper will outline the development of an innovative support mechanism for students embarking on work-based learning placements, with the support of HEFCE Catalyst A funding for the development of a mobile web application (web-app) to scaffold students' learning and knowledgeable action in work contexts. The PlacementPAL (peer-assisted learning) project engaged students as partners (SAP) in developing and evaluating a mobile web-app for use by students enrolled on two diverse programmes at the University of Suffolk: BSc (Hons) Radiotherapy and Oncology and BA (Hons) Event and Tourism Management. The insights gained from working in partnership with students along with a critical evaluation of the methods and outcomes associated with the project are presented here.

In common with all UK programmes preparing students for a career as therapeutic radiographers, the BSc (Hons) Radiotherapy and Oncology at the University of Suffolk requires students to gain

competence in work placements that account for approximately fifty percent of their total learning hours (Hyde, 2014). While not a requisite for gaining professional registration as in health programmes, many undergraduate degree courses within UK business schools, such as the BA (Hons) Event and Tourism Management at the University of Suffolk, include work placements as valuable opportunities to apply theory to practice, to deepen learning and to enhance employability (Stansbie *et al*, 2016). Within health literature, it is usual to call work-based learning 'practice placements'. For the sake of consistency with management pedagogical literature, these will be referred to as 'work placements' within this paper.

The complexity of work placements and the need to take knowledgeable action in workplace contexts can make the transition from campus learning a stressful one (Markauskaite & Goodyear, 2016; Lave & Wenger, 1991) and is widely acknowledged as one of the most significant challenges facing students preparing for a career as health care professionals (Prymachuk *et al*, 2009; Leduq *et al*, 2012; Andrew *et al*, 2009). Some of the challenges reported in the literature are reflected in feedback elicited at a local level, with students citing anxiety relating to applying their still-developing knowledge to situations, fitting in as a member of the team and interacting with existing staff on work placements.

Both course teams at the University of Suffolk provide significant preparation and support for students entering first work placements, and peer-assisted learning (PAL) has been used on campus for several years with some degree of success. The reciprocal benefits for both mentor and mentee are well-documented, with opportunities to enhance the basic skills of the novice, consolidation of knowledge by the mentor and facilitation of the development of professional identity for both mentor and novice (Martinez *et al*, 2015; Henning *et al*, 2008). Despite having had some success with peer-assisted learning at the University of Suffolk, opportunities to continue face-to-face PAL mentoring in work placements remain limited by capacity in the workplace and compatible scheduling of placements between cohorts. Motivated to find innovative solutions to enhance students' placement experiences and to extend the reach of peer-assisted-learning into the workplace, a mobile web-app providing immediate access to subject knowledge and guidance from peers was proposed.

Bovill *et al* (2016, p. 198) propose a model for working with students as partners in what they call the 'co-creation of learning and teaching', where students can take the role of co-researcher, consultants and pedagogical co-designer. Healey *et al's* (2014, p. 24) model is more inclusive and

expansive, and useful in evaluating the outcomes of student partnership within the PlacementPAL project. In the design of the project, it was intended that students would have a direct role in the co-learning, co-designing and co-development of PlacementPAL, as well as co-researching and co-enquiring. However, as we report, this proved to be challenging. Healey *et al* (2014) suggest that engaging students in peer-assisted-learning projects can support not only the active engagement of students in their own learning and that of others, but through partnership with staff, can enhance learning and teaching practices within the institution. It was therefore proposed that student mentors would be engaged as partners in many aspects of the design and delivery of the project, to both enhance student mentors' learning and to ensure the relevance and authenticity of the web-app to enhance learning and teaching practices across both programmes.

As work placements are a feature of many undergraduate programmes, it was felt that the opportunity to explore the potential of a web-app to support learning in diverse workplace environments would be an advantage, enriching the project through inter-disciplinary working. A 'pedagogical pattern' approach was proposed to support the development and evaluation of a tool that could be applied to a variety of contexts and, as suggested by Bergin (2006), provide opportunities to learn from one another's experiences and to share good practices.

Project Aim and Objectives:

The aim of the project was to develop a mobile web application to scaffold students' learning and knowledgeable action in work contexts.

Objectives:

1. Design a pedagogical pattern from which to develop, pilot and evaluate an innovative mobile web-app tool to enable students' transition and help scaffold both the acquisition of relevant subject knowledge and the development of professional socialisation.
2. Integrate an interdisciplinary approach by fully engaging relevant students and tutors from two different academic fields (BA (Hons) Event and Tourism Management programmes; and BSc (Hons) Radiotherapy and Oncology programme) in all phases of the project as key partners e.g. in the web-app design, content selection and pilot studies.
3. Consult with employers and other stakeholders to ensure the web-app supports the application of pertinent skills and relevant knowledge aligned to their priorities, including e.g. review of the web-app, its content and in evaluation of pilot studies.
4. Pilot the web-apps developed in the two distinctive professional contexts (of Radiotherapy and Oncology; and Event and Tourism Management)

Methods

Clearance was obtained from the University Ethics Committee for data collection and piloting of the web-app and steps taken throughout the project to ensure appropriate ethical conduct. Of particular concern was the potential for students to experience a power relationship with the researchers, who hold roles as course leader, module leader and personal tutor and to feel coerced to participate in data collection, or to respond in a particular way. Consistent with guidance provided by the British Educational Research Association (BERA, 2011), a 'third party' Research Assistant was employed to publish invitations to participate in the research, to obtain informed consent and to conduct the focus groups and interviews described below. All data were anonymised and transcribed by the research assistant to ensure that comments were not attributed to individuals. In addition, students were reassured that they were free to withdraw their consent to participate in focus groups or interviews at any time without explanation and without detriment.

Two focus group meetings were held for each programme between March and June 2017 to elicit the views of existing students who had already successfully made the transition in to work-placements on the potential value of a web-app to support novice students and to determine the structure and content that would be of greatest value. A total of thirteen Event and Tourism Management students from years 2 and 3 (twelve female, one male) and eleven Radiotherapy and Oncology students from years 1 and 2 (ten female, one male) contributed to this part of the project. Once transcribed, data from the focus groups were analysed to identify themes to be used to inform the structure and to determine the content for the web-app.

The focus groups meetings held with students were complemented by interviews with employers to elicit their views on the level of preparedness of students for work placements, to determine the level of acceptance of students appropriately using a mobile device in placement (i.e. not in client / patient facing situations) and to determine their views on content that would be beneficial for students to be able to access in support of work place learning and performance.

The opportunity to become PlacementPAL leads was advertised to all year 3 students on both courses and once recruited, the Student Leads met with the project team to further develop the design for the web-app. These meetings were inter-professional in nature, providing opportunities for students and staff from diverse disciplines to work collaboratively on the construction of a common framework or 'pattern' to be customised to develop a web-app suitable for students from each programme.

The framework for the web-app was developed by the Technical Lead for the project. An off-the-shelf CMS (Joomla) was used as a framework for developing the two web-apps. This was hosted on a Linux based hosting platform external to the University of Suffolk's own infrastructure due to the lack of access and freedom to develop on internal servers. One caveat to this was the inability to store sensitive student user data so for the sake of these pilots, unique ID's were created by the students accessing the site but given to the team anonymously. No identifiable data was collected or used in this process.

The content for the web-apps was written by the Student Leads during the summer of 2017, ready for curation by the Research Leads in each subject. Content was checked for accuracy and appropriateness only and no amendments were made to the language, tone or substance, as the project team felt that it was important to retain the authenticity of the web-apps as peer-developed tools for student support. Once the web-apps were populated with content, testing commenced in a variety of work-placement locations to ensure that content could be accessed. In addition to the content, both web-apps had embedded tools to collect anonymised usage data to assist the project team in evaluation.

Novice students on both programmes were introduced to the web-apps during October 2017, ready for commencement of their first placements between November 2017 and January 2018, where the web-apps would be piloted with second year Event and Tourism Management students and first year Radiotherapy and Oncology students. Both groups of students were invited to complete a pre-pilot questionnaire to gain their first impressions and to determine how likely they felt they would be to use it. Fifteen students from each of the programmes completed the pre-pilot questionnaire.

On completion of their work-placements in January 2018, students were invited to complete a questionnaire to share their views on the usage and value of the web-apps as a supportive measure in work placements and to elicit any suggestions for further development. Eleven Event and Tourism Management students and ten Radiotherapy and Oncology students completed the post-pilot questionnaire.

The Student Leads were invited to attend a one to one interview with the Research Assistant to provide feedback on their experience of developing content for the web-apps and in working collaboratively as partners with the project team. The project leads were also interviewed by the

research assistant to elicit their feedback on the experience of working in partnership with students in the production of the web-apps.

Results of Web-app Usage and Student Feedback on Content and Design

BA (Hons) Event and Tourism Management students had minimal engagement with the PlacementPAL web-app. The pre-pilot questionnaire suggested that students would use the web-app, and that they liked the idea of the additional support while on placement. Interestingly, the pre-pilot questionnaire indicated that there would be greater engagement with the PlacementPAL web-app. Fifteen participants completed the pre-pilot questionnaire, seven of which indicated that the content would be useful to them in their work placement module. Of the content areas, 'dealing with challenges on placement' and 'finance and budgets' were predicted by students to be of the most use. In this the project team were reminded of Winstone *et al's* (2017) findings on assessment feedback: 'It'd be useful, but I wouldn't use it.' Like assessment feedback, there are clearly barriers for students in using PlacementPAL to support independent learning. Investigation into these barriers, and how to overcome them, will be part of further developments of the project.

From the post-pilot questionnaire, there were a range of reasons given for non-engagement, including (most common):

- "I didn't know about it"; students who had missed the pre-pilot questionnaire, and who had not engaged with emails regarding the web-app didn't realise the support was available
- "I asked my tutor"; because of the small cohort, and the nature of the supporting tutors, questions were being answered before students were signposted to the web-app
- "I haven't been on placement"; the timings of the project were based on the funding requirements, rather than the students' schedule, thus there were missed opportunities for engagement

Future iterations of the project will need to consider reasons for non-engagement to better embed an innovation that supports the students in the way that they need. In this aspect of student partnership, the project team acknowledge that work still needs to be done to improve involvement of students.

BSc (Hons) Radiotherapy Oncology students had more engagement with the PlacementPAL web-app. Of the fifteen students who completed the pre-pilot questionnaire, fourteen indicated that they

would find a web-app useful. Ten students completed the post-pilot questionnaire and reported that they had accessed the PlacementPAL web-app while in the workplace, using mobile devices, five of which found the web-app either as useful or more than expected, with the sections on anatomy being overwhelmingly popular. Seven students reported that they used the web-app to remind themselves of specific knowledge, and three because they were worried or confused about something. One student indicated that it was a useful revision tool:

RO Student: "At night before bed I would revise"

BSc (Hons) Radiotherapy Oncology students reported having problems in accessing the web-app at times, with three experiencing poor data connections, two reporting hospital policy or stigma around using mobile phones while in a clinical setting, and one being unable to download material. Despite these issues, there was a clear appetite in the post-pilot questionnaire for further development and materials to be included:

- Brief/ basic information about the machines (Xtrahl, Varian, Elekta)
- Information about the areas and equipment in their placement (screens)
- App rather than web-app & downloadable content to access offline
- Labelled CT images
- Understanding calculations
- Explanations of subject relevant abbreviations

Students-as-partners (SAP): Student Perspective

One of the objectives for this project was to engage students as partners as both collaborators and creators of the content. Throughout the project, the team developed new ways of thinking about student partnership, moving from a focus on engagement, to a more process-driven model. The project aimed to include students as partners in three ways: to run focus groups at the start of the project to get a sense of what content students wanted to see on the web-app; as Student Leads, who helped run the focus groups, collate the results, and write the content for the web-app (for the peer-assisted learning aspect); and as users of the web-app, and supporting the future development of the project. At the end of the project, the Student Leads were asked to comment on their involvement and reflect upon their role as partners in the process.

For most of the Student Leads, the opportunity to be part of the discussion of the learning process was vital. For them, equality across the discourse was a key aspect of their role as student partners, and the structure of meetings, and the freedom they were given to develop content was imperative:

SL1: "[we were given] free-reign to create the content and by providing meetings which allowed for discussion..."

SL3: "we had the autonomy to do what we felt we needed to do... the direction given to us ensure that we were focussed... but we have more than enough freedom within that..."

One of the Student Leads acknowledged that the relationship was still being built across the institution, and that student partnership was more of a process than an outcome (Healey *et al* 2014):

SL2: "I think have the Student Leads has started this 'students as partners' relationship... something the University should try to do more of."

The opportunity to support the project as partners had other, personal, benefits to the students. All of the Student Leads acknowledged that a key motivator for them in working on the PlacementPAL project was for the development of their own skills:

SL1: "being involved in the experience would benefit... my own reflective and collaborative skills."

SL2: "reaffirm my own knowledge."

SL3: "I felt that I consolidated my own learning..."

Most also felt that the opportunity to support the learning of others was important to them:

SL1: "... would benefit the development of junior students..."

SL2: "development of this app was a great way to satisfy that 'teacherness' within me... and I have developed an ambition to help students..."

Given autonomy over their own learning experience within the role of Student Lead of the PlacementPAL project helped support students in consolidating their learning and their personal

development. Student partnership, then, offers opportunities not just to enhance the student learning experience while at University, but far beyond.

Students-as-partners (SAP): Staff Perspective

As we, as an academic community, shift our thinking from student engagement to student partnership (Matthews, 2016), we acknowledge that there are several real and perceived challenges from the staff perspective (see, for example, Bovill *et al*, 2016, and Murphy *et al*, 2017). In the PlacementPAL project, the first, and ongoing, challenge was time. Student partnership takes time to develop and embed, especially when it is not already part of the organisational culture, as has already been acknowledged in the literature. However, what has, perhaps, been overlooked, are the *timings* of projects and initiatives.

The HEFCE Catalyst A fund was announced over the summer months, when students were already away from campus, and the results were released in October, when the new academic year was already well underway. As a result, we struggled to recruit Student Leads and engage students as adopters of the technology – the time constraints either clashed or did not quite fit into their schedules. Consequently, we had to scale down the aims for collaboration, particularly between the student groups, and the PlacementPAL web-app had limited impact on the students on the BA (Hons) Event and Tourism Management programme.

Due to institutional staffing issues, Student Leads were also left to work more independently than originally intended, and to tighter deadlines. Research Lead 1 discussed how workload pressures were a particular barrier in their own engagement and support of the project. However, given student feedback discussed above, the Student Leads enjoyed this opportunity for greater autonomy, and it supported their own learning and development. While worrisome for the project team at times, this appears to have been more of a perceived barrier than an actual issue with the partnership.

Both Research Leads acknowledged that there was work on to do on developing student partnerships in learning and teaching:

RL1: "There may have been opportunities for the PAL mentors to become a more integral part of the project team... at the conception and design of the project itself and even the application for funding stage..."

RL2: "Students weren't involved at the bid writing stage, which meant, I think, some of them felt this was an innovation that was 'done to them' rather than 'created with them'."

The interdisciplinary nature of the project was commented on by both Research Leads as a benefit to their own practice. While that created logistic challenges of its own, the opportunity to work and learn across departments was commended by the whole project team:

RL1: "I have learnt a great deal from colleagues from different disciplines in relation to learning and teaching, student support, diverse placement opportunities and an increased range of benefits of working with employers."

RL2: "[I've] enjoyed working collaboratively across departments. It is very easy to get stuck in your School 'silo', which limits your scope and imagination. Working with people from various departments... has been a great experience and has helped me to think more generally about my own pedagogical approach."

These opportunities to work collaboratively have led to the development of further projects across departments and a greater, institutional, perspective on learning and teaching. The results and lessons learned from the PlacementPAL project will feed into an institutional learning, teaching and assessment strategy which will call for greater collaboration in order to enhance the student learning journey.

Recommendations and Future Work: Questions to Take Away

Over the course of the PlacementPAL project, our understanding of what it means to engage students as partners evolved. While challenges became more obvious, our desire and drive to address issues in future projects became more pronounced. We became increasingly aware of that "the linchpin of partnership is a relational process between students and academics/staff underpinned by a mindset – and an institutional culture..." (Matthews, 2016, p. 3) As this became clearer, so, too, did the barriers we faced, and the need to culture-driven solutions. From this, we pose our first questions to take away:

- Do colleagues in your institution have an accurate understanding of what is meant by students as partners?
- And what barriers might your own institution face in engage with students as partners, and how can you embed mechanisms to overcome these?

How can we rethink, and support a change to, the culture of our institution, both in terms of student-focus and staff-focus, to better work with students as partners in the future? One of our big 'takeaways' from this project was the need for student buy-in at the conception stage. Involving students at the point where a project is conceived and the funding bid for, to ensure that the processes are fit-for-purpose and accessible, is one way we can embed a culture of partnership for the future.

Healey *et al's* (2014, p. 24) model for students as partners was, perhaps, overly ambitious for this project. While our Student Leads were indeed involved in the co-researching (with the Research Assistant) and co-design of the materials, their engagement in co-developing the project as a whole, and co-inquiry at the conclusion of the pilot was limited. This, we recognise, demonstrates room for improvement in further iterations of the project.

Within the project, we recognised the importance for students to take a lead in the content design and development. Through the pre-pilot questionnaires and focus groups, as well as feedback from the post-pilot questionnaires, we identified several areas of content that students felt they needed. Unsurprisingly, some of these the project team had not thought of, whereas other areas that we considered necessary were omitted by students. Throughout the project, we became increasingly aware of the spectrum of students as partners; the participants of the pilot were partners in a different way from our Student Leads, and while all students had a part to play, their involvement went through its own lifecycle within this initial PlacementPAL pilot. As a result, as part of the Learning, Teaching and Assessment strategy, we are rethinking what we mean by students as partners in different contexts and at different levels.

Our final question to takeaway concerns employability:

- How can we engage students as partners to rethink what we mean by innovation in learning and teaching around employability?

As Cook-Sather (2014) explores, engaging students as partners can be transformative. In future-proofing placements, and higher education more generally, we must consider learning, teaching and assessment innovations that enhance and support student learning, career development, and confidence-building. These changes are necessary to guide students through a difficult employment

landscape, offering them the skills and attributes needed to succeed in a range of roles throughout their working lives. Student partnerships can help tailor these innovations to a range of work-based contexts, skills and ability levels, encouraging students to take control of their own learning (HEFCE 2013, in Healey *et al* 2014, p. 18). While PlacementPAL was indeed an innovation in the way the course teams support students on work placements, the inclusion of a more integrated students as partners model could have made the pilot more successful in both programmes. Engaging students at an earlier stage, and more fully throughout the project, may have ensured the web-app have greater impact for students in terms of knowledge gained, and support offered. For the PlacementPAL project team, this will certainly be something we consider as we look to the future.

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Innovation in Employability: Are short-term programs the future?

Shaun Butcher

ASET Conference Sponsors, CRCCAsia
S.Butcher@crccasia.com

Abstract

The main aim of this session is to highlight the creativity that exists within short-term employability programmes and will suggest that the need to increase overseas mobility and diversify the offer to students has enabled innovation to flourish.

This workshop will start with a presentation on the various ways that CRCC Asia work in partnership with institutions in the UK, USA and Australia to deliver innovative short-term employability programs in China, Japan and Vietnam. Case studies will be used throughout and these will include examples from faculty-led programmes with our US University partners, the growth of ‘mass trips’ in the UK including our partnership with Huawei and the British Council, as well as innovative partnerships from New Zealand and Australia. We will share details on program development, execution, challenges and funding sources in the hope of inspiring further innovation.

The second half of this workshop will focus on knowledge sharing, allowing delegates to discuss best practice from their institution - we know that institutions are doing great things when it comes to short-term employability programs and we want to allow a forum for that to be shared so that others can be inspired by this creativity and innovation.

Presentation

 <p style="text-align: center;">  Innovation in Employability: are short-term programs the future? Shaun Butcher UK University Partnerships Manager s.butcher@crccasia.com <small>ASET 2018 - Nottingham</small> </p>	<p style="text-align: center;">  </p> <p style="text-align: center;">This session and ASET Conference Themes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What will employability and the world of work look like in the future? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>More diversification and options for students including an increased uptake in short-term programs, combined with online tools to aid learning</i> • What are the success stories and how do we learn from them? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Case studies from CRCC Asia Partnerships</i> • What are the challenges of diversification in the range of work based and placement learning opportunities? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>We will discuss these</i>
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Key Takeaways

- Discuss advantages/disadvantages of short-term employability programs
- Discuss challenges inherent in short-term program delivery, especially overseas
- Learn about how CRCC Asia works with partners on various short-term employability programs
- Knowledge sharing between delegates to inspire innovation in the field

What are short-term programs?

- Summer schools
- Semester Abroad
- Immersion programs and excursions
- Faculty-led programs
- Volunteering
- Internships
- Study + Internships

'could either be discipline-related or in entirely different areas, adding breadth and diversity to the student experience' (Simon Sweeney, 2012)

How long are short-term programs?

UUKI

Short-term mobility (1–4 weeks)
Semester mobility (5–13 weeks)

Long-term mobility (14 weeks or more).

China

Japan

Vietnam

South Korea

The UK



Short-term vs long-term programs

- What quantitatively and qualitatively qualifies as a short-term programs?
- What are the advantages/disadvantages of both short-term programs and longer-term programs?
- Are these advantages/disadvantages magnified when the placement is undertaken abroad?

We think short-term mobility...

- **benefits students by**
 - Conferring the same benefits as longer-term programs: *Employability*
 - Helping to develop a global mindset and networks: *Global Connections*
 - Creating resilient students
 - Enabling students to gain deeper understanding of other countries: *Country-Specific Knowledge*
 - Providing a platform to become culturally agile: *Cultural Agility*
 - Enhancing students' understanding of the subject matter: *Sector-specific knowledge*
- **benefits institutions by**
 - being a tool for recruitment: it helps differentiate courses in an increasingly competitive HE market
 - allowing students who take courses which prohibit traditional study abroad an opportunity to gain valuable employability experiences


Growing demand for short-term programs

- [UUKI's submission to the European Commission's Erasmus+ midterm review](#)
- 50 institutions responded to the review
- A desire to increase funding for short-term mobility opportunities and summer schools, especially for WP groups

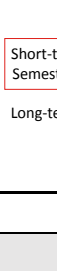
"(a)lmost every comment called for short-term mobility options to be introduced" and that these comments "often highlighted the link to WP as, if a student is not able to study or work abroad for a long period of time as a result of their financial background or caring responsibilities, short-term options could prove vital in raising UK participation further still".

<https://www.erasmusplus.org.uk/blog/widening-participation-in-uk-outward-student-mobility>

Model 1: Faculty-led programs



TEXAS
The University of Texas at Austin



UF UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA


Study + internship in Shenzhen

1. Students study electrical engineering (Megatronics) with their home university professors at Shenzhen University for one month
2. They then complete a CRCC Asia internship program


3 part program in Florida and Beijing

1. **Pre-departure course:** Chinese Commerce and Culture (3 UFGPA credits). Taught by UF Faculty
2. **Cultural Discovery Week** in Beijing
3. **Internship** (3 UF GPA credits)

Model 2: Funded short-term programs



BRITISH COUNCIL



NEW ZEALAND EDUCATION | ThinkNew

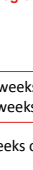
Short-term (2 months) internship program with The British Council via the Generation UK – China Scheme

2016 – 17: 74 with CRCC Asia
2017 – 18: 117 with CRCC Asia
2018 – 19: ??? Numbers are tbc but a [commitment from the UK Government](#) to further support this


Short-term (2 months) internship programs with the University of Auckland via the Prime Minister's Scholarship Award

12 in Shenzhen, China
12 in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam


Model 2: Other funded short-term programs



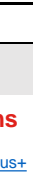
UNIVERSITY OF BRISTOL



US UNIVERSITY OF SUSSEX



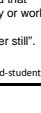
LIVERPOOL JOHN MOORES UNIVERSITY




UNIVERSITY OF HERTFORDSHIRE

- Short-term (2 months) internship program via the Generation UK – China Scheme.
- Widening participation eligibility criteria: Shenzhen, China
- Short-term (4 weeks) internship program via the Generation UK – China Scheme.
- Widening participation eligibility criteria: Sussex First, Generation Scholars, Beijing and Shenzhen
- Short-term (2 months) internship program
- 2017 – Shanghai, China
- 2018: Vietnam and Japan
- Short-term (2 months) internship program
- Our China Campus Program which combines 3 weeks study at a Beijing University and 5 week internship

Model 3: 'Mass Trips'



HUAWEI



Seeds for the Future


Short-term (1 month) program

2 weeks in Beijing – 3 days with CRCC Asia
2 weeks in Shenzhen – 3 days with CRCC Asia


One week mass trip – over 350 students along with staff

2 days with CRCC Asia

"We have seen substantial growth in one-week mobility since 2013, 222.3% across the sector, but this is even more pronounced for our target demographics with between 243.5%–365.5% growth in one-week mobility dependent on demographic."



<p>CRCC Asia</p> <p>Model 3: 'Mass Trips'</p>  <p><small>Seeds for the Future students at the Ambassador's Residence in Beijing, August 2018. (Courtesy of the British Council Generation UK - China and Huawei)</small></p> <p>Benefits</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High impact • Creates a buzz – good for marketing • Encourages longer-term program uptake • Lower costs for students (?) • Not disruptive <p>Concerns</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is it really employability related? • Logistics – can be high pressure for the organisers. • Costs – is it worth it? • Unknown and untested, especially if in a new location 	<p>CRCC Asia</p> <p>Discussion</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do you think any of these models would work for your institution? • What challenges would you face setting up something like this? • What barriers exist in your institution and do you have any solutions for overcoming them? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funding, time, staffing, resources, student demand... • Any examples of best practice from your institution? <p>Model 1: Faculty-led programs</p>  <p>Model 2: Funded short-term programs</p>  <p>Model 3: 'Mass Trips'</p> 
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<p>CRCC Asia</p> <p>What's next?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Become credit bearing? • Embedded into courses? • A boost in institutional funding for such programs? • Further creativity when it comes to funding: alumni, third-parties e.g. Santander 	 <p>CRCC Asia</p> <p>Thank you</p> <p>Innovation in Employability: are short-term programs the future?</p> <p>Shaun Butcher UK University Partnerships Manager s.butcher@crccasia.com</p> <p><small>ASET 2018 - Nottingham</small></p>
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The Success and Future-Proofing of Psychology Professional Placements



Helen St Clair-Thompson and Carla Chivers

Newcastle University
Helen.St-Clair-Thompson@newcastle.ac.uk
Carla.Chivers@newcastle.ac.uk

Abstract

The School of Psychology at Newcastle University now run a professional placement programme, in which undergraduate students undertake a year-long professional psychology placement prior to their final year of study. Placements are in a range of settings, for example the NHS, Northumbria Police, and local charities. Most of the placements are offered on a voluntary basis. Here we will share the success of the first year of the professional placement programme, commenting on the practices used, students’ experiences, and how can we learn from them. We will then discuss the future-proofing of the professional placement programme within the current educational landscape. This will involve the consideration of students’ financial constraints, the diversification of placement opportunities, and appropriate methods for assessing students’ development.

Presentation

<p style="text-align: center;">The success and future-proofing of psychology professional placements</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Helen St Clair-Thompson & Carla Chivers Newcastle University</p> 	<p style="text-align: right;">ASET ANNUAL CONFERENCE</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Annual Conference</p> <p>Overview of workshop</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The rationale for, and development of, the BSc in Psychology with Professional Placement • The success of placements so far, considering student feedback and future prospects • Interactive discussions about the future-proofing of psychology professional placements
<p>BSc in Psychology with Professional Placement</p> <p><i>Rationale for programme</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Only a small proportion of psychology graduates pursue a career in professional psychology • There is huge competition for access to postgraduate courses • Experience in a relevant field is an essential entry requirement e.g. To apply for a DClinPsy you must have a minimum of 12 months experience in a field relevant to clinical psychology • Graduates with a BSc in Psychology with professional placement will have substantial relevant experience 	<p>BSc in Psychology with Professional Placement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Processes used for placements</i> • Students can apply to placements during their second year if they meet our eligibility criteria • Our placement team source suitable placements, and students apply to these as though applying for a job • We also advertise relevant national placements and support students in finding their own placements • We provide advice on applications and interviews, assist with scheduling interviews, and approve placements if required • We closely monitor students whilst on placement, through emails, online forms, and placement visits 

The Success of Placements

The Success of Placements

- 100% of students have passed their placement year
- 100% of students have met at least 2 of their agreed learning objectives
- At least 20% of students have been offered post-placement opportunities

The Success of Placements

My best moments on placement have definitely been **shadowing a clinical psychologist** on an acute inpatient ward as well as being author on a paper sent for publication, potentially joint first author on a second publication, and finalising a draft for a third publication!

Northern Centre for Mood Disorders, Community Treatment Orders

I think my best moment on placement was when I got the opportunity to spend 1:1 time with a patient in the classroom.

NHS: Complex Neurodevelopmental Disorder Service

My highlights so far have been developing my experience of **working with vulnerable groups**, which has included accompanying my placement supervisor on prison visits and also conducting interviews with sex workers.

Newcastle University, Forensic Psychology Research Group

The highlights of my placement have been being able to lead **my own research project**, having the opportunity to go to national conferences and getting to visit the operations departments of the police, especially the dog section!

Northumbria Police

One of my highlights so far has been spending the day with ICTS which is an intensive community treatment service in Sunderland. While **shadowing** this team I was able to **observe client 1:1 sessions and interventions** and got to talk to the patients myself about how they were feeling.

NHS: The Kolvin Service

The Success of Placements

This placement has also given insight into the **medical profession of Psychiatry**, which has ultimately given me the confidence to apply for **Graduate Entry Medicine** after my degree.

Northern Centre for Mood Disorders, Team Lithium

The placement has **confirmed** I want to be a clinical psychologist, but during the placement I have become aware of the **many different pathways** I could take to do this, and made me want to take time to be a support worker and **have learnt what kind of AP post I would enjoy.**

NHS: Specialist Psychological Therapies

Yes, definitely. I have had more time to think about my career and more invaluable experiences from placement for me to assess what I'm good at and what I enjoy.

Newcastle University, Speech and Language Sciences

I wasn't really sure what area of psychology I wanted to go into once I graduated but since my placement I know I want to work as an **educational psychologist.**

Kings Priory School

I think from doing placement so far, I'm **considering other options**, more than I previously would have. In the inpatient psychiatric setting, I've seen more of what **occupational therapy** involves and seen that it is a slightly better resource than clinical psychology due to the average length of stay etc. I haven't changed my decision as such but am not as narrowed as I previously was to do a clinical psychology doctorate.

Northern Centre for Mood Disorders, The Hadrian Clinic

Interactive discussions

- Most professional placements are offered on a voluntary basis

What are the advantages and disadvantages of this approach?

5 minutes discussion

Interactive discussions

- Most professional placements are within Newcastle

What are the opportunities and challenges for diversification of placements?

5 minutes discussion

Interactive discussions

- Students currently produce a poster of their placement experience (Semester 1) and a reflective log about their development (Semester 2)

What alternative assessment strategies could we use?

5 minutes discussion

Summary and conclusions

- The BSc in Psychology with Professional Placement looks to provide students with valuable work experience which will aid access into postgraduate courses and enhance future prospects
- Placements demonstrate to students the diversity of the field of psychology which in turn can expose students to alternative careers and career pathways
- Success and future proofing of placements could be helped by minimising issues associated with unpaid placements, considering opportunities for diversification, and innovative assessment methods

Thanks for your participation!

Helen St Clair-Thompson
helen.st-clair-thompson@ncl.ac.uk

Carla Chivers
carla.chivers@ncl.ac.uk

Managing university/work/university transitions; lessons from listening to students

Rachel Edden

Nottingham Trent University
rachel.edden@ntu.ac.uk

Abstract

Whilst the nature of student learning through work is recognised as different from institution based learning, the “burgeoning” (Evans et al., 2001: 149) work based learning (WBL) literature has hitherto failed to be widely used to theorise short term periods of work experience such as the year-long undergraduate sandwich placement. In my own institution (NTU), there is a strong tradition of year-long sandwich placements, however, the emphasis on the value of the placement has tended to be on the work experience that is gained, rather than on the value of the placement as a learning experience. Indeed, Marshall and Cooper (2001) highlight that the notion of sandwich actually evokes the image of a slice of work experience inserted between two layers of academic input. Within this model there is an assumed unproblematic transition from university, to work, and back to university, with little recognition given to the vastly different ways students learn within these two ‘worlds’. The WBL literature however, has much to offer in terms of establishing the nature of work-based knowledge and learning, as distinct from knowledge and learning in formal educational situations (Walsh, 2008), and can contribute much to understanding how people learn through work.

Frequently, research in the arena of placements has tended to emphasise the “good news story” (Auburn, 2007: 119) of placements in terms of their contribution to key skills’ development, graduate employability, and degree performance, often through quantitative research where all uniqueness of students as persons is lost. The research reported here takes an alternative approach, by listening to students’ voices, to understand their lived experiences of placement, and its integration within their broader higher education experience.

The paper is set out in the following way; the following section will give some specific context for the study, and outline a little of the literature on participation models of learning. The third section will outline and discuss the methodology employed in the research, and the fourth section will set out some key findings from the empirical research. The final section draws conclusions and outlines the implications of the research for other practitioners working in related fields.

Context

The students in this study are studying a Bachelor in Arts (Honours) Accounting and Finance degree (BAAF) within the Business School. BAAF is a long-standing course with an average of approximately 120 students at each level (year). In common with other undergraduate Business School courses, students choose to study the BAAF degree either as a three year full-time programme, or as a four year sandwich programme, including a year-long (minimum of 40 weeks) placement in industry between the second and final year of the degree. This research focuses on some of those students who choose to undertake a placement (currently around half of the BAAF cohort).

The theoretical framing for the placement year within the Business School can be seen as prioritising formal, institution-based knowledge, despite a reference to experiential learning, as the following extract from the Placement Handbook¹ illustrates:

Your placement experience is based upon a form of learning called ‘experiential learning’. This is the very powerful form of learning we gain when we engage in a practical experience. It is more skills based but, at its best, draws upon a theoretical underpinning. The theory upon which you will draw is your learning from the first two years of your degree. **One of your most important tasks is to seek out links between what you have learned from your course at University and what you see within and around your placement employment** (Nottingham Business School, 2017: 8, original emphasis).

The implication in the extract above is that the placement is a context upon which to impose what has been learned in the classroom, rather than a place to experiment or to learn things not covered in ‘formal’ education. It appears that a technical rationality model is embedded in the Business School that implies the unproblematic application of scientific theory to issues of practice. The prioritisation of institution-based knowledge accords with Boud and Solomon’s (2001: 24) observation that established practices such as integrating placement opportunities in HE “usually sit discretely within conventional course structures and understandings about academic knowledge and learning”. Moreover, Walsh (2008: 10) acknowledges how it is common practice for such learning “to be assessed on a ‘Pass/Fail’ basis, which means that it cannot contribute to the classification of the overall award”, as is the case for

¹ This document is provided to all Business School sandwich students (in hard copy and soft copy form) prior to their placement commencing.

the placement in the Business School. Boud and Solomon (2001: 18) propose that educators must consider what the limits of their traditional educational practices are in the context of learning at work, and suggest that:

Our practice is grounded at a very deep level in a set of assumptions about the separateness of learning and work. Our practice as educators has been dependent on this separation. Our educational institutions are separated physically and conceptually from the points of application of learning and we need to find ways of bridging this gap.

The current move towards a greater degree of HE provision being delivered through an Apprenticeship route is shifting the landscape in terms of the integration of institution and work-based learning. However, there is a long way to go before the ingrained assumptions articulated by Boud and Solomon (2001) above are eroded.

Theories of workplace learning

The two “most influential metaphors” of learning (Hager, 2011: 22), acquisition and participation, which Sfard (1998) argues underpin most educational thought, provide a useful lens through which to view workplace learning.

Learning as acquisition is underpinned by an ontological view of an ‘out there’ reality, and an epistemological assumption that knowledge exists independently of the knower but can be acquired, internalised and acted upon (Felstead et al., 2005; Harris, 2006). Hager (2004) points to the allegiance of this view to the mind/body dualistic understandings of human beings inherited from Descartes, where the mind is elevated over the body, and learning is an essentially solitary, individualistic process. The dominance of the acquisition view of learning can be illustrated at a micro-level, by the above quotation establishing the Business School’s position concerning placement learning. At a macro-level, it can be illustrated by the dominance of the discourse on generic skills within HE, which presupposes both the independence of skills from the student, and indeed that what is learned is separate from and independent of the context in which it is learned (Bennett et al., 1999; Hager, 2011; Stasz, 2001).

In the alternative metaphor where learning is characterised as participation in practices, knowledge is conceptualised as continually reconstructed through the relationships and interactions between

individuals (Lee et al., 2004), and learning is significantly shaped by social, organisational, cultural and other contextual factors (Hager, 2011). Discussing 'knowledge' Sfard (1998: 6) observed:

[T]erms that imply the existence of some permanent entities have been replaced with the noun "knowing", which indicates action. This seemingly minor linguistic modification marks a remarkable foundational shift... The talk about states has been replaced with attention to activities. In the image of learning that emerges from this linguistic turn, the permanence of *having* gives way to the constant flux of *doing* (original emphasis).

In contrast to the Cartesian privileging of the mind over the body, this approach stresses the crucial role of action (what bodies do) in the world (Felstead et al., 2005). Given the messiness of busy workplaces, as social hives of activity and influence, approaches which conceive of participation itself as inseparable from learning would seem to offer much to our understanding of placement learning.

A particular "landmark" in workplace learning theorising (Hager, 2011: 24) which has enjoyed widespread currency (Lee et al., 2004: 10) was developed in Lave and Wenger's work on situated learning, conceptualised in the notions of communities of practice and legitimate peripheral participation (Lave and Wenger, 1991; Wenger, 1998). The ethnographic studies upon which Lave and Wenger's (1991) work was based illustrated that access to practice rather than instruction was the source for learning for apprentices. A social practice theory of learning termed 'legitimate peripheral participation' was developed, which emphasised the learning trajectory of newcomers who start on the periphery of the community, and move towards full participation and membership over time.

Wenger (1998) developed ideas around the negotiation of meaning within communities of practice, and the way that identity changes as one 'becomes' a member of a particular community. He discussed how we negotiate meaning with the world, and how our meaning exists in our negotiation or interaction with the world. In this way, learning is viewed as a way of 'being' in the social world through active participation in communities of practice, rather than a way of coming to 'know' about the social world, divorced from activity.

More recently, Wenger-Trayner et al. (2015) developed the notion of 'landscapes of practice' which emphasised the importance of encounters at the boundaries between many different communities of practice, for providing opportunities for learning. Identity is negotiated anew in each new community

participated in, and it is the journey across landscapes of practices, as well as within practices, that shapes who we are (Wenger-Trayner and Wenger-Trayner, 2015). These ideas recognise alternative trajectories to the periphery to centre, or novice to full participation trajectories from Lave and Wenger (1991)'s earlier work.

These conceptualisations are useful in highlighting how it is quite possible for people to develop sophisticated, skilled and nuanced technical practices, without any prior theory. They have hitherto not been used (as far as I am able to determine) to help understand periods of students' engagement with placement, where, for most students, participation is provisional and temporary.

The following section outlines the methodology used in this study.

Methodology

As raised above there has been an absence of research within the realm of placements which has given priority to student voice, to understand the lived experience of placement through the eyes of those undertaking it. This research seeks to address this absence by undertaking in-depth qualitative interviews with individual students during their placements, together with a focus group discussion with (different) returning placement students. A focus group was used because of its ability to promote and facilitate interaction between participants, and therefore responses may surface that would otherwise lie dormant (Kruegar and Casey, 2015). The focus group consisted of eight students and was held towards the end of their final year of study. Moreover, to get closer to students' lived experiences of placement, in-depth interviews were also held with six placement students, at three points in time during their placement. Students were interviewed within the first few weeks of starting their placement, after three or four months of working, and again, towards the end of the year-long placement. These interviews sought to understand what it was like to be a placement student at each of their employing organisations and the various tasks and activities the students were involved with. A general interview guide was developed for the focus group, although this was not rigidly applied and questions were varied, altered, or not used at all depending on the focus group progression. No pre-determined questions were identified for the one-to-one interviews, rather just some broad topics for discussion. Generally students were asked to describe what they had been doing in the past few weeks, or since the last visit, in order to get a sense of the ways in which they uniquely experienced the placement.

The focus group and interviews were audio recorded and fully transcribed. Appropriate ethical approvals were gained and all students were happy to sign informed voluntary consent forms. Students, (and placement organisations) were anonymised from the transcription stage.

A phenomenological approach to analysis that follows Moustakas (1994) was adopted. Through phenomenological description, a person's experience of phenomena is placed at the centre of any investigation (Ganeson and Ehrich, 2009), and the researcher is tasked with phenomenologically 'listening' to the persons of the research (Van Manen, 2016). Moustakas (1994: 103) sets out "methods and procedures" for conducting phenomenological analysis, in which he suggests that all written transcripts are read several times to obtain an overall feeling for them, then, from each transcript, significant phrases or sentences are identified and meanings created which can be clustered into themes. It is those themes that relate to the interface between university and work, and transitioning between these 'worlds' that are reported in this paper.

Findings

The placement is experienced in terms of actions and behaviours

Research findings support the suggestion that students were experiencing the placement in terms of actions and behaviour, and were learning how to 'be' in their new environment. For instance, students quickly became involved in a whole series of socialisation processes, including inductions and socialising outside the workplace with colleagues. Other placement students featured strongly in a number of students' accounts of the social aspects of office life, and all students talked with fluency about working with others in teams. It was commonly the micro-level, small-scale practices, that made up students' daily lives that were talked about in interviews. For instance, students discussed the office practices for making hot drinks during the day, and what they, and other people did at lunchtime.

The focus groups extract below highlights how James and Alan were learning how to act and behave within their placement organisations:

James – I think it's just having that work experience of being in a business, it's so valuable (agreement). The way you conduct yourself, something so simple.

Alan – I was going in in the first few weeks telling stupid jokes and they were like 'don't do that' (laughing), and I was like 'OK'.

During her first in-depth interview, Felicity demonstrates how she was aware that her behaviour needed modification in order to make a good impression at work:

I'm trying as much as possible not to speak so much (laughs). I'm trying as much as possible to remember that I'm still at [name of organisation], still working, rather than get too relaxed with the whole atmosphere of my team. I'm trying to remind myself that I'm a placement student at the end of the day and this is not my permanent job, so I still need to make a good impression.

Like Alan, and Felicity above, Polly also talked about how she felt she needed to watch what she said in the workplace:

I went from uni and I was just thrown straight into that environment and that was quite – that was a big change. You have to watch what you say, you have to be really formal about everything so. University you chill back, you say whatever you want, you relax and then you're just put in that environment and you're like, 'I've got to be mature here. I have to be quite quiet, I've got to watch what I do and say'. So that was a bit crazy. But I think it helped me. It did help me develop as a person. And I thought, 'wow, this is what the rest of my life is going to be like'.

For Polly, as for many of the students, placement provided a taste of what working life was likely to be like, and a chance to learn how to act in a workplace environment.

It was through the actions and social interactions of students in the workplace that they came to understand how to perform their role and function within their placement organisation. However students themselves continued to associate 'learning' with the familiar pedagogical discourses of the university. For instance, the most notable use of the terminology of learning in the student transcripts came from one student, Malcolm, an audit placement student who was taking the first level of his professional accountancy examinations during the year, and regularly made reference to learning associated with his professional training at college during interviews. Learning for him was far removed from his workplace practices, and is compared with his previous university practices, thus confirming working and learning as separate activities.

Separation of theory/practice

The binary separation of working and learning observed above is echoed in the binary separation of theory and practice. Indeed, a range of literature heralds work placement as valuable as a means of providing students with the opportunity to link theory and practice (Ashworth and Saxton, 1992; Crebert et al., 2004; Hardacre and Workman, 2010; Harvey et al., 1997; Little and Harvey, 2006; Sheridan and Linehan, 2011), and is emphasised in the Business School guidance quoted above. However, the application of theory to practice, at least in an accounting context, is not straightforward, as indicated in the focus group extract below:

Caleb - I found accounting in practice is probably not the same as accounting theory (general agreement) that we learn at uni.

Richard – I think the only thing that helped us in doing an accounting course was that we knew some of the terminology but I reckon in most placement finance roles anyone with a non-accounting background could come in because you just pick everything up on-the-job.

James - Yeah totally agree.

Neil – There was nothing we learnt (interrupted)

Richard –Nothing we learnt that we used.

Neil – Nothing we learnt that we used.

Lauren – The only time that I felt at an advantage over graduates from other disciplines was when I went to college to do the ACA [one of the accountancy professional bodies] exams and that was only because you were in college.

Neil – Because we did things like consolidated financial statements and I wasn't doing that on my placement I was doing filing and making people cups of coffee (laughing). Our finance director, on a lot of money, was doing the financial statements, I wasn't doing them. It was more IT skills really (agreement from Laura). More the IT side and how you run SAP, Excel, different software.

Caleb – I don't know, I did a bit of double entry and prepayments and accruals, that sort of thing.

Alan – I did a few journals but I still didn't take my knowledge from year 1 and 2 to do it, I still had to learn it

In the extract above, Richard talked of picking “everything up on-the-job” and Alan, that he “still had to learn” how to do journals rather than recalling past knowledge. These students do not appear to be

applying theory to the problems of practice, as a technical rationality model of professional practice would imply, and as the Business School currently encourages. The placement had provided these students with the opportunity to realise, as Caleb put it: “accounting in practice is probably not the same as accounting theory”. Students’ experiences of placement were far wider, and more complex, than seeing the placement as an arena for applying previously acquired theory.

Work takes precedence over university requirements

A common method for supporting student learning on placement is providing students with a framework to reflect on their activities in the form of a learning journal, log or diary (Ashworth and Saxton, 1992; Fell and Kuit, 2003; Little and Harvey, 2006; Sheridan and Linehan, 2011; see also Beard, 2007; Blake and Summers, 2007), and this practice is followed at the Business School where students are required to maintain a placement portfolio. The separation of working from learning is reinforced by an understanding within much of this literature that work experience in itself is not intrinsically beneficial but it is the (recorded) learning that an individual derives from the experience that is important (Ashworth and Saxton, 1992; Chisholm et al., 2009; Criticos, 1993; Little et al., 2006; Pegg et al., 2012; Roodhouse and Mumford, 2010).

However, this paper supports findings reported elsewhere (for example, Sheridan and Linehan, 2011; Walker, 1989) that these frameworks are not universally popular with students, and that work practices taking precedence over university requirements for the students in this research:

Lauren – I didn’t complete the log cause I didn’t have time to do it. I tried to for the first two weeks when I was on training, then after that (trails off).

Richard– I only remembered two months in that I had to do it so then I had to back track. Because for the first few weeks it’s not even crossing my mind that I need to do uni work, I’m just trying to get focussed on learning the job.

Neil – Getting up every morning at half six, getting back at six o clock every night Monday to Friday, am I really on Friday night going to [complete portfolio]? No, I’m going to sack it off (agreement).

Boundary crossing – university to work

Although students were socialised into their working roles, they sometimes felt unprepared for the realities of working life. For all 14 students in my research, this was their first exposure to working for a substantial length of time in an office environment, and they needed to learn how to navigate their way

through unfamiliar office practices. Sometimes these practices (for instance getting up early and into work on time), were straightforward albeit something of a nuisance, however there were some practices students felt unprepared for navigating. For instance when talking about what she wished she had known before starting the placement, Lyn comments:

Because you [the university] talk about how to act when you do interviews, but do you know what not to do, what not to say when you're in a work office, like what not to wear, what not to, I know it's sort of easy but how not to write an email. Even if it's just something really basic (second interview).

Very similar comments were raised by Amy who wished she had known "how to construct an email. I know that's probably common knowledge. Because you know when you like go to end an email I'm like 'gosh I don't know what to put'". Amy also wished she had known how to dress on placement, and described how she came to "pick it up":

What I'm expected to wear I didn't really have a clue. Obviously you have two interviews and obviously you dress a lot smarter for your interviews. I didn't hear anything off them, on what to wear, anything like that, so I just thought, I'd go for the smarter, just in case, 'cause it's always better to be over dressed. And then I just picked it up really.

Boundary crossing – work to university

Crossing the boundary back from work to university following the placement was also an uneasy transition for some students. For instance, Lyn commented that "when I come back I might be a bit out of it in terms of accounting" which echoes the concerns raised above concerning the application of university theory to placement activities. The extent of these problems is illustrated in the following extract from the focus group discussion:

Lauren – I think it's harder to go from placement to final year than it was second year to placement.

Richard – If anything it's 'cause coming into final year I've completely forgotten everything I did first and second year, and like the people who haven't done placement are, I say the second year fresh in their minds but, semi-fresh but like, 'cause we spent a whole year like not doing anything we'd done first and second year, I spent the first three or four weeks just revising what I'd done second year before I started learning anything new.

Neil – It's almost like as well, it's almost like a disadvantage being on placement.

James – I do as well.

Neil – Because you're like miles behind. Certainly with certain subjects.

Lauren – And it does knock your confidence a bit when you can see others in the room who are obviously getting it a lot quicker than you are because they've done it more recently.

The transition from work to university after placement has received little attention in the literature (Auburn, 2007). Fell and Kuit (2003: 221), in their examination of the extent to which the Quality Assurance Agency Code of Practice in the UK on placement learning (QAA, 2001) was adhered to, concluded that "most of the programmes studied did not appear to provide much support when students returned from placement and continue their studies at the university".

Conclusions and implications

The findings from in-depth one-to-one interviews with students during placement, and a focus group with returning placement students suggests that the experiences of university, and of placement, are very different and unconnected with one another for students. The way students learn on placement is through the active doing of their job, and through informal organizational socialisation they learn how to conduct themselves in their roles. They do not recognise the many and varied forms of informal learning they are exposed to during their placement as 'learning', and continue to associate 'learning' with the more structured, institution-based practices of university. They struggle both with the practical aspects of functioning effectively in the working-world, and readjusting to university life following their work experience. They also found the demands of completing university requirements for periodic reflection difficult to integrate into their daily working lives.

These findings resonate with an understanding of learning as participation in a community of practice (Lave and Wenger, 1991). Students are understanding the appropriate ways of doing things, they are learning how to behave within their new environment. They are learning the language and unspoken conventions of their placement community, through being socialised into the community and through interaction with the existing members. This is a paradigm shift from the understanding of learning that is reinforced within the more formalised structures of the institution, which students are exposed to both in their first and second years, and on their return to university following the placement. Here, an individualistic, cognitive conception of learning is predominately reinforced, where knowledge is transmitted from a knowledgeable other into the heads of students, to be retrieved in order to pass assessment requirements.

A reconceptualization of learning as participation in practice could provide a useful framework for better integrating university and work within HE, and how that could be usefully achieved within the Business School is briefly discussed.

Whole of person approach

A 'whole of person' (Lave and Wenger, 1991) approach should be adopted from the outset of engagement with the university which emphasises development in areas outside of formal qualifications. In the Business School this is articulated through a range of new credit bearing modules at each level of study: These modules will support students in recognising practice in its many and varied forms as providing valuable learning opportunities, to be periodically reflected upon. Students are supported by an academic mentor to assist them in making the most of their university journey. The focus for these modules will differ across the levels, but briefly, at Level 1, will emphasise students' engagement with extra-curriculum activities, societies, volunteering, or part time work, as providing opportunities for valuable learning. At Level 2, a focus on the development of professional skills, values and practices, should better prepare students for the realities of working life once on placement. Lastly, at the final year, students will have the opportunity to reflect fully on their placement activities, and integrate their experiences throughout their degree journey.

Boundary crossing activities

Greater interaction between year groups within programmes can help to strengthen integration between the various disparate elements of sandwich degree programmes. Fostering an environment of collegiality, between students, and staff, can create a community within the programme, with members sharing a shared purpose of the function and goal of the programme. This has been achieved on the BAAF programme through simple activities such as networking events, alumni presentations, a programme social committee, and a general atmosphere of approachability of staff, and emphasis on cooperation rather than competition between students.

Identity

The renewed emphasis within the programme on a developing sense of identity, both as a person, and as a professional accountant, should result in a more seamless transition between the worlds of university and work, and help more fully integrate the placement experience within the BAAF programme in the future.

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Managing a diverse employability offering from open day to graduation

Samantha Dalby, Minaxi Patel and Dan Middler

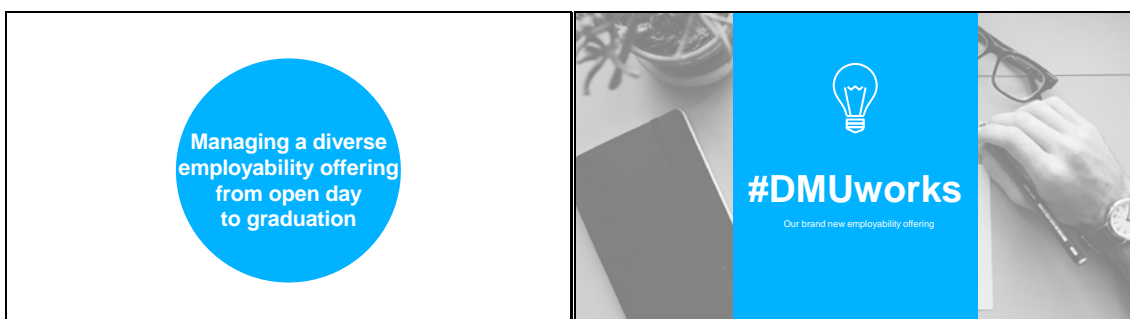
De Montfort University
samantha.dalby@dmu.ac.uk mipatel@dmu.ac.uk daniel.middler@dmu.ac.uk

Abstract

At De Montfort University there is strong senior support for a large range of employability-rated activities inside and outside the curriculum. In fact evidence of these activities was stated as a key factor in being awarded TEF Gold status. This active institutional engagement with exciting new initiatives is very positive for the University's profile and offering a really diverse set of opportunities to students, from short term volunteering to embedded work experience, and competitions to 12 month placements. However, how can we manage this array of activity and make sure it is all meaningful, high quality and supported? How do we assess and evaluate the different offerings to understand their relative value for students' learning and development?


In this workshop we investigate the challenges of diversification in the student employability offering. We will share how our new #DMUworks initiative implements a modular approach which is easy for students to understand and engage with. We'll talk through our 'stepping stone' approach to employability, covering specific embedded employability modules and our different ways of interacting with employers within our curriculum, leading on to 12 month placements. We'll also look at how we build in flexibility for students who do not fall into the common placement categories, and how we accommodate student demand for an ever more diversified range of opportunities.

Presentation







#DMUworks


Introducing our new employability offer...



Why introduce #DMUworks


-  Complex offering under different branding – confusing for students
-  Opening clear access points suitable for all students to dip in and out of
-  Same destination, different routes
-  Recognising difference between employability and recruitability


END GOALS...



YEAR LONG PLACEMENTS

- Direct link from placement to graduate level roles and outcomes; 97.2% (EPI) and 84.6% (JQI)
- Changes in DLHE will have impact







FRONT LOADING SUPPORT

- ✓ Providing a variety of activities
- ✓ Earlier interventions – impact from Year One
- ✓ Catering for students from all levels and backgrounds
- ✓ Being innovative and having creative solutions

POSITIVELY INFLUENCING OUR STUDENTS ALONG THEIR JOURNEY TOWARDS A PLACEMENT YEAR



THE STUDENT JOURNEY



Employability mentoring


12 month placement

Live company briefs


Competitions

Short-term embedded placement


Embedded Yr 1 employability module



Unitemps




Placements / Careers fairs




Employer skills programmes

THE STUDENT JOURNEY – PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCES



DISCUSSION POINTS:

1. How do you help your students navigate through your employability offer?
2. What new and innovative solutions have you implemented to motivate your students?
3. How much has moved online or virtual?
4. What flexible solution do you offer (or are developing) for students, whose industry does not support "traditional" placements?



Thanks!

Any questions?

You can contact us at:
samantha_dalby@dmu.ac.uk
mapatel@dmu.ac.uk
daniel.middle@dmu.ac.uk

Can students be “nudged” to develop their employability? Using behavioural change methods to encourage uptake of industrial placements

Julie Fowlie and Clare Forder

Brighton Business School, University of Brighton
c.l.forder@brighton.ac.uk
j.fowlie@brighton.ac.uk

Abstract

An important aspect of preparing students for the workplace is the need for students to take ownership of their employability and to engage in opportunities which can help them improve and articulate it in advance of embarking on their careers after graduating. Industrial placements, alongside other employability-enhancing opportunities, play an important role in this. Nonetheless, in recent years there has been a decline in the number of students opting to undertake a year in industry. Positioned within the debate surrounding undergraduate employability, this paper will explore nudge theory, and its criticisms, in the context of an intervention implemented by staff at Brighton Business School (BBS), University of Brighton designed to promote students' ownership of their employability to increase the uptake of industrial placements. It also identifies some soft outcomes, notably the breaking down of some typical behavioural barriers to placements and encouraging students to think reflectively. It will conclude by offering recommendations for replicable practice in other universities; specifically a model for developing nudges not only in relation to employability but within higher education more broadly.

Introduction

It is well-recognised that undergraduate work placements provide additional benefit to students and universities in relation to employability (Wilton, 2012; Helyer and Lee, 2014) and outcomes measured by such instruments as the Destination of Leavers from Higher Education (DLHE) survey as well as the annual graduate market report produced by High Fliers. While for many the benefits and positive outcomes of undertaking a year in industry during a degree programme is obvious and even the primary reason for choosing a particular course for some, there has been a decline in the uptake of industrial placements over recent years (Lock *et al*, 2009; Bullock *et al*, 2009; Jones *et al*, 2017). Reasons behind the decline are varied but typically include a combination of instrumental and behavioural barriers as we will explore below. This calls into question how students themselves view employability and the benefits of engaging in employability-enhancing activities. It suggests that undergraduates may not be aware of the importance of taking responsibility for their employability by making the most of the opportunities available to them (Hepworth *et al*, 2015).

We propose that one way of increasing the uptake of industrial placements and thereby underlining the value of being responsible for one's employability is by designing interventions based on nudge theory (Thaler and Sunstein, 2008). Already applied successfully in many areas of higher education, it appears that such an approach can achieve positive outcomes. We will explore the ideas behind the theory and demonstrate how it has been applied at Brighton Business School.

Nudge theory

Thaler and Sunstein (2008) in their seminal work on a variant of behavioural change they termed 'nudge' theory, lay out their approach as a means of influencing behaviour to improve people's lives for the better. A key tenet of this is not using force or coercion to generate change but to provide choices that do not forbid other options or significantly change economic incentives (*ibid*, 6). Those providing such choices are known as 'choice architects' (*ibid*, 3) and it is their role to design an intervention that is easy to avoid (*ibid*, 6), but that will increase the likelihood of those targeted making a choice that is in line with the intended outcome (Oliver, 2013). This is known as a 'nudge'. There is plenty of debate in the literature around the philosophical underpinnings and ethical considerations involved in this approach (Hausman and Welch, 2010; Heilmann, 2014). The scope of this paper does not allow for in-depth exploration of this but we do address briefly the main concern that nudges manipulate rather than inform choice (White, 2013; Wilkinson, 2013). These arguments are usually located in the contexts of public policy and express a range of social, political, and moral objections to the concept of nudging (Furedi, 2011; Selinger and Whyte, 2011; Goodwin, 2012). Hansen and Jespersen (2013), whilst identifying similar arguments, also recognise that not all nudges are equal. They realise the flaws in each side of the debate and posit that evaluating whether a nudge is a form of manipulation may rest on how far it can be recognised as transparent (2013: 18). Of the four conceptual models of nudges they develop, one which is transparent and results in change as a result of reflective thinking on the part of those being influenced is classed as an 'empowerment' nudge (Hansen and Jespersen, 2013: 24). The intervention we discuss below adheres to this model.

Despite criticism, nudge theory has also received positive reception in many areas, including the workplace environment (Hall-Ellis, 2015), informed consent in healthcare (Brooks, 2013; Cohen, 2013), lifestyle (Marlow, 2014), and environmental policy (Ölander and Thøgersen, 2014). There also exists a growing body of literature on nudges in higher education. For example, Fritz (2017) explores how the use of learning analytics might nudge students' responsibility for learning; Smith *et al* (2018) discuss how emailed grade nudges explaining how an assignment will affect students' final marks improved homework performance; and Pugatch and Wilson (2018) identify how nudging students to

engage in peer tutoring services saw a significant increase in take up. Each of these examples corresponds well to the transparent, empowerment-style nudge as described above.

Employability, however, appears an area of higher education that remains relatively unexplored in terms of implementing nudges. Interestingly, Yorke and Knight's (2006:12) assertion appears to precede the underlying themes of Thaler and Sunstein's (2008) work:

Students whose self-theories are apparently fixed may, given appropriate 'messages', be encouraged to revise them in the direction of malleability. Revision is more likely when students are presented with a consistent affirmation that the sort of intelligence that is valued in the workplace differs from the supposedly-fixed intelligence which is widely believed to determine success or failure.

Their suggestion ties in closely with the ethos of nudge interventions and thus forms the basis of intervention discussed below. Additionally, Deutschman's (2007) framework for change aligns with these beliefs, examining how facts, fear, and force as agents of change are misconceptions. He describes three keys to change: relate, repeat, and reframe, each of which focus on forming a new relationship with something that inspires or sustains hope (2007: 14-15). The concept of "reframe" is particularly useful here as it correlates with learning new ways of thinking, which is essentially what we aim the nudge to provoke.

Employability

'Employability' takes on many different definitions. It is recognised throughout the literature as: the propensity of students to obtain a job (Harvey, 2001); a form of work-specific adaptability (Fugate *et al*, 2004); the set of skills, knowledge, understanding and attributes that make a person more likely to choose occupations in which they can be satisfied and successful (Dacre Pool and Sewell, 2007). The complexity of the concept is outlined by Andrews and Higson (2008: 413) who note that it is both difficult to articulate and define. Later Pegg *et al* (2012: 20) find that employability raises a "definition dilemma".

Contributing to this dilemma is the difference in perspective which governs how employability is viewed and the tensions it thereby creates. Employers largely see it as 'work readiness', i.e. the ability of graduates to hit the ground running by being in possession of the skills, knowledge, attitudes, and commercial understanding that are immediately valuable (Archer and Davison, 2008; Mason *et al*, 2009). For students and graduates however, it is most often seen as the "set of achievements...that makes [them] more likely to gain employment and be successful in their chosen occupations" (Knight and Yorke, 2003: 5). The Higher Education Academy's (2015) framework for employability advises developing a shared understanding and view of employability to facilitate

staff, employer, and student engagement. Although Clarke (2017:9) goes some way by suggesting its reconceptualisation as “the human capital, social capital, and individual behaviours and attributes that underpin an individual’s perceived employability, in a labour market context, and that, in combination, influence employment outcomes”, a definition of employability combining both outlooks has yet to be achieved.

As such, higher education institutions (HEIs) essentially straddle two perspectives. On one hand they must respond to employers’ requirements in producing graduates equipped with the skills necessary to perform well in the workplace (Pollard *et al*, 2015), but at the same time, they must also instil in students the ability to gain those jobs in the first place (Helyer and Lee, 2014). Nonetheless, we found it important to draw upon at least one definition to provide a scaffold for the research presented here regarding the uptake of industrial placements. Our approach is based on Harvey’s (2003: 3) description:

Employability is not just about getting a job...Employability is more than about developing attributes, techniques or experience just to enable a student to get a job, or to progress with in a current career. It is about learning...In essence, the emphasis is on develop critical, reflective abilities, with a view to empowering and enhancing the learner.

It is also informed by Watts’ (2006: 15) position that employability consists of career management skills, including making and implementing decisions that determine one’s career and upholds Pegg *et al*’s (2012) focus on the personal development aspects inherent in the notion of employability. We seek to achieve this by employing methods developed from behavioural change approaches (Thaler and Sunstein, 2008). Before drawing specifically on how we have implemented this in our own institution, it is useful to consider what takes place in the context of developing students’ employability and before decisions to undertake industrial placements are made.

Enhancing employability: a multitude of options

Careers and employability services

Across most disciplines, today’s students are exposed to a wide variety of career-enhancing opportunities during their time at university, of which four strands can be identified. First, there is provision of careers and employability services usually found on-campus. As there is already a body of literature exploring higher education careers services (Watts, 1997; Harris, 2001; Rowley and Purcell, 2001) there is no need to revisit it here. However, in broad terms these services allow students to access information, advice, and guidance on career pathways. They are catalysts for

employer-university engagement and play a significant role in linking students with employers (Lowden *et al*, 2011). In some instances they also offer support beyond graduation.

Employability in the taught curriculum

Second, opportunities for students to enhance their employability are often embedded into the taught curriculum. The aim of this is typically to encompass academic and 'practical' intelligence (Yorke and Knight, 2006) and it can occur in a variety of ways: through individual or a set of core modules, across a whole curriculum, or as a bolt-on (Cranmer, 2006). It can also be compulsory or optional. There are certainly some tensions at the institutional level regarding implementation, with many arguing that this may dilute discipline or subject curricula (Speight *et al*, 2013) and others casting doubt on the effectiveness of classroom-based employability teaching and learning (Mason *et al*, 2003; Cranmer, 2006). However, with a documented skills gap in the graduate labour market (Jackson, 2013; Mason *et al*, 2009) it has become increasingly important to adjust curricula and pedagogy to enhance graduate skill outcomes (Jackson, 2014).

Extra-curricular activities

Third, students can boost their employability through participating in an extensive array of extra-curricular activities (ECAs). These are usually offered by HEIs but can also be sought independently. Some of the most well-recognised options involve undertaking some form of volunteering (Holdsworth, 2010; Holdsworth and Brewis, 2014); playing sport (CBI/NUS, 2011; Thompson *et al*, 2013); and part-time work (Muldoon, 2009; Gbadamosi *et al*, 2015). Also included but less well-documented in the literature is students' access to numerous clubs, societies, networking events, guest lectures, as well as the development of their own interests (Watson, 2011). Roulin and Bangerter (2013) examine further the role of ECAs and assert that students are attuned to their importance as a means of not only developing but showcasing their employability, particularly with regard to competitive jobs markets. Importantly, Clark *et al* (2015), through discussing the value of ECAs with alumni, highlight the long-lasting affect these can have on one's employability.

Placements, internships, and work-based learning

Fourth, a long tradition of industrial placements, internships, and work-based learning provides students with another means of enhancing their employability (Andrews and Higson, 2008; Hall *et al*, 2009; Lowden *et al*, 2011). These may take many forms, such as short-term, year-long, mandatory or optional, paid or unpaid. Securing a placement typically necessitates engagement in the majority of the opportunities discussed above, particularly during the year prior to the placement. Aside from

developing the skills and competencies that come under the umbrella of employability, a placement can also provide a head start for graduates in the early stages of their career (Wilton, 2012) as well as a higher starting salary (Brooks and Youngson, 2016). It builds on the foundations gained and experienced in traditional classroom settings and encourages students to apply this knowledge in a practical setting (Jackson, 2015). A vast range of opportunities to do so exists across large, multinational firms, through to smaller, local companies.

These strands all serve to help students understand, articulate, and develop their employability. But do students appreciate that this array of activities underpins the central goals of improving their work readiness and ability to seek and gain employment?

Taking ownership of employability

Lack of student engagement (for various reasons) and difficulties with implementation can restrict the value of the above-mentioned opportunities. For each of the strands discussed above there is an inherent expectation that students will actively choose to benefit from them. However, research has demonstrated otherwise. For example, Archer and Davison (2008) find that students are not proactive in their use of careers and employability services, with Greenbank (2011) noting that they may choose not to make use of them at all. Tymon (2013: 853), whilst considering if HEIs are “able, willing or designed to develop employability”, finds that even when such activities are embedded into the curriculum, many first and second year students do not seem to engage with them. Similarly, some students may even try to avoid experiencing them (Atlay and Harris, 2000). Stevenson and Clegg (2011) also note the critical importance of extra-curricular activities as means of enhancing employability but find that students mainly participate in them not for reasons of employability and building their future selves but to maximise the opportunities of the present. Additionally, Pegg *et al* (2012) observe that widening participation, part-time, and mature students are less likely to take part in extra-curricular activities.

Finally, many barriers to undertaking placements exist. These obstacles, among others, often include: wanting to graduate quickly without adding another year onto their studies (Morgan, 2006); belief that they already have enough work experience (Bullock *et al*, 2009); unrealistic expectations, lack of experience, and poor academic performance (Balta *et al*, 2012). In addition to these largely instrumental factors, in practice we discover on a regular basis that there are also numerous behavioural barriers at play in this decision-making. These may include but are not limited to lack of confidence (Bullock *et al*, 2009), disinterest or doubt (Aggett and Busby, 2011), and not appreciating the longer-term benefits (Brooks and Youngson, 2016). Consequently, a number of students on

sandwich degrees often opt out of their placement year and move from a four- to three-year pathway (Little and Harvey, 2006).

These findings hint at the fact that students may not be taking responsibility for their own employability and do not share the view of careers and academic staff that they need to engage fully with employability activities (Hepworth *et al*, 2015: 48). Low engagement and lack of responsibility can be further affected by way in which employability is typically addressed. Because employability as a learning outcome can often be the result of a combination of approaches (as outlined above), students may not see the connection between each one (Rae, 2007: 608). As a result, opportunities for students to develop their employability cannot exist in isolation. Promoting students' ownership of their employability is necessary in order to help them understand how and why these skills are being developed, and why this is important (Baker and Henson, 2010).

Brighton Business School context

At Brighton Business School (BBS), and no doubt in other departments and institutions, this reluctance to engage with the placements strand of employability (and subsequently elements of the other strands) is often further displayed in students' enrolment patterns. Looking specifically at Business courses, students can choose to follow a three-year route without placement or a four-year route including placement. This paper focuses on the Business (and associated pathways) students who opt for the three-year route. On average these students account for 30% of the total Business cohort each year.

Business students who study at BBS on the three-year pathway fall into two different categories. There are those who, despite being provided with information and guidance regarding the value of a year in industry (by either staff or peers), adhere to their decision not to do a placement. There are then those who, either by the end of their first year or once they enter the second year, have realised the value of a placement year. These students, providing their first-year mark meets or exceeds an internally set benchmark of 60%, typically self-select a transfer onto a four-year route to include a placement. However, the rate of self-selection has declined over the last four academic years, dropping from 31 students in 2014-15 to only three in 2017-18.

Within the cohort of students who do not change course, there are also those whose first-year results exceed the 60% benchmark, demonstrating they are academically capable of undertaking a placement but still do not choose to transfer to the four-year pathway. These students often appear resolute in their decision not to undertake a year in industry. It is this group who most often display the behavioural barriers to participating in placements as discussed above. The declining number of students choosing to transfer to the four-year route suggests that behavioural barriers are becoming

more embedded in students' decision making, which in turns reflects a lack of ownership of their employability. Consequently, our research has centred on an intervention rooted in nudge theory, as a means of breaking down some of the barriers.

Research design

This research project was undertaken in two parts. First, based on the central principles of nudge theory (Thaler and Sunstein, 2008) we designed a simple, straightforward intervention to nudge the behaviour of a group of students identified as academically capable of undertaking an industrial placement. Following ethics approval, this involved sending a letter (by post and email) inviting them to change from a three-year degree without placement to a four-year route including a placement. The letter explained that they had achieved the results necessary to do so and outlined some of the benefits to undertaking a placement. The wording of the letter was chosen carefully to remain in line with the practice of nudge theory; that is, to ensure those being influenced understood it was optional and that they were not being forced to change anything:

...In light of your results we would like to offer you the option of changing from the three-year non-placement route to the four-year Business Management option with one year's work placement.

In addition the nudge was transparent, fully explaining the benefits of transferring to the four-year course. Finally, it was easy to ignore if the student so wished. They did not have to do anything if they did not want to change course and only needed to take action if this was something they decided to pursue.

Second, following a pilot, we conducted a survey with students who had received the intervention in the last two academic years. Prior to completion, participants were made aware that their responses would remain anonymous. Using Qualtrics, students were asked to complete seven questions based on the intervention, whether or not they acted upon it, and how it made them feel. Space for any additional comments was also provided.

Findings

In the academic year 2016-17, 34 students on non-placement pathways were invited to change to a Business Management (and associated pathways) degree including a placement. In 2017-18, a further 67 students were invited to do the same. Table one below shows these figures as part of the wider BBS context (data for 2018-19 are included but do not form part of the research presented here):

Year	Total no. Business students (3-year route)	No. students 'nudged' to change to placement route	No. of students responding to nudge
2016-17	127	34	14
2017-18	105	67	40
2018-19	110 (t.b.c.)	46	t.b.c.

Table one: number of students nudged and responding to nudge

Of those who responded to the nudge not all succeeded in securing a placement. However, the data for 2016-17 show that 43% of responding students undertook a placement, contributing to 4% of all placed students that year. In 2017-18, 28% of responding students also undertook a placement, contributing to 11% of all placed students.

The response rate for the survey on the nudge was far lower than expected at 11%. This is possibly due to it being issued at a busy time for those on placement and at the beginning of the examinations period for those who had yet to start theirs. However, looking at the qualitative data gathered, we can identify some emerging trends. To start, 55% of respondents indicated that at the start of their degree programme they had not intended to do a placement. While some respondents claimed that they felt they had left it too late to change course or that they simply “did not see any additional benefits to what [they] wanted from their degree”, 73% stated that they decided to change their course after receiving the nudge (letter).

Those who responded positively to the nudge noted that it made them feel very positive. Answers to the question “how did the invitation to change to management make you feel” included:

Excited

Capable of coming out with a strong degree

Good – it gave me a new opportunity

Encouraged and supported

Wanted to start thinking about a placement year

However, one respondent gave a more negative answer, stating that they thought the “university was trying to get me to change because it would suit them better”.

The question “in what way(s) did being invited to change course help you” also prompted positive responses:

It gave me a confidence boost that the university believes I’m capable of carrying out a placement year.

It allowed me to start thinking about what career I wanted when I left university.

It gave me confidence in my abilities.

Made me realise that it was a great way to get more industry experience which would benefit me coming out of university.

It helped me think about how it would look for future employers.

It helped me decide to try and get a placement year.

Discussion

Behavioural change

These responses are interesting in that they reveal the behavioural barriers the students may have been experiencing. Comments referencing confidence, excitement, encouragement, and support as a result of receiving the nudge perhaps indicate that these elements had been lacking beforehand and thus may have contributed to the decision not to undertake a placement as outlined by Bullock *et al* (2009), Aggett and Busby (2011), and Balta *et al* (2012). Therefore we can argue that the nudge contributed to breaking down some of the behavioural barriers often experienced by students when thinking about placements, echoing Pugatch and Wilson's (2018: 160) findings that students change their behaviour in response to specific messages. As the nudge also positively affected some students' outcomes (i.e. they secured a placement) we can also tentatively suggest that this intervention has been more successful in changing behaviour than the other employability-related activities the responding students had already been exposed to.

Validity of the nudge

The responses also demonstrate a change in students' thinking. The comments referring to how the nudge made respondents realise, think or decide indicate reflective thinking, or the deliberate and conscious processing of information as associated with self-awareness, agency, autonomy, and volition (Hansen and Jespersen, 2013: 13). That this is evidenced in reaction to the nudge suggests that the nudge itself cannot be seen as an act of manipulation (Sunstein, 2015). With evidence that placements are beneficial (Wilton, 2012; Helyer and Lee, 2014), and students still opting out of undertaking them we can suggest that their rational decision-making processes and autonomy were already not intact before the nudge was applied. This adds further validity for executing the nudge in the first place (Nys and Engelen, 2016).

The development of reflective thinking also contributes to an overall improvement in students' employability. Remembering Harvey's (2003) assertion that employability is not just about getting a job, but being able to develop critical and reflective abilities, we propose that the act of nudging targeted students has helped enhance their employability regardless of whether or not they secured a placement. As well as empowering students, we have also contributed to a reframing (Deutschman, 2007) of the way they think.

Determining success

Following the suggestion of Kusters and Van der Heijden (2015: 285) we evaluate the success of this nudge by focusing on both hard and soft outcomes. The hard outcome is the increase in the number of placements undertaken as a result of selected students receiving the nudge. Whilst accounting for small percentage of the total number of placed students we view this as a success for two reasons: one, the nudge did what we hoped it would do and increased the number of placements; two, the percentage of placements it helped secure saw a year on year increase from 4% to 11%.

However, perhaps more useful than statistics are the soft outcomes generated by the nudge. In addition to breaking down some behavioural barriers and prompting reflective thinking as discussed above, we can also identify a change in overall attitude towards students' own self-theories as suggested by Yorke and Knight (2006). Here we note that the receivers of the nudge began thinking of themselves as more capable and more open to opportunities, thereby becoming more malleable (Yorke and Knight, 2006: 12). There is also a change in terms of thinking ahead to the future.

Whereas prior to the intervention most (55%) students were interested only in the three-year route, after the nudge their comments demonstrated a revised view. They felt capable of achieving a good degree, began looking ahead to what career they might follow after university, and started to think what future employers might want. Obviously it is impossible to determine with absolute certainty that they would not have engaged in such thought processes without receiving the nudge. However, by following Kusters and Van der Heijden's (2015: 286) logic that nudges can also be evaluated against an alternative strategy (in this case: no direct action taken to encourage academically capable students to undertake a placement) we can suggest that the nudge has influenced this change in thinking.

A final soft outcome can also be found in the increase in the number of students who engaged with BBS' placements team. In total, 59% of 'nudgees' in the 2016-17 group and 60% of 'nudgees' in the 2017-18 group made contact with the placements team. Following the introduction of a new placements website in 2017-18, the same 60% of nudged students also set up a profile and had a least one face-to-face meeting with a placements officer. Earlier we outlined engagement with careers or employability services as one of the employability-enhancing opportunities students sometimes do not make use of (Archer and Davison, 2008; Greenbank, 2011). After implementing the nudge we can assert that while it may not have resulted in all influenced students securing a placement, there was a significant increase in the number of them taking steps to be responsible for their employability.

Conclusion and recommendations

We suggest that nudge theory in the specific context of undergraduate employability can be used to successfully increase the uptake of industrial placements. In this sense it has been an important tool for encouraging students to take responsibility for their employability. We recognise the limitations of our small-scale study and realise that the results cannot be generalised. However, the combination of hard and soft outcomes indicates that there is some value to this approach. We recommend, therefore, that a transparent, ‘empowerment’ (Hansen and Jespersen, 2013) nudge be considered in other institutions where academically capable students have opted out of the placement option at enrolment stage.

We also suggest that a broader application of nudge theory may well suit many other circumstances where not only change but the empowerment of students is necessary. We know from Deutschman’s (2007) ideas that a wide broadcast of facts is not always successful in effecting change, therefore targeted and structured nudges appear a practical means of achieving it. We conclude by offering a model for adapting nudge theory that may suit not only the employability agenda but also other contexts in higher education. It includes initial steps for defining reasons for change and establishing why it has not already occurred; moves through to the nudge itself, encompassing behavioural change (i.e. the response to the nudge), and the need for it to be relatable, transparent and empowering; then finally outlines the expected outcomes of the intervention, such as evidence of reflective thinking, positive change in self-theory, and signs of students starting to take responsibility (whether for employability, learning or any other aspect):

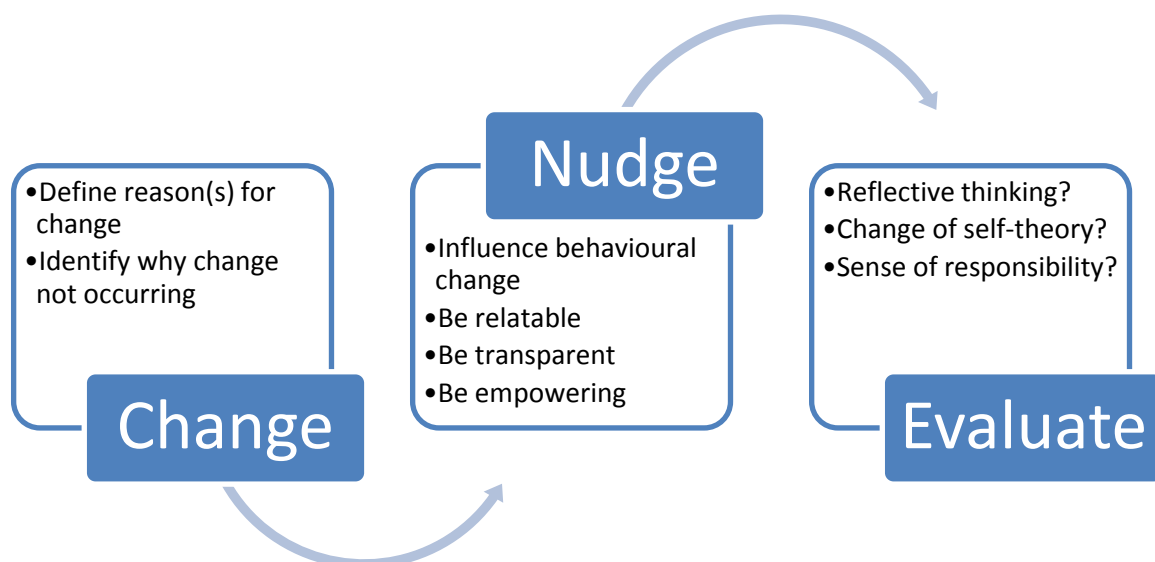


Figure one: influencing behavioural change in higher education students

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DELEGATE LIST

Adrian	Hawksworth	Imperial College London
Alexandra	McNinch	Durham University
Alice	Burke	Cardiff University
Amirah	Hajat	RMP Enterprise Ltd
Andrew	Botros	ARC Technologies Ltd
Angela	Standish	University of Manchester
Annette	Dolan	NUI Galway
Anthony	Bishay	ARC Technologies Ltd
Ardy	Cheung	University College London
Ben	Onyido	De Montfort University
Brian	Byers	ASET Trustee/Ulster University
Carina	Thomas	University of Derby
Carl	Whyte	QuantumIT
Carla	Chivers	Newcastle University
Caroline	Demetriou	Canterbury Christ Church University
Caroline	Doolan	University of Suffolk
Cassie	White	Nottingham Trent University
Catherine	Davies	Kingston University
Catherine	Hunt	University of Roehampton
Catherine	Teehan	Cardiff University
Charlotte	Rowley	Sheffield Hallam University
Charlotte	Taylor	University of Lincoln
Charlotte	Thomson	University of Essex
Chris	Cole	Loughborough University
Chris	Colegate	University of Nottingham
Christian	Thode	Nottingham Trent University
Christine	Ellis	Aston University
Christine	Fenton	University of Warwick
Ciaran	Stoker	University of Exeter
Claire	Martin	University of Kent
Clare	Forder	University of Brighton
Clare	Harding	Pagoda Projects
Colin	Turner	ASET Trustee/Ulster University
Colleen	Heaton	Sheffield Hallam University
Dan	Middler	De Montfort University
Danielle	Maya	University of Bath
Danielle	Rowe	University of East Anglia
Deepa	Rughani	De Montfort University
Denise	Mac Dermott	Ulster University
Denise	Thyer	Swansea University
Diane	Blything	University of Nottingham
Donna	Franklin	Anglia Ruskin University
Ed	Holroyd Pearce	CRCC Asia
Eileen	Cunningham	University of Salford
Ella	Wyburne-Ridsdale	Bath Spa University
Emily	Ramsden	Nottingham Trent University
Emily	Timson	ASET Trustee/University of Leeds
Emma	Winfield	Nottingham Trent University

Erica	Sparkes	University of Nottingham
Famy	Rashid	University of Kent
Fatima	Ahamed	Aston University
Felicity	Clifford	University of Kent
Fiona	Naismith	University of Derby
Francesca	Crickmere	University of Exeter
Francesca	Walker-Martin	ASET Vice Chair/University of Central Lancashire
Gemma	Harris	De Montfort University
Heather	Woodruff	Oxford Brookes University
Helen	Gansmo	Norwegian University of Science and Technology (NTNU)
Helen	St.Clair-Thompson	Newcastle University
Helena	Pimlott-Wilson	Loughborough University
Helyn	Taylor	ASET Trustee/Swansea University
Humera	Hodgkinson	De Montfort University
Jacqueline	Gray	University of Lincoln
Jacqui	Storey	University of Nottingham
James	Corbin	ASET Trustee/University of Kent
James	Wade	Newcastle University
Jamie	Bettles	Pagoda Projects
Jamie	Bradbury	Bath Spa University
Jane	Scivier	Nottingham Trent University
Jenna	O'Brien	University of Leeds
Jessica	Woodhead	University of Exeter
Jill	Bennett	University of Nottingham
Jo	Gregory	University of Nottingham
Jo	Higham	Loughborough University
Jo	Jenkins	Cardiff University
Joe	Mulholland	CAFRE, College of Agriculture, Food and Rural Enterprise
John	Charlton	University of West London
Judith	Baines	University of Hertfordshire
Julie	Udell	University of Portsmouth
Kate	Hastings	Newcastle University
Katharine	Price Edwards	Lancaster University
Katherine	Cameron	University of Edinburgh
Kaye	Heyes	Canterbury Christ Church University
Kevin	Papworth	QuantumIT
Kimberley	Harris	University of Warwick
Laura	Bielby	Durham University
Laura	Bradley	Ulster University
Laura	Foster	University of Roehampton
Liz	Asher	Nottingham Trent University
Lizzie	Brock	RMP Enterprise Ltd
Lorna	Savage	University of Edinburgh
Louise	Morris	University of Hull
Louise	Wilson	University of York
Luke	Peake	Virtual Internships
Mairead	McMahon	Pagoda Projects
Marcellus	Mbah	Nottingham Trent University
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Margarita	Harris	Anglia Ruskin University
Marie	Laffey	NUI Galway
Marie	Payne	London South Bank University
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Melissa	Larkin	King's College London
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Michelle	Ashton	London College of Fashion, University of the Arts London
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Natalie	Everett	University of the West of England
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Suzanne	Nolan	University of Suffolk
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Sylwia	Wasiak	University College London
Thomas	Spurway	Kingston University
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Vicki	Doughty	University of Essex
Vicki	O'Brien	ASET Trustee/University of Central Lancashire
Zoe	Hinton	London College of Fashion, University of the Arts London
Zul	Muhammad	De Montfort University

Speakers and Guests

Apoorva	Kashyap	Ulster University
Bryony	McCormick	Ulster University
Christopher	McCausland	Ulster University
Emma	Bates	Loughborough University
Geoffrey	Copland	ASET
Jane	McNeil	Nottingham Trent University
Jordan	Funk	Henley Business School
Lisa	Gray	Jisc
Madeleine	Woodman	Henley Business School
Michael	Jennings	Ulster University
Niara	Lee	University of Leicester
Paul	Greatrix	University of Nottingham
Raphael	Poisson	University of Central Lancashire
Shannon	Stack	University of Southampton
Vincent	Chaglasyan	London School of Economics

ASET Staff Team

Debbie	Siva-Jothy
Janet	Aspinall
Nicola	Bullivant-Parrish



The Placement and Employability Professionals' Body

ASET is the professional body for placement and employability staff. It has been at the forefront of developments in sandwich courses and other forms of work placements, in both Higher and Further Education, for more than 30 years. We represent over 1800 academic and administrative placement staff at more than 130 HE and FE institutions.

ASET has been the catalyst for the development of guidelines in many areas and also the promotion and dissemination of best practice. We also seek to champion the general concept of work-based learning.

ASET is an educational charity run by work-based learning practitioners for work-based learning practitioners and offers support, advice, guidance and representation to all professionals who work in the sector.

As the leading organisation in the work-based and placement learning sector we seek to provide independent and influential strategic leadership for it.

Membership gives all relevant staff at universities, further education colleges and employers the opportunity to benefit from, and contribute to, a wealth of experience and expertise.

If you wish to discuss any aspect of ASET's work, please contact the ASET office or any of the Executive Committee Members. Contact details are below:

ASET
The Work-Based and Placement Learning Association
The Burton Street Foundation
57 Burton Street
Sheffield
S6 2HH

Tel: +44 (0)114 234 5197

Email: aset@asetonline.org

Website: www.asetonline.org

ASET Office

Debbie Siva-Jothy Development Manager
Janet Aspinall Administrator

Executive Committee Members

Dr Geoffrey Copland	Formerly University of Westminster	President (ex-Officio)
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ASET Conference 2019

The next Annual Conference will be 3-5 September 2019.
Further details available on the ASET website.

www.asetonline.org

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ASET
The Work-Based and Placement Learning Association
The Burton Street Foundation
57 Burton Street
Sheffield S6 2HH

Tel: +44 (0)114 234 5197

Email: aset@asetonline.org

Website: www.asetonline.org