

**ASET**  
*Integrating Work and Learning*



# **ASET Annual Conference 2009**

**Proceedings of the 2009  
Placement and Employability  
Professionals' Conference**

**Lancaster University Conference Centre  
8<sup>th</sup> – 10<sup>th</sup> September 2009**

## **President's Introduction**

### **ASET Conference 2009**

This conference took place at the beginning of Academic Year 2009/10 and provided the opportunity to look forward to how the work of higher education professionals concerned with student placements and work experience could enrich the education, prospects and future lives of those engaging in higher education at a time of potential major change.

The world of higher education cannot stand aside from the economic and political environment. The preceding year had seen the worst global financial crisis for sixty years. As governments and societies adjust to the challenges of the rapidly changing environment, universities and colleges around the world will also have to respond. The immediate effects were already affecting universities and students. The most immediate problems facing universities include declining public funding coupled with greater expectations from society of their products, be these research, knowledge transfer or graduates.

In England, where most of the conference participants work, the newly formed government Department of Business, Industry and Skills has taken responsibility for universities and higher and further education colleges. The omission of the word "universities" in the title of this new Department has been regretted by many in higher education who see it as an indication that universities are to be seen simply as service providers to the economy, and thus likely to be more subject to direction to deliver defined products to meet government targets. More immediately, English universities and higher education colleges know that they are facing both short term and long term cuts in public funding as the country responds to the challenges of the costs of public funding, support to failing banks, reduced tax income from the recession and other additional costs of meeting the recession, not forgetting an unending commitment to extra expenditure as a result of global terrorism and the challenges of climate change. University income was scaled back at very short notice for 2009/10 academic year, with promises of more cuts to come. At the same time, the previously planned expansion plans for student numbers were also cut back at a time of record demand for places. It was estimated at the time of the conference that there would be 50,000 qualified applicants for entry in 2009 who would not be able to find places to study. This came after concerted efforts by universities to raise participation by under-represented groups, particularly from lower socio-economic backgrounds. In response to this difficult situation, the government suddenly announced that universities in England could take up to a total of 10,000 additional students provided that they wished to study science, technology, engineering, maths and certain aspects of business studies. However whilst government would provide these students with access to student loans and grant, the universities that would teach them would not receive any additional income to meet the cost of teaching the students. Many of the universities that are in high demand from students refused to accept any of these places as to do so would reduce further the resources available to teach them. These are specifically English issues but the effects of recession manifest themselves in similar ways in the other administrations in the UK and more widely across the globe.

The recession has caused widespread unemployment of new graduates, many graduates losing places that they had already secured. This came at the time of graduation of the first

cohort of full-time students who had been required to pay the tuition fees of £3000, introduced in 2006, thus incurring higher levels of graduate debt. Many employers, faced with increasing demand for limited places from graduates, demand proof of work experience. For many years, possession of work experience has enhanced graduate employability. This year it is even more highly valued. However, at the same time, employers are saying that they are less able to offer paid or unpaid work experience. As one unemployed graduate, reflecting the experience of many, said "All the employers want work experience. How can I get any if no-one will give me a chance?" There were many reports of students taking jobs and internships with no pay simply to raise their chances of worthwhile longer term employment. This may be possible for students who have some financial backing to call on, usually from parents, but for students who have no recourse to their own sources of income, that avenue will remain closed.

This situation comes soon after a hard hitting report on inequality of access to the professions in England by former minister Alan Milburn. His report "Access to the Professions" showed that the chances of someone from a socially and economically deprived background gaining access to the key professions have not increased over the past 20 years, indeed may have decreased, relative to someone educated at a high achieving school with affluent and highly committed parents. A second requirement of many employers was that the student should have studied at a university which features in the top 10 of newspaper league tables and the statistics are clear that entry to these universities is strongly weighted to those students from the higher social groups.

This poses a challenge to both universities and to employers. How can universities develop worthwhile placement and internship experiences for all? How can employers reach out to those less socially and economically favoured students to provide real opportunity of experience? Should they try to do this if they find it easier simply to follow their traditional recruitment routes? Just as universities sometimes say that it is not their job to correct for social and educational deprivation (whilst expressing support for widening participation) should employers take any responsibility in this area? Not many seem to do so.

The conference set out to address a wide range of issues related to work experience and placement. There is no doubt that the recession has highlighted the extant differences of opportunity to students from different backgrounds. This has complicated the work of those staff, academic and support, who do so much to help to broaden the experience of their students through placements of many types. How do they find worthwhile placements that are safe, provide useful experience and are properly rewarding? How do they persuade employers to adopt the same principles of fairness that universities espouse? How much can they learn from sharing experiences not only from colleagues in their own country but across Europe and more generally internationally? How do they evaluate the learning experience? How can they help students to prepare more effectively for the workplace, short and long term?

There were lively discussions and heated exchanges of views at times. That is what makes a good conference, and that was shown at Lancaster. No conference, however exciting the agenda, will be successful without participatory delegates and, above all, nothing would happen without the hard work and commitment of the organising committee. I would like to express my thanks to the team. We have to remember that ASET is a membership organisation. That is its strength, but its conferences are prepared and developed by ASET

members all of whom do this on top of their normal work commitments, and as I am well aware, no-one in higher education these days has simple undemanding jobs. So thank you all for making this conference a success, as rated by that most critical group, its participants.

Geoffrey Copland

President ASET



# ASET 2009

- We've kept the highlights – networking, information exchange, workshops, visits, eating out and the quiz!
- Speakers from agencies at the forefront of researching and influencing work based learning
- Opportunities for social activities
- For those of you who Tweet – please include the #ASET09 in your tweets about conference



# Throughout the conference...

- Check arrangements for the visits and for the evening meals
- CPD afternoon groups A-D, E-K, L-Sewter, Slater-Y
- If you need a hand, contact a member of the conference team – Debbie, Amanda, Rebecca and Sarah
- Find a member of the ASET Executive

## Most of all...

- Talk, listen and be enthused
- Swap ideas and share your thoughts
- Eat, drink and be friendly

# General Programme

## Day 1 - Tuesday 8 September

8:00-9:00	Breakfast (Monday night delegates only)
10:00	Registration and networking
10:30-10:45	ASET welcome and housekeeping
10:45-11:15	<b>Opening Keynote</b> – <b>Ron Laird</b> (University of Ulster) and <b>Lisa Ward</b> (University of Huddersfield) – 'Different Dialects – a World Conversation on Work Integrated Learning'
11:15	Break
11:30-12:30	<b>Plenary</b> – <b>Professor Lee Harvey</b> (Copenhagen Business School)- 'Evaluating Work and Learning: Reflection and Assessment'
12:30	Lunch
13:30-17:00	<b>CPD Taster Afternoon</b> ; a series of sessions giving a taster of ASET's CPD offerings allowing you to update your knowledge. All delegates will have the opportunity to attend each of the sessions in rotation, a schedule is available in the delegate pack. 'International Placements' (Led by <b>Lisa Fowlie</b> , Health and Safety Adviser, Bangor University) 'Equal Opportunities' (Led by <b>Marcella Wright</b> , Head of the Equality Unit, University of Hertfordshire) 'Enterprise and Entrepreneurship' (Led by <b>Tamsin Pyne</b> , Employer Liaison Manager, University of Plymouth) 'Employment Law' (Led by <b>Carrie de Silva</b> , Principal Lecturer in Law and Taxation, Harper Adams University College) 13.30-14.10 CPD session A 14.20-15.00 CPD session B
15.00	Break 15.30-16.10 CPD session C 16.20-17.00 CPD session D
18:30	Drinks Reception
19:30	Dinner at Barker House Farm

## Day 2 – Wednesday 9 September

8:00-9:00	Breakfast
9:00-9:45	Workshop 1 (see separate Workshop Timetable below)
9:55-10:40	Workshop 2 (see separate Workshop Timetable below)
10:40	Break
11:00-13:15	<b>Plenary Panel Session</b> - 'Equipping Students to Succeed in an Austere Job Market' (Including the ASET AGM) Panellists: <b>Dr Geoffrey Copland</b> (ASET), <b>Dr Maurits van Rooijen</b> (WACE), <b>Rajbinder Kandola</b> (Enterprise PLC), <b>Simon Galan</b> (Accenture), <b>Allan Brown</b> (Graduate Prospects), <b>Lisa Day</b> (ICAEW) and <b>Stephen Watson</b> (MB Hodgson)
13:15-14:00	Lunch
14:15	Social Trips – Lancaster Castle or Williamson Park (pick up back at 16:30/16:45)
18:30	Depart Campus
19:00	Drinks Reception in Revolution Bar, Lancaster City Centre
19:30	Dinner at Penny Street Bridge or The Waterwitch in Lancaster City Centre

## Day 3 – Thursday 10 September

8:00-9:00	Breakfast
9:00-9:45	Workshop 3 (see separate Workshop Timetable below)
9:55-10:40	Workshop 4 (see separate Workshop Timetable below)
10:40	Break
10:55-11:40	Workshop 5 (see separate Workshop Timetable below)
11:50-12:35	Workshop 6 (see separate Workshop Timetable below)
12:40-12:50	ASET Conference wrap-up
12:50	Lunch and depart

# Workshop Timetable

## Day 2 Wednesday 9 September

Room	Room 1	Room 2	Room 3	Room 4	Room 5	Room 6
<b>Session</b>						
<b>Workshop 1</b> 9:00 - 9:45 Wednesday 9th	Holding a Mirror Up to Work Based Learning, Assessment and Feedback – Simon Bedford (University of Bath)	A BProf for Negotiated Work-Based Learning: the Case for a ‘Signature’ Award – Mike Laycock (HE Consultant)	Heritage Walks in Partnership with Yarn Spinners Tours - Ian McGregor Brown (Leeds Trinity and All Saints)	Student Placement Journeys - The Impact of the Recession – Lisa Ward and Jane Gaffikin (University of Huddersfield)	Hungry for Employability? Have a Sandwich! - Lauren Anderson and Elizabeth Terry (University of Hertfordshire)	Access to Employability: Developing the Employability of Students with Disabilities – Richard Mendez (University of Leicester)
<b>Workshop 2</b> 9:55 - 10:40 Wednesday 9th	Foundation Degrees: Issues Arising from a Comprehensive Review of Research – Lee Harvey (Copenhagen Business School)	Motivating Reluctant Students to Go on Placement - Areles Molleman and Helen Barefoot (University of Hertfordshire)	Postgraduate Internships: the Importance and Value According to Business School Students - Eleanor Bueza and Jacqueline Steinmetz (University of Westminster)	Learning Interpersonal Skills through ‘on the Spot’ Reflection and Rehearsal - Bill Penson and Sarah Patrick (Leeds Metropolitan University)	Now we are one (and a half) - An update on the PG Qualifications in the Management of Student Work Experience – Jan Digby(NASES)	Developing the Reflective Learner: Experiences of the MA in Applied Research and Consultancy at Lancaster – Frank Dawes (Lancaster University)

## Day 3 Thursday 10 September

Room	Room 1	Room 2	Room 3	Room 4
<b>Session</b>				
<b>Workshop 3</b> 9:00 – 9:45 Thursday 10th	Placements without Places: Supporting Freelance Work Experience - Mimi Thebo (Bath Spa University)	‘This Has Reminded Me that I’m Actually Quite Good at What I Do’. Using a Critical Best Practice Approach to Evaluate Use of Knowledge in Social Work Practice - Jean Gordon (Open University)	We’ve Embedded Employability Skills and Plenty of Reflection, but What are we Actually Assessing? - Lindy Blair and Anne Irving (University of Surrey)	The Missing Link: Examining the Relationship between Social Capital and the Development of Employability - Sandra Hill (University of the West of Scotland)
<b>Workshop 4</b> 9:55 – 10:40 Thursday 10th	Prince’s Trust Fund Raising Challenge - Jess Sewter and Ian McGregor Brown (Leeds Trinity and All Saints)	Creating the Conditions for Enabling Reflective Practice: A Tool for Assessment – Rosemary Moreland and Isobel Hawthorne-Steele (University of Ulster)	Maximising the Placement Experience: The Form, Role and Value of Scaffolding and Reflective Practice in Work-Based Learning for Researchers - Sarah Kerr and Rebekah Smith McGloin (University of Nottingham)	

# Workshop Timetable

## Day 3 - Thursday 10 September (Continued)

Room	Room 1	Room 2	Room 3	
Session				
<b>Workshop 5</b> <b>10:55 – 11:40</b> <b>Thursday 10th</b>	Mentoring in the Workplace - Lee Hurrell (North Devon College and University of Plymouth)	FLUX: A Model for Delivering Enterprise into the Curriculum as Placement Preparation – Tamsin Pyne (University of Plymouth)	RateMyPlacement.co.uk - Benefiting Students, Universities and Employers Alike (Alastair Lindsay and Cara Redford)	
<b>Workshop 6</b> <b>11:50 – 12:35</b> <b>Thursday 10th</b>	Students as Co-Workers and Co- Researchers in a Collaborative University Enterprise – Clare Dowding (University of Surrey)	Approaching Placement Extinction? Exploring the Reasons Why Placement Students are becoming a Rare Breed at the University of Central Lancashire - Francesca Walker and Sue Thwaites (UCLAN)	Widening Opportunities for Placements through Partnerships using OPUS Online Placement Management - Ron Laird and Colin Turner (University of Ulster)	





**Different Dialects –  
a World Conversation on  
Work Integrated Learning**

Lisa Ward, University of Huddersfield  
Ron Laird, University of Ulster

Opening Keynote

ASET Conference 8<sup>th</sup> September, 2009

# Purpose



- Discuss what is happening in the world community
- Location of world events
- Key discussion topics
- How to get involved

# WACE Events



- Singapore - June, 2007
- Charleston - November, 2007
- Sydney - October, 2008
- Madrid - December, 2008
- Vancouver - June, 2009

# Key Topics



- Design of WIL
- Economic Climate
- Preparation for WIL
- Employability
- Technology
- Research

# Design of WIL



‘Qualifications have to be designed to incorporate periods of work that integrate with contact lecture room study’

# Design of WIL – South Africa

- Higher Education Qualification Framework, 2007
- HEIs to 'place students into WIL programs'
- WIL not funded
- Dilemma ??

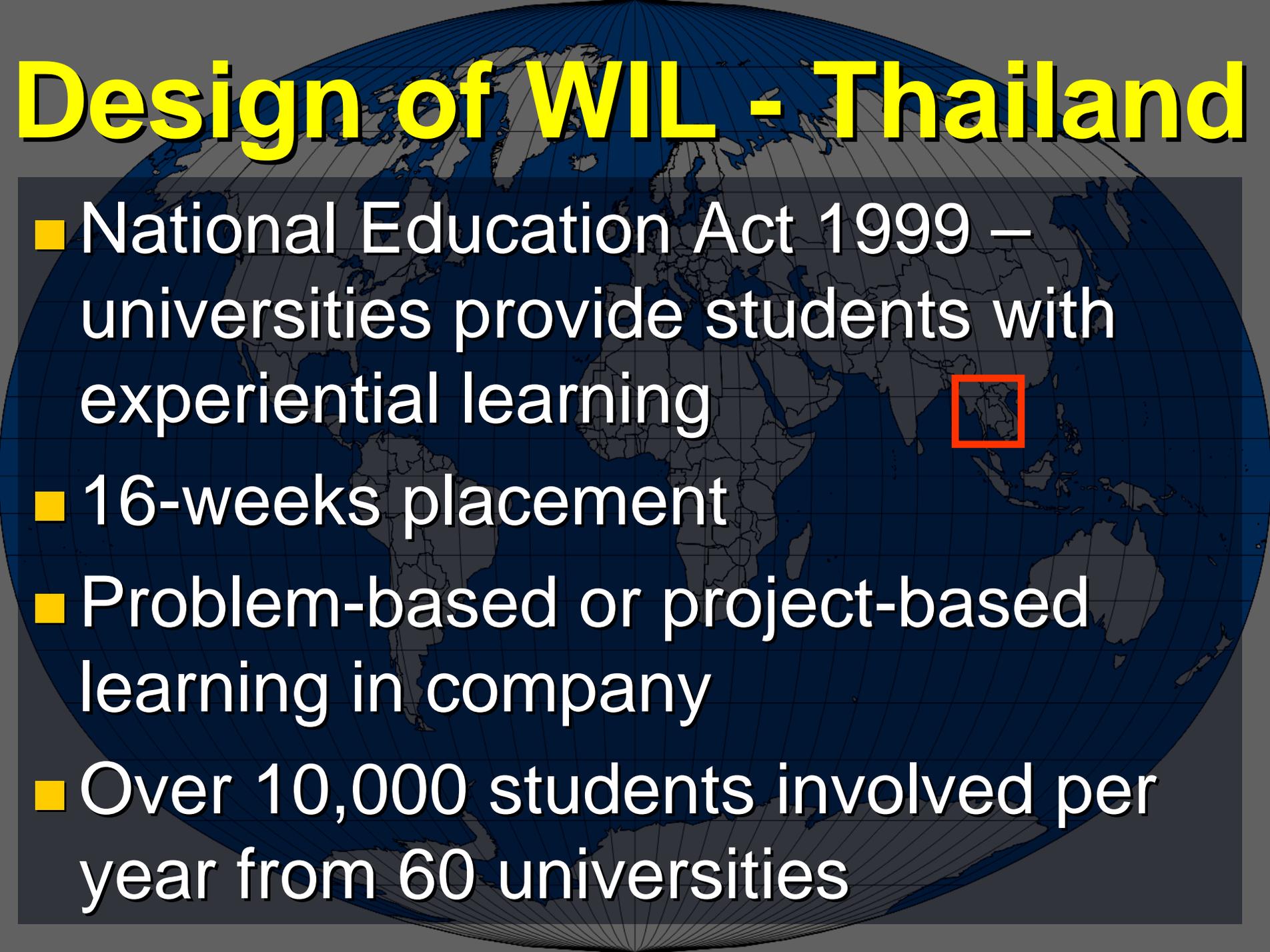


# Design of WIL - Turkey



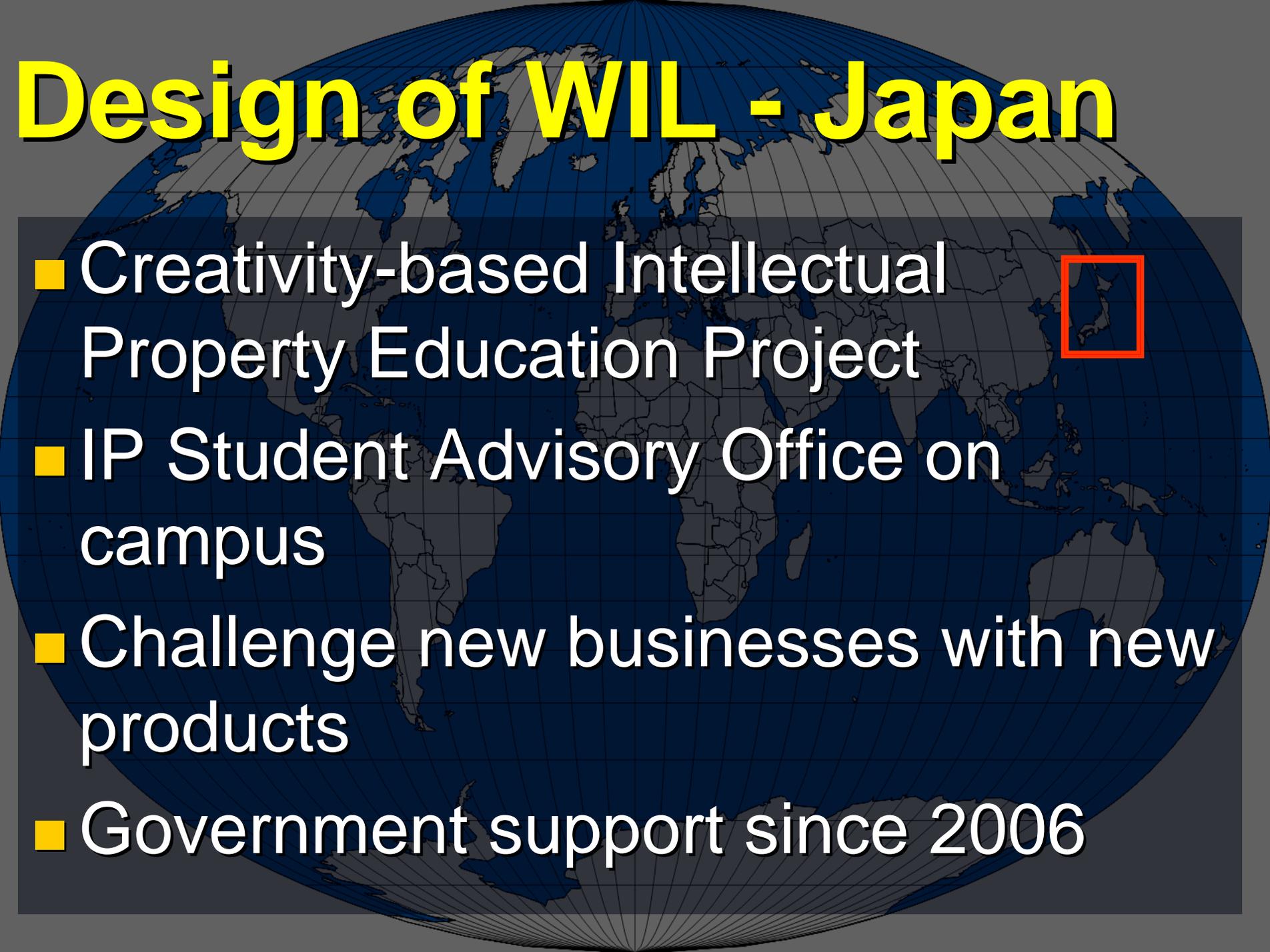
- TOBB University of Economics and Technology, 2003
- Entrepreneurship and theory with practical experience
- Alternate academic and practical
- Co-operation protocols signed with 500 companies for over 1000 places

# Design of WIL - Thailand



- National Education Act 1999 – universities provide students with experiential learning
- 16-weeks placement
- Problem-based or project-based learning in company
- Over 10,000 students involved per year from 60 universities

# Design of WIL - Japan



- Creativity-based Intellectual Property Education Project
- IP Student Advisory Office on campus
- Challenge new businesses with new products
- Government support since 2006

# Design of WIL - Japan



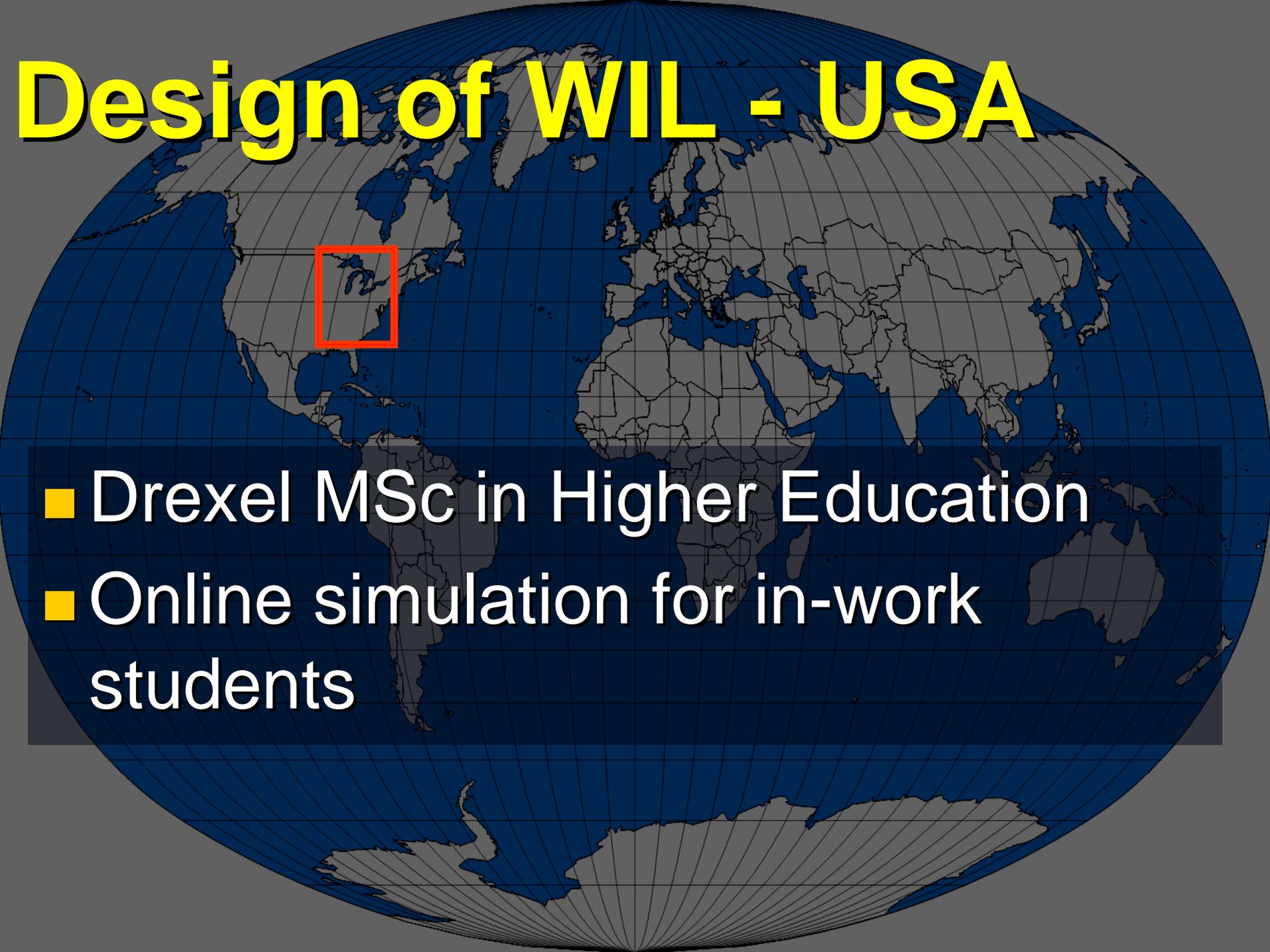
- 'Career Gateway to Asia'
- Inward students orientation to Japan and industry
- 17 universities and 100 companies

# Design of WIL - Finland



- 'ProAcademy' study programme – 'doing a real business'
- Learn by doing on projects
- University-appointed Coach guides learning

# Design of WIL - USA

A globe showing the world with a grid of latitude and longitude lines. The United States is highlighted with a red square. The title 'Design of WIL - USA' is written in large yellow letters at the top.

- Drexel MSc in Higher Education
- Online simulation for in-work students

# Economic Climate



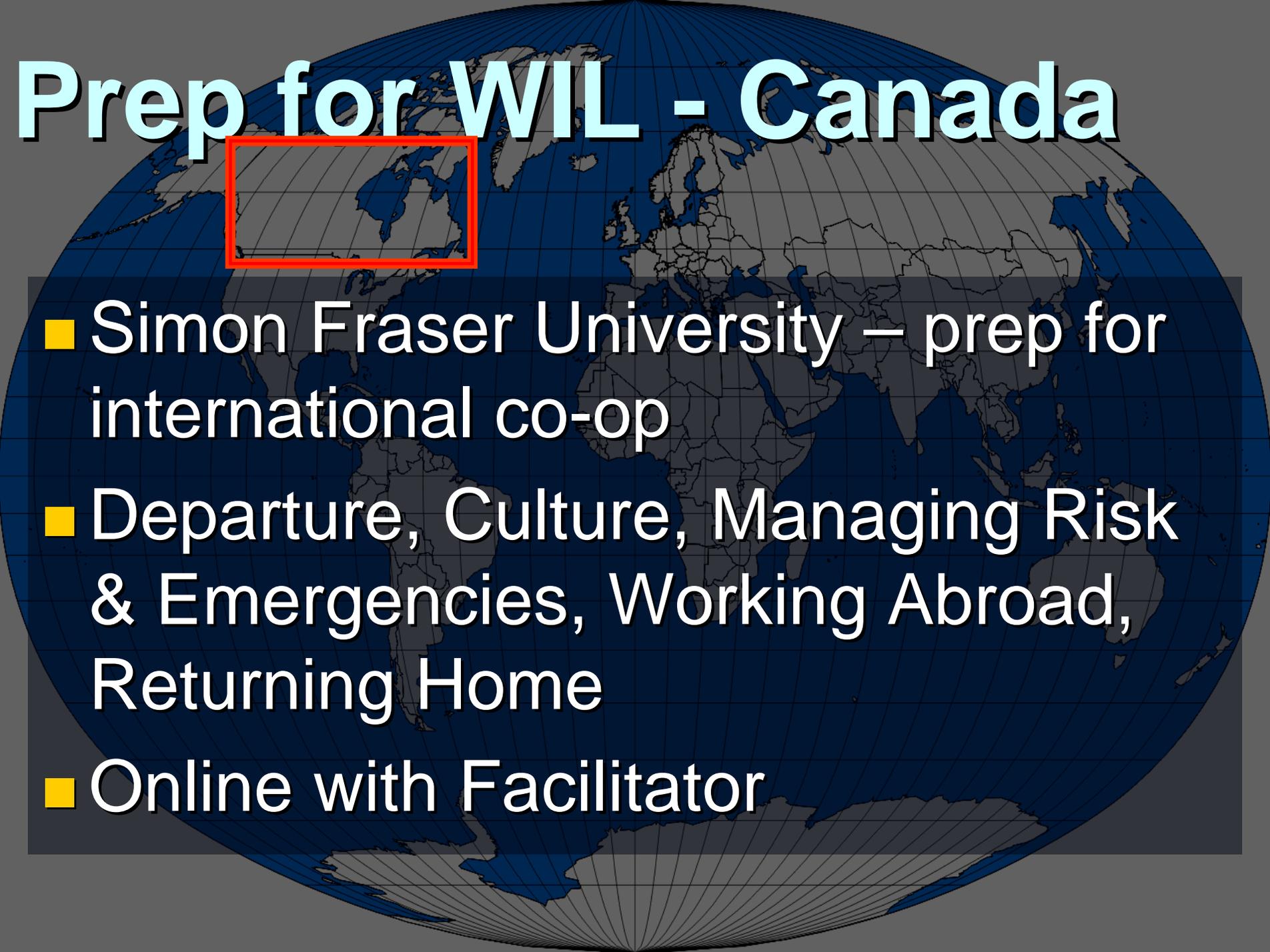
- Global war on talent – Singapore  
2007
- Australian – minerals boom  
October, 2008
- World in economic crisis –  
Vancouver, 2009

# Diane Francis



1. Over easy credit, role of US Federal Reserve
2. Overspending by everyone – government, industry, business, individuals
3. Regulatory Failure
4. Massive large scale fraud

# Prep for WIL - Canada

A globe showing the world's continents and oceans. A red rectangular box is drawn around the continent of North America, specifically highlighting the country of Canada.

- Simon Fraser University – prep for international co-op
- Departure, Culture, Managing Risk & Emergencies, Working Abroad, Returning Home
- Online with Facilitator

# Prep for WIL - Canada

A globe showing the world's continents and oceans. A red rectangular box is drawn around the continent of North America, specifically highlighting the country of Canada.

- University of Waterloo – engineering
- Professional Development courses
- Concurrent with placements
- 3 hours per week for 10 weeks each
- Online - 5000 students

# Prep for WIL – Hong Kong



- Freshmen - 'China Studies Course'
- 5 weeks in Shanghai or Beijing
- Cultural orientation in prep for WIL before graduation

# Prep for WIL – South Africa

- Durban University of Technology –  
‘Each One Reach One’
- Pair an alumnus  with current undergraduate
- Similar disciplines

# Employment



- Growth in mentorship
- Generational Differences
- Major Australian Study 'Maximising the Contribution of WIL to the Student Experience'

Joanne Tyler, Monash and  
Martin Smith, Wollongong

# CERI

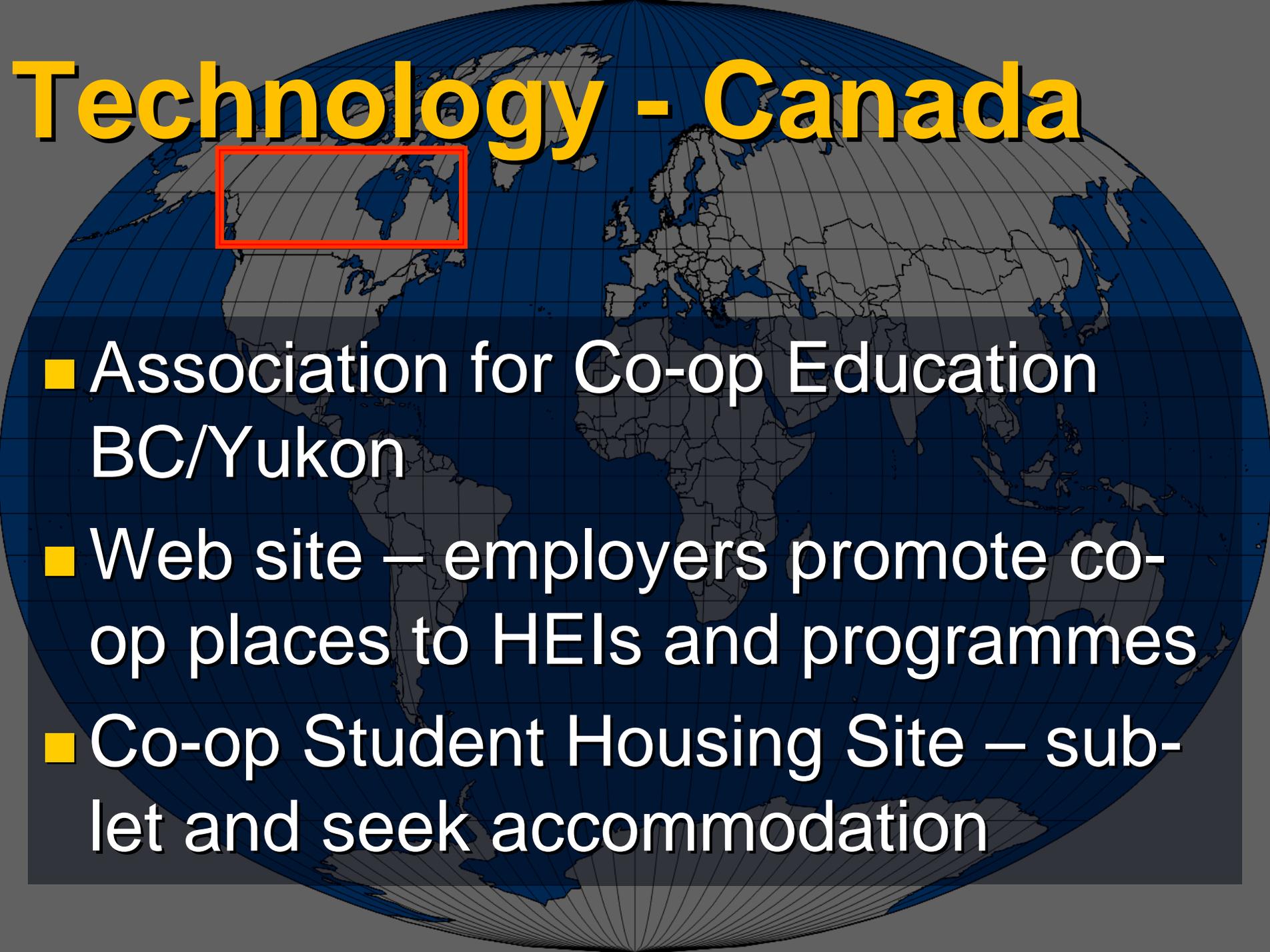
Collegiate Employment Research  
Institute (CERI), Michigan

Phil Gardner – Editor, Journal for  
Co-operative Education and  
Internships

- Young adults at work
- What do young adults want?
- Surfing for the right job

<http://ceri.msu.edu>

# Technology - Canada



- Association for Co-op Education BC/Yukon
- Web site – employers promote co-op places to HEIs and programmes
- Co-op Student Housing Site – sub-let and seek accommodation

# Technology - Canada

A globe showing the world's continents in grey and oceans in blue. A red rectangular box highlights the Canadian region, including North America and parts of Europe and Asia.

- University of Victoria, BC
- Weekly eNews Letters
- Mentor Programme – pair recent and new co-ops online

# Technology - Canada



- Simon Fraser University
- Engage the 'Millennials'
- Facebook, UTube, Twitter to engage and prompt
- Blogs to prompt reflection

# Technology - Australia



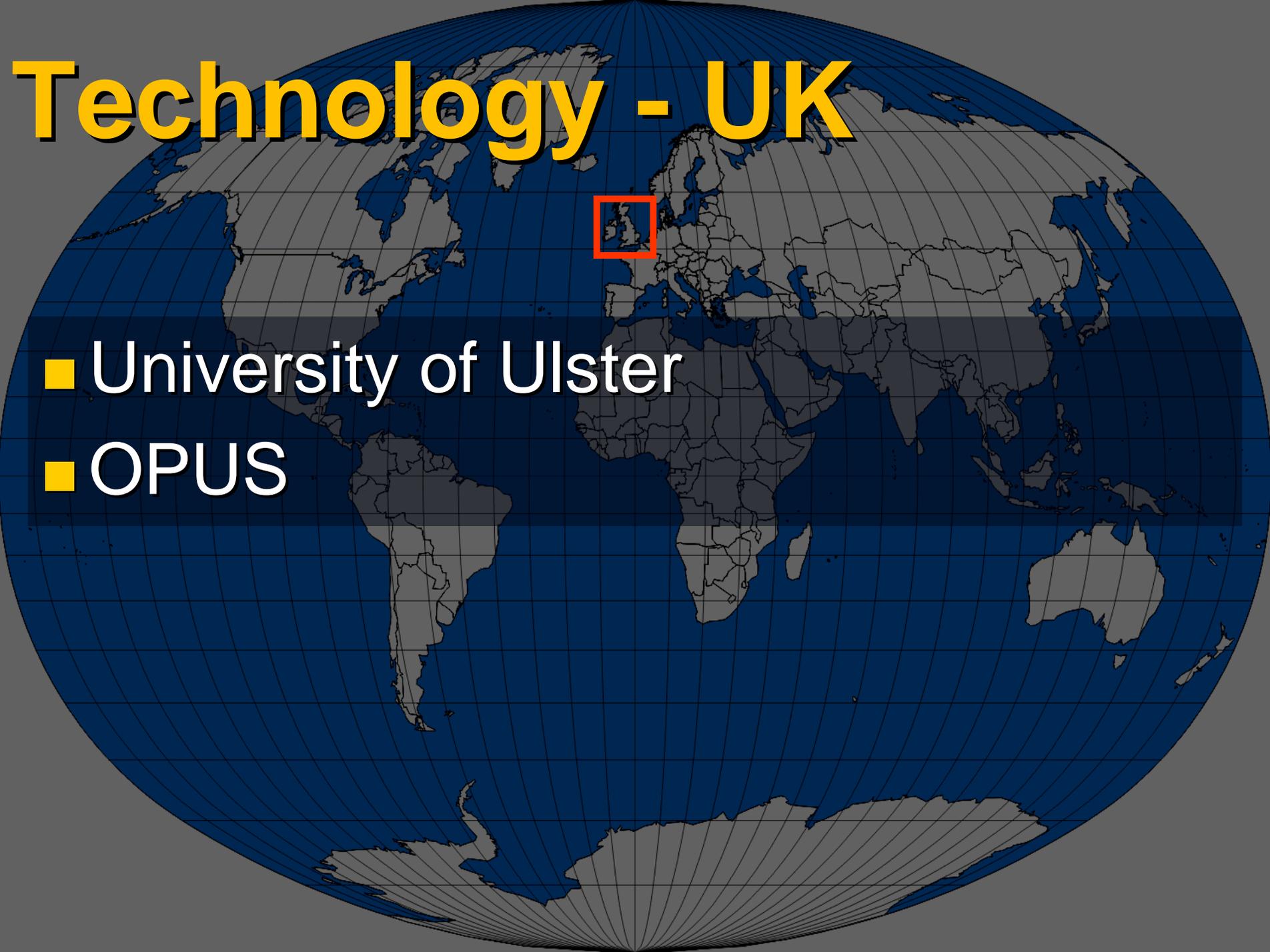
- Flinders University – Clinical Communications Programme
- Multi-media nursing scenarios, online, interactive
- Students – English not first language

# Technology - UK

A globe showing the world with a grid of latitude and longitude lines. The United Kingdom is highlighted with a red square.

- University of Huddersfield
- Podcasts of students on their placement experience
- Record personal & professional development

# Technology - UK

A world map with a grid overlay, showing the United Kingdom highlighted in a red square. The map is centered on the Atlantic Ocean, with the Americas on the left and Europe, Africa, and Australia on the right. The grid consists of latitude and longitude lines.

- University of Ulster
- OPUS

# Research



- Wider range of research – not just the basics
- Research methods: surveys, questionnaires, statistics.
- Evaluations, reflective practice.

# International Research



- University of Waterloo (Canada), University West (Sweden), Gothenburg University (Sweden)
- Psychological Outcomes: self-concept, self-efficacy, hope, procrastination, study skills, tacit knowledge.

# Personal Research



- Presenting internationally
- Submit for peer review
- Be a peer reviewer



# Symposium

Developing an International Agenda  
for Co-op Research

18 world wide delegates

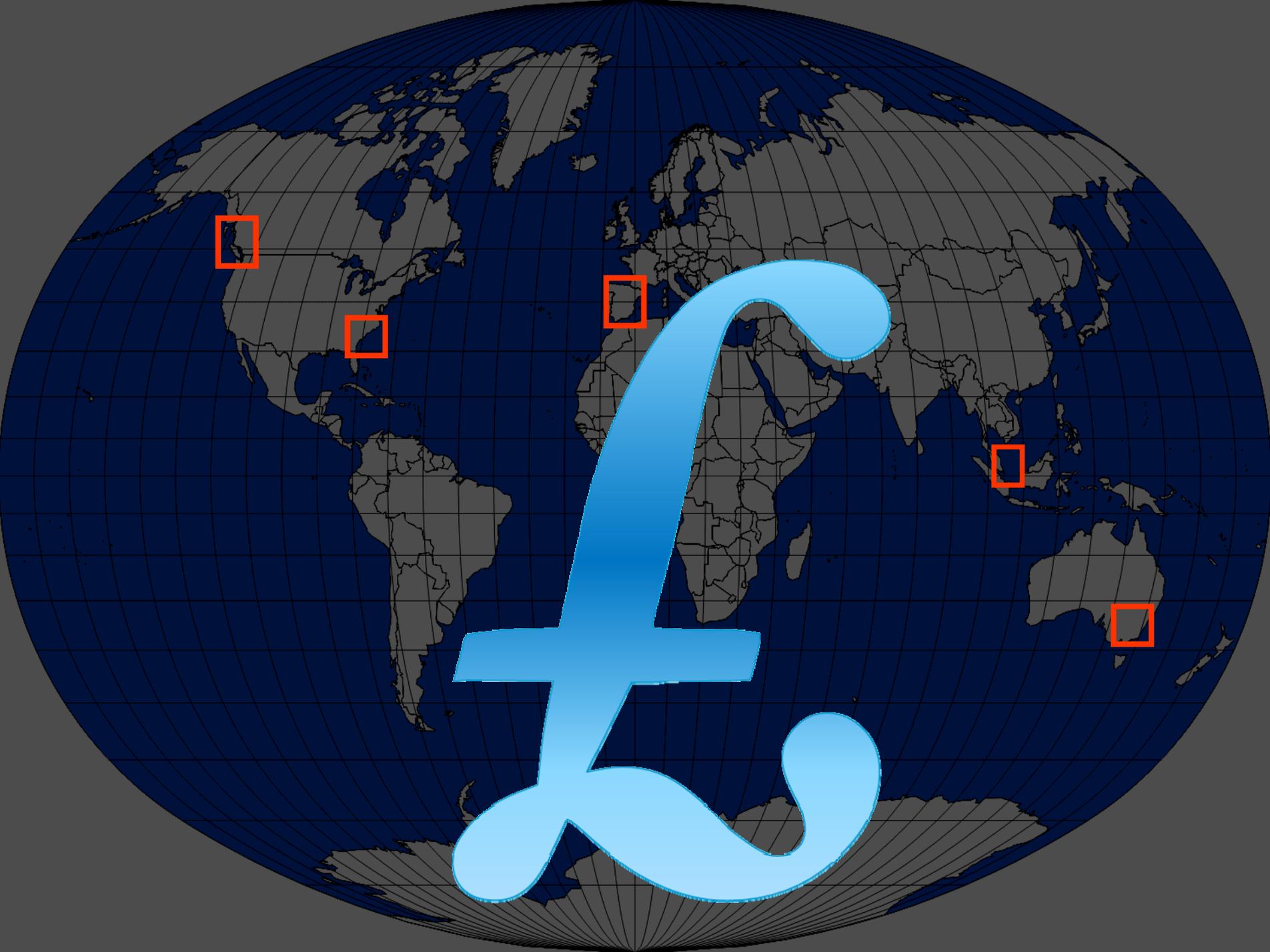
3 themes:

1. Building a theoretical framework
2. Addressing economic development
3. Addressing boundary spanning and governance

# Summary



- Travel, learning, contacts
- Evaluate own practices
- Improvements & Innovation





**WACE International Conference**  
Hong Kong Polytechnic University  
3 - 5 February 2010

**WACE 8<sup>th</sup> International Symposium**  
FH Joanneum University of Applied  
Sciences  
Graz, Austria  
23 – 25 June 2010

[www.waceinc.org](http://www.waceinc.org)





# Evaluating Work and Learning: Reflection and Assessment

**Lee Harvey**

**Copenhagen Business School**

[lh.11@cbs.dk](mailto:lh.11@cbs.dk)

<http://www.qualityresearchinternational.com>

# Types of work-related learning

organised work experience as part of a programme of study

organised work experience external to a programme

*ad hoc* work experience external to a programme

# Introduction

*Work Experience* (1998) stated:

'Students should be prompted to reflect on their experiences and how they feel they have changed as a result of those experiences, rather than simply write down what happened.'

'Assessment ... is a way of making the learning from work experience intentional and a means by which to encourage on-going reflection. Assessment can take a vast range of forms—essential elements are that it involves reflection and that it is not isolated from the rest of the learning process.'

# Integrated process

- Experience of work, then, is not enough in itself. It is the *learning that comes from it* that is important.
- 7 interrelated areas crucial to WE:
  - meaningful
  - intention
  - reflection and articulation
  - assessment
  - accreditation
  - quality monitoring
  - work experience portfolio

# Integrated process

- Experience of work, then, is not enough in itself. It is the *learning that comes from it* that is important.
- 7 interrelated areas crucial to WE:
  - meaningful
  - intention
  - reflection and articulation
  - assessment
  - accreditation
  - quality monitoring
  - work experience portfolio

## *Future Fit*

- It is extremely important that students develop valuable transferable skills as part of their university experience...
- There is a broad range of approaches to achieving this goal...
- This report identifies good practice...

## *Future Fit on reflection*

- There are a range of approaches... Using the student's Personal Development Plan to encourage analysis of and reflection on the employability skills. This approach needs to be underpinned by some means whereby the student can go on to acquire those skills they lack (see Liverpool John Moores University case study) (p.13)
- What works? The use of reflective learning, building on students' personal development planning (p. 17)

## *Future Fit* case studies: reflection

'The aim of [Goldsmith's] 3D Graduate concept is that it should be embedded in what students do... The most significant part is that students will be encouraged to reflect on what skills they have, what they are picking up from their courses and also to think about how that relates to careers and employment. Dr Philip Broadhead...explains:

"We want them to be thinking 'I want to do this, but in order to do it, I'll need a particular range of skills, so I'll take that option instead of this one.' The website we've established takes a student all the way through and creates an online portfolio which they can produce for applications and interviews." (p. 34)

## *Future Fit* case studies: reflection

- The [LJMU] WoW process will mean different things to different students, it expects every student to develop and reflect on the eight transferable graduate skills the university has identified, alongside their subject skills, and... undertake some kind of work-related learning.... Their personal development planning and LJMU e-portfolio allows students to reflect on and record what they've done.
- "And alongside that there's the voluntary WoW programme or process that will help them to identify the extent to which they've developed higher level world of work skills, which we divide into three themes: self-awareness, organisational awareness, and making things happen. (p. 48)

## *Is PDP sufficient for reflection?*

- PDP a useful tool
- *Work Experience* (1998):
  - The *articulation* of what has been learned is a key issue, and it is imperative that students are supported to be able to articulate their experiences. Articulation of learning and development is essential for students to be able to communicate their work experience to potential employers.
  - Reflection needs some kind of structure within which the learning can take place...encouraging students to critically review their own progress at regular intervals.

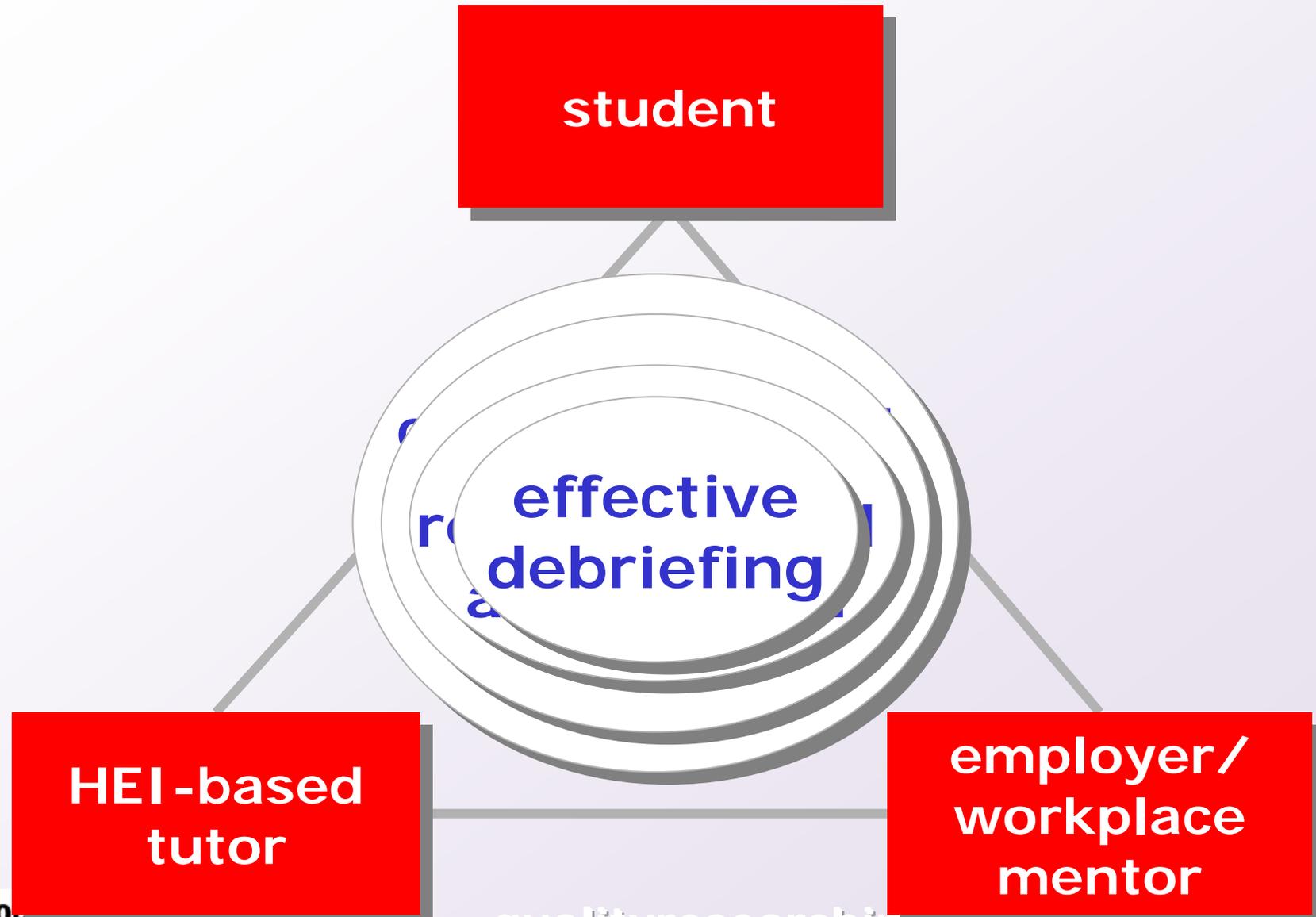
## *Is PDP sufficient for reflection?* (2)

- Case studies suggest filling in gaps
- *Work Experience* (1998):
  - Through encouraging students to reflect on their learning, students are empowered as lifelong learners.
  - First, they are able to recognise what they have learned.
  - Second, they gain an understanding of how they learn, which they can use to improve their learning effectiveness in the future.
  - Third, they develop the language to describe their achievements to others.

## Reflection: Summary

- A well-planned experience, with ongoing and built-in, 'real-time', reflection, linked to identifiable outcomes, is likely to optimise the learning potential.
- This stresses the need for organisation and preparation of any form of work experience to enable students to maximise the learning opportunities *and* to encourage improvement.

# Quality pyramid



qualityresearchinternational.com



## Assessment: slow progress

- RISE Report (1985) highlighted the unsystematic approach towards the assessment of placements
- "If work experience is to be part of an undergraduate programme, then there is pressure to formally assess it and accredit it towards the degree or a separate internal or external award." (*Work Experience*, 1998)

# Assessment

“The assessment of work experience offers different challenges to the assessment of some other forms of undergraduate learning as there are more partners involved, and there is the issue of each of the parties’ roles in assessment. These are not easy issues to resolve and it is important not to ‘bog down’ work experience with a heavy burden of conventionally assessed written work. There are, thus, staff development implications of a widening of assessment.”

# Assessment: employer involvement

“Employer commitment is key—they must, in some way, be involved in the assessment: the course team need their views on the student. It also means that employers are, and feel, involved in the whole of the work experience.”

BUT

## Assessment: employer experience (1998)

“Yes, we give feedback to the University and it is assessed feedback. It’s quite terrifying really. It’s a fifth of their final year mark so you can’t give them the wrong mark. What is horrendous about that is that no-one has ever really given us guidance on how to evaluate someone’s performance. I would like to think we are sensible enough to take it seriously but certainly in the early days it would have been less painful if we knew what a 2.1 looked like.

*(Business Manager, small design and communications company)*

# Assessment: employer experience

- Not sure we have got any better at using and helping employers in the assessment process
- Such comments may be why, apart from professional practice courses (such as nursing), we don't often have employers directly involved in assessment/grading.
- But have we 'progressed' from assessing academic skills or reflections on skill development to assessing the skill development *per se*? (Some professional courses excepted)

## *Future Fit on assessment*

- The assessment process throughout the placement is closely monitored to ensure a worthwhile experience for every student. [Surrey](p.27)
- Staff [at Goldsmiths] also spent some time defining the skills they thought they were giving students, and undertook a fundamental re-examination of the way students are assessed. Now the aim is that student assessment reflects these defined skills, and this is in turn reflected in the way staff approach the curriculum. (p.34)

## *Future Fit on assessment*

- At M&S: Every student has their own personal development plan, with reviews at six and 11 months. Continuous performance management through weekly reviews and active feedback, along with assessments as part of every training course, enables everyone to identify what has worked well and where improvements are possible or necessary. Stores are also regularly assessed to make sure the training they're providing meets the required standard. (p. 50)
- Is this included in their HE assessment?

# Methods for assessing placements

<i>Method</i>	<i>Issues</i>
Dissertation	<p>Requires the use of higher level skills - critical analysis, synthesis and evaluation.</p> <p>May be a conflict of values when choosing subject matter: academic tutor may be concerned with academic rigour, formulation of research questions/methodology; industrial tutor may tend to focus on results which have practical implications for business operations/strategy. Preparation of a business focused executive summary is advisable.</p> <p>Assessment effort very high: large volumes of material to be reviewed, intermediate feedback and guidance may be required.</p>
Assignment	<p>Marking criteria and weightings required.</p> <p>Contextually unique: topic will vary.</p> <p>Work context of learner will provide setting and subject matter.</p> <p>Assessment effort: high. Effort required to negotiate learning outcomes with learners and mark material.</p>

<http://www.engineering.ac.uk/teaching-guides/industrial-placements/index.php/table-1-methods-for-assessment-of-placements/>



# Methods for assessing placements

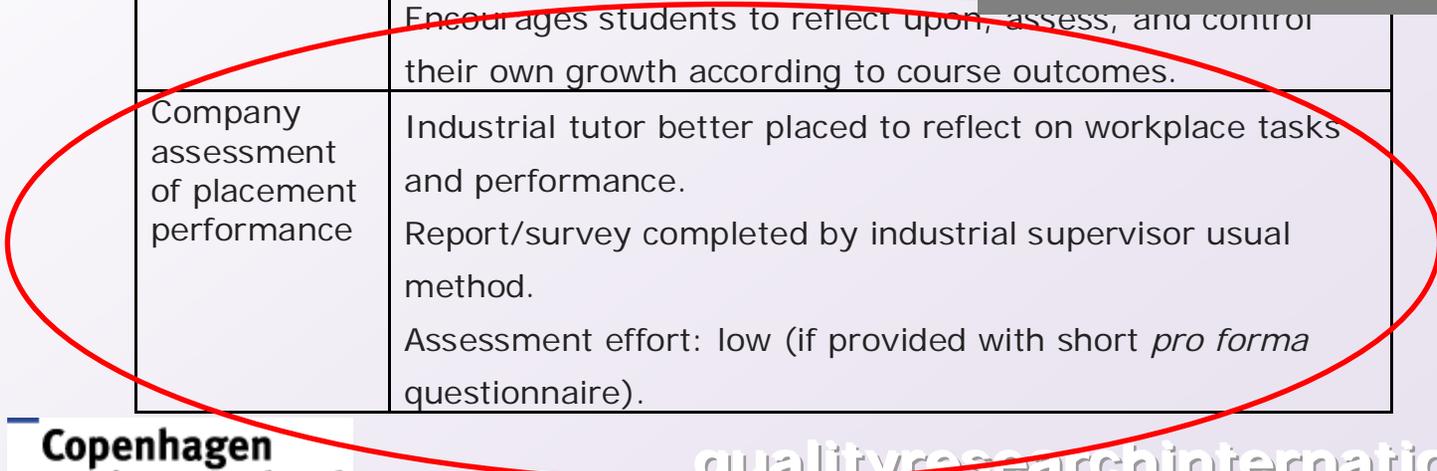
Memorandum report	<p>Learner summarises results of a research study in 1-2 sides of A4.</p> <p>Forces learners to be succinct and focus on essential issues.</p> <p>Assessment effort low - relatively quick to mark.</p>
Presentation/ viva	<p>Tests background knowledge and understanding.</p> <p>Can be assessed by academic tutor/industrial tutor/peers.</p> <p>Assessment effort: low. Mainly confined to drawing up assessment criteria and completing assessment <i>pro forma</i>.</p>
Poster display	<p>Guidance and assessment criteria required.</p> <p>Assessment effort: low. Peer assessment or assessment by one or both of the tutors (academic and industrial).</p>
Self-assessment against criteria set by tutor (potentially agreed in a learning contract)	<p>Develops students awareness of own skills and knowledge and encourages reflection.</p> <p>Reliability open to question.</p> <p>Assessment criteria must be identified and agreed in advance and used.</p> <p>Assessment effort - low. Onus is on student.</p>



# Methods for assessing placements

Assessment of student's learning logbook/work record	<p>Encourages self-reflection as a learner.</p> <p>Validity can be questioned, needs to be combined with another method of assessment such as interview.</p> <p>Can provide evidence towards professional accreditation.</p>
Portfolio	<p>Should present evidence of achievement and reflect on what they have learned.</p> <p>Students need guidance on what to include and what to omit and size of portfolio required.</p> <p>Assessment effort: very high. Portfolios are large volumes of material and usually accompanied by commentary, student guidance is important.</p> <p>Originality of a portfolio makes it hard to copy, rely on prior experience.</p> <p>Encourages students to reflect upon, assess, and control their own growth according to course outcomes.</p>
Company assessment of placement performance	<p>Industrial tutor better placed to reflect on workplace tasks and performance.</p> <p>Report/survey completed by industrial supervisor usual method.</p> <p>Assessment effort: low (if provided with short <i>pro forma</i> questionnaire).</p>

**No indication of the purpose of the assessment: has to be inferred**



# *Assessment of what for what?* <sup>(1)</sup>

- Work-linked academic subject-focused output (essay, project)
- Work-linked analysis of organisation (essay)
- Work-linked reflection on the work process or skill acquisition (log, diary, essay, report, PDP)
- Direct evaluation of skills or competences (supervisor observation, task completion, peer review)
- Not exhaustive list but clearly very different
- Designed for the benefit of teacher or the student?

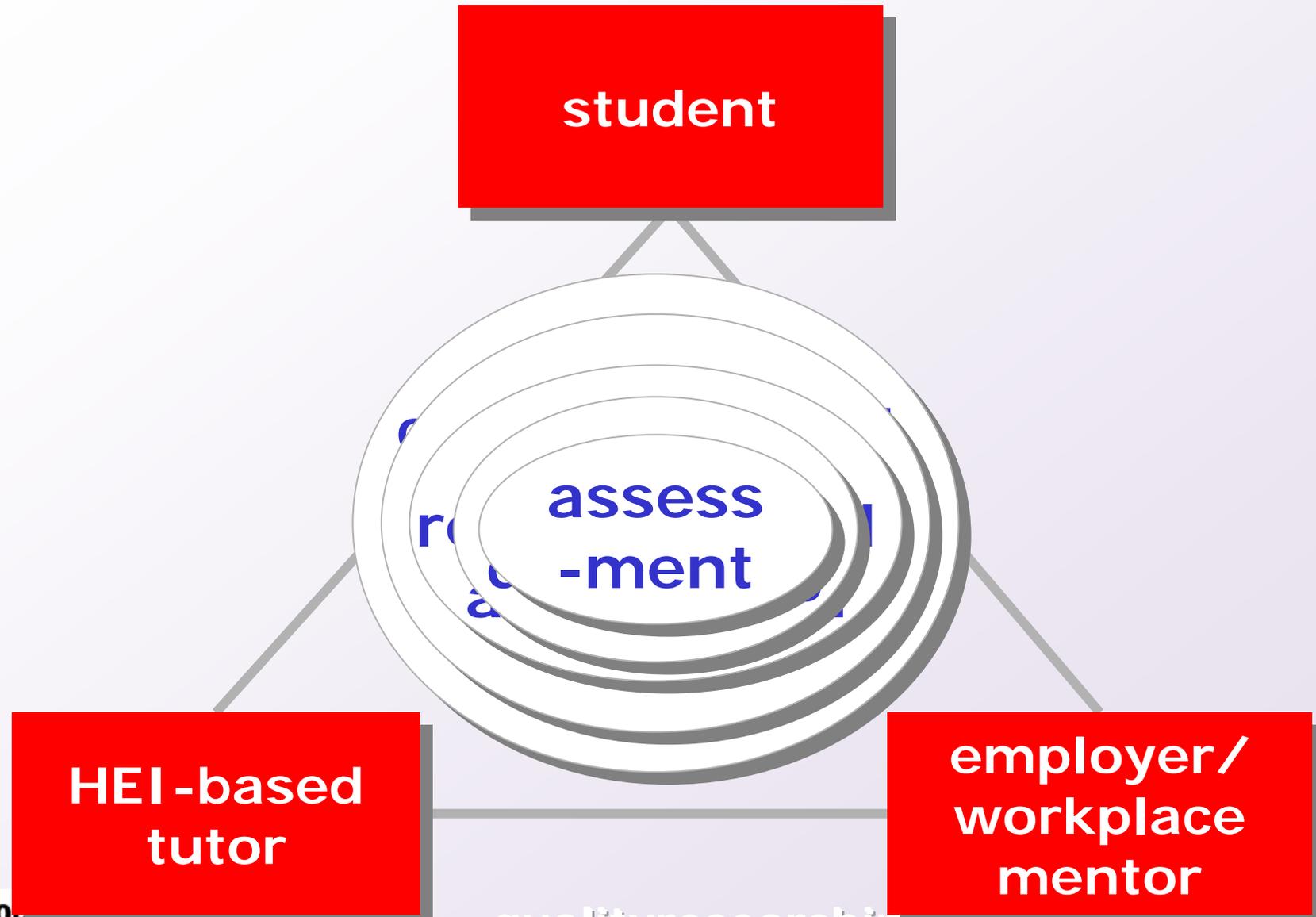
## *Assessment of what for what?* (2)

- assessment to make work experience 'valuable' to students (instrumentalism);
- making WE equivalent to non-WE (summatively and psychologically);
- assessing the development of a range of attributes not just written output;
- shifting the emphasis to give the student more opportunity and responsibility to develop as an independent learner. (1998)

# Conclusion

- Reflection and articulation are key
- More than using PDP to find gaps in skills
- Needs enabling: quality pyramid
- Assessment: progress?
- Assessment of what, by whom for what purpose and how? (reflection important but not only reason)
- Problem of
  - aligning academic assessment with workplace assessments/evaluations
  - Using (trusting/training) a variety of stakeholders to input into the assessment process

# Quality pyramid



**Thank you**

**[lh.l@cbs.dk](mailto:lh.l@cbs.dk)**

**leecoliharvey@gmail.com**  
**[www.qualityresearchinternational.com/glossary](http://www.qualityresearchinternational.com/glossary)**

# Employability

- A set of attributes, skills and knowledge that all labour market participants should possess to ensure they have the capability of being effective in the workplace—to the benefit of themselves, their employer and the wider economy. ([Future Fit, 2009](#))
- A set of achievements—skills, understandings and personal attributes—that make graduates more likely to gain employment and be successful in their chosen occupations, which benefits themselves, the workforce, the community and the economy. ([ESECT, 2005](#))

# Employability

- A set of attributes, **skills and knowledge** that all **labour market participants** should possess to ensure they have the **capability of being effective in the workplace**—to the benefit of themselves, their **employer** and the wider economy. (Future Fit, 2009)
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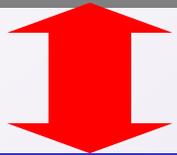
What is work experience?

# 'Definitions'

**Work experience**



Any experience from a work setting linked to the programme: plus 'extra-curricular' experiences



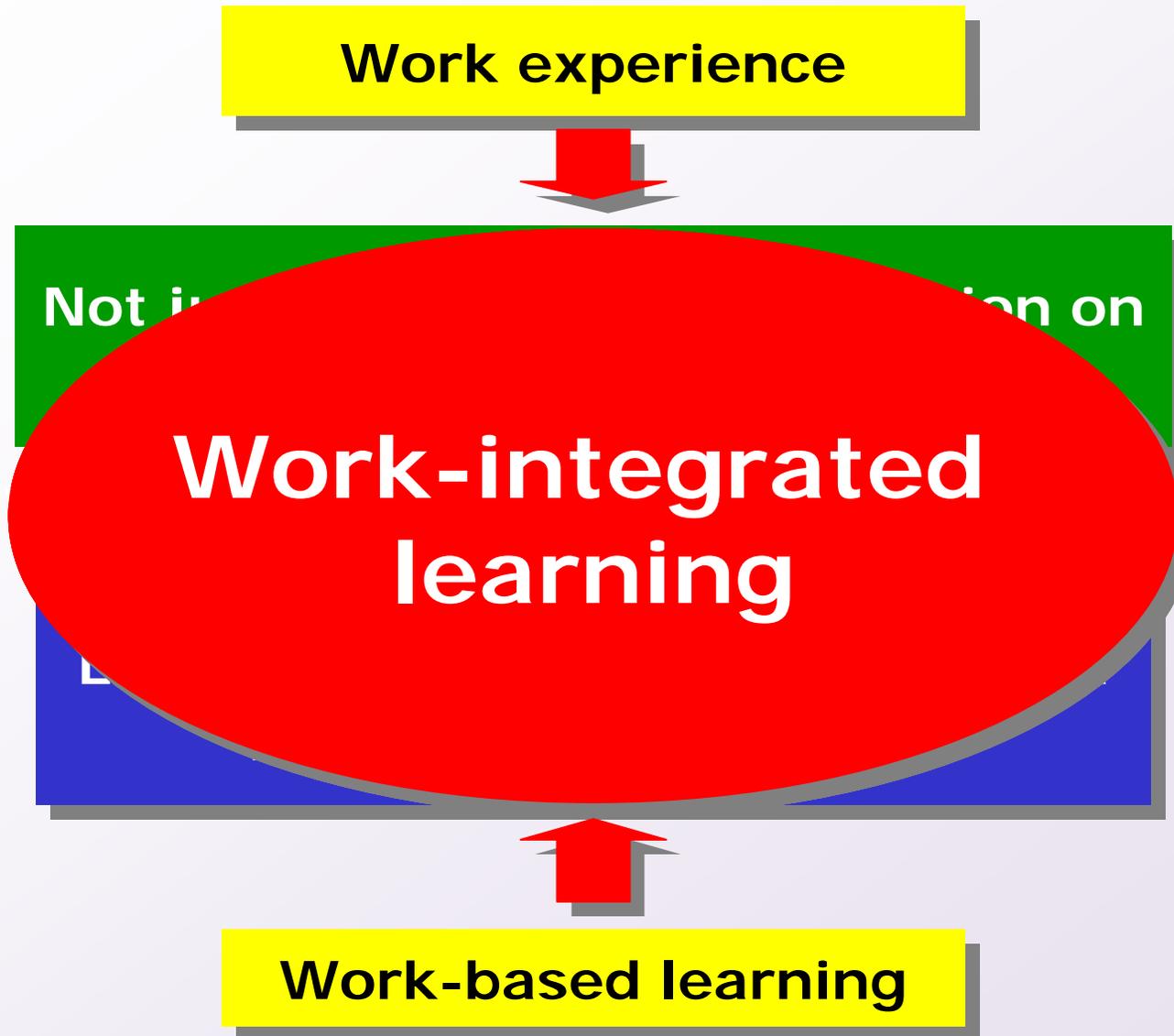
Recently, any learning that takes place in a work setting



**Work-based learning**

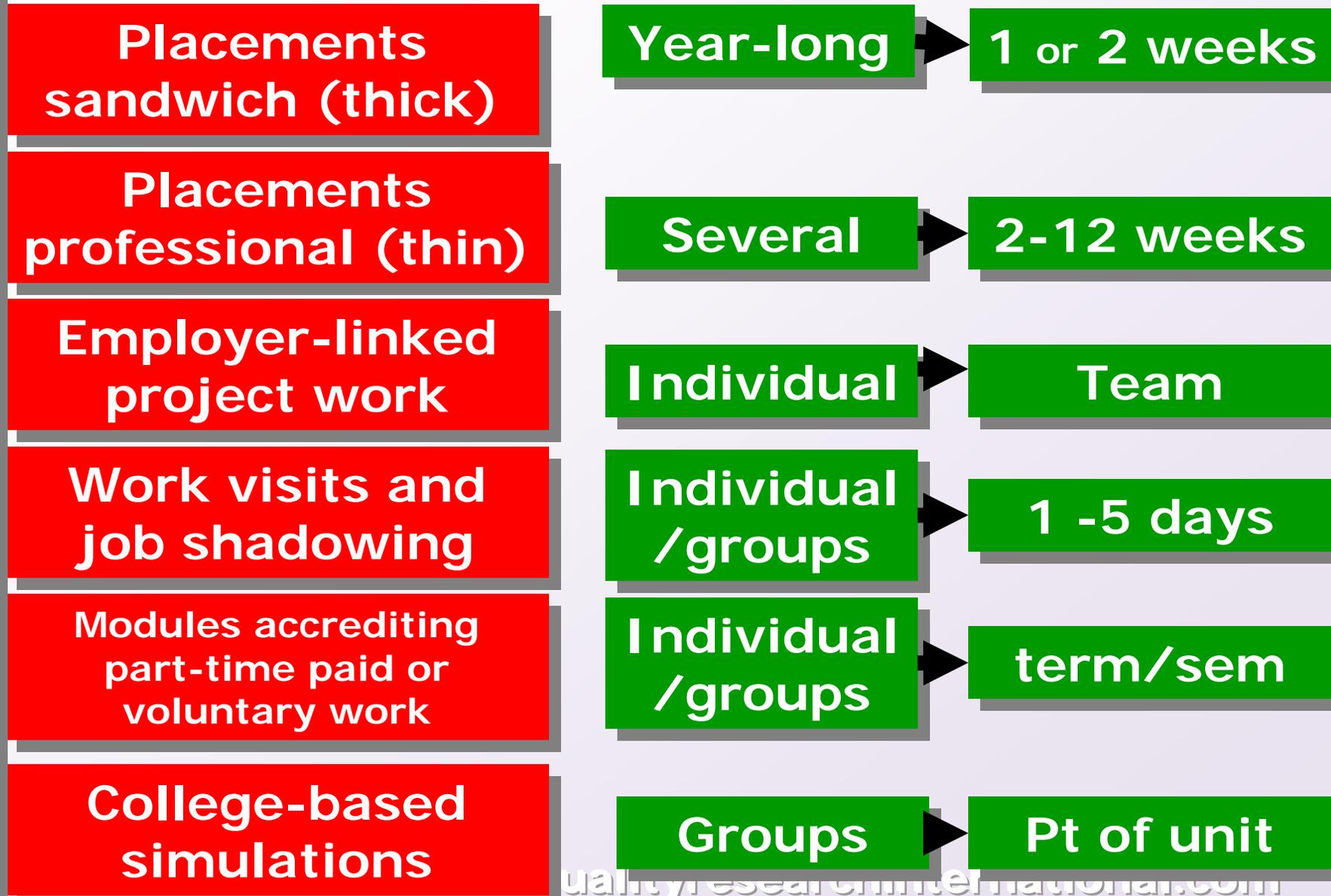
What is work experience?

# 'Reflection'



# Embedded in programme

Types of work experience



# Organised external to programme

- Generic programme (year in industry)
- Acknowledgement/accreditation of voluntary work (Millennium volunteers)
- Business-based opportunities
  - Shell STEP
- International organisations (AIESEC)
- Job shops (unsupported)

# Ad hoc work experience

- Work undertaken by HE students during term-time or in the vacations.
- Paid, or may be unpaid (for example, in the voluntary sector).
- Not planned, at the outset, as a part of a taught programme of studies, nor is it organised as a work experience process that integrally encourages reflection on experience.
- Can be used to gain credit in some institutions. (overlap)

# Lessons from research and practice

- Employability enhancement is more effective when integrated rather than piecemeal (especially when linked to institutional learning and teaching policy and to government initiatives).
- Employability is about developing a range of attributes and abilities, not just job-getting skills.
- Employability involves developing a portfolio of experience.

# Accreditation (apart from statutory requirement)

- towards the programme award
  - *satisfactory completion*, sandwich placement;
  - *specific academic credit*, module credit
- separate award of the institution
  - certification
- separate award of an external body
  - exemptions from professional body requirements
  - City and Guilds licentiateship/NVQ
  - Corporate recognition
- Why?
  - To encourage students to take WE seriously?
  - For employers? Qualification or reflection?
    - Employer preference: national

# **A BProf for Negotiated Work-based Learning: the case for a 'signature award'.**

Mike Laycock

Higher Education Consultant

# A signature award

- an indication of the status and 'coming of age' of work-based learning – defining the need
- defining the signifiers of the award
- defining the characteristics of learners
- extends and develops Foundation Degrees.
- parallels with professional doctorates

# why the need: to clear the fog

- To reflect 'new pedagogies for learning' '(Boud 2001:4)
- *'Everyone has a view on what work-based learning means and they use a wide range of terms interchangeably ... This all goes to ... undervalue the potential benefits of work-based learning as a mode of learning at a higher level'* (Nixon et al 2006.3)
- *'There is a real lack of common understanding over the definition of work-based learning by all stakeholders.'* (NEF 2007.9)

# why the need: for universities?

- increased concern, for some, over on 'employer-led demand' (Leitch)
- apprehension about the degree of business intervention in HE – 'engaged partner' in BProf but no loss of academy autonomy
- distinguish award from growing vocational (occupational?) emphasis in awards such as Foundation Degrees

# why the need: for employers?

An approach which seeks to develop responsibility in learning and ownership of the learning process is much more likely to promote skills and attitudes that employers say they want , eg:

- the ability to see opportunities and to set and achieve goals;
- the ability to handle change and adapt to new situations;
- energy and enthusiasm in pursuing projects;
- the ability to communicate in a manner appropriate to the audience;
- the ability to be a constructive team member.

# employability skills determined by learner rather than academy or employers

*'The ability of students realistically to assess their capability for employment in their chosen field, to make informed choices towards enhancing that capability, and, with institutional support, to take responsibility for their own continuous professional development ' (Laycock 2007)*

# major characteristics of BProf

- Informed by real world problems in occupational practice
- programme principally structured around negotiated work-based learning
- generic award and not attached to any particular subject area or profession
- transdisciplinary

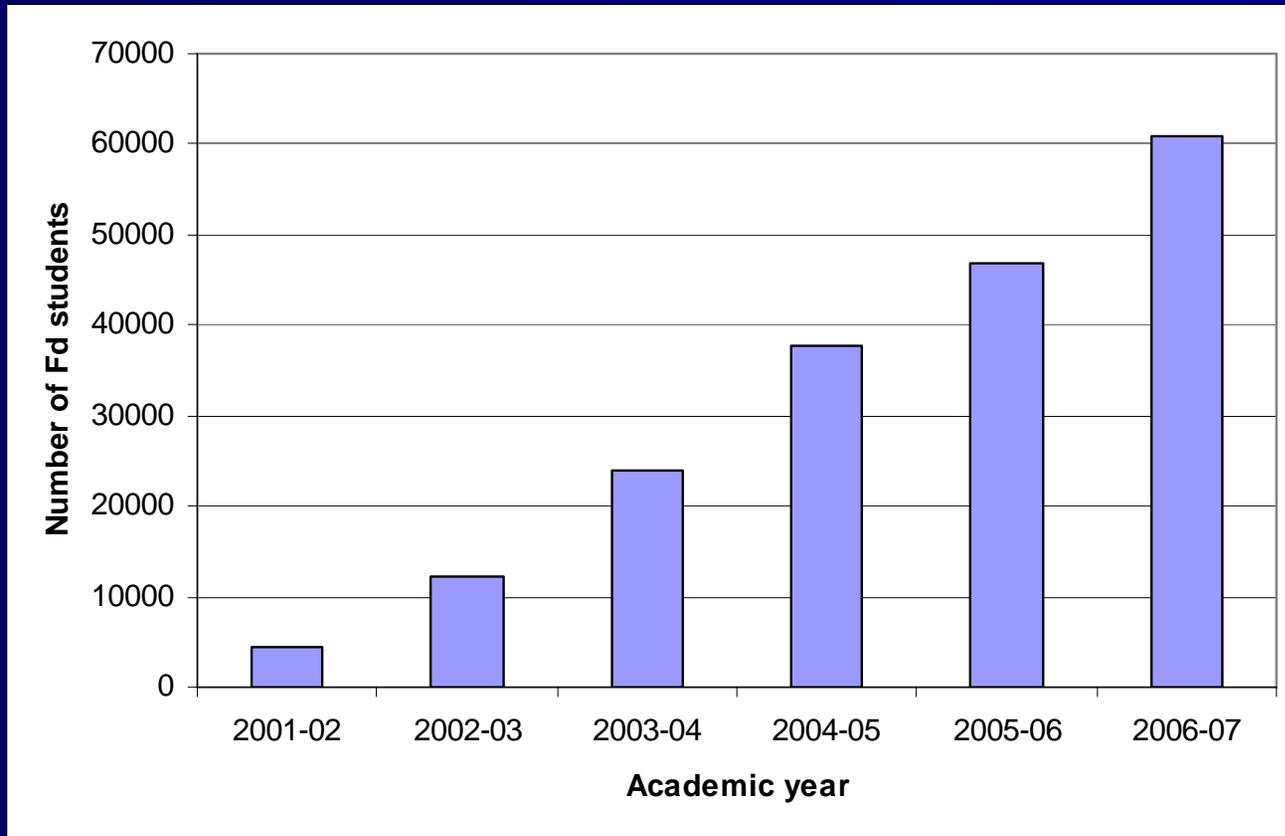
# a BProf for negotiated work-based learning

- reserved for self-managed and self-directed learning
- learner-led but learning outcomes and the content of authentic, work-based study are constructed, negotiated and agreed between the employee, the employer and the academy.
- challenge and support are provided by the academy and the workplace integrating theory and practice and enabling critical reflection.
- achievement of learning outcomes assessed against a framework of standards and levels consistent with the award.

# characteristics of BProf graduates

- the ability to exercise initiative, personal responsibility, and decision-making in complex and unpredictable circumstances;
- the ability to seek solutions to organisational/occupational/professional problems informed by theoretical and conceptual frameworks appropriate to those problems;
- the ability to negotiate, by means of a learning agreement, a programme of study to graduate level;
- high level project and programme management skills;
- high level teamwork skills and, where appropriate, leadership skills;
- high level oral and written communication skills;
- high level organisational skills; and
- an ability to exercise moral and ethical judgements.

# Developing FDs



# Distinctiveness of FDs

- partnership between employers, HEIs, FECs Sector Skills Councils;
- employer involvement in the design and review of programmes;
- increasing accessibility - opportunities for learners to 'earn and learn';
- flexible delivery modes and study patterns;
- articulation and progression.

# BProf may help with the 3 major challenges for FDs

- the status of, and degree of 'informed awareness' (Longhurst 2007) about, FDs;
- the 'conceptual confusions' and need for further development of work-based learning;
- the need for further development in articulation between FDs and honours degree programmes (only 55 per cent of the students registered at an HEI who qualified with a foundation degree in 2003-04 went on to study an honours degree in 2004-05 (HEFCE))

# HEFCE on FDs

- *The low graduation rate for those progressing to the final year of an honours programme reflects the need for development in articulation between foundation degree and honours programmes. (HEFCE 2007)*

# parallels with Prof Docs

## Prof Doc

- significant/original contribution to the profession
- research informed by real world problems
- variable balance between taught and research project elements
- primarily discipline/profession-centred
- 'partnership' with employers

## BProf

- significant contribution to an occupational area
- research informed by real world problems
- primacy of research project element
- primarily trans-disciplinary?
- 'negotiation' with employers

# 3<sup>rd</sup> Generation Prof Docs?

First generation  
Mode 1

Not very different from PhDs in that they privilege mode 1 academic over professional knowledge. Coursework assessment. Academy has primary role in development and knowledge production

Second generation  
Mode 2

Increased flexibility of delivery. More integration with the professional workplace. Portfolio assessment. Emphasis on partnership and co-production of new, trans-disciplinary, mode 2 knowledge

Third Generation  
Mode 3

'Partnership' notion is replaced by negotiation of content, research method, context, assessment. Control is learner-managed within a framework of procedures and support provided by the University

# conveys transformational learning

- BProf provides an opportunity, in Freirean terms, to sponsor transformational learning
- current discursive framework for FDs is towards the 'domestication' of students in an 'economically driven conceptualisation of Lifelong Learning' (Doyle 2003).

# centrality of learner-directed approach

- clearly signifies that this is not subjected to an employer led demand approach
- clear engagement of the academy in providing criticality and the broad academic context

# what are the possibilities?

- much, no doubt, will depend on continuing to establish the epistemological legitimacy of work-based learning as to whether the potentially expansive and challenging nature of the proposed BProf will be realised.
- But if the learner has a 'sense of agency in critical environments' (Stephenson et al 2004) then enrichment of the learner, academy and workplace will take place.

**And now...**

**What might be the important  
characteristics of a BProf  
and why?  
(10 mins)**

# Creating a BProf?

How could a BProf help to set the work-based learning agenda in my institution?

What might be the important factors in helping to create a BProf? (10 mins)

# What can I take back?

What can I take back to my  
own institution?

(10 mins)



Leeds Trinity  
& All Saints

# You Have To Walk Before You Can Run

Wednesday 9 September; 9.00-9.45

Ian McGregor Brown – Associate Principal Lecturer Employability  
Jess Sewter – Employer Partnership Office Manager

## Past, Present & Future of Employability by Placement

- Over 30 years experience of six week block placements being an integral component in UG programmes.
- A dedicated Employer Partnership Office arranging, coordinating and progressing over 800 placements each year and predicted to be 1000 this year (& a database to die for!).
- Recent developments have added year long volunteering and enterprise development placements as an option to the six week block.
- Considering further developments including year long, full-time paid placements, accreditation of learning from part-time employment, student/employee exchange schemes.
- This particular workshop however concentrates on a year one humanities pilot project.

## Yarn Spinners Tours/Leeds Trinity/Student

- Link made with Rubina Khan, owner of Yarn Spinners Tours (<http://www.yarnspinnerstours.co.uk>) through the Bradford Enterprise Exchange.
- Partnership opportunities identified, discussed and agreed.
- Working as a link between History Academic and Rubina to establish the project brief and enabling “commercial awareness”.
- Rubina acting as consultant, adviser, judge and offering “commercialisation” opportunities.
- Differing expectations in terms of outcomes, abilities, approaches etc.

## Level of Interest/Activity

- 20 students opted for the project.
- 5 groups of varying size.
- Resulting in research for and physical checking of 5 walks.
- All five groups showed signs of picking up on Rubina's advice with linkage to other organisations, seeking provisional deals, sponsorship and "buy-in".
- All five groups had produced business plans to greater or lesser extent – the weak point!
- All five groups in giving the presentation encountered the experience of "selling" history.

## Future Development?

- Maintaining & growing links with Yarn Spinners:
  - Already provided media students to produce a corporate DVD.
  - Discussions are ongoing in relation to commercialisation of two walks proposed and members of two other groups have been offered “research contracts” with Rubina.
- Need to embed additional support for development of business plans in future operation and to really encourage students to access support from the Enterprise Project Officer whilst recognising they are not signed up for a business degree.



Leeds Trinity  
& All Saints

## Contact Details

- Rubina Khan, Yarn Spinner Tours,  
<http://www.yarnspinnerstours.co.uk>
- Jess Sewter, Employer Partnership Manager,  
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- Ian McGregor Brown, Associate Principal Lecturer in  
Employability, [i.brown@leedstrinity.ac.uk](mailto:i.brown@leedstrinity.ac.uk), 0113 283 7100 Ext.  
495

# Student Placement Journeys and The Impact of the Recession

Lisa Ward and Jane Gaffikin



University of  
HUDDERSFIELD

ASET Annual Conference,  
Lancaster, 8-10<sup>th</sup> September 2009

Inspiring tomorrow's professionals



Insert date/name

# Student Placement Journeys

An on-line collection  
of video resources  
showcasing the development of students  
on one year work placements  
with views from their employers  
and placement tutors

# Student Placement Journeys and the Impact of the Recession

- Background
- Journey Process
- Project Management
- Challenges
- Viewpoints: students, employers, tutors and University
- Impact of the Economic Downturn
- Conclusions
- Journey Films

# Background

- Strategic aims: ‘To produce enterprising and employable graduates’
- Placements are ‘fee free’
- In - house
- Project Manager and Project Officer
- Funding

# Publications

2006 –  
HECSU/HEA  
Graduate links to  
placements

2007 – WACE  
Singapore –  
Placement  
Podcasts

2008 –  
WACE  
Sydney –  
Employer's  
Perspective

2009 – WACE  
Vancouver  
Placement  
Journeys

ASET UK  
Conference 2007 /  
2008 / 2009

# What are placement journeys?

- 'Placement Podcasts' DVD
- On-line video resources

Oct 2007

Student at  
University

May 2008

Student With  
Employer at  
Work premises

April 2009  
Student in Final  
year with  
placement tutor

# Who are the resources for?



University of  
HUDDERSFIELD

- Students
- Work placement units
- Careers service
- Work placement tutors
- Employers

# Finding students to film

- Lessons from 2006
- University
- Employers
- Students

Building relationships is time consuming!

# Collaboration

- Placement Offices and Placement Tutors (Academics)
- Students – 14 students
- Employers – 9 employers – wide variety of sector, some local, some blue chip.

# Meet the Students - Fashion



**Jennifer Allan: JD Sports & Hannah Custance: Textile Centre of Excellence**

# Meet the Students – Transport Design



**Adam Lay, Asa Parker & Chris Poole: Anders Yacht Design**

# Meet the Students – Computing and Engineering



**Karl Griffiths: Barnsley Academy, Craig Clavin-Booth: Cummins Turbo Technologies & James Harvey: Nestle**

# Meet the Students - Hospitality



**Lee Smith, Kayleigh Stephen & Farooq Saddique: Runnymede Hotel and Spa**

# Meet the Students – Applied Sciences



**Louise Barker, Duncan Farley: Thornton and Ross  
& Nathan Gooch: Igloo Thermo-Logistics**

- Scheduling / planning of filming
- Finding film locations: University and on-location
- Time away for filming

# Scheduling

Film – Side by side  
Script vs  
Free-flow

Transcribe  
Edit – one hour to  
two minutes

‘Crisp’  
Original

Play,  
Review,  
Edit,  
Cycle

50 individual films  
To edit

Planning, time,  
locations, away  
from office

# Student Viewpoint

- Real views of world of work.
- How to manage projects.
- What managers do.
- Skills development: organisational, time management, planning.
- Holding down 'proper' job.

# Student Viewpoint (2)

- Social side / cultural issues.
- Much more focused in final year.
- Broader perspective of the industry.
- ‘Trying out’ careers
- Career plans developed often including further study.

# Student - Craig



# Employer's Viewpoint

- Try before you buy – one year job interview.
- Don't expect finished product
- Do expect hard work and commitment
- Wanted to give something back to profession
- Impressed by students

# Employer - Leigh



# Tutor and University's Perspective



- Students return with confidence, confidence, confidence
- Change from children to adults
- More relevant final year projects
- Our professional knowledge is updated for benefit of Uni
- Refreshing curriculum

# Tutor - Hugh



How has the economic downturn impacted upon  
our students?

Our students' stories

# Economic Downturn? Fashion



**Jennifer Allan: JD Sports & Hannah Custance: Textile Centre of Excellence**

# Economic Downturn? Transport Design



University of  
HUDDERSFIELD



**Adam Lay, Asa Parker & Chris Poole: Anders Yacht Design**

Inspiring tomorrow's professionals

# Economic Downturn? Computing and Engineering



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# What will happen to the resources

- Available at [www.hud.ac.uk/tqef](http://www.hud.ac.uk/tqef)
- Resources available in all placement offices
- Links to employers websites.
- Internal dissemination.
- UK Dissemination at ASET

# Any questions?



Lisa Ward

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Jane Gaffikin

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Website: [www.hud.ac.uk/tqef](http://www.hud.ac.uk/tqef)

# Hungry for employability? Have a sandwich!

Lauren Anderson, University of Hertfordshire

Elizabeth Terry, University of Hertfordshire

## Paper Overview

This paper will discuss the motivational theories and the reluctance behind a students' decision on whether or not to complete a sandwich year. It will also discuss the benefits that we feel we have brought to the University of Hertfordshire (UH) and the benefits it has brought to our development and understanding of working in a business facing environment. We want to express, that if like us students are hungry for employability, they should have a sandwich!

## Placement overview

UH is at the vanguard of a new type of emerging university – those that are business-like and business-facing. Their priority is to prepare their students for the world of work and produce highly employable graduates. They offer work placements and internships to provide their students with the employability skills that they need. In 2008/09, 230 students from the Business School completed a placement year with 21 of them being employed by UH; this is just under 10%. Two of these placement positions were taken up by us; Lauren Anderson and Elizabeth Terry. We have been working on placement at the UH with a department called the Learning and Teaching Institute (LTI). The LTI are incorporated with the Blended Learning Unit (BLU) which is a Centre for Excellence in Teaching and Learning. As an organisation, we develop, promote and evaluate the opportunities offered by technology and combine these with the more traditional ways of learning and teaching. Respectively, our roles have been Technology Mentor and Marketing Assistant.

## Benefits of completing a placement year

In the economic down-fall that we are currently experiencing, it is important that students have a competitive edge over fellow candidates. They need to be able to show employers that they are capable of working in a business environment and know how to react in difficult situations. They need to show that they can work as a team and solve problems, as well as work individually and show initiative. Some students may say that they learn this at university, but until they gain work experience, they will not realise the difference between working in an educational environment and working in a business environment. At UH, we believe that the placements office does a great job at highlighting the practical benefits for completing a placement. However, less emphasis is put on the personal motives behind a placement. Completing a placement enables you to experience *real* situations rather than basing your input on hypothetical circumstances. This on its own puts students ahead of the game on an employability level, as employers are able to see how they react and behave in business situations rather than guess on the basis of university work. Knowing how to prioritise your work and become more organised is also something you need to be aware of in the working environment and a placement allows you to experience and develop this. It also brings students many opportunities such as dealing with clients, presenting at national/international conferences', leading meetings/discussions and organising events/campaigns. In an interview, students are able to indicate where they have developed and learnt new skills using the basis of their placement.

Another major benefit of a placement is the salary. It allows students to understand the value of money and become more reliable with it. For students, this is an important aspect to learn as most live off of their loan whilst at university. For us, the salary has given us the opportunity to travel after we graduate. Budgeting for this each month has made us more mature and appreciative towards the

placement we are in. It has allowed us to think further into our future careers and become more focused on what we want out of life.

### **Benefits we have brought to UH**

Not only have we benefited from working at BLU, but the University of Hertfordshire has also. Being a student on placement, we have been able to provide many academics with a student's outlook on business activities. Within our first month of working with BLU we held a stall at Fresher's Fair. Our objective was to research students' opinions of technology. We produced a questionnaire, which allowed us to receive both quantitative and qualitative data; the results provided BLU with accurate feedback on students' perceptions of technology which was then used to support BLU activities throughout the year. Our participation at Fresher's Fair, gave us the opportunity to present the data at a staff seminar based on the "Student Experience". There, we were able to give a truthful and informative insight into our opinions of the technologies we used, and the methods of teaching we experienced within our studies. We also shared our views regarding the Business School and the matter regarding business students not having personal tutors. The feedback that we had received, both during and after the seminar, proved to us that our opinions and thoughts (coming from a student perspective) were both refreshing and greatly valued.

Furthermore, throughout the year, we both liaised with the Student's Union, using it as a platform to express ideas between BLU and the student cohort. We particularly made use of "The Universe" (the Student Union's fortnightly newspaper) as a medium for communication, which was an innovative movement for BLU. Additionally, we had regular meetings with the VP for Academic Support and Campaigns, where we would discuss ways in which we could encourage the student population to gain an enhanced understanding of BLU and its activities.

As mentioned earlier, UH offered a total of 21 placements to students this year. In the current recession that we are experiencing, offering your own students a placement can prove to be very economical and beneficial all round. Not only are you able to offer more placements to students, but as a university you are able to fill positions at a reduced cost, thus reducing annual overheads. Furthermore, you will be able to receive a student input, something that is greatly valued in such a business facing organisation.

### **Motivation theories for a placement**

We conducted a series of short video interviews and asked students who have completed a placement year to share their thoughts on the reasons for their decision. The results we found were very interesting; some were quite varied whilst others were extremely similar. A main reason for choosing to do a placement included the principle of appearing more employable to employers once they graduated. One student indicated that she commenced a placement in order to enhance skills that are required for the business environment. It appeared that the students were very aware of the current economic recession and were choosing to do a placement to help boost their chances of employment and "ride-out" the current job market. Another student explained that her reason for completing a placement was because she did not want to fall into the same situation as her friend; they had no *real* work experience and found it hard to get a job because of this.

We can add that our major reasons for choosing to do a placement were to improve our knowledge of a business environment and to develop in key skills such as; team working, presenting, communication and writing. We are also hoping that the skills and experience we have gained will help us to achieve a higher degree classification than it would have done if we opted out of a placement year. Both of us had always planned to travel so a placement year was also a way to earn money to save for this purpose. Further to this placement, we are now planning to travel together;

this is something neither of us were expecting to gain from a placement and is living proof that a sandwich year really can bring you more than you hope for. It has given us the opportunity to fulfil our dreams.

### **Reluctance; why students do not complete a placement year**

When asking fellow peers why they chose not to complete a placement year, we received a diverse range of answers. From the outset, it became apparent that the key reason for not commencing a placement was because many students had an *"I just want to get university out of the way"* attitude. Several indicated that they had already taken a gap year and therefore felt that the university/student experience was never ending. Moreover, it was mentioned from one person that they did not enjoy university and therefore wanted to graduate as soon as possible; the thought of extending the process by another year was not an option. A number of students felt that taking a year out of studying to complete a placement would create a sense of de-motivation to complete their final year. One student stated: *"I wouldn't have wanted to come back to finish uni after having experienced a taste of working life"*. Moreover, one Marketing student mentioned that being rejected by a total of three different companies put him off the application process altogether and he therefore decided to terminate his search for a placement. Nonetheless, he did mention that the process was a great learning curve for him and taught him how to articulate interview skills for when he graduates. Finally, one student mentioned that she did not take a placement year as she held the opinion that employers were taking advantage of placement students financially, by paying low wages.

By asking participants whether they were glad they had decided not to complete a placement year, we gave them all the opportunity to reflect on their decision. On balance, they were all glad although that is not to say that some didn't have a few regrets. Many stated that with the current economic climate, finding a job was proving to be of great difficulty. One student mentioned that they felt less attractive to employers because they have no experience of working in a real life business environment. On the other hand, a number of participants had no regrets at all and were relieved to be *"free from uni"*.

### **Conclusion; something to think about**

In conclusion, we believe that deciding to commence a placement year is a big step and is something that should not be taken lightly. It is apparent that there are differing circumstances surrounding a person's decision to take on (or not take on) a placement and that they need to evaluate the pros and cons and do what is right for them. However, from our experiences, we would certainly promote the completion of a sandwich year. It is important for students to realise that the majority of job applicants have a degree; 680,000 higher education qualifications were gained in 2007/08 with around half of these being first class (National Statistics, 2009). With a total of 48 graduates chasing every job (Belfast Telegraph Newspaper, 2009), employers are looking for applicants with an edge and something that will make them the ideal candidate for the job. Having completed a sandwich year will prove to employers that we can work well in a corporate environment, handle business issues effectively and articulate a number of life skills that would have only been adopted in the work place.

Having the opportunity to complete a placement, whilst still being a student was a once in a life time opportunity. Not only were we given a huge opening to our future lives, but we were also given the necessary support; this has been something we have been able to reflect upon and learn from. With this combination, we would certainly recommend to anyone that completing a placement year is a valuable decision. We have no regrets at all and look forward to taking the skills we have learnt, into our final year!

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*Belfast Telegraph* (2009) Northern Ireland graduates facing job crisis [Online]. Available at:  
<http://www.belfasttelegraph.co.uk/news/education/northern-ireland-graduates-facing--job-crisis-14386609.html> [Accessed: 10 August, 2009]

# ACCESS TO EMPLOYABILITY

Developing the employability of students with disabilities

Richard Mendez

# Aims of the Workshop



- Investigate the need for a specialist employability programme at the University of Leicester for students with disabilities
- Discuss the specialist programme devised by the University of Leicester
- Evaluation of the programme
- Discussion

- ❑ Research from the UK's Association for Graduate Careers Advisory Services (AGCAS) Disabilities Task Group
- ❑ Improved parity in the employment destinations of graduates with disabilities and non-disabled graduates in 2007
- ❑ But disparities still exist !



# The UK National Context

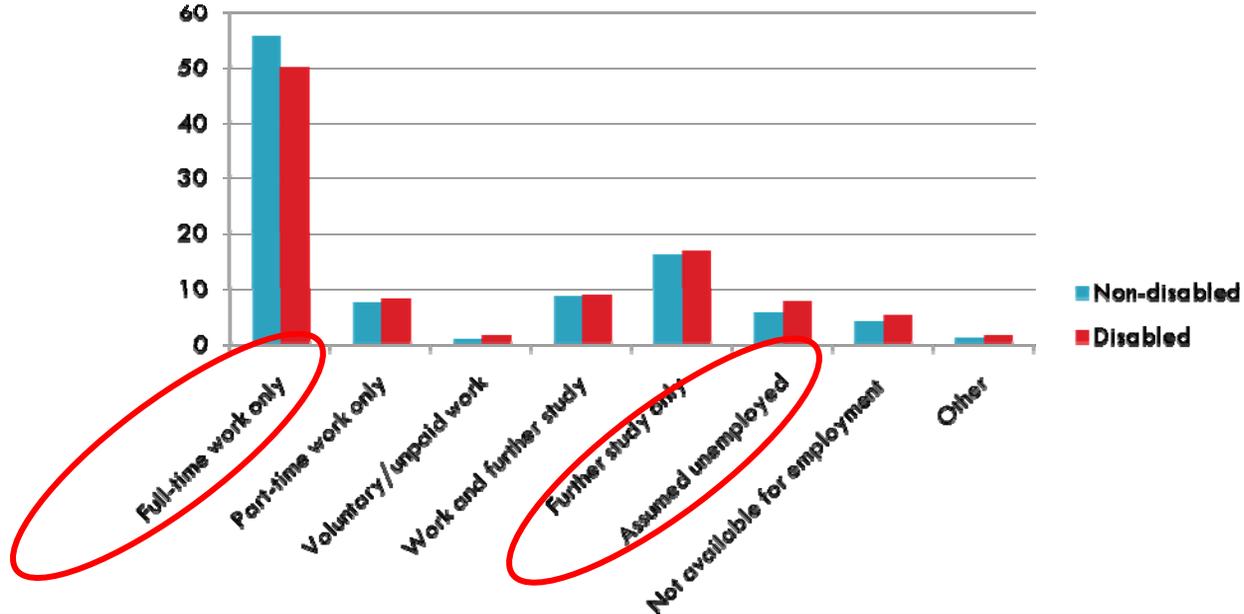


AGCAS' research showed that in 2007:

- 49.9% of graduates with a disability were in **full-time employment**, compared with 55.6% of non-disabled graduates
- 7.8% of graduates with a disability were **unemployed**, compared with just 5.6% of non-disabled graduates
- Statistics appear relatively positive for graduates with disabilities but masks underlying issue
- Previously shrinking gap between both sets of graduates, beginning to widen again

# The UK National Context

2007 Destinations of graduates with a disability compared with non-disabled graduates in percentages (%)

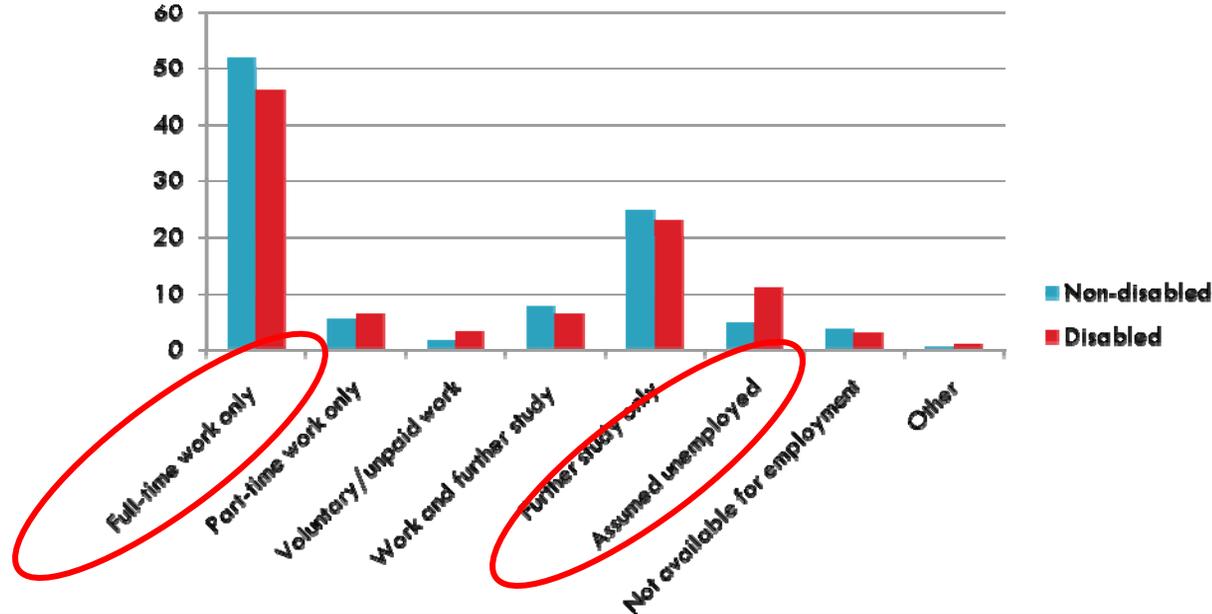


# The University of Leicester Context

- In 2007, 46% of University of Leicester graduates with a disability were in full-time employment compared with 51.9% of all other Leicester graduates that year
- 11% of University of Leicester's graduates with a disability were assumed unemployed compared with only 4.7% of Leicester's non-disabled graduates
- University of Leicester graduates with a disability, twice as likely to be unemployed than their non-disabled counterparts
- Also, fared poorly when compared to the national equivalent (7.8% vs 11%)

# The University of Leicester Context

2007 Destinations of University of Leicester graduates with a disability compared with University of Leicester non-disabled graduates in percentages (%)



# Focus Group Research



- In 2008, qualitative research conducted in the form of three focus groups
- To gauge the views of students with disabilities re: graduate employment

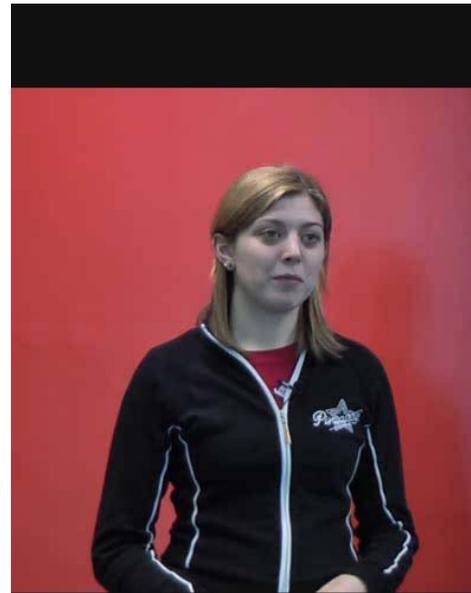


# Analysis of Focus Group Results



- Many had no prior work experience – cited time management issues
- Majority had never compiled a CV
- When questioned about their concerns about graduate employment
  1. Employers' negative perception of disabilities
  2. Obtaining a job
  3. Managing their dyslexia in the world of work
  4. Adhering to deadlines and meetings in the workplace

# Concerns about Graduate Employment



**ASPIRING TO BE MORE EMPLOYABLE?**

We support the development of students' employability skills by providing:

- information, advice and guidance for students, academics and employers on work-related learning activities;
- work-related learning resources that will help students recognise important employability skills;
- tailored interactive workshops in academic departments covering employability and work-related learning;
- additional support and consultancy on enterprise learning.

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- additional support and consultancy on enterprise learning.

Lyford Gayle, BA (Hons) International Relations, 2<sup>nd</sup> Year

# Rationale for Specialist Programme

- ❑ Concluded students with disabilities might not be engaging in usual channels of employability provision
- ❑ Thus, disadvantaged upon graduation compared to their non-disabled counterparts
- ❑ In educational climate where philosophy focuses on inclusive education, specialist '**exclusive**' employability intervention needed to address the status quo
- ❑ These conclusions lead to the creation of ***Access to Employability***

# What is Access to Employability?



- ❑ Philosophy: empower students with disabilities by building confidence and providing practical work experience
- ❑ 2-hour interactive workshop addressing key issues such as disclosure
- ❑ Employer representative talks about his own experiences managing his dyslexia whilst establishing a successful career
- ❑ Pre-arranged 15-day staggered internship with local employers from different industries



# Structure of Access to Employability

Initial registration on  
to Access to  
Employability



2-hour  
interactive  
workshop



**TOPICS:**

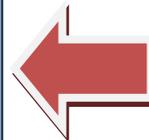
1. Disclosure
2. Employer talk
3. Barriers to employment
4. CV writing and action planning



Student commences  
work placement and  
access to e-resources



Pre-placement  
consultation to  
help students  
maximise the  
experience



Sign up to 15-day  
staggered work  
placements

# Example of e-resources

## **Graduate Opportunities**

**For all disabilities**

**Employment Opportunities:  
An interview with Shazia  
Hussain on Disclosure**

# Evaluating Access to Employability



- Difficult to evaluate impact without ascertaining the employment destinations data of all participants when they graduate
- Until then, rely on participants' feedback collected via consultations and questionnaires

# Evaluating Access to Employability



## Positives:

- Built their confidence and knowledge
- Participating in an internship
- The employer representative talking about his own experiences of dyslexia was reassuring and uplifting

## Constructive criticisms:

- 2-hour workshops, whilst enjoyable, arduous and exhausting
- Workshops should cover job interview techniques
- Limited number of 15-day internships, more variety needed

# Thoughts about Access to Employability

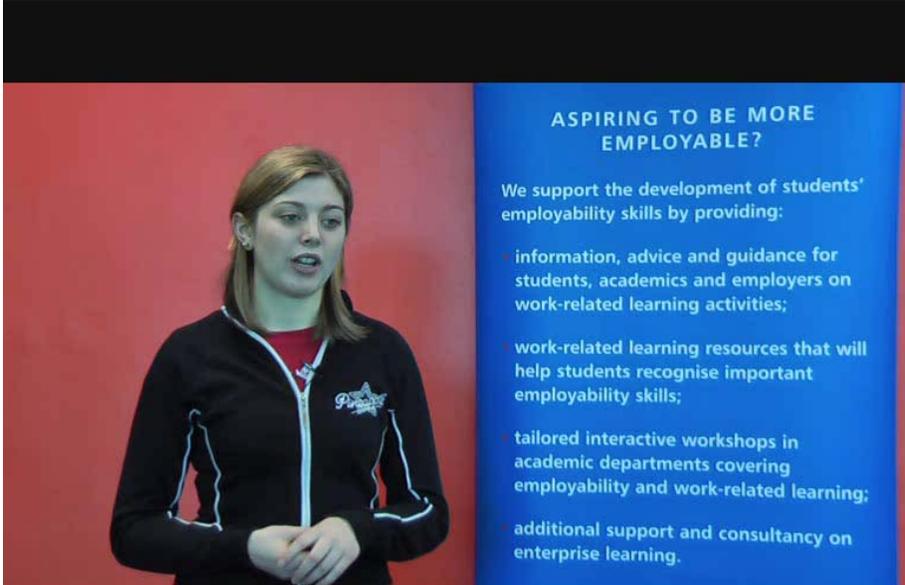


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- tailored interactive workshops in academic departments covering employability and work-related learning;
- additional support and consultancy on enterprise learning.

Sarah Hatfield, BA (Hons) International Relations, 2<sup>nd</sup> Year



**ASPIRING TO BE MORE EMPLOYABLE?**

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- work-related learning resources that will help students recognise important employability skills;
- tailored interactive workshops in academic departments covering employability and work-related learning;
- additional support and consultancy on enterprise learning.

Geraldine Cowell , Archaeology BSc, 3<sup>rd</sup> Year

# Current and Future Developments



- AccessAbility Centre now has a dedicated careers adviser on-site
- In-depth research on a larger pool of students via questionnaires
- More work placement opportunities
- Separate session focused on job interview techniques

# Discussion



In 3 or 4 groups

- ❑ Select a question card
- ❑ Discuss question in your group – 10 minutes
- ❑ Read out your question and feedback to everyone – 5 or 10 minutes

- Hirst, A. (2008) The Changing Legal Context, Continuing Professional Development and the Promotion of Inclusive Pedagogy for Disabled Students, *Learning and Teaching in Higher Education*, vol.3, pp. 49-61
  
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- Leacy, A. & Tunnah, E. (2009) 'What *Happens Next? A Report on the First Destinations of 2007 Disabled Graduates*', Sheffield, AGCAS.

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University of  
**Leicester**



# Review of research on Foundation degrees



**Lee Harvey**

**Copenhagen Business School**

<http://www.qualityresearchinternational.com>

# Introduction

- Extensive review of research focused on Fds.
- Undertaken on behalf of, but independently from, Foundation Degree Forward (*fdf*).
- Up-to-date compilation of a substantial amount of material and provides an agenda for future research work on Fds
- Announced 2000; 4,000 students in 2001–2, 87,000 students in 2008–9

# HE research

- HE research is characterised by a proliferation of small-scale, often practitioner-oriented studies.
- The research on Fds is no different: localised and often reflection on practice augmented by a small survey or the collection of qualitative data.
- There are few examples of well-planned and resourced substantive studies.

# Reviewed items

<i>Publication medium</i>	<i>Number of items</i>
Academic journal article	62
Reports	58
Professional & practitioner journal article	18
Conference paper	17
Book or chapter in book	13
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>168</b>

## Two types of material

- Accounts that use original empirical data, which range from anecdote and reflections from course tutors, through student evaluations to fully-developed research projects.
  - Mainly a single programme sometimes with a national or regional focus but more frequently with a focus on a single institution and its partners.
- Analytical and critical analyses of the Fd initiative, often based on policy documents, and sometimes augmented by reanalysis of available data.

# Report headings

- Foundation degree policy, context, aims and implementation
- Value of Foundation degrees
- Collaborative working and employer engagement
- Student experience of learning
- Work-based learning
- Student support and guidance
- Programme design, development and pedagogy
- Research agenda

# Report headings

- Foundation degree policy, context, aims and implementation
- Value of Foundation degrees
- Collaborative working and employer engagement
- **Student experience of learning**
- **Work-based learning**
- Student support and guidance
- Programme design, development and pedagogy
- Research agenda

# Student experience of learning

“Given the centrality of innovative forms of learning (work based, flexible, blended and reflective learning) to Foundation degrees it is confounding to find that the learner’s experience of engaging with the new qualification is so under examined.”

Beaney (2006, p. 3)

Beaney, P. (Ed.), 2006. *Researching Foundation Degrees: Linking research and practice*. Lichfield: **fdf**.

# Early Years Sector-Endorsed Fd

## Series of studies\*

### Snape and Finch (2006)

971 students in 119 institutions

- Mowlam, A., Murphy, J. and Arthur, S., 2003. *Evaluating the Introduction of the Early Years Foundation Degree: First report in the series of EYFD Evaluation*. London: NatCen.
- Mowlam, A. and Snape, D., 2004. *Qualitative Mapping of Delivery Strategies Amongst EYSEFD Providers. Second Report in Series of EYSEFD Evaluation*. London: NatCen.
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## Snape and Finch 2006

- Levels of satisfaction with tutors remained high, although it was lower among those who had changed tutors.
- Around 80% of respondents thought their tutors were knowledgeable and experienced in the subject area and that most lessons were well organised.
- Around two-thirds thought that assignments were well explained, that tutors gave enough help and support with assignments and that they were given enough time to complete assignments.

## Snape and Finch 2006

- Two-thirds (67%) of the students at the second-phase said they had received help with developing study skills from staff at their university or college; a drop from 75% at the baseline stage.
- The authors commented that: 'It may be that such support was more common in the early stages of the course and was not recalled by students at the second interview a year later' (Snape & Finch, 2006, p. 39).

## Snape and Finch 2006

- Most agreed that their participation on the course was beneficial to their work.
- Over 75% agreed it had made them more enthusiastic about their work, given them more confidence at work, or given them a deeper understanding of their work. The proportions citing each of these benefits rose slightly from the first study.
- Those who expected to get a higher level job after they completed their course were more likely to report that the course had made them more enthusiastic about their work. (Snape & Finch, 2006, p. 6)

# Snape and Finch 2006

- Time-planning caused the most problems, particularly those with children.
- The programme had brought little immediate financial benefit; income had stayed the same for 80% and declined for 10% as a result of reduced hours.
- Overall, the proportion of respondents who reported financial worries rose slightly, from 43% at the baseline stage to 50% at the second-stage survey. The most common concerns were course fees and other course costs.

# Snape and Finch 2006

- The main non-financial concerns centred on family life.
  - Pressures of combining work and study (69%),
  - Time commitments of the course (56%)
  - Impact of the course on partners/families (46%).
- Then concerns were about the course
  - Difficulties keeping up with the pace of the course (37%) and with its academic requirements (35%).
  - 'While such concerns were already present at the start of the course, it is encouraging that they did not increase during the second year of the course' (Snape & Finch, 2006, p. 7).

# Knight *et al.*, 2006: qualitative study

- 50 students on the EYSEFD
- teaching on the EYSEFD was widely praised,
  - particularly when 'it was being delivered by someone with practical experience of working in the EY sector who also recognised the particular needs of students on the course' (Knight *et al.*, 2006, p. 7).
- Students also reacted positively to enthusiastic teachers who were interested in the students' experiences.
  - However, students reported that elements of the college-based learning had 'seemed disorganised, with some course modules being revised or cancelled at short notice, and assignment deadlines sometimes being clustered close together' (Knight *et al.*, 2006, p. 6).

## Knight *et al.*, 2006: qualitative study

- Also reflecting the quantitative study: students referred to the increased pace from the second year of the degree. The authors comment that 'Some adjusted to this well, as they had to the demands of the EYSEFD more generally. However others, often those without recent experience of higher learning, found meeting the demands of this pace more difficult. There continued to be little evidence of any formal Individually Paced Learning' (Knight *et al.*, 2006, p. 7).

## Knight *et al.*, 2006: qualitative study

- Reflecting the quantitative study, some students indicated that: 'support was less readily available from the end of the first year, as tutors adopted a more 'hands-off' approach. Some students felt this reflected their own growing confidence, but others had felt 'abandoned'' (Knight *et al.*, 2006, p. 7).
- An aspect not picked up in the quantitative study was the positive peer group support. Students on the EYSEFD had developed systems for collecting notes and hand-outs for absent friends and lift-sharing to and from college sessions.
  - 'Students also gave one another informal support and encouragement. In the context of less hands-on support from tutors, students reported relying more heavily on the support provided to them by their peers' (Knight *et al.*, 2006, p. 7).

# Summary of student experience

- improved self-confidence, self-esteem, and a sense of achievement
- better knowledge and understanding and a positive impact on performance at work (although applying new-found knowledge in practice environments was not always met with approval)
- enhanced academic and life skills: becoming more critical, reflective and as having a better basis for making judgements

# Summary of student experience

- enhanced enthusiasm for their paid work but also an increase in interest in further learning (one study 80% of students want to continue studying after their Fd)
- little immediate financial benefit; a small minority experience any increase in income. Respondents generally have to move to a new employer to gain a promotion or increased pay
- financial concerns (not least course fees)
- a damaging effect on family life, especially for mature students. This can be a major factor in withdrawal for mature females.



# Summary of student experience

- The Foundation degree's contribution to the widening participation agenda thus raises personal and emotional as well as academic issues and there is a need for recognition of the sacrifices, challenges and conflicting commitments that face working, mature students.

# Summary: transition in Bachelor

- Different learning and teaching styles: more lectures, fewer opportunities to discuss with lecturers, reduced link to workplace experience.
- Some face a different social and organisational setting when moving from an outreach centre to the main university campus.
- Main problem is the pedagogic models, the nature of the academic support (or lack of it) and what constitutes autonomous learning.
- Some commentaries imply that the FE experience or the students are not equipped for 'proper' HE study at final-year level. Some, however, raise fundamental questions about the lack of flexible pedagogy in the university setting.



# Work-based learning (WBL)

- WBL arguably at the core of Fds. However, work-based learning is in flux given that the workplace itself is in transition.
- Claim that future work-based learning partnerships will be less hierarchical and the learner will become an equal partner alongside the employer and the provider.
- However, there is a concern that a focus on WBL could reinforce gender stereotyping as Fds reflect gender divisions and reinforce the workplace *status quo*.

# WBL Summary: Employers

- Employers tend to support WBL
  - recognise the improved organisational skills, critical thinking and confidence of Fd students.
- Employer involvement in WBL depends on
  - their interest in and understanding of the Fd
  - the level of confidence in the college delivering the programme.
- Employers are more likely to be positive about WBL if it is straightforward to arrange cover for the student
  - depends on the student's role and seniority at work.
  - minimising absence of key staff, perhaps via the use of virtual learning, is important.



# WBL Summary: Students

- Most students appreciated the value of the work-based component of their Fd.
- Organisation of the work-based learning element varies.
  - work elements closely linked to the study programme, which also provide opportunities for skill development
  - work-based elements that offer no opportunity for new development
  - disengaged periods of work unrelated to the study programme.

## Successful WBL characterised by

- Fd is delivered in a college with a strong reputation for its engagement with employers and a high degree of credibility
- the WBL element is delivered, in part, on the employer's premises
  - helps to ensure that WBL and academic learning are integrated
- the content and assessment is aligned with business needs
- integration of theory and practice is enhanced by employers making explicit links between workplace and classroom content

## Successful WBL characterised by <sup>(2)</sup>

- the college is committed to WBL and to meeting the skills needs of local industry
- the employer contributes to the design of the WB element of the programme
- the employer provides real 'live' projects and assignments to support the assessment of learning
- company-based mentoring supports and guides student progress
- staff from academia and business work as a team to ensure the quality of the student's learning experience
- there is low staff turnover.



# Support for WBL

- A key element of WBL is the support for learning in the workplace. Three types of mentor
  - ‘reactive’ mentor who is available as and when needed;
  - ‘pastoral mentor’ who proactively offers pastoral support;
  - ‘quality control mentor’ who oversees the quality of the student’s work and, at best, ensures that assessment tasks are matched to the employee’s day-to-day work activities.
- Minority of HEIs provide workplace mentor training. Where it does occur, employers tend to be more supportive and engaged in WBL.
- Many students are not novices but are experienced and are deepening their knowledge, which mentors need to appreciate.



# Effective mentoring characterised by

- clarity about the role of the mentor
- appropriate mentor training
- written information explaining the role
- contact between HEIs and mentors
- time available to support students
- personal benefits the mentor perceives as accruing from undertaking the role
- physical proximity of mentor and student
- no role conflict (e.g., mentor is not also the line manager)
- relationship with the student.

# Assessment of WBL

- Major issue with little research
  - Assessment is a major driver for students.
  - What is to be assessed in the workplace?
  - Academics used to formal teaching/lecturing often find it difficult to effectively assess WBL.
  - Employers tend not to get involved in summative (academic) assessment.
  - Employer involvement in assessment is constrained by existing work-place assessment régimes, staff training and the time to undertake assessment as part of their management role.

# Assessment of WBL

- Unlike academic assessment, assessment in the workplace is normally linked to performance evaluation with consequent development and reward outcomes.
- Perception of theory and knowledge within the work place does not necessarily match academic perspectives. Pragmatic knowledge may be seen as more useful and, therefore, preferred by work-based assessment systems. Learners may, in certain environments, be reluctant to demonstrate competence based on academic knowledge, leading to variable presentation of self.

**Thank you**

**lh.11@cbs.dk**

**[www.qualityresearchinternational.com](http://www.qualityresearchinternational.com)**

**Review available at  
Fdf site under publications**



# Motivating reluctant students to go on placement



*Areles Molleman*  
*Helen Barefoot*

University of  
Hertfordshire

**The Learning and Teaching Institute**

incorporating **The Blended Learning Unit** a Centre for Excellence in Teaching and Learning

# Session outline

- Motivational issues in programmes that have an optional Sandwich Year
- A new strategy to improve student motivation towards a Sandwich Year
- Discussion and exchange of ideas

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# Setting

- UH - School of Life Sciences

Year 1

Year 2

Year 3

Work placement in the UK **Sandwich Year** Work or study year abroad

- Automatically enrolled but students can easily opt out (~60%-95%)

**The Learning and Teaching Institute**

# Reasons students quote for opting out

- Don't want to be 4 years at uni
- Don't want further increase in debt
- Will lose friends
- It's scary, especially when having to leave home
- My parents don't support it



**The Learning and Teaching Institute**

# Reasons we think (/thought) students are opting out

- Many are comfortable at uni, thank you
- Many are not persistent enough
- Many are reluctant to consider their future
- Many are insufficiently convinced of the importance of work experience

**The Learning and Teaching Institute**

# Initial remedial action

- Use personal tutor system:  
Advice
- Career training sessions in semester A of year 2
  - Job application bread & butter
  - Employer, students presentations



**The Learning and Teaching Institute**

# Weaknesses of this approach

- Piecemeal: Students are not focussed
- Poor attendance: Preach only to the converted -those who need it the least
- Too late, e.g. pharma jobs come out in Aug/Sept.
- Many students don't relate to success stories – low self-esteem

**The Learning and Teaching Institute**

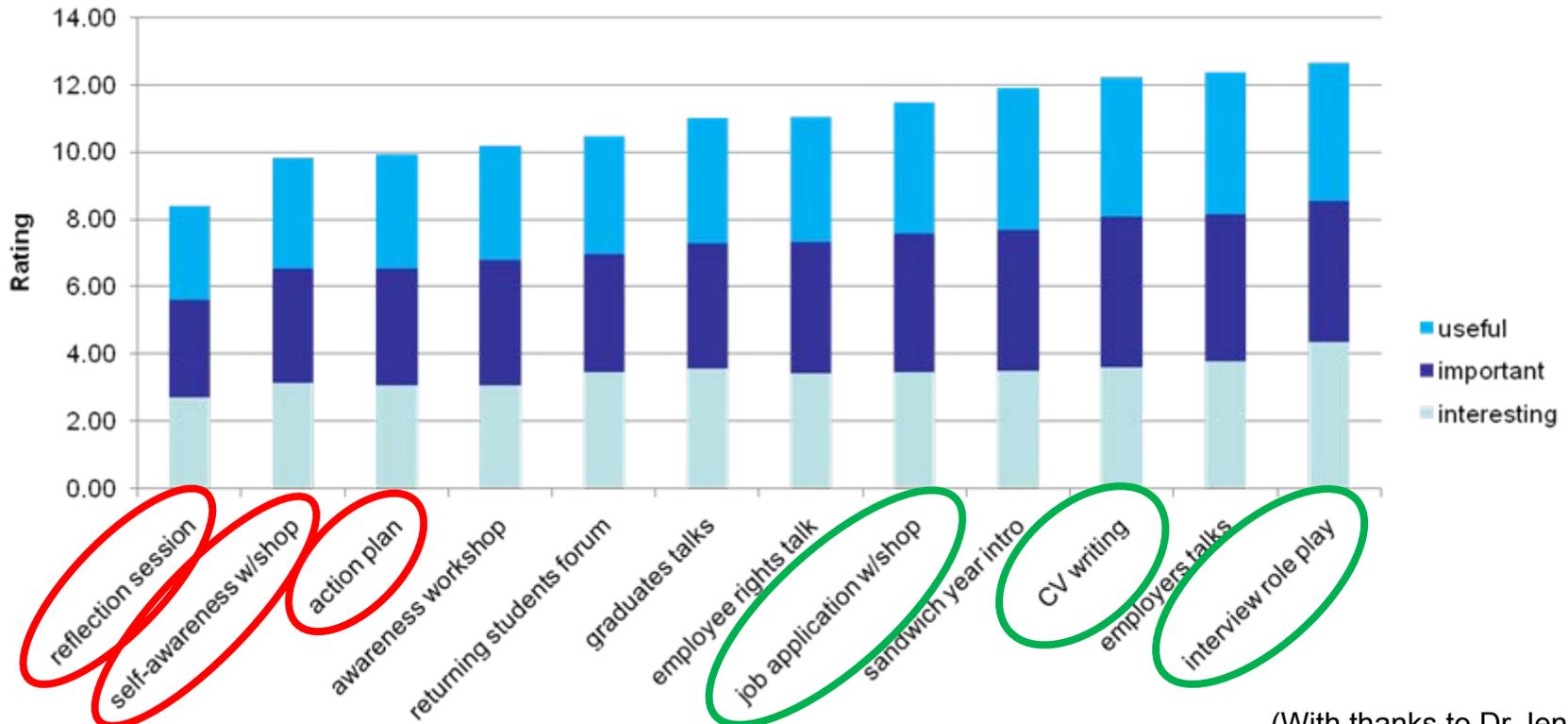
# Induction week programme

- Concentration of career training in induction week of Biosciences year 2
- Inclusion of self-awareness elements
- Follow-up with Action Plan in the personal tutor system

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# Student feedback: questionnaire results



(With thanks to Dr Jen Young)

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# Student feedback: questionnaire results

Comments: Very useful but

- Days a bit long after summer break
- Too much emphasis on a subgroup of degrees (Biomed Sci)
- Degree-specific sessions
- Needs further reinforcing throughout year

(With thanks to Dr Jen Young)

**The Learning and Teaching Institute**

# Improvements

- More degree-specific items
- Some way of reinforcing during year 2 (and 1?)
- Foster reflection skills more widely

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# Discussion

- How do we improve student motivation towards taking up a placement?

or, wider:

- How do we make lethargic students think timely about –and invest in- their career?

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# **Postgraduate Internships: the importance and value according to business students**

by

Eleanor Bueza and Jacqueline Steinmetz

Business Experience and International Unit (BEIU)

- Introduction
- The Questionnaire
  - Questions
  - Results
- The Focus Groups
  - Questions
  - Results
- Recommendations
- Conclusions

# Introduction

“To better understand how postgraduate students feel about integrated internships in their programmes and to find out what their needs and preferences are.”

# The Questionnaire

## Survey Monkey

Launched: 3 February 2009; Closed: 18 March 2009 (8 weeks)

226 respondents out of 1800 recipients

## Incentive

2 Eurostar Tickets

# The Questionnaire: questions

15-20 minutes; 9 sections; 30 questions

- Personal: sex, age, nationality
- Work Experience: previous UK experience, years of work experience, current employment status and type
- Course Information: degree title, Jan/Oct start,
- Internship Preferences: mode, months, location, paid / unpaid, sector, level,
- Internship Goals: motivation
- Services from WBS: before / during internship

## The Questionnaire: the results

### Personal data:

Sex: 62% female; 38% male

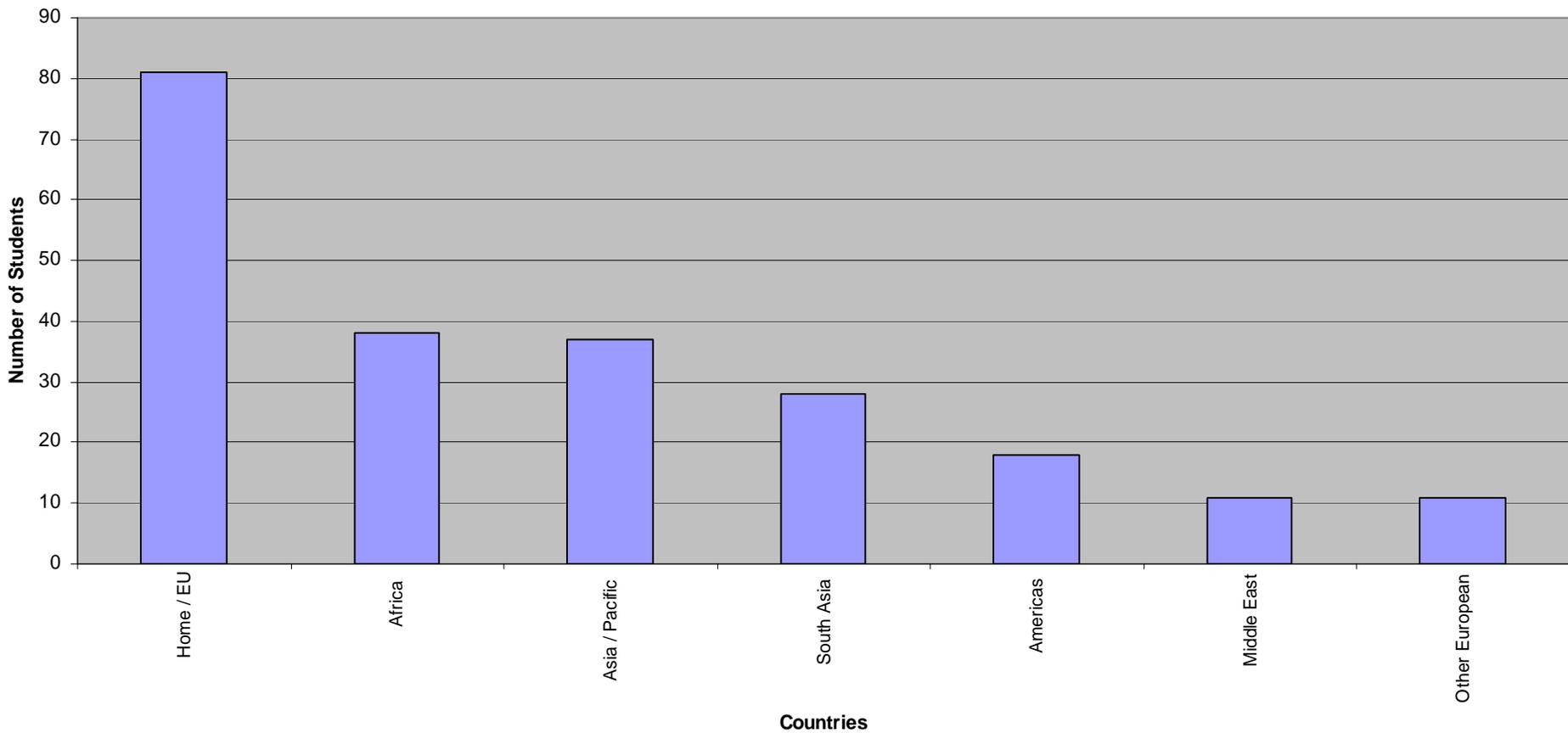
Age: 37% = 20-24; 34% = 25-29; 29% = 30+

### Nationality:

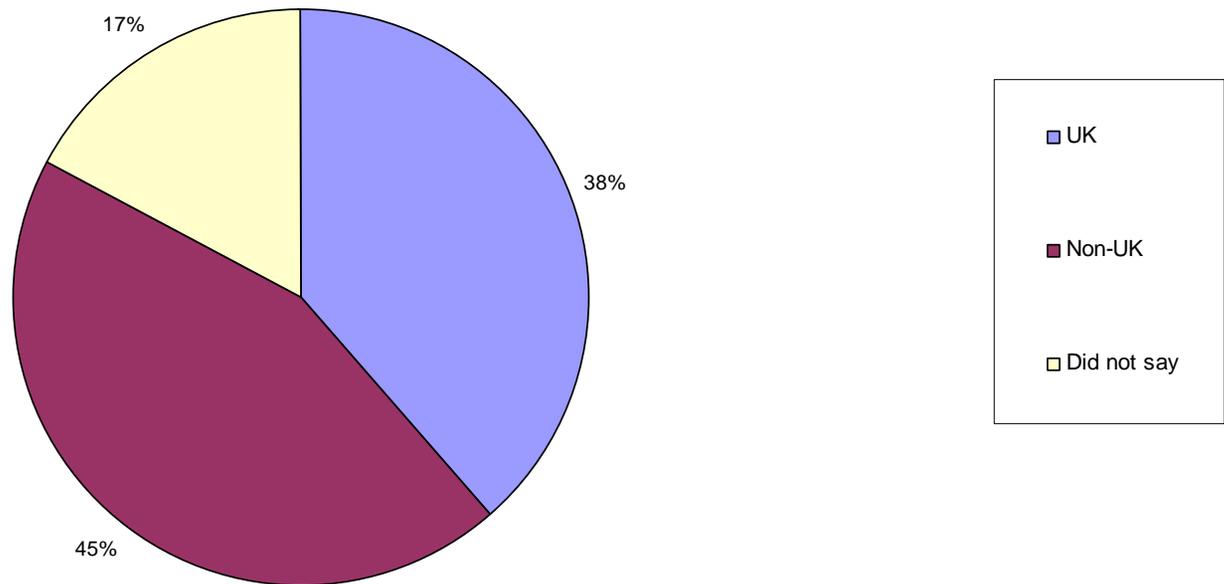
80% international students

20% home students

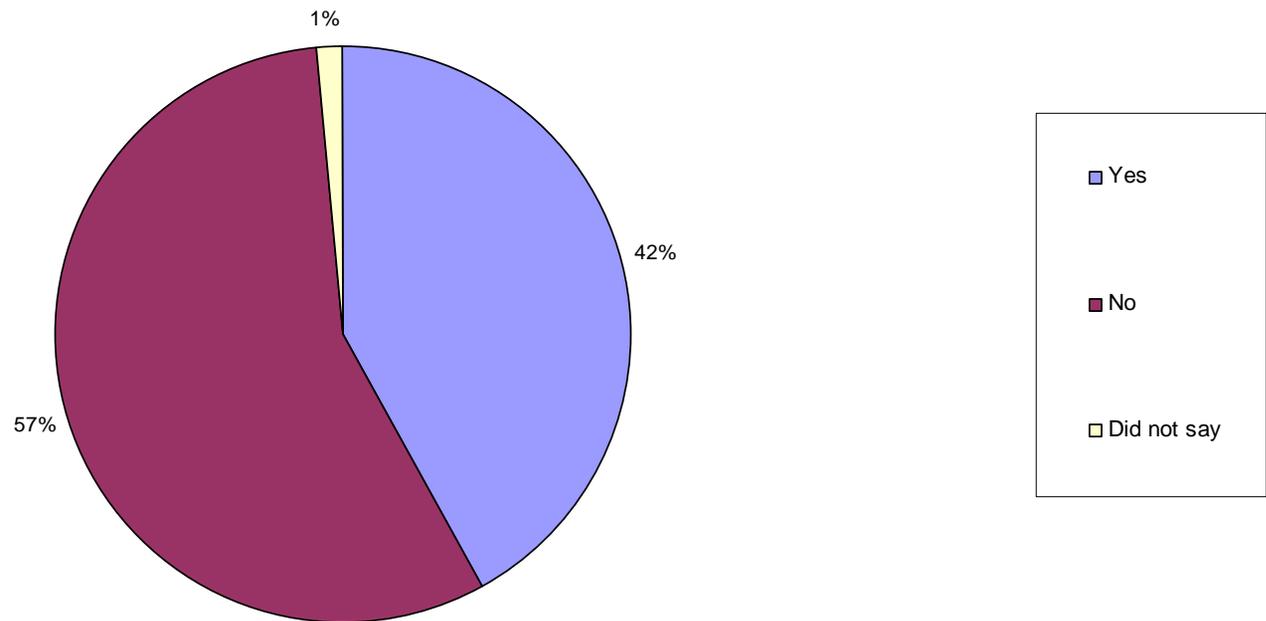
International Students' Country of Origin



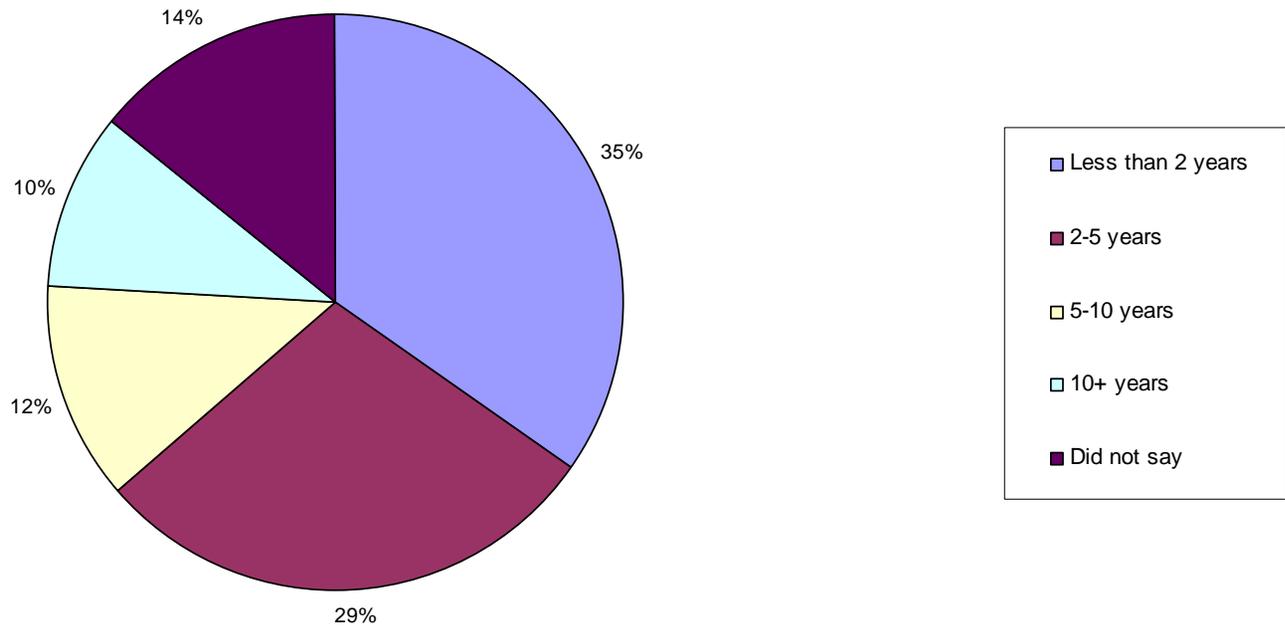
International Students' Residency Before Course



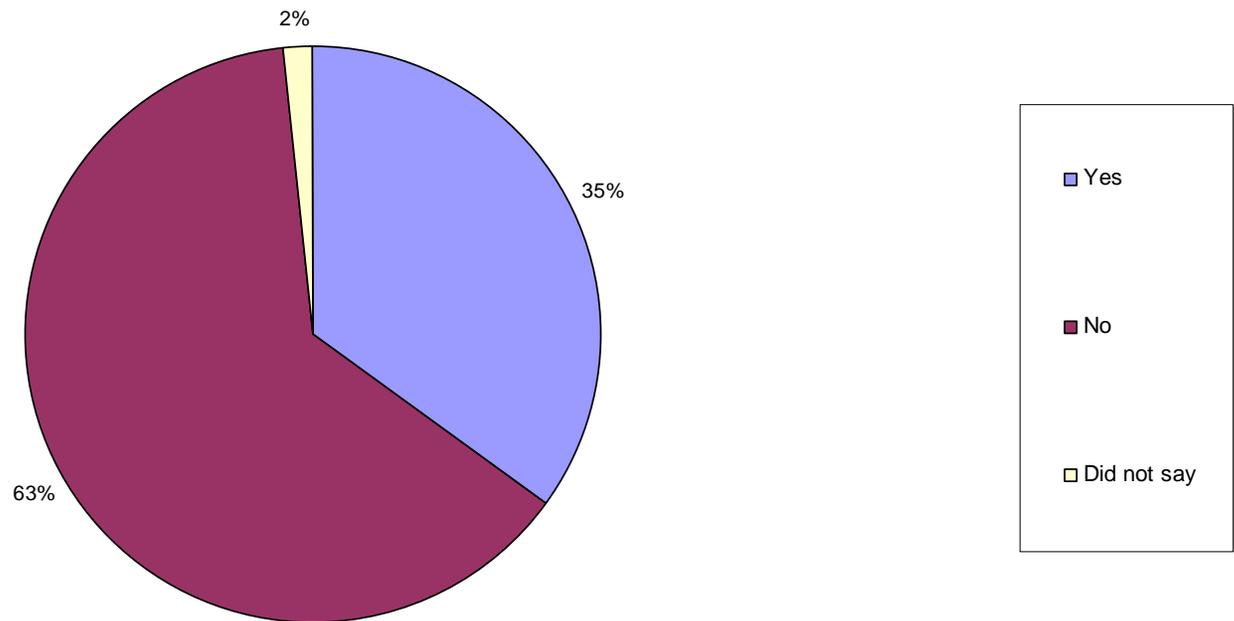
UK Work Experience Before Course



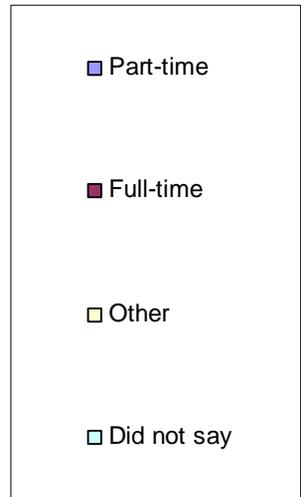
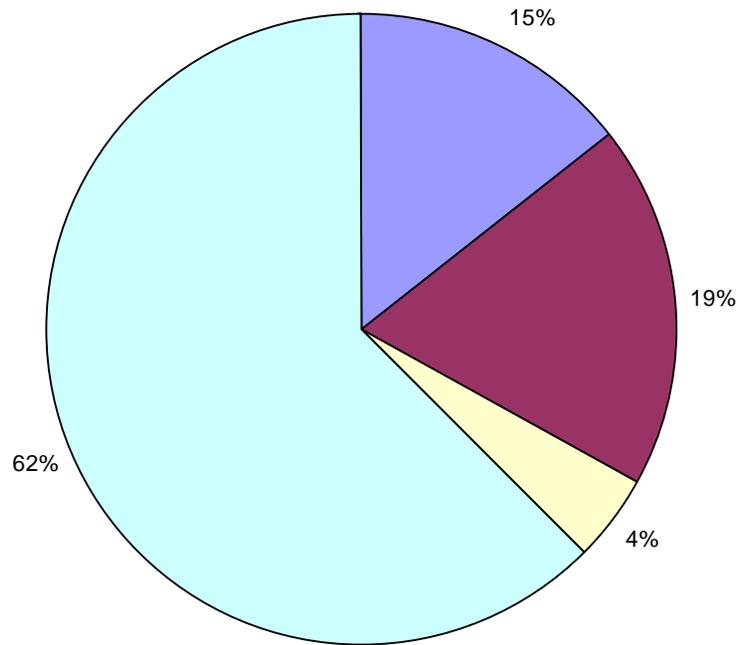
Years of Work Experience



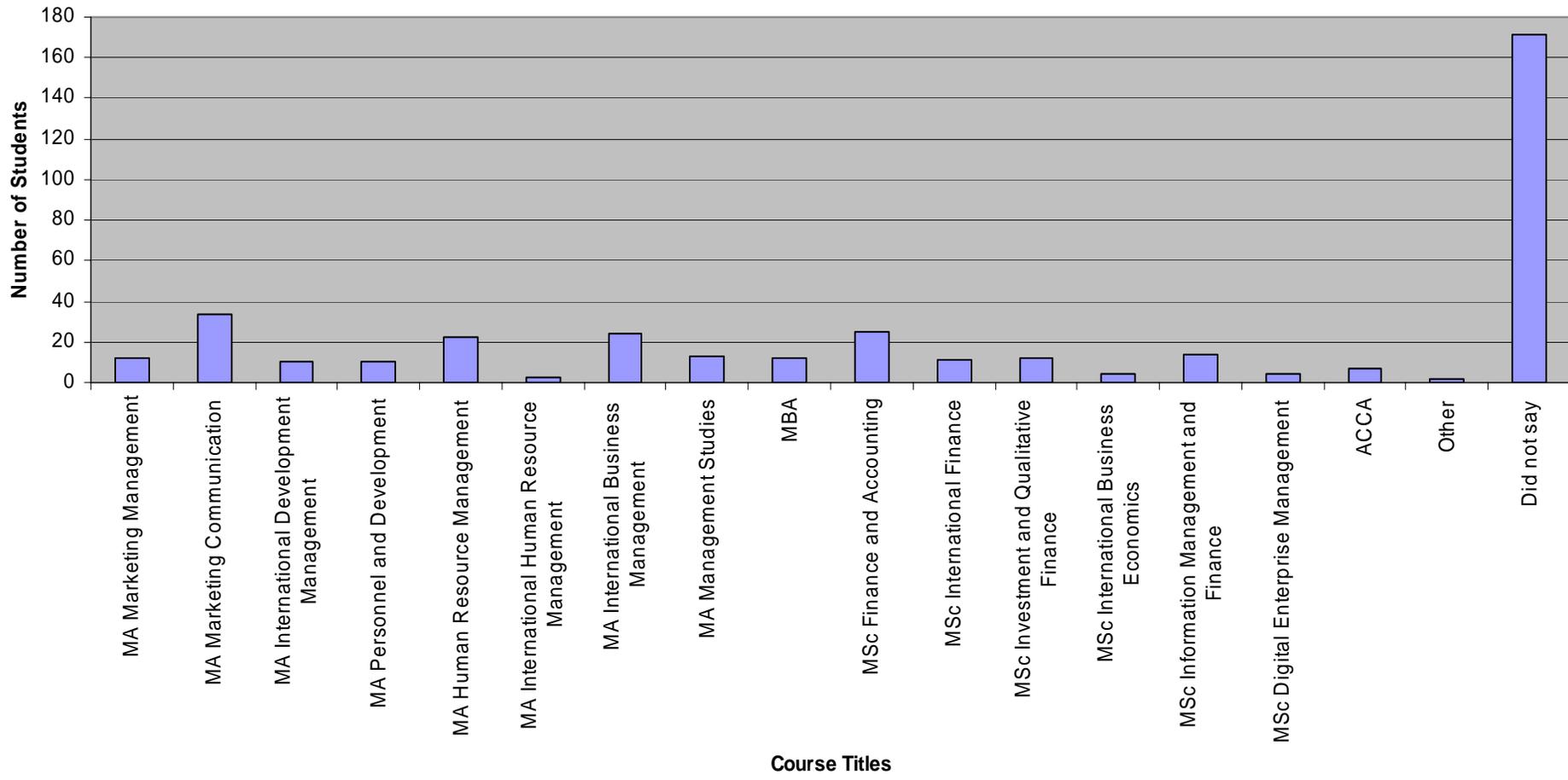
Currently Employed?



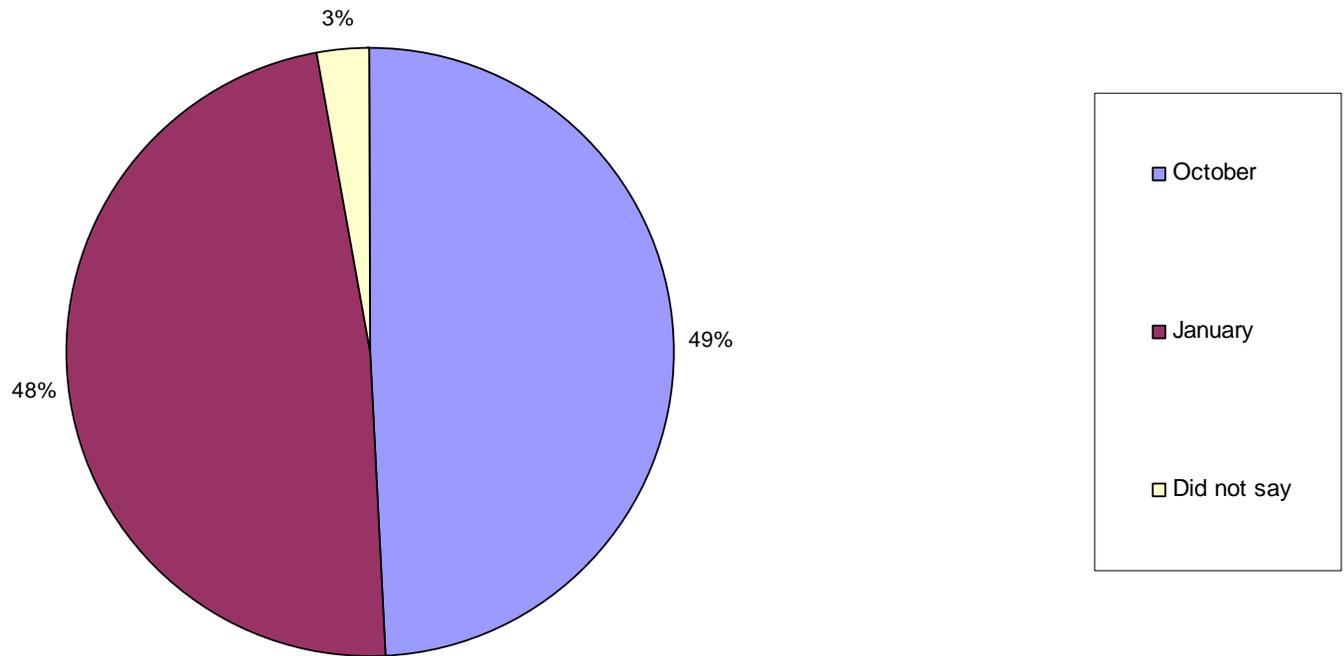
Type of Employment



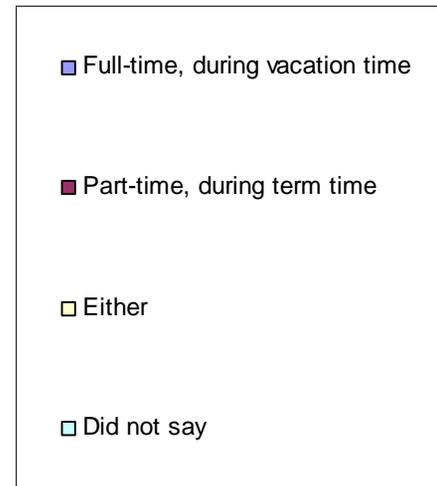
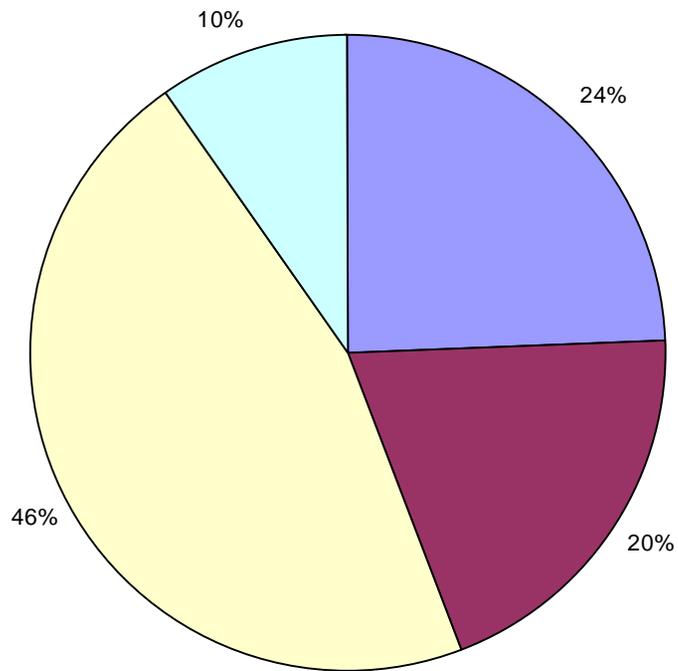
### Postgraduate Course Enrolment



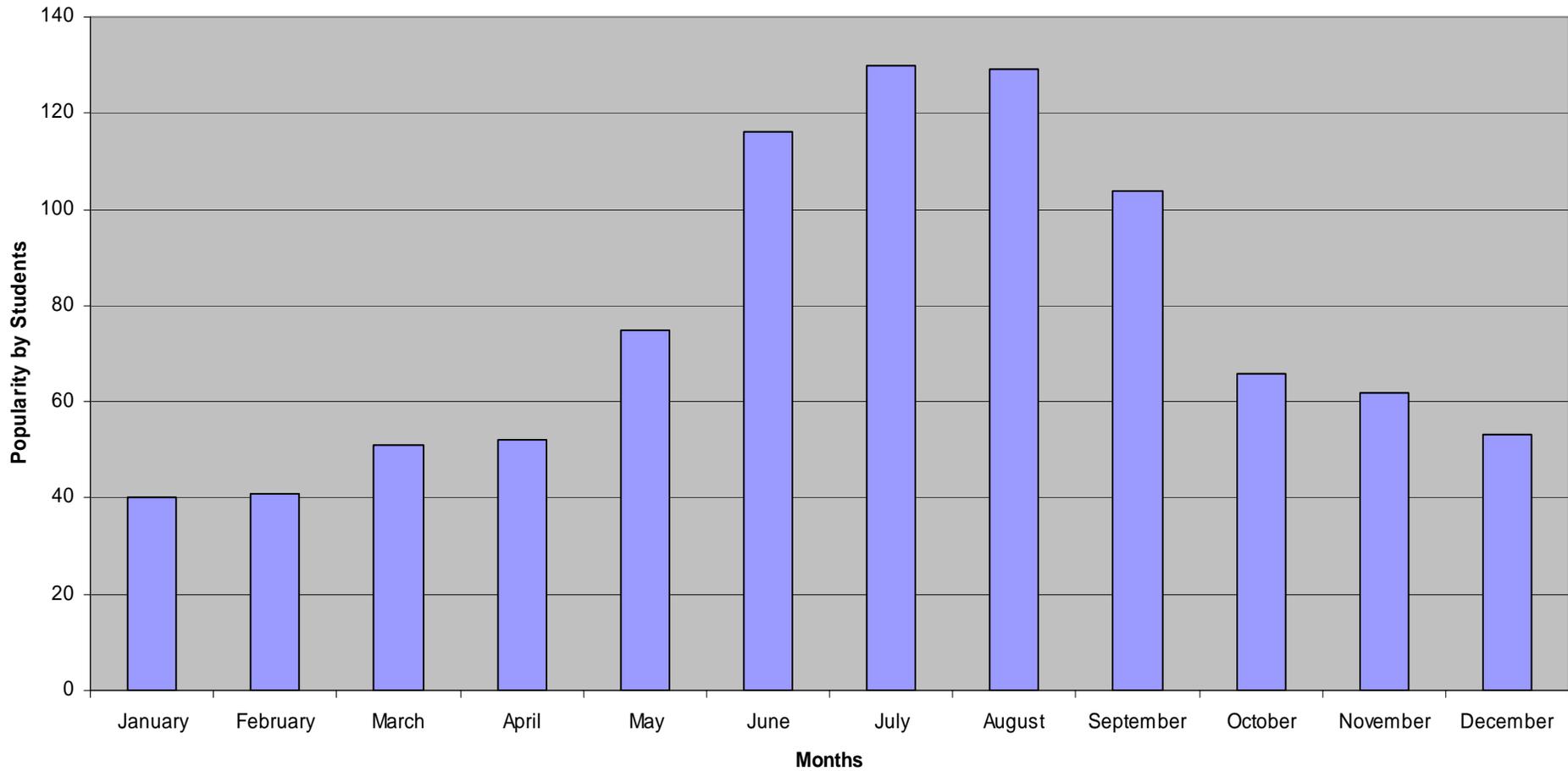
Start of Course



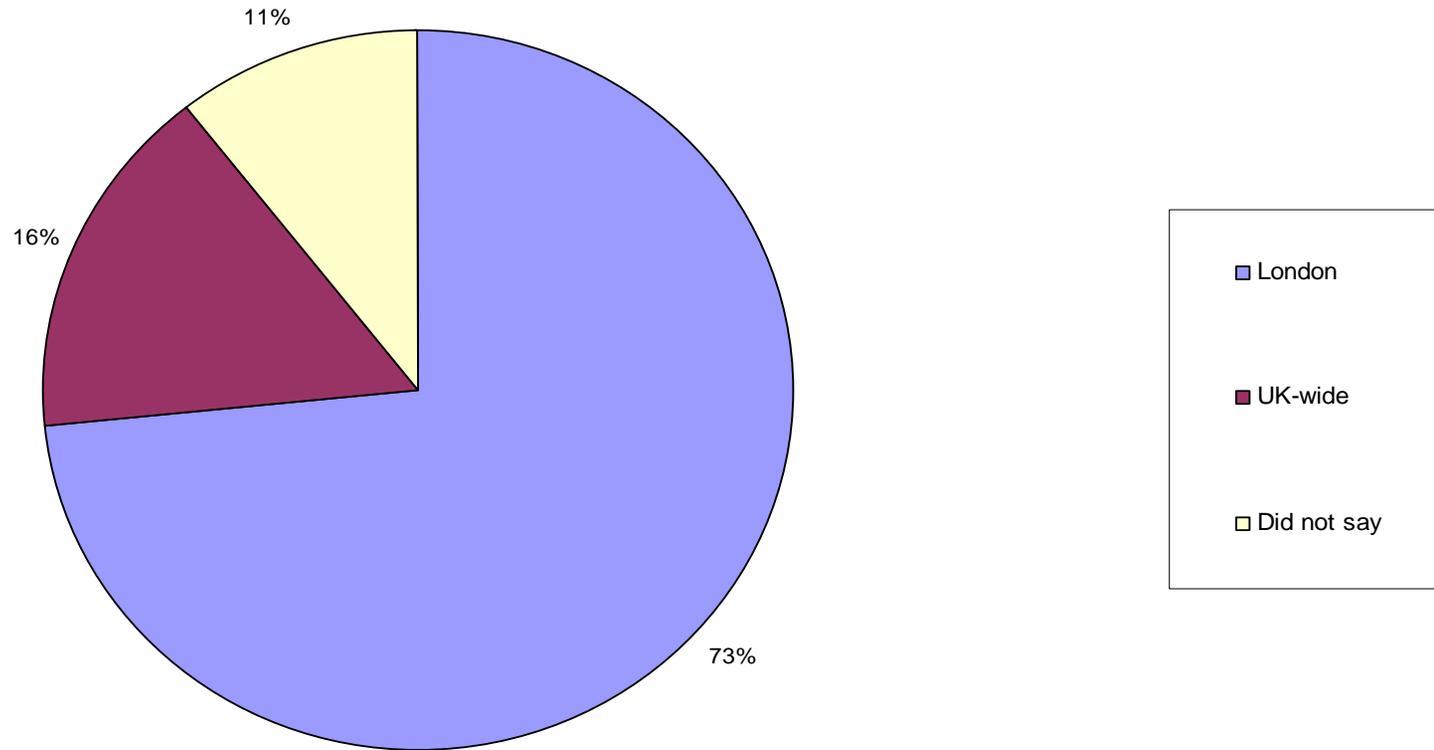
Interest in Mode of Internship



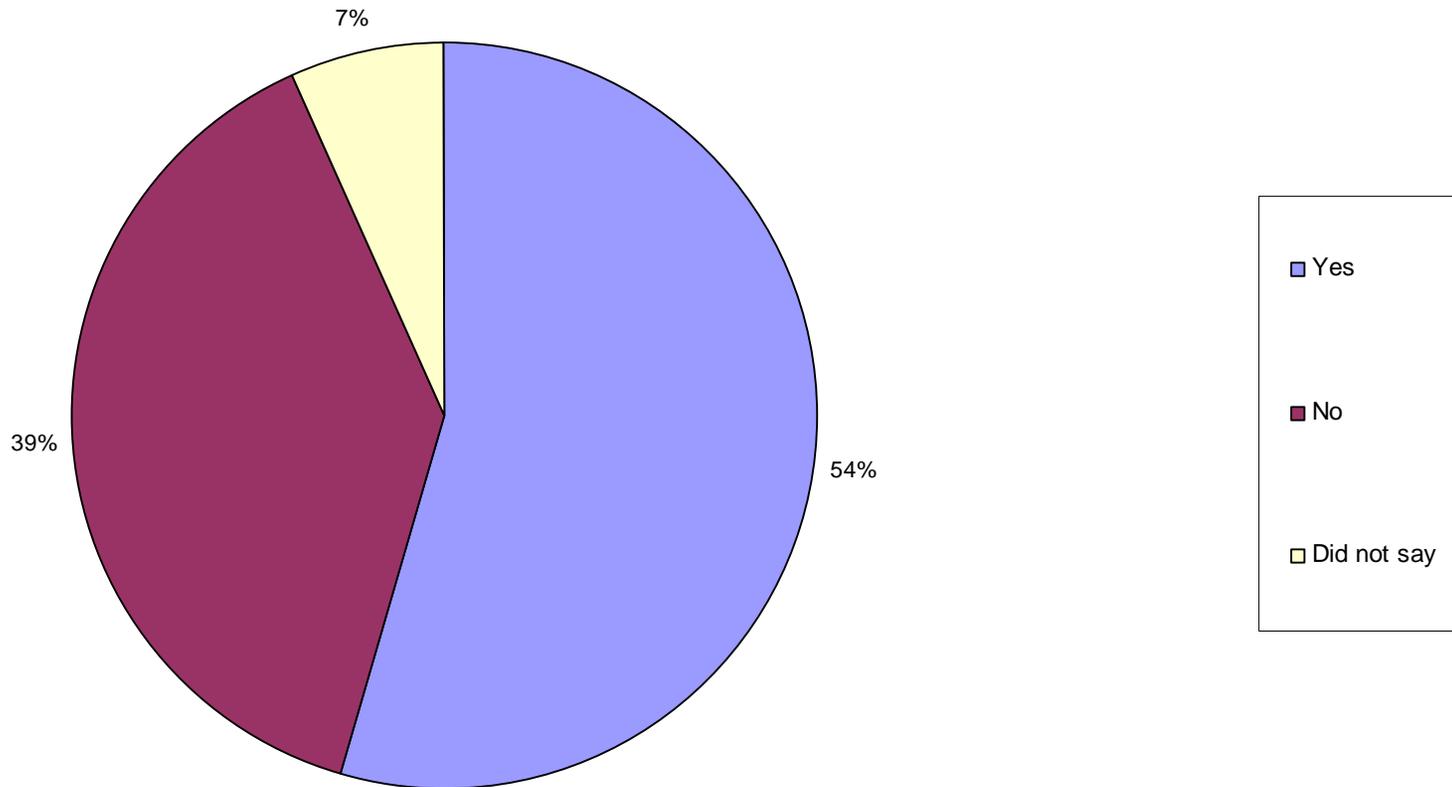
Preferred Internship Month



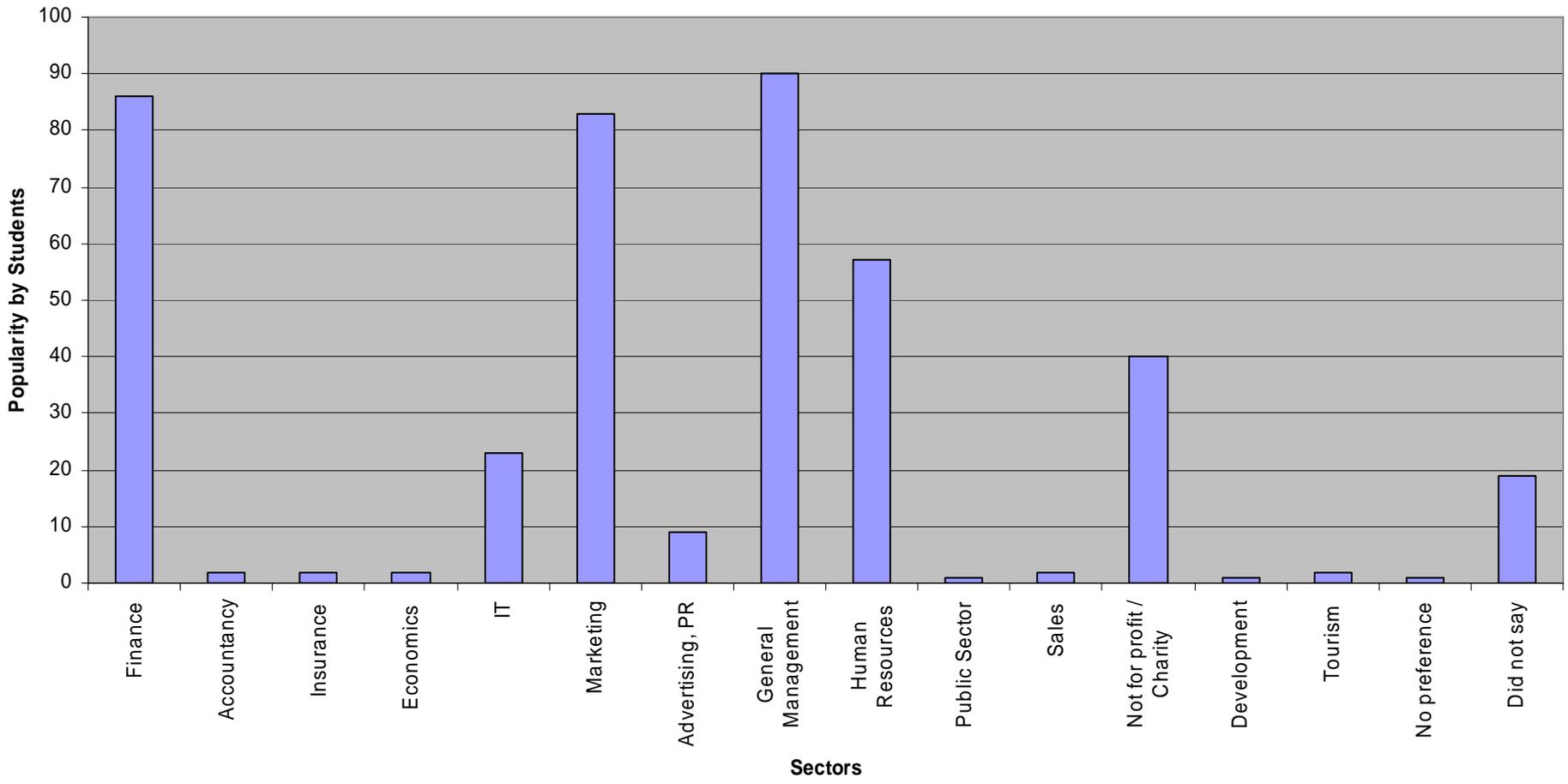
Preferred Location of Work



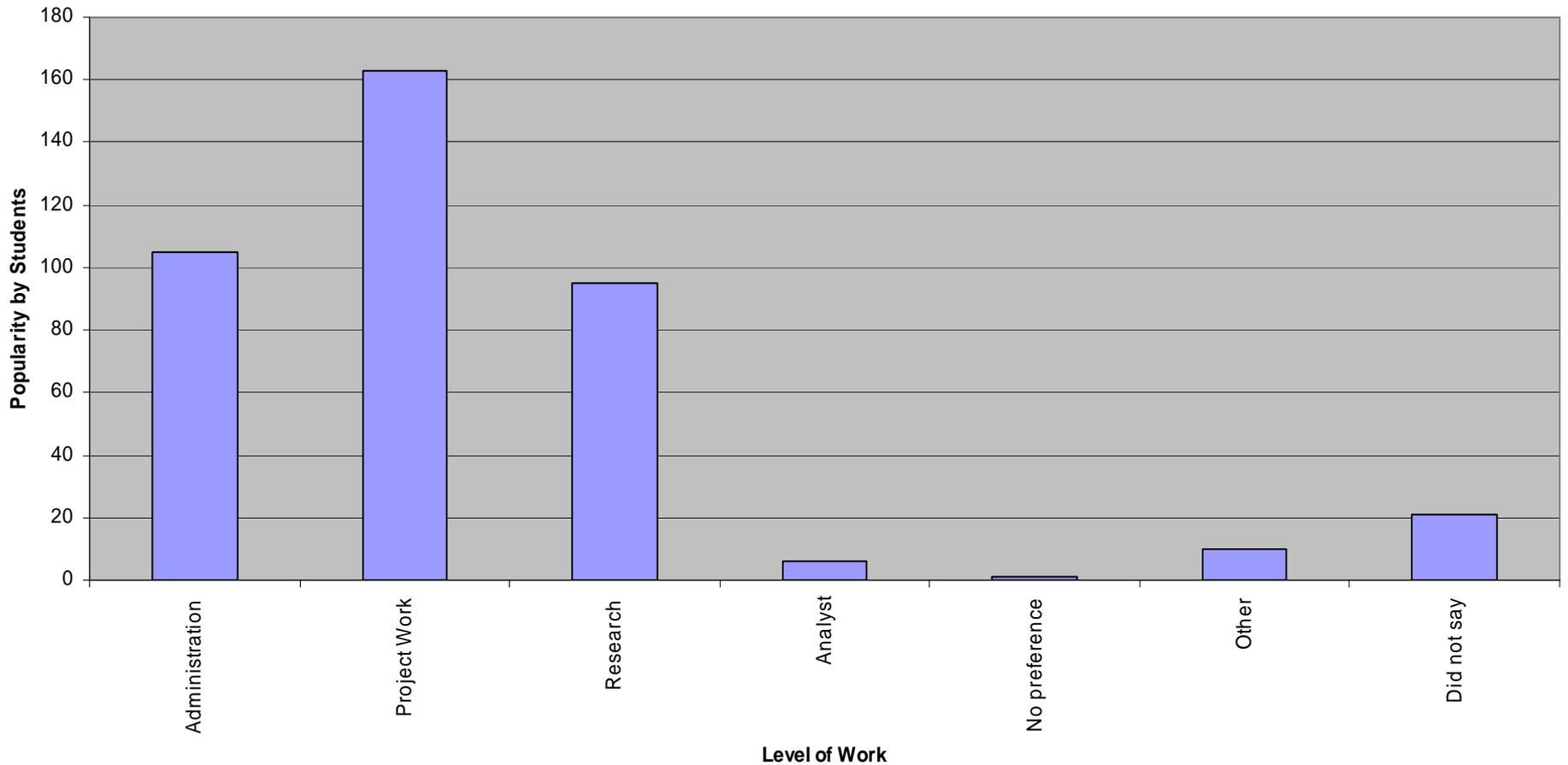
Acceptability of an Unpaid Internship



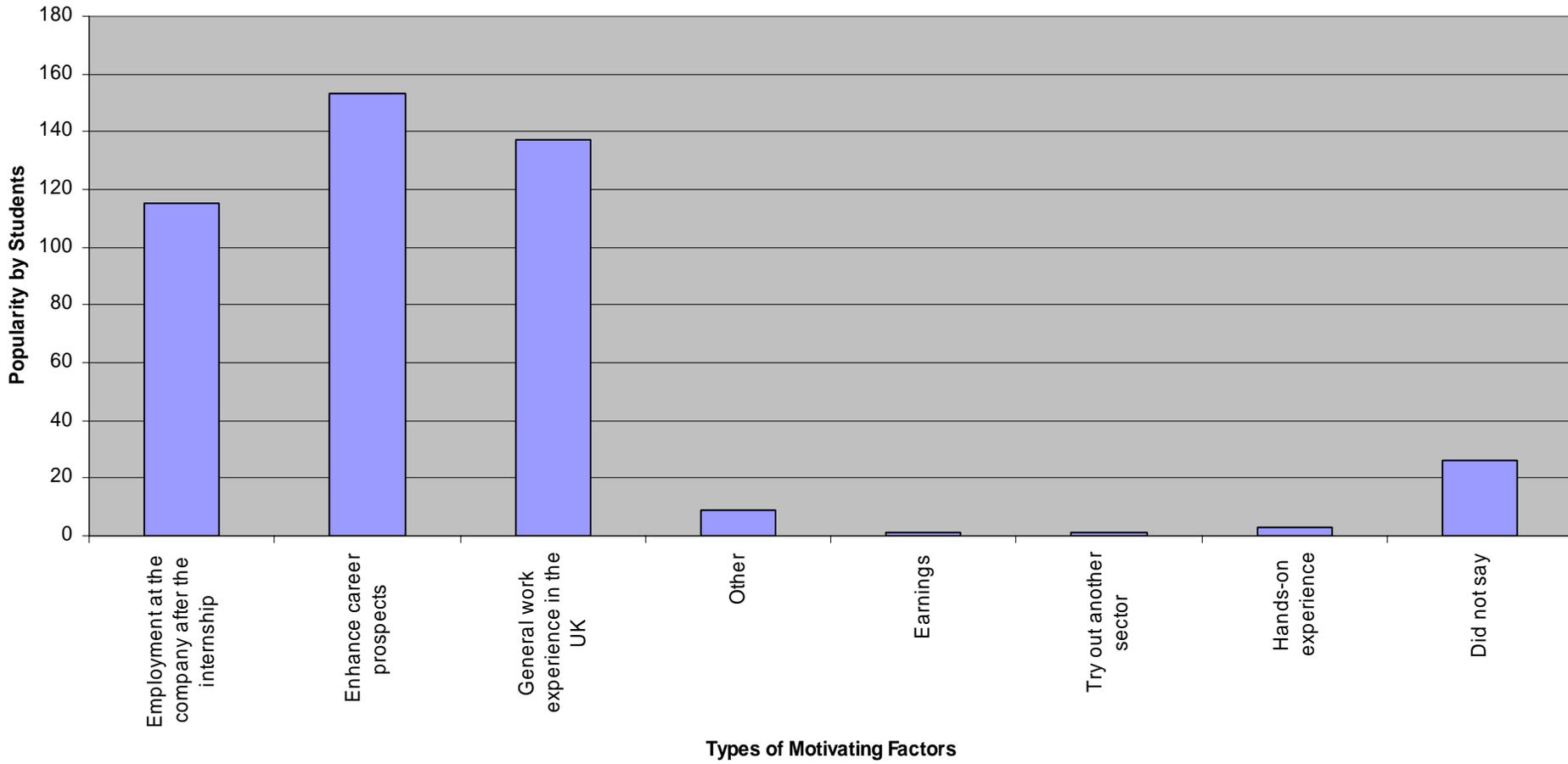
Preferred Internship Sector



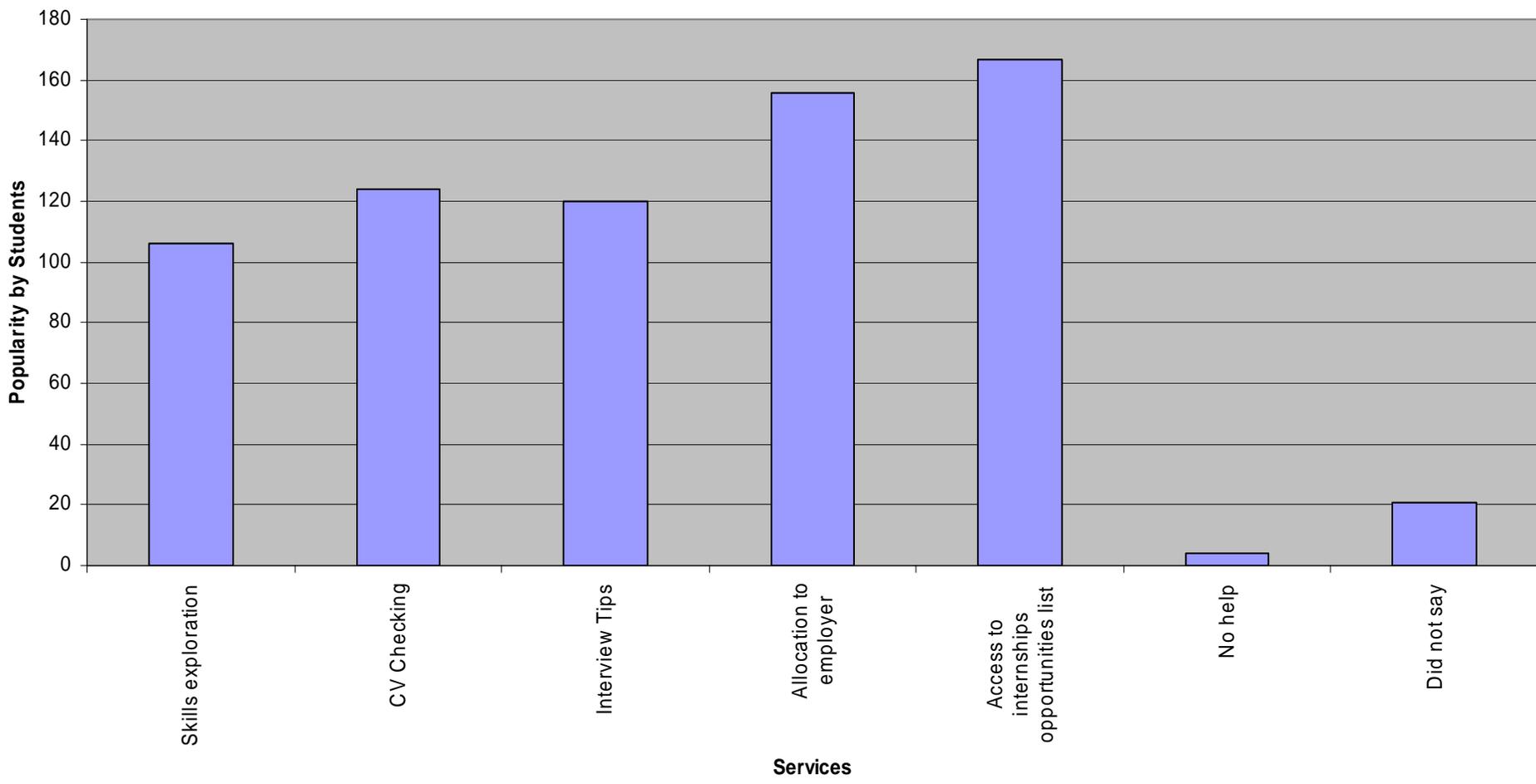
Preferred Internship Level



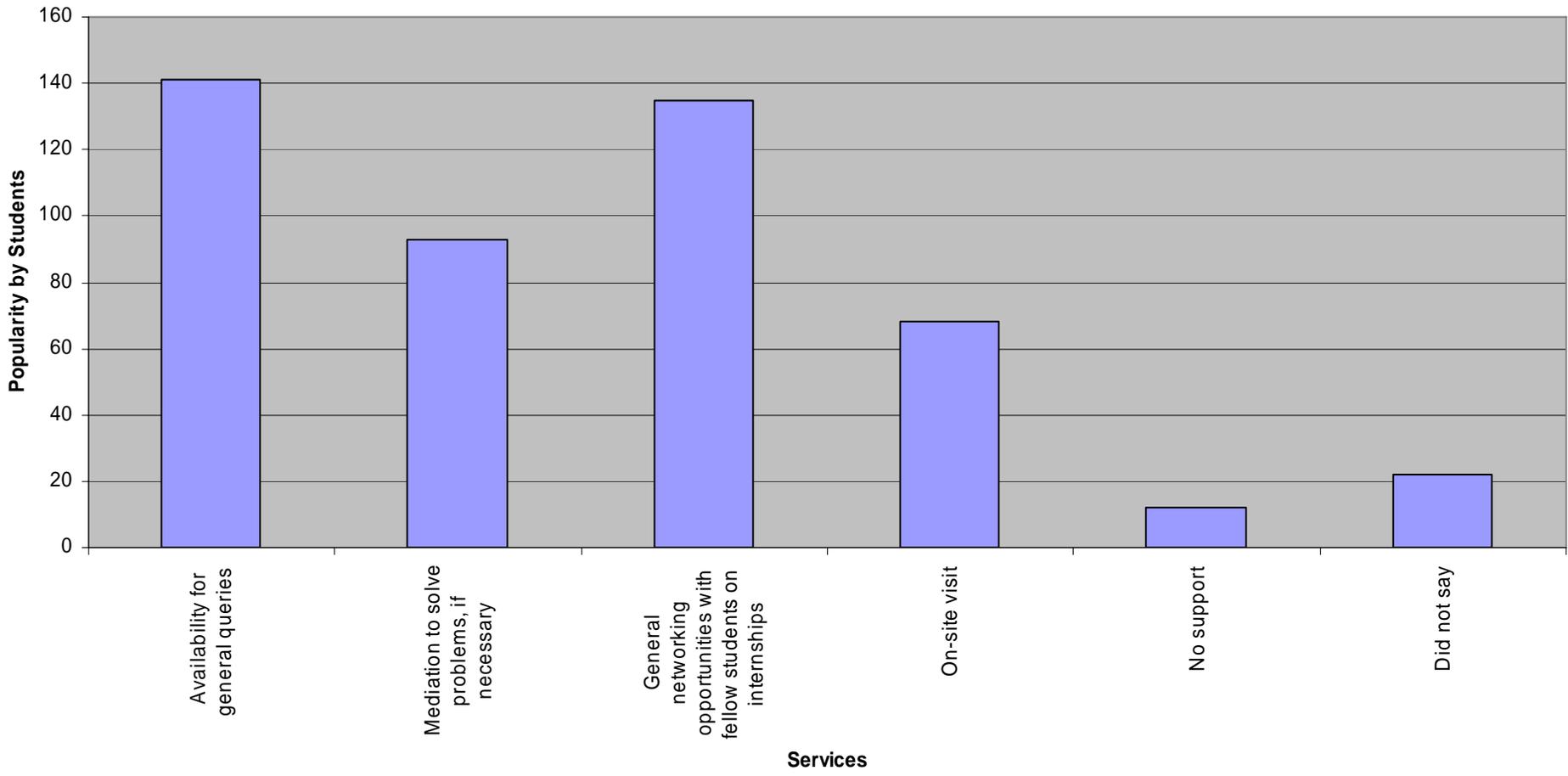
Internship Motivation



Wish List of Services from WBS Before an Internship



Wish List of Services from WBS during an Internship



# The Focus Group

1 hour

Participants:

- 4 females
- International students: USA, Caribbean, Indian and Portuguese
- Significant work experience
- 3 January starters; 1 September starter

# The Focus Group

## Questions and Answers

### A) General Preferences:

- When in the year would you prefer to undertake an internship?
- Would you prefer to work part-time hours or full-time hours during an internship? Why?
- How long should an internship last?

# The Focus Group

## Questions and Answers

### B) Curriculum:

- Should an internship be part of the curriculum?
- What kind of work would you like to engage in, i.e. project work that is related to your course or other?

# The Focus Group

## Questions and Answers

### C) Benefits / Value

- What do you think are the benefits or advantages to undertaking an internship?
- Do you think an internship will affect your employability?
- Would you consider your internship employer as a possible graduate employer?

## Recommendations

### A) From the questionnaire

- To coordinate short-term, intense internships over the vacation period; not concentrating only on the autumn period
- To consider widening the offer to other MA programmes
- To research and develop links to employers in these fields
- To investigate the possibility of paid internships and post-internship recruitment
- To develop an advertising list on BlackBoard

# Recommendations

## B) From the Focus Group

- For Int'l students, to start an internship immediately after the course finishes
- To investigate the possibility of linking the internship to the curriculum
- To seek out internship opportunities lasting up to 3 months over the summer for int'l students
- To seek out internship opportunities in specific, requested fields

## Conclusions

- Positive feelings
- Career-specific internships
- UK work experience enhances UK and overseas employability
- Preference for paid over unpaid
- Understand and appreciate the value of the combination of in-class theory with practical work-based learning
- Appreciate School internship services provided before and during
- Other Schools to conduct similar survey to find out needs and preferences for work-based learning

**Thank you.**

Questions?

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[J.Steinmetz@westminster.ac.uk](mailto:J.Steinmetz@westminster.ac.uk)

# Learning Interpersonal Skills through 'on the spot' reflection and rehearsal

Bill Penson & Sarah Patrick

Senior Lecturers in Mental Health  
Psychological Therapies & Mental Health Group  
Faculty of Health

# Aims

- To orientate participants to methods for coaching interpersonal skill development
- To look at how educators can develop criteria for feedback and reflection,
- To discuss how this can be built into curriculum design
- To review learner feedback in using this experience

# Rationale

- Interpersonal skills play a major part in a learner's development
- Some learners need to develop such skills as essential in dealing with customers or clients
- Various models/approaches draw on such skill development e.g. therapy, coaching, mentoring
- Teaching/learning interpersonal skills is deserving of attention

# Linking activities to Learning Outcomes

- The learning environment is ‘highly unpredictable’ (Webster 2002)
- Constructive or curriculum alignment ‘traps’ students in a ‘web of consistency, optimising the likelihood that they will engage in appropriate learning activities’ (Biggs 2003)
- Assessment, learning and teaching therefore need to be congruent

Biggs, J (2003) Teaching for quality learning at university. 2nd Edition. Maidenhead. SRHE & Open University Press

Webster, C (2002) Curricula, chaos and constructive alignment. Learning and Teaching Support Network; Generic centre. Published online 11th November.

Available from; <[www.heacademy.ac.uk/resources.asp?section=generic&process=search8pattern-constructive%20alignment](http://www.heacademy.ac.uk/resources.asp?section=generic&process=search8pattern-constructive%20alignment)> [Accessed 27th July 2005]

# The learning experience regarding interpersonal skills

- This is about ***skill development*** so learning needs to be about ***reflecting*** on ***performance - DOING***
- Assessment, Learning & Teaching methods should reflect this:
  - simulation, role play, using video/audio objects, ‘real life’
  - Discussions, presentations
  - Critiquing, ‘selling’, supporting

# What are the qualities you value and how do you know they're demonstrated?

- What are the qualities and skills that you are looking for in your students?
  - How does this translate into a learning outcome?
- What behaviours go with this which are observable and/or measurable?

# Criteria for skills: **interpersonal effectiveness**

- The practitioner seemed open rather than defensive shown by not holding back impressions or information, not evading students questions
- Content of what the practitioner said communicated warmth, concern, caring rather than cold indifference
- Practitioner did not criticise, disapprove or ridicule the student's behaviour or point of view
- Practitioner made clear statement without frequent hesitations or rephrasing
- Practitioner was in control of the tutorial. She/he was able to shift appropriately between listening & leading.

Source: adapted from Cognitive Therapy Scale

# Example 1 from a Psychodynamic Interpersonal Therapy Competency Scale

- **CUE BASIS**: Did the therapist explicitly base his/her interventions on cues (verbal and non-verbal) supplied by the client?
- **Rated**: (Not at all) 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5 – 6 – 7 (Extensively)
- The purpose of this item is to measure the extent to which the therapist's interventions are explicitly based on verbal and non-verbal cues supplied by the client during the session. These cues include choice of words as well as the content expressed. They also include non-verbal cue such as posture, gestures, facial expression, and tone of voice.
- **COMPETENCY MEASURE**: (very incompetent) 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5 – 6 – 7 (Exceptional)
- **Less Competent**: Therapists' comments are unrelated to patients' verbal or non-verbal behaviour. Therapist ignores important cues, especially regarding patients' current feelings and experience of the therapist behaviour.
- **More Competent**: Therapist bases comments on patients' verbal, non-verbal and vocal behaviour, in particular picking up cues about current feelings and patient experience of therapeutic relationship

# Example 2 from a Psychodynamic Interpersonal Therapy Competency Scale

- **NEGOTIATING STYLE**: Did the therapist express his/her views concerning the patient's experiences and circumstances as tentative statements, open to correction, and inviting elaboration and feedback?
- **Rated 1-7**
- This item assesses the "how" of the therapist's talk. It is concerned with the extent to which the therapist, rather than implying "this is right", conveys the message, "This is the way I see it now...but maybe I am wrong". To be tentative is not to be vague. Therapist statements in a session rated highly on this item may well be definite (i.e. clearly "owned" by the therapist) and often specific (i.e. referring to particular experiences and making quite detailed comment or observations concerning these). These qualities of definiteness and specificity follow from the therapist doing his or her best to be accurate. However the therapist rating highly on this item acknowledges that he or she does not know which answers are right for the patient. The therapist conveys his or her wish to be corrected, expressing a hope for communication which will lead on to the dialogue, with an adjustment of misunderstanding. This wish is expressed in words, constructions and turns of phrase, as well as in the way they are spoken. The rater should watch for such indicators of tentativeness as 'maybe', 'it's almost as if', 'I'm not sure about this, but...', 'I wonder if...', etc
- **COMPETENCY: Rated 1 - 7**
- **Less competent**: Therapist makes unqualified, dogmatic or overgeneralised statements, implying they know better than the patient. Therapists' comments are vague rather than tentative, tending to alienate the patient rather than facilitate exploration.
- **More competent**: Therapists' comments are offered in a tentative way that invites correction and exploration. Therapist modifies statements on the basis of feedback from the patient

# Setting Up Experiential Learning

- Ground Rules
- Boundaries and limits
- Role and Purpose
- Debriefing
- Feedback Rules:
  - Self and other awareness
  - Picking up cues
  - Succinct and focussed
  - Specific (may be determined by learner)
  - Style of delivery
  - Timing (need to be able to deal with consequences)
- Facilitator skills

# Lets set up a role play..

- Triads:
- You will have a conversation for 4 – 5 minutes
- Person 1 is ill and needs to hand work over to person 2
- Person 2 is already very busy and feeling pressured
- 3<sup>rd</sup> person is observing only and looking for the interpersonal qualities and skills demonstrated by the other two.
- After the role play, you will all have an opportunity to feedback to each other

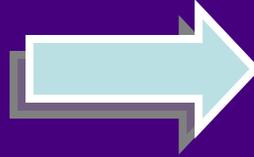
# Reflecting on the Experience

- Using Driscoll's 'WHAT?' Model of Reflection (Driscoll 2000) think about taking part in this workshop and consider:
  - content and
  - process
  - from a participant and teaching perspective?
- And what about the model of Reflection?

Driscoll J (2000) *Practising clinical supervision*. Edinburgh: Balliere Tindall

A description of the event: **WHAT?**

- Is the purpose of returning to this situation?
- Happened?
- Did I see or do?
- Was my reaction to it?
- Did other people do that were involved in this?



An analysis of the event:

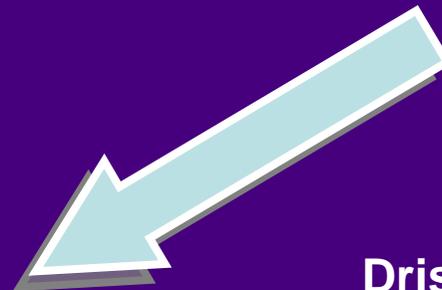
**SO WHAT?**

- How did I feel at the time of the event?
- Were those feelings I had any different from other people who were also involved at the time?
- Are my feelings now, after the event, any different from what I experienced at the time?
- Do I still feel troubled, if so in what way?
- What were the effects of what I did (or did not do)
- What positive aspects now emerge for me from the event?
- What have I noticed about my behaviour by taking a more measured look at it?
- What observations can other people offer by way of helping me to reflect on my actions?

Proposed Actions following the event?

**NOW WHAT?**

- What are the implications for others and me in clinical practice based on what I've analysed?
- What difference does it make if I choose to do nothing?
- Where can I get more information to face a similar situation again?
- How can I modify my practice if a similar situation happens again?
- What help do I need to help me 'action' the results of reflection?
- Which aspect should be tackled first?
- How will I notice that I am any different in clinical practice?
- What is the main learning that I take from reflecting on practice in this instance?



**Driscoll's Model  
of Reflection  
(2000)**



# Management of Student Work Experience

## Postgraduate Qualifications

# Summary of NASES Research

- Benchmark roles
- Compatibility with others in sector
- Professional recognition
- Value contribution
- Role specific
- Career path and progression
- Incentive to remain in sector

# Structure of the Qualifications



Certificate

Recruitment

Learning from Work  
Experience

Employer Relations



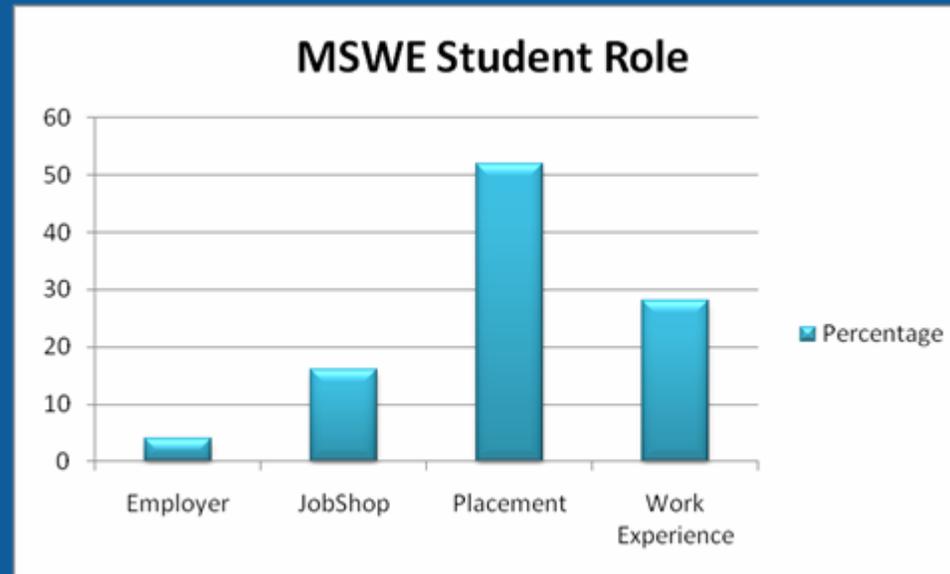
Diploma

Human & Financial  
Resources

Enhancing Effectiveness

Marketing

# Current Student Profile



# Feedback so far - VLE

- “The module content was appropriate for the work I do but the structure was confusing as it was the first time I'd studied academically for many years.”
- “The inclusion of reflective exercises was an effective approach in relating theory to practice.”
- “As this was distance learning and a new course based on work related issues some of the assessment criteria could have been made clearer from the outset. Feedback was good.”

# Feedback so far - residential

- “Very useful and thought provoking”
- “100% relevant - I can't wait to get back to work and implement this”
- “Thoroughly enjoyable, both trainers very easy to get on with, good teaching style.”
- “Useful to relate it to our work, many other courses usually directed to Career Advisers”

# An example from Residential

- Listening Exercise

# An Example from VLE

Imagine a small employer called 'Brite Lites' have e-mailed you as follows

*Hi - my name is Andy James and I run a small local advertising agency called Brite Lites. There are currently five people in my team, but we are planning to grow.*

*I would like to build better links with you, as your service was so supportive of me during my studies. I finished studying in 2000. I was thinking of offering some sort of work experience within my company for the 'right' person. I also have some basic administrative tasks that I need help with such as computer inputting and filing - I could pay a basic salary for these.*

*Can you tell me how your service could help me? I also need advice on the type of vacancy I should advertise and my next steps in advertising the job.*

How would you respond to Andy? What type of vacancy(ies) could Andy advertise through your service and what preparation would Andy need to take before advertising his opportunities? Please write a response which could be e-mailed to Andy.

# More information

- Contact us on
- [careerstudy@reading.ac.uk](mailto:careerstudy@reading.ac.uk)
- [J.m.digby@reading.ac.uk](mailto:J.m.digby@reading.ac.uk)
- 0118 378 2503

## **Theme: Learning from and reflecting experience**

### **Developing the reflective learner: experiences of the MA in Applied Research and Consultancy at Lancaster**

Frank Dawes, Director of Employability, Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences,  
Lancaster University

#### **1. Introduction**

The paper aims to illustrate how the MA in Applied Research and Consultancy at Lancaster has developed a learning strategy that requires them to develop their reflective learning skills through several assessed elements of the course.

The programme engages students to work as 'consultants' to address the needs of a client organisation within the real work constraints of time and resources. Each project has its own detailed objectives presented in an initial consultancy which is agreed between the client, the university and the student. These objectives identify the key issue or problem that needs to be addressed through the consultancy project and identifies some initial outline objectives.

#### **2. Structure of the MA**

Students undertaking the course take four modules and are required to complete a dissertation.

The modules are: -

1. The Consultant Research Methods Workshop
2. Personal Development
3. Research and Consultancy Skills in Practice
4. Work Placement – Consultancy project
5. Dissertation

The reflective learning skills are developed principally through three of the five modules: The personal development module; the work placement module and the dissertation.

The dissertation for the MA differs significantly from dissertations on other MA programmes. Rather than offering the results of the project the dissertation instead offers a critical analysis and evaluation of the process of completing the consultancy. Although the dissertation is based on the student's experience of the consultancy, it should be well supported by references to relevant concepts.

This requires the student to reflect on practice and 'make sense' of the theoretical concepts when applied to 'real' issues.

### 3. Reflection in Learning

The role of reflection in experiential learning has been identified as a key process by many authors (Brookfield, 1983; Dewey, 1933; Houle, 1980). Perhaps the most widely used experiential learning model is Kolb's (1984) framework, the four stage cyclical model of experiential learning acknowledges the importance of an individual's experience within the learning process.

Individuals' actions lead to *concrete experiences* (CE) which provide us with a basis for reflection; *reflective observation* (RO) takes place when we stand back and think about our experiences and analyse the outcomes of these. This leads to the development of ideas about how things relate to one another – Kolb refers to this as *abstract conceptualisation* (AC).

Following this stage of the cycle, ideas are put into practice to see if they lead to improvements. This *active experimentation* (AE) stage leads to new experiences, -

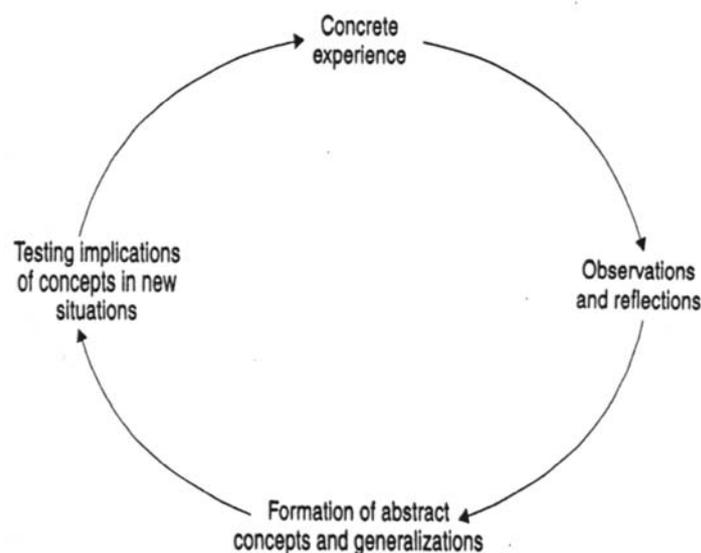


Figure 1: The learning cycle adapted from Kolb (1984)

Boud et al (1985) suggest that Kolb's model pays insufficient attention to the process of reflection and the phases it consists of. Several writers have focused directly on this and Moon (2000) draws together the work of Steinaker and Bell (1979); Boyd and Fales (1983); Boud, Keogh and Walker (1985) and Atkins and Murphy (1993) in order to identify the phases in the reflection process. As she indicates these are concerned with "how the experience is experienced" (Moon, 2000:31). These phases are outlined below:

- Development of a need to resolve something
- Clarification of the issue
- Review and recollection
- Review of the emotional state

- Processing of knowledge and ideas
- Eventual resolution and possible action and transformations

The need to resolve something results from an experience that the learner has which begins with a sense of discomfort or unease. The need to clarify the issue is fundamental in identifying what the focus of reflection actually is; clarification occurs through some means of review or recollection of events. It may mean returning to notes made at the time of the experience or through a discussion of the events that took place.

The processing of knowledge and ideas allows the learner to link new data to that which is already known and integrate this within their 'knowledge system', which is similar in principle to Kolb's stage of abstract conceptualisation. Eventual resolution and possible action and transformations are the final phase in this cycle.

Relating ideas and data to previous knowledge and experiences is fundamental for learners developing their own knowledge. Entwistle (1996) identifies that this is a key component of a 'deep approach' to learning. The intention of this approach is to look for patterns and underlying principles, check evidence and begin to understand ideas for oneself. He contrasts this deep approach to a 'surface approach' where the intention is to cope with the requirements of a course by memorising facts and procedures and treating the course as unrelated bits of knowledge.

A fundamental aspect of the MA is the exposure of students to real world pressures and constraints and to provide them with an opportunity for personal or self-development. Reflection plays an important role in self-development, Moon (2000) identifies that the elements needed for successful self-development are: self-awareness; self-improvement; empowerment and emancipation.

Moon suggests that reflection which leads to a greater awareness of self and one's view of the world is the starting point for further development. Self-improvement arises from an individual taking action to meet a development need, which may be brought about by changing circumstances. Empowerment and emancipation occurs when the individual as a matter of routine integrates critical reflection into their professional development activities.

#### **4. Integrating Reflection into the Learning and Assessment Strategy**

Critical reflection is embedded in the assessment strategy of the MA and is assessed explicitly in the following elements of the course:-

##### **4.1 Personal Development module**

The personal development module requires students to provide a critical self-assessment of their skills, attributes and preferences and produce a personal development plan. Following this they are required to complete a personal development journal over a 4-5 month period that provides a record of the activities and actions taken to meet the objectives identified in their personal development plan, plus a reflective commentary which provides a critical reflection on the progress made in meeting their personal development objectives

##### **4.2 Work placement – Consultancy project**

Students are required to keep a fieldwork diary or project log from the outset to not only record their progress but to capture critical incidents which can be used to reflect on when writing the dissertation.

### 4.3 Dissertation

Unlike many other MA dissertations the aim of the dissertation is to provide a critical analysis and evaluation of the project and its processes. Students are required to engage in a reflection of the management and outcomes of the consultancy, building in a reflexive recognition of their own part in the process.

#### Examples of Reflective Learning on the Consultant MA

##### Case 1: Sam

Sam was a Lancaster graduate who had studied Theatre Studies as an undergraduate. His client was an organisation that co-ordinated a number of events as part of a summer festival. The Innovation and Enterprise Unit at Lancaster University had approached the organisation (Festico) about the possibility of them engaging a student consultant to carry out a project for them. Following initial discussions the organisation identified a potential project that involved investigating the potential for expanding the current box office services to serve the needs of other events and festivals within the region.

Sam had a number of difficulties with his client due resource constraints, (there was only one full time employee) this resulted in Sam being unable to obtain responses to a number of critical questions he needed to ask. The following extract from his dissertation illustrates how he was able to reflect on material from the course and apply this in practice:

With the lack of communication occurring between consultant and client, which caused the underlying problems with the consultancy, it is necessary to look at what Evendon and Anderson (1992:195) write on the subject and they state that *“Consultation involves asking and listening.”* In the case of Festico the roles of consultant and client were almost reversed when, although the consultant was fulfilling their role to some extent with ‘asking and listening’, the client was doing much more of this because of time constraints and lack of staffing...after several of these (meetings), it became obvious that a form of client management was needed.

Since the roles of client and consultant reversed, it was necessary to find ways of convincing the management of Festico of how to move forward with the brief that would benefit the organisation in the most fruitful way. In Whetten et al (2000:403) it is pointed out that *“organisations must be flexible and organic.”* By carefully considering, prioritising, and finally choosing the correct management concepts to suit the situation this has resulted in building up a good working relationship.

The above extract demonstrates how Sam was able to utilise the process of reflection (Moon 2000) as outlined earlier. He quickly realised that there was a need to resolve the problem caused by his clients lack of time and resources and was able to clarify the issue by reviewing the problematic nature of the relationship and moving towards new behaviours. The application of theoretical concepts allowed him to make sense of the situation’s constraints and develop an understanding of how to move forward. In Entwistle’s (1996) terms he had demonstrated a ‘deep approach’ to learning.

The following extract demonstrates how Sam was able to become more self aware of his personal attributes and develop specific skills and competencies that demonstrate self-improvement.

I began the research feeling very out of my depth ...however throughout the course and personal reading I quickly gained some idea of how I should be moving forward positively.

Through further reading (for example, Whetten et al (2000)) I have been able to define the areas where personal development has evolved. My prioritising and goal-setting skills became more and more developed and are now invaluable to me both personally and as a consultant.

### **Conclusions**

By integrating reflection into the design of the Consultant MA, students on the programme are required to become aware of their experiences and 'make sense' of theoretical concepts when applied to 'real issues'. This results in students becoming 'reflective learners' and developing a 'deep approach' to learning (Entwistle, 1996). We have also seen in the example of Sam that reflection can be seen as a technique for helping facilitate personal development enabling the learner to cope with new and changing circumstances.

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# Placements Without Places

'We need to be educating streetwise and canny Freelancers.'

Neil Moreland<sup>i</sup>

Although most Bath Spa University students will engage in work-based learning during their degree, not all this learning will be with an employer. Many students engage in work-based learning on a freelance basis, and some of this learning may be assessed. This paper has been particularly informed by the work of the Bath Spa University CETL, Artswork, which has investigated the links between Creativity, Technology and Employability over the last four years. In the scope of the CETL, many examples of freelance WBL were shared and examined.

Examples of freelance work-based learning include:

- Touring as a performer.
- Researching or writing for a commission.
- Providing a service (such as web-design or filmmaking) for a client.

Guidelines for best practice in work-based learning assume that the student will be working for an employer, at the employer's place of business. Key HEI responsibilities from ASET and QAA guidelines ask that:

- Both the student and the placement provider/employer are clear about the scope of the placement
- The student understands the learning outcomes expected from the placement and how they relate to the curriculum and any assessment
- The placement provider/employer has insured that the student will be safe during the placement
- Both the student and placement provider/employer have an opportunity to feed back on the placement

and

- the student has an opportunity to reflect later on the placement

Because a freelance placement has no employer, the student will be self-employed during the placement. We have taken this to

mean that the student will need to take on the role of the placement provider/employer as well as the role of the student.

In these cases, then, HEIs should make sure that:

- The student is clear about the scope of the placement and has set reasonable boundaries for this scope of work
  - The student understands the learning outcomes expected from the placement and how they relate to the curriculum and any assessment
  - The student has analysed risks associated with their work and has thought seriously about Health and Safety issues
- and
- The student has an opportunity to feedback during or immediately after the placement, but also has an opportunity for later reflection on his or her experience.

Bath Spa University has been working to provide a handbook for module coordinators who incorporate freelance placements in their curriculum. The handbook will give guidance and clarity on the responsibilities of lecturing staff when requiring or suggesting that students engage in freelance placement activities for assessment.

It is not an attempt to restrict or impede work-based learning at the university, or to add onerous bureaucratic procedures to student engagement with the wider world. Instead, we hope it will give a safe, stable framework to expand our work in this area even further.

In it, we have included

- Proformas that heads of department and module coordinators may copy or adapt for their own use
  - Text and outlines that may also be adapted or copied, including an introduction which should be pasted into relevant module handbooks
- and
- Examples of good practice already in place at the university.

The handbook is organised under the headings of the above university responsibilities. Here, these headings are related to QAA and ASET codes of practice.

[Mapping Handbook Headings with QAA/ASET Codes of Practice](#)

## The Standard Introduction To Freelance Placements

QAA Precepts: 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8  
ASET Guideline: 3.1, 4.1

The student is clear about the scope of the placement and has set reasonable boundaries for this scope of work

QAA Precepts: 1, 4, 5  
ASET Guideline: 3.1, 4.1, 5.1

The student understands the learning outcomes expected from the placement and how they relate to the curriculum and any assessment

QAA Precepts: 1, 3, 5  
ASET Guideline: 3.1, 3.2, 4.3

The student has analysed risks associated with their work and has thought seriously about Health and Safety issues

QAA Precepts: 3, 4, 5  
ASET Guideline: 3.1, 4.2, 5.2

The student has an opportunity to feedback during or immediately after the placement, but also has an opportunity for later reflection on his or her experience

QAA Precepts: 5  
ASET Guideline: 3.2, 3.3, 4.2, 4.3, 5.2<sup>ii</sup>

The guidance for each of these key elements is presented below, using the element itself as a heading.

### 1. The student is clear about the scope of the placement and has set reasonable boundaries for this scope of work

We feel this requirement can be met a learning contract between the student and the module lecturer. The learning contract should be part of the coursework for the module, and can be an assessed item (it can be a pass/fail item with no mark weighting or included as part of another assessment item).

Many lecturers already require that such things as tour plans or project briefs from clients form part of their students' project portfolios. These can be seen as learning contracts. In order to comply with the above, lecturers will need to make sure that these plans, briefs or contracts are seen and signed off by both the lecturer and the student previous to the student's placement activity.

This may be done by email, on Minerva, in face-to-face tutorials, or in groups, so long as the lecturer's knowledge and input and the student's understanding and acceptance can be recorded.

Small and micro organisations offering work experience, where the student is acting as a freelancer (as opposed to larger organisations undertaking a formal placement), may send a description of work to the lecturer, who in this case functions somewhat as an agent for the student. This is often by email, or in a telephone or face-to-face conversation. The lecturer will need to ensure that a (short) description of the work offered is written or recorded. This description will need to be seen by the student and the student's agreement should be recorded and retained.

Again, most modules will already have some form of this item, however, a generic example of a learning contract is included in the handbook.

## 2. [The student understands the learning outcomes expected from the placement and how they relate to the curriculum and any assessment](#)

This element can be covered as simply as requesting a required paragraph in the module handbook.

The paragraph should include a list of the learning outcomes expected for the freelance placement, and how they relate both to the module and the course in general.

In the assessment items and assessment criteria for the module, staff should ensure that any items that are related to the student's freelance activity are clearly identified as such.

An template for a module handbook paragraph is in the freelance placement handbook.

### 3. The student has analysed risks associated with their work and has thought seriously about Health and Safety issues

We use risk assessment forms. Students must be supported to consider various aspects of risk in their work. These fall into three basic categories:

- Place
- Activity
- Equipment

Place varies in freelance placements. Students may be performing in a venue or working as a freelancer at an editing station in a busy office. They may also be going to interview a member of the public in their home, or filming on a busy street.

Some places will have insurance in case of accidents. Professional performance venues, for example, will have public liability insurance, and those who run offices should also insure anyone who visits or works in them. Students should ask about insurance when they are confirming a booking, and a record of the answer should be recorded.

Some places (such as a public street) will not have insurance that covers the student's freelance activity. The student will need to analyse the risk to determine if the placement is safe and desirable. In some cases, students may want to take out insurance of their own.

Likewise, some activities are more dangerous than others. In the School of Humanities and Cultural Industries, a student recently filmed a mock documentary about 'human curling'. This activity had major safety challenges: Actors were being hurled into each other over ice, film equipment with electric cables was in close proximity to water, and actors and crew were walking and skating on ice. However, the student's risk assessment of this activity was so thoughtful and exacting that the insurers of both the university and the ice skating rink were pleased to underwrite the activity.

If the student is supported to think clearly about the dangers of an activity, they are able to plan better to avoid the associated dangers. For example, if a performer intends to drive him or herself a considerable distance between performances and is able to see the dangers of driving when fatigued, s/he may choose to

reschedule a performance, take another form of transport, or pay the costs for another driver. In the example of a student interviewing a homeless person in a doorway, the student would want to ensure that s/he plans to have a responsible companion with her/him and to ask advice from the police before engaging in such an activity. One outcome of considering risk can be that the student chooses or is advised to abandon the activity, and will need to evolve another plan for their work.

Equipment has two kind of risks: risks to the user and/or any passers-by and risks to the equipment itself. If a student is an actor with, for example, a large mask or headdress, their sight might be compromised. They may want to restrict their area of performance in order to avoid trips or falls, other cast and crew may undertake to ensure that there are no hazards underfoot during the actor's performance, or one cast member might be able to function as the actor's 'handler'. If the large mask were part of a professional costumer's inventory, the student would also want to make sure it was insured against damage or loss.

In music and filmmaking, cabling is often an issue. In the risk assessment, students are able to note that cabling can cause trips and falls and suggest ways of dealing with the hazard (i.e. taping cables to the floor with duct tape or providing plastic channelling). Likewise in these areas of practice, equipment tends to be both easily broken and highly desirable to thieves. Students need to have considered the issues around these problems and to have come up with strategies and solutions to minimise risk and loss.

A good risk assessment does not eliminate a difficult activity. However, neither is it a tick-box exercise. A risk assessment is an opportunity for the student and the lecturer to consider the risks associated with the student's placement and to work together to create strategies that minimise that risk.

Risk assessments are standard practice in many creative industries and good practice for all freelance workers. If our students become adept at assessing risk, it will be a valuable skill for their futures.

An example of a good risk assessment proforma is included in the freelance handbook.

4. The student has an opportunity to feedback during or immediately after the placement, but also has an opportunity for later reflection on his or her experience

In The School of Music and Performing Arts, Commercial Music students go on tour as a rock band. While they are out on tour, they keep a blog. Although the lecturers do not monitor the blog daily, they read a sample of entries from all groups on a regular basis.

In Creative Writing, students who have gone out to research a story in Freelance Journalism speak in the next class about their experiences.

These are two examples of feedback during or immediately after the placement. In order to comply with QAA standards, we feel it is necessary that the lecturer should in some way record that the feedback occurred. This can be done with a symbol next to a student's name on a register, or in a full report on the student's experience – it's really up to the module coordinator and the Head of Department. The important thing is that the lecturer has been listening to what the student has to say about their placement.

Later reflection can also take many forms. Let's return to the band out on tour. While they are out, they make a video diary, called their 'rockumentary', which becomes an assessment item.

Likewise, the journalists submit written reflection on their experiences as freelancers in their final assessment. Again, the form – whether it's a video diary, blog, journal, essay or presentation – is very flexible.

We feel it is best practice to make this reflection an assessed item.

## Conclusion

The freelance handbook is designed to help module coordinators conform to best practice guidelines in freelance WBL.

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<sup>i</sup> 'A Political and Moral Economy of Employability', Neil Moreland, Research Fellow, ESECT, The Open University

<sup>ii</sup> QAA Code of practice for the assurance of academic quality and standards in higher education Section 9: Work-based and placement learning - September 2007 = and = A Good Practice Guide for Placement and Other Work-Based Learning Opportunities in Higher Education - Good Practice for Placements Guides – Volume 2 (ASET)

# ***“This has reminded me that I’m quite good at what I do”* Using a critical best practice approach to evaluate use of knowledge in social work practice**

**Jean Gordon, Barry Cooper, and Sue Dumbleton, The Open University**

This discussion paper is based on research funded by the Open University Practice Based Professional Learning Centre for Excellence in Teaching and Learning (PBPL CETL). The research was conducted between March and December 2008.

## **Introduction**

There is a drive in the UK and elsewhere to develop the knowledge base of social workers, and, more broadly, to increase research literacy in public services (Davies et al., 2000). In 1998 the Department of Health issued guidance that stressed that social services should be based on “the best evidence of what works” (DoH, 1998, 5.32). More recently, Scotland’s 21<sup>st</sup> Century Review of Social Work has emphasised that, “if we are serious about developing social work as a profession and having practitioners able to practice safely and innovatively, then we need to both develop and use evidence to inform practice” (Scottish Executive, 2006: 55). The call for “evidence based practice” is equally strong in many other professions, including nursing and teaching, and this common interest is creating opportunities for joint working. For example, NES (NHS Education for Scotland) and IRISS (Institute for Research and Innovation in Social Services) are currently working together to create a shared Knowledge Management Strategy for the social services in Scotland (NHS/IRISS, 2009).

It is difficult to argue with the importance of ensuring that any professional’s decisions are based on reliable evidence of what works. However, past research has suggested that social workers make quite limited use of theory and research findings (e.g. Rosen, 1994, Osmond and O’Connor, 2006) and rely too much on following prescribed procedures rather than taking a more inquiring and creative approach to their work with service users and carers (McDonald et al., 2008). There is also uncertainty and dispute about just what can be counted as ‘evidence’ for social care practice. We do not know enough about how evidence can best be accessed by practitioners and used to improve outcomes for service users and carers in ways that take full account of the complexity of the situations for which practice knowledge is required (Hodson and Cooke, 2007, Marsh and Fisher, 2008). It has also been argued that the growing number of initiatives designed to disseminate knowledge and promote evidence based practice are not themselves based on good enough evidence of what works (Nutley and Davies, 2000, Walter et al., 2004). Interestingly, although there is a relatively large literature on evidence use and knowledge management in social services, the perspective of social work practitioners has not been investigated to any great extent (Trevethick, 2008). In this research we were interested in exploring this apparent gap in our understanding

about how social workers conceive of and use knowledge in their day to day practice.

## **Aims**

This research aimed to investigate how social work practitioners make use of research, inquiry, and other forms of knowledge evidence to inform their practice. The purpose of this short conference paper is to explore the benefits of using a critical best practice approach to help students and work-based practitioners to identify their use of knowledge for practice. It will include a summary of the research methodology and methods, provide an account of practitioners' responses to this method of inquiry, and discuss how the methods used in this research might be used to support the work based learning of students and practitioners.

## **A Critical Best Practice Approach**

The study used a 'critical best practice' approach (Ferguson, 2003) to learn from the detailed analysis of how social workers in different work settings in Scotland use knowledge evidence in their day to day practice with service users and carers. A 'critical best practice' approach uses critical theory to describe and analyse examples of good practice to promote learning and improve practice (Ferguson, 2003: 1005). A key aspect of critical best practice in social work is that it is *critical*, involving the analysis of the perspectives of, for example, individual practitioners, manager, service users and carers, balancing respect for service users, and awareness of oppression and vulnerability, with social work authority and accountability, within the busy and complex 'real world' environments in which social workers practice (Ferguson, 2008). A critical best practice approach also offers a chance to celebrate achievement, providing an alternative to perceptions of social work informed by the frequently negative media reporting of social work practice in the wake of child abuse and other tragedies.

## **Methodology and methods**

A critical best practice approach involves "detailed description and analysis of actual social work practice drawn from real events and cases" (Cooper, 2008: 3). The qualitative methodology aimed to access, analyse, and learn from detailed accounts of the experiences of six qualified social workers through in depth interviewing. The interviews were conducted using a flip chart sheet and pens which the interviewer used to 'map' the chronological stages of intervention, using headings such as 'Engagement', 'Assessment', and 'Planning' as appropriate to the chosen example of practice. This was a variation of Osmond and O'Connor's "knowledge map" (2006: 9), used as a tool to stimulate practitioner reflection on past practice, and as a focus for dialogue.

Three Scottish Social Services agencies with a known interest in research into social work practice were approached, and each agreed to identify two practitioners to participate in the research. One face to face interview of up to two hours was conducted with each social work practitioner. Each interview involved detailed discussion of, and reflection on, one example of practice chosen by the practitioner, in discussion with the interviewer. The interviews were designed to provide opportunities to assist practitioners to 'unpick' their use of evidence to inform practice, using a number of open questions as prompts:

- What knowledge did you use to help you do that?
- Were there other kinds of knowledge that you used?
- Where did the knowledge come from?
- What helped you access (or use) that knowledge?
- Were there barriers to you accessing (or using) knowledge?

The kinds of knowledge (e.g. knowledge of the law, of research, of service users), their sources, and the conditions that supported knowledge use were added to the 'map' in different colours as practitioners talked. The 'map' was also used during the interview to review the practitioner's account and was added to or amended as the interview progressed. The social workers had an opportunity to amend transcripts of the taped interviews before these were analysed.

### **The Knowledge Map**

The practitioners all referred to an interacting mix of practice experience, social work and other theory, and knowledge of legislation, methods of intervention, and local and national policy, procedures, and resources. The resulting maps were rich and complex, each reflecting both the context of the practitioner's work (with, for example, older people or children) and the particular experiences of the practitioner, including their personal, educational and professional backgrounds. A schematic version of a knowledge map is reproduced below:



### Practitioners' responses to the interviews

Most of the practitioners started the interviews in a fairly tentative way, expressing some anxiety about both their level of knowledge and their ability to contribute to this research. They all found articulating the knowledge used in relation to the chosen example of practice challenging at first. For example, an early response of one practitioner was,

*".....Just trying to think..... It's so difficult because you just know it and you just get on with it, don't you?"*

However, this social worker, like the others appeared to become increasingly confident and fluent as the interviews progressed. At the end of the interviews all six practitioners were surprised by the very dense 'knowledge maps' of the cases discussed. They said that they had not been aware of either the range or quantity of knowledge evidence they had drawn on when they first started to reflect on these practice examples,

*"I think it has been beneficial for me just to see all that because I would kind of think that I probably don't use a huge amount of particular theories or anything, but actually looking at it what I am doing ...it is quite helpful for me to know that actually I do have access to a wide range of knowledge."*

It was also striking how engaged the practitioners appeared to become in the interview process, and how the opportunity to 'unravel' an example of practice could also be a reassuring and confidence building process,

*"I've actually found, sitting here talking to you, is helpful and I know this is not part of, you know, what you're doing here, but this has actually reminded me that I'm quite good at what I do when I get time to do it."*

For a few of the practitioners such opportunities for practice discussion were also evidently unusual in the context of pressured working lives. This was particularly true of the practitioners employed in local authorities with direct responsibility for assessing and meeting the needs of vulnerable adults and children.

### **Implications for work-based learning and practice**

The methods used suggest a number of implications for learning, highlighting the importance of approaches that enable both students and practitioners to make very active and creative links between direct practice experience and a range of relevant knowledge, learning about and expanding their individual 'knowledge maps' as they do so.

This research supports a view that inductive and problem solving approaches that move "from the particular to the general" (Osmond and O'Connor, 2006:15) can promote both learning and increased confidence about using and articulating knowledge for practice. This style of learning is already well established in some areas in social work education, especially during student practice learning opportunities, but may be less frequently called upon in academic settings or once practitioners qualify. The findings reinforce the benefits of tools such as reflective diaries, process recordings and critical incident analysis, highlighted in other presentations during this conference, which use problem solving, reflection and analysis to move from practice to underpinning knowledge.

This study also found that practitioners related well to using visual methods of representation which make it possible to capture less linear links between aspects of practice and knowledge evidence. There is clearly nothing new about using visual tools for learning; mind (or concept) webs and maps, for example, are frequently used as aids to problem solving and learning in many workplaces and educational programmes. More specific examples within social work include the Theory Circle (Collingwood, 2007) and the Practice Pyramid (Ross, 2002). Used well, all these tools appear to have potential not only to support increasing facility to move between practice and evidence in creative ways, but also to expand the practitioner's repertoire so that their 'map' for practice is extended beyond the familiar boundaries that fit with their particular world view and/or are promoted, consciously or unconsciously, within their particular organisation or social work setting. However, it has been suggested, in fields as diverse as engineering and foreign language teaching, that academic teaching styles frequently do not take sufficient account of the learning styles of more visual learners (Felder and Henriques, 1995; Felder and Brent, 2005).

The hesitant way that practitioners initially addressed their knowledge mapping also raises some questions about how able and confident social workers are to articulate the knowledge that they use in practice. This is a key skill for practitioners, most visible when they are asked to justify life-changing decisions, such as taking legal

action to protect children or adults, but necessary for any assessment, care plan, or other intervention in the lives of others. Students and practitioners may require more support to help them articulate their use of knowledge in practice. This might be achieved in a variety of ways that include the modelling of good practice in articulating knowledge use by tutors, practice assessors and supervisors and providing very regular opportunities through qualifying and post-qualifying training to practice these key skills in spoken and visual, as well as written forms.

### **Some key questions**

The presentation on which this paper was based was designed to promote discussion between facilitators of work-based learning from a range of professional backgrounds about their experience of supporting learners to become evidence informed practitioners. The workshop discussion focused on some key questions for facilitators of work based learning, and for future research:

- How do we help work based learners to make most effective use of knowledge in their practice?
- How can managers, supervisors, assessors, tutors colleagues, and others help work based learners to:
  - Understand their own 'knowledge maps'?
  - Develop the confidence to articulate what they know?
  - Expand and update their 'knowledge' maps?
  - Share their knowledge with others?

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We've embedded employability skills and  
plenty of reflection ...  
but what are we actually assessing?

Lindy Blair and  
Anne Irving



# My SCEPTRe Fellowship project - curriculum development

**'Red Line'**

**= tangible thread**

**= e-portfolio**

**Personal and  
Professional  
Development  
opportunities**

**(int & ext)**



# The Learning & Teaching Strategy for Faculty of Management & Law



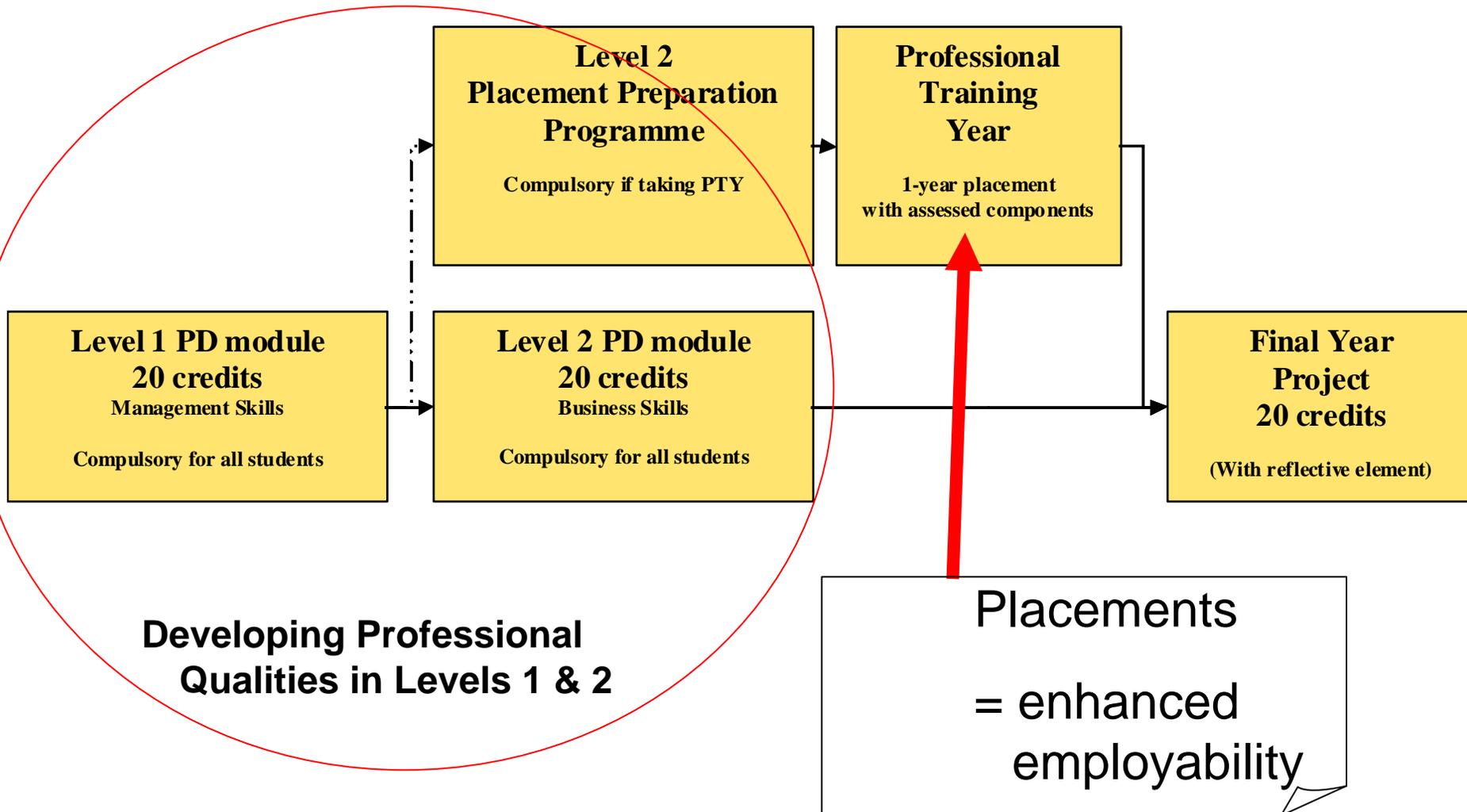
The Faculty of Management and Law will support a vision which recognises that students are engaged in 'whole-life' learning throughout their time at Surrey that increases their employability and develops their professional identity.

a vision which sees 'whole life learning' as encompassing .... both formal and informal learning no matter where it takes place, e.g. in class, on placement, extra-curricular, university life, etc.

a vision which embeds professional development within the academic curriculum whilst encouraging and enabling students to make use of the wide range of developmental opportunities offered by the university.

a vision which sees the professional training year and exposure to the professional context as a key component of personal, professional and academic development and encourages all students to actively participate in these opportunities

# The 'embedded' Professional Development thread



## Curriculum Development Aim

...increases their employability and develops their professional identity

***'Employability'***

***= Professional Qualities (not just skills)***

**3As - Attributes, Attitudes, and Abilities**

- ***Self-directed***
- ***Self-organised***
- ***Self-aware***
- ***Self-reliant***
- ***Reflective***
- ***Resilient***
- ***Readiness to learn***

# What's already in place...

## **The 'thread'**

- *embedded & been through Periodic Review*
- *central to all 7 management programmes*

## **Two strands within the thread:**

### **1. Personally reflective (PDP)**

*Self Audit, Development Plan, Reflection and Learning to take forward.*

### **2. Professional Skills and Commercial Awareness**

*IT Skills, Project Working, Working in an Organisation....*

**Level 1**                      *Can I learn on my own?*

**Level 2**                      *Do I work well with others*  
*Am I a good project manager?*

**Placement**                *Am I employable?*  
*Do I have right attributes, attitudes, abilities?*

**Final year.....?**

## Made it credit-bearing

**If it's not assessed  
the students who *need* to do it... won't engage.**

So, embed it in the academic modules....  
and link it to tasks in other modules

***We had 485 Level 1 students  
+ Marking teams of 4 - 5 PhD students***

***Level 'P' 60 Academics marking 170 reports***

So, need to make assessment criteria robust!

# How is the PD thread assessed?

## Level 1 – 20 credits (see handout)

<b>Task 1</b> <b>3-page Webfolio (Includes ‘About me’)</b>	<b>50%</b>
<b>Task 2a</b> <b>Learning Skills Self-Audit</b>	
<b>Task 2b</b> <b>Professional Development Plan</b>	
<b>Task 3</b> <b>Group Presentation</b>	
<b>Task 4</b> <b>Reflective report</b>	
<hr/>	
<b>IT Skills</b>	<b>50%</b>
<b>Integrated Business Report</b>	

## Level 2 - 20 credits (see handout)

<b>Reflective Portfolio</b>	<b>30%</b>
<b>Group Project Assignment</b>	<b>70%</b>

## Level P - 120 P credits (see handout)

<b>Professional Training Report</b>	<b>60%</b>
<b>Employer Assessment</b>	<b>30%</b>
<b>Placement Tutor Assessment</b>	<b>10%</b>

## Level 3 - 20 credits (see handout)

<b>Project Report + reflection</b>	<b>100%</b>
------------------------------------	-------------

## So what are we assessing?

### Employability: Attributes, Attitudes & Abilities

- Skills-focused tasks address key 'abilities'
- Qualities, attributes and attitudes are assessed effectively by employers (see Performance Review Criteria)

### Problem 1

- But what about the students that don't go on placement? About 50%.

# So what are we assessing?

## Reflective capacity

- There are assessed reflective tasks at all levels
- We differentiate between personal reflection at level 1 to more critical reflection, evaluation and analysis at levels P & 3.

### Problem 2

- The use of non-native speaker PhD students with limited or no marking experience to help assess large cohorts has highlighted the need to have more robust assessment criteria at level 1. How can we break down what we mean by good personal reflection so that it is meaningful?

### Problem 3

- We need to do more at level 2 to take students from just personal to more critical reflection and analysis?

# Impact beyond the School of Management



- English Literature 30-20-10 plus placement
- VLE based infrastructure:
  - Cohorts of over 400 at each level, are managed by Lindy using an over-arching [Professional Development](#) site in the VLE that bridges all levels and supports each of the PD thread modules. ALL email queries diverted to a single discussion board and students usually answer each other's questions.
  - In my Faculty, departmental sites in the VLE cater to all programmes and levels, with one area dedicated to Professional Development, PDP, careers info, placement support etc.
- PebblePad
  - All students develop e-portfolios which tutors access via a 'gateway' i.e. single web link. No paper files needed.
  - Students share their e-portfolios with personal tutors

## Addressing problem 3:

### Problem 3

- We need to do more at level 2 to take students from just personal to **more critical reflection** and analysis?

## Why 'teach' reflection?

- Reflection can 'upgrade' learning (Moon 1999:147-9)
- "Reflection is integral to a deep approach to learning"  
(Moon, 1999:152)
- Certain tasks and activities can deepen the process of reflection (Moon 2004:135)
- E.g. **group reflection**. Because shifts in self-perception are very difficult to achieve unless we are challenged through public dialogue by someone seeking evidence for a self-assessment.

## An example from another Faculty

Previous teamwork assessment	Revised teamwork assessment
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>•Discipline-based group research project</li><li>•Project group presentation</li><li>•Individual reports with an executive summary agreed by the group</li><li>•Individual reflective statement on personal and team performance</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>•Discipline-based group research project</li><li>•Project group presentation</li><li>•Individual reports with an executive summary agreed by the group</li><li>•The individual reflective statement on personal and team performance becomes the starting point for a reflective online group discussion</li></ul>

## Rationale for group reflection

- To take reflection to a deeper level than that achieved in a written 'monologue' by making the reflective statement the starting point.
- To enable individual reflections on team and personal performance to be debated among the team as they arose.
- To see evidence of shifts in thinking through interaction and peer feedback.
- To enhance the 'value' of the task by strengthening social and intrinsic motivation.
- To demonstrate the power and value of collaborative learning.
- To develop asynchronous discussion skills.

## Discussion task design

- Each student engages with 2 different sets of people: (1) their project team & (2) a cross-team group comprising 1 member of each project team
- Project team: evaluation of personal performance and team's performance leading into a reflective discussion
- Cross team: broader sharing of conclusions and recommendations for future teamwork
- Front-loaded the task so that initial high quality postings developed quickly into rich debate that took on a momentum of its own
- Clear guidance on content, frequency and length of postings, and responses required
- Precise deadlines set for each stage of the task

# Task Rubric Part 1:

## 'Reflections on team work'



First posting (c.4 - 500 words): **deadline 5pm Friday 6th March.**

1. Tell the group which Belbin team role(s) you think best describes you and give reasons based on your experience working with this team.
2. Identify what you felt was the group's main strength and explain how it contributed to the effectiveness of the team and how you achieved the task.
3. Identify what you felt was the group's main weakness and explain how it detracted from the effectiveness of the team and how you achieved the task.
4. Identify what you felt was your main strength, referring to your role and behaviour and explain how you think it may have impacted on the team.
5. Identify what you felt was your main weakness, referring to your role and behaviour and explain how you think it may have impacted on the team.

Please **log in a second time by 5pm on Monday 9th March** to read each other's contributions and post comments and questions on each member's analysis. **Log in a third time by 5pm Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> March** to continue the discussion and respond to each other's questions.

This discussion area will close at 5pm Friday 20th March.

\*Assessment criteria included

# Task Rubric Part 2:



## 'Recommendations for future team work'

First posting (c.2-300 words): deadline 5pm Friday 13th March

Post a message that completes the two sentences below, encapsulating what you have learned from the experience of working in a team and how it has shaped your suggestions and recommendations for future team work.

- To work effectively with a team in future, I would make sure that the group ....  
*(You can refer to work planning, meetings, communications, team spirit, establishing ground rules etc.)*
- To work effectively with a team in future, I would make sure that I ....  
*(You can refer to your team role, behaviour, time management, inter-personal skills etc.)*

Please log in a second time by 5pm on Monday 16th March to read each other's contributions and post comments and questions on each member's recommendations. Log in a third time by 5pm Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> March to continue the discussion and respond to each other's questions.

This discussion area will close at 5pm Friday 27th March.

\*Assessment criteria included

# Assessing online group reflection

Specified that marks would be allocated “for the quality of the discussion and reflection that ensues from these initial postings with particular reference to:

- Analysis of performance (own and team’s)
- Insight into own and team’s strengths, weaknesses,
- Reference to the theories of team building / roles etc
- Recommendations for future team work tasks
- Awareness of and sensitivity to the language appropriate to online discussions.”

## Evidence of critical reflection?

- Main topics developed: conflict, leadership, meetings, quiet members
- Depth of insight: probing beyond the superficial
- Analytical powers: wording of task and subsequent responses forced increased analysis
- Understanding of theory demonstrated naturally
- Sensitivity: “...fear of offending”
- Shifts in thinking: “I hadn’t thought of that”
- Discussions clearly reflect influence of reading material

## Evidence of reflection?

- “To work effectively with a team in future, I would make sure that I would not try and force my views on others, as I think I did this to a certain extent last time and it was found to be somewhat abrasive by others”.
- “I just mean .. I know how to contribute more to a group next time”.
- “I am a very difficult person and most of the times, even if everything is really good, I change things to my likes (sic)”.
- “I feel that ... a sense of rivalry did not emerge until the very end when hindsight allowed us to see how we had worked”.

# How can students help each other to promote more critical reflection?



- By using appropriate **questioning and prompting techniques** to probe further reflection
- By expressing their subjective feelings and opinions in a non-threatening way.
- By being sensitive to the language of online discussions – i.e. appropriate register and emotional detachment.
- By modelling the language of reflection and critical thinking for self evaluation as an example.

## Managing assessment

- Establish realistic objectives: ‘layers’ of reflection
- Assessment load can be heavy, design manageable descriptors /clear simple criteria/ weighting
- Timing of reflective task while group work is still in progress: more dynamic but also more emotional

## How effective was it?

- Provided a structured framework for the assessment of an 'informal' task
- Enhanced the quality and depth of reflection
- Timing allowed discussion to contribute to final deliverable
- Effective for this module – communication skills for computing undergraduates
- Motivation: Students continued discussions after final deadline
- 83% stated the experience had been positive in feedback questionnaire
- Students found it easier to deal with the problems via the online discussion board rather than face-to-face.

Questions you might have been  
formulating whilst listening.....



This is what we'd like your help with....

### First question

- How do we assess the qualities, attributes and attitudes of the students that don't go on placement?

### Second question

- How can we break down what we mean by good personal reflection at level 1, to identify criteria that it is meaningful to non-native speaker PhD students?

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School of Management 2008/2009



Sandra Hill

STUDENT  
NETWORKS AS  
NEW LEARNING  
SPACES

**UWS** UNIVERSITY OF THE  
WEST of SCOTLAND

# Aims of presentation

- To examine the importance of student networks as valuable learning spaces
- To examine the characteristics of the learning environment which support or inhibit student networks

# The Study

- Recent graduates from the Business School were invited to reflect upon how employability skills and attributes were developed during their course of study.
- The focus was on making connections with others, in the internal learning environment and with the business community

# Creating Bridging Social Capital

- Occurs when students begin to connect with other students and staff in the institution
- Structures and support are needed to enable this to happen
- Students need to connect with new networks when existing groups inhibit their studies
- We must not assume that skills and capabilities to confidently connect with others already exist

# The Learning Space in Networks

- ⦿ Support and encouragement
- ⦿ Access to new ways of thinking and behaving
- ⦿ Access to new ideas and a trigger for creativity
- ⦿ Development of skills, competencies and capabilities relevant to employability
- ⦿ Role for staff in encouraging reflection of informal learning

# Aspired Characteristics of Students

- Demonstrating commitment to study
- Seen to be contributing in class
- Achieving academically
- Regular attender
  
- *“ I knew at the end of second year that I was going the wrong way. If I kept doing what they were then I was not going to make it. I wanted to work with a group that was more confident, more committed sort of thing. I thought some of their confidence might rub off on me”.*

# What happens to those who do not display admired characteristics?

- Students are restricted in accessing some groups because of past behaviour of lack of confidence in making connections
- *“ She had let me down in the past. I just made sure I didn't work with her again.”*
- *“They left everything to the last minute. Even though their work was good. I did not want to be with someone like that. I just couldn't trust them in the group to do things on time”.*

- Some groups become closed and restrict access (bridging to bonding social capital)

*“ We were a very closed group. It was into class and heads down. It would have been too difficult to let anyone new come into the group”.*

- They need to be aware that this will restrict access to different behaviours and ideas
- What happens to those who are not let in?

# Student groups need trust

- Trust was regarded by all as a key characteristic
  - Demonstrated by behaviour in class and performance in assessed work.
  - Where trust is broken, students are left feeling angry, distressed and vulnerable.
  - They are often unforgiving / friendships can be irretrievably broken

# Formal Work Groups

- ◎ Students often feel unprepared for working in groups
  - Clarifying group objectives
  - Knowing how to manage group behaviour and processes
  - Developing skills and attributes
  - Dealing with conflict and applying sanctions
  - Reflecting on group and skills development
  - Reflecting on employability

# Reflecting on experiences

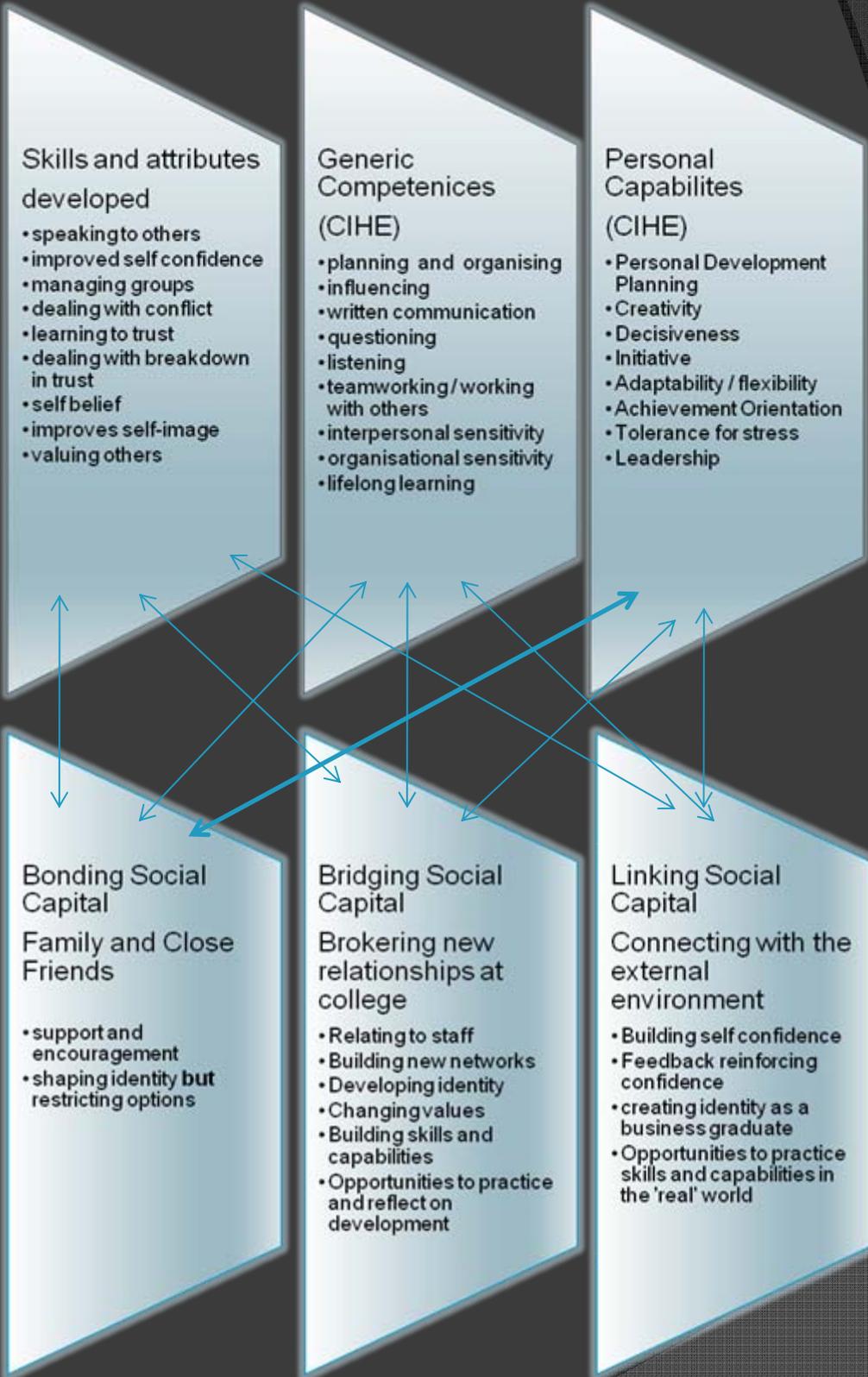
- ⦿ Increased confidence
- ⦿ New ways of working
- ⦿ Practising skills and behaviours
- ⦿ Applying them to relationships with diverse others in the external environment (linking social capital)

# Linking Social Capital

- Occurs when students have opportunities to connect with more remote networks
- Gives access to information and resources not normally available within the immediate learning environment such as business experts
- Can be challenging, exciting, daunting
- Students need to recognise the skills and attributes which enable them to make connections confidently and competently.

# Developing Employability

- ① Interpersonal skills and competencies to communicate with diverse others
- ① Knowing who to connect with, why to connect and how to sustain the connection
- ① Knowing how to transfer skills and capabilities to other situations
- ① Confidence comes with feedback and success





Leeds Trinity  
& All Saints

# Working on Behalf of the Prince's Trust

Thursday 10 September; 9.55-10.40

The value of a worthwhile cause and external mentors.

Jess Sewter, Employer Partnership Office Manager

Ian McGregor Brown, Associate Principal Lecturer Employability



Prince's Trust

## **Past, Present & Future of Employability by Placement**

- Over 30 years experience of six week block placements being an integral component in UG programmes.
- A dedicated Employer Partnership Office arranging, coordinating and progressing over 800 placements each year and predicted to be 1000 this year (& a database to die for!).
- Recent developments have added year long volunteering and enterprise development placements as an option to the six week block.
- Considering further developments including year long, full-time paid placements, accreditation of learning from part-time employment, student/employee exchange schemes.
- This particular workshop however concentrates on the recent development of a partnership with the Prince's Trust.

## The Prince's Trust

- Link created due to prior strong relationship with Andy Farley, now Regional Fund Raising Manager with Prince's Trust.
- Sold the idea of the strong links in culture and ethos between Prince's Trust & Leeds Trinity.
- Andy keen to try out the Prince's Trust C500 in an HE setting.
- Brought with it a "package of support" including "pro-bono" mentors.
- Brings introductions to young people supported by the trust and therefore opening students eyes to other realities.



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## Project Lifeline

- May 2008 – initial pilot with year 1 students, £500 target and Fergus Smyth as mentor.
- Target not met, strong learning (students and staff), mentor has his “Happy Monday’s” moment.
- January 2009 – second cohort, now year 2 students, target increased to £1000, Fergus Smyth joined by Jackie Waite.
- Target met and surpassed (target increased week 4 to £1250), much stronger learning, mentors with “Happier Monday’s!”
- January 2010 – third cohort, £2000 target, enhanced infrastructure to be created.

## Things that went well or that we enjoyed

- Good size team, students well suited for the task, a result of the screening process and maturity that comes with entering year 2.
- Having a dedicated room for the project was crucial to its success.
- Team grew as individuals and bonded through shared experience.
- Target more realistic and was raised by 25% in week 4.
- The project appears to have kudos among the year 2 peer group.
- Project planning, sequencing and flow more effective than the previous version.
- The final presentation was excellent in terms of skills demonstration and provided a final focus to punctuate the last day. The Principal's presence was valued.
- The students were given an hour of coaching on their feedback from the project and what to do as a result. This was well received.
- The teamwork and mutual support between LTAS, PT and two mentors was pivotal.
- Having an email account was useful. Weekly flash reports (ABCD) were effective.



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## Things we should do differently next time

- The project should be more structured in order to ease the mentoring burden and better bring out course learning.
- The project should strike the balance between the number of students, their capability and the target. It must provide enough to occupy them full time for the duration. Suggested target is £2000.
- The team could do more to market themselves, developing a brand image and communicate their goals.
- How to get more business enterprise into the project.
- How to get more Prince's Trust input and exposure at the initial stages to help students understand the purpose of their work.
- How to lessen the workload on mentors or manage expectations well. The project requires a commitment of between half and a full day per week.



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## Skills Developed?

- Teamwork
- Project Management
- Business Planning
- Working to and meeting deadlines.
- Fund raising.
- Valuing and using resources.
- Research
- Reflection
- Presentation skills.
- Team dynamics when working with peers.
- Seeing each other as professionals.
- Giving and receiving honest assessment on each others performance.
- Maintaining momentum, energy and team morale.
- Commercial Awareness
- Awareness of others in less auspicious surroundings.

## What else?

- With the support of Fergus a new model of “employability” development for students studying in the Department of Management, Business & Marketing.
- Model comprises 9 key “performance criteria”.
- Each criteria must be consciously improved during the degree.
- Employers, placement providers, voluntary organisations positively encouraged to provide feedback in order to support selection of targets in the subsequent years.

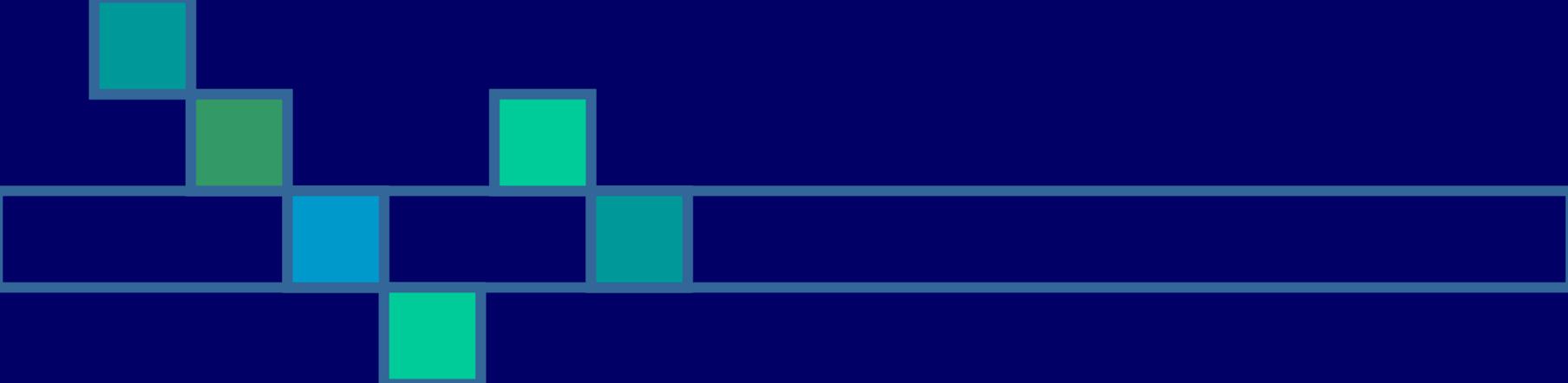
<b>Criteria</b>	<b>Area of Analysis</b>
<b>Outlook</b>	What did you learn from being inspired by others? <i>In what sectors will your style be most welcome</i>
<b>Ownership</b>	What did you learn from a process of keeping a learning diary and selecting critical incidents for submission?
<b>Problem solving</b>	<i>Give an example of business problem solving and relate this to your style</i>
<b>Commercial awareness</b>	In your placement or place of work, how can the business goals be better achieved? <i>What sort of markets are most suitable for your approach to work</i>
<b>Customer awareness</b>	Is your place of work customer, product or process focussed? Explain your thinking <i>What sort of customer base brings out the best in you?</i>
<b>Oral communications</b>	Explain how you have varied your oral communications in different circumstances. Consider the implications of this. <i>What markets will respond to your ability to communicate orally</i>
<b>Written communications</b>	Explain how you have varied your written communications in different circumstances. Consider the implications of this. <i>What markets will respond to your ability to communicate in written form</i>
<b>Business skills</b>	In the place where you work, consider how IT systems could support business goals? <i>What are your career anchors and how can you realise them</i>
<b>Personal growth</b>	Identify areas for personal development and activities to improve them



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## Contact Details

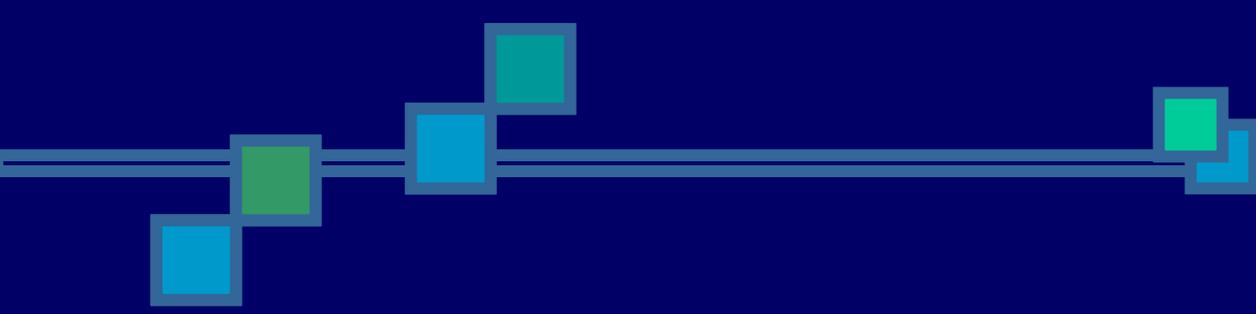
- Andy Farley, Prince's Trust, Yorkshire & Humber Fund Raising Manager, [andrew.farley@princes-trust.org.uk](mailto:andrew.farley@princes-trust.org.uk), 01977 698015
- Jess Sewter, Employer Partnership Manager, [j.sewter@leedstrinity.ac.uk](mailto:j.sewter@leedstrinity.ac.uk), 0113 283 7182
- Ian McGregor Brown, Associate Principal Lecturer in Employability, [i.brown@leedstrinity.ac.uk](mailto:i.brown@leedstrinity.ac.uk), 0113 283 7100 Ext. 495



# Enabling Reflective Practice - A Tool for Assessment

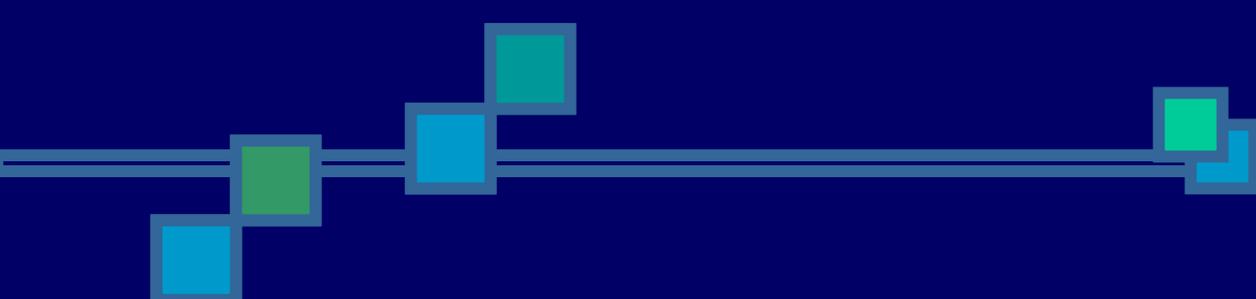


Dr RJ Moreland, Ms. I. Hawthorne-Steele &  
Ms. C. O'Donnell.

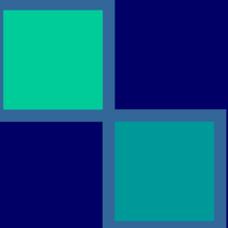


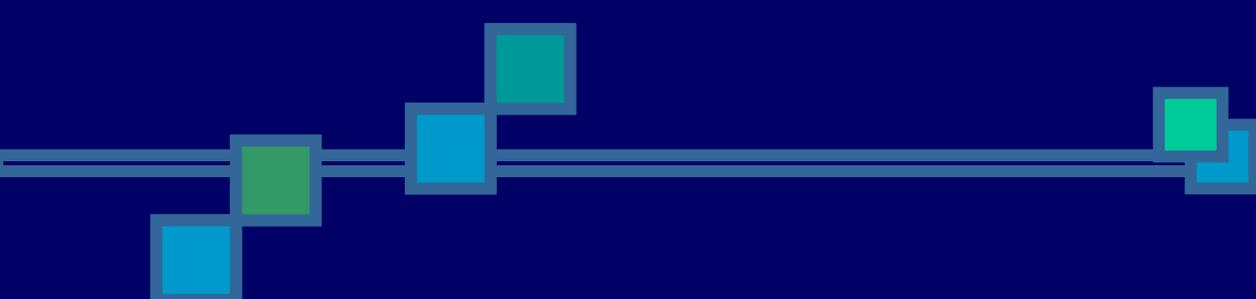
# The Vision

- To create a tool which accurately assesses critical reflection in students and encourages them to engage in reflective practice.
- 



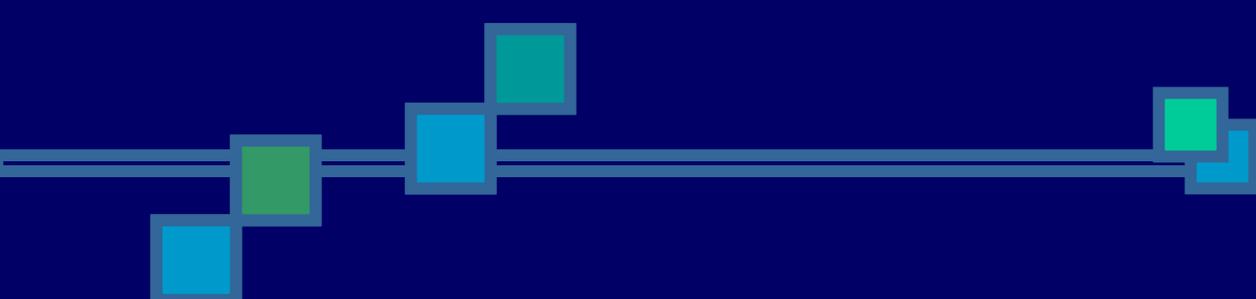
# Concepts and Relationships

- 
- Definitions of key terms – reflective practice; critical thinking; critical reflection.
  - Why are they important?
  - How do they inter-relate?
  - What are the issues?
- 



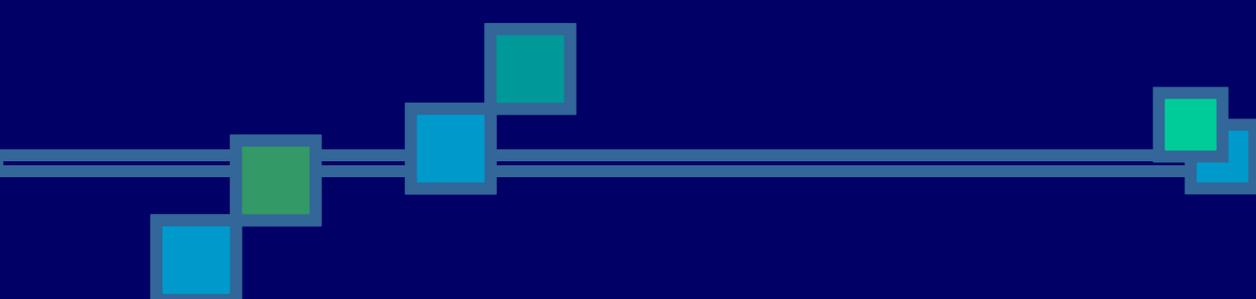
# Reflecting on Practice - Reflection in Practice

- Summary of background – BSc Com Dev. – placement module – difficulties for students being able to get to grips with critical reflection and reflection on practice – hit and miss!
  - Us reflecting on our practice – professional endorsement, increase placement modules; importance of critical reflection.
  - How has critical reflection been assessed in practice to date?
- 



# Redesigning Assessment Tool

- Reflection on practice – what was missing from old template – why it didn't work – what students struggled with?
  - What we added to improve it.
  - What are the anticipated outcomes?
- 



# Conclusion

- Further testing needed
  - Summarize the results so far
  - What we plan to do next
  - Identify action items and any unresolved issues.
- 

## The form, role and value of reflective practice in evaluating work-based learning for researchers.

- Context
- Theory
- Method
- Outcomes
- Conclusions



## Context 1 : Arts Graduate Centre

- Part of Graduate School;
- Works to support postgraduate and postdoctoral researchers;
- Based in the Arts Faculty;
- Offers activities designed to:
  - build a strong Faculty-based community
  - promote and facilitate skills development
  - enhance postgraduate employability
- Key strand of activity focuses on experiential learning in the form of placements.

## Context 2 : Placement Model Overview

*All placements last 90 hours*

### Internships

- internal to UoN
- discreet, guided project, line-managed by Graduate Centre Managers

### Experiential Placements

- based in creative industries/publishing
- line-managed by the hosts
- assigned tasks as part of office team

### Consultancy Placements

- allow participants to contribute to organisation at
- Training provided
- Mentored by sector expert

## Context 3 : Why AGC placements are of value to postgraduates

They provide:

- work-place skills;
- address identified skills gaps;
- focus on career development;
- highlight the significance of informal learning;
- facilitate reflective practice and demonstrate its value.

## Theory : Reflective Practice

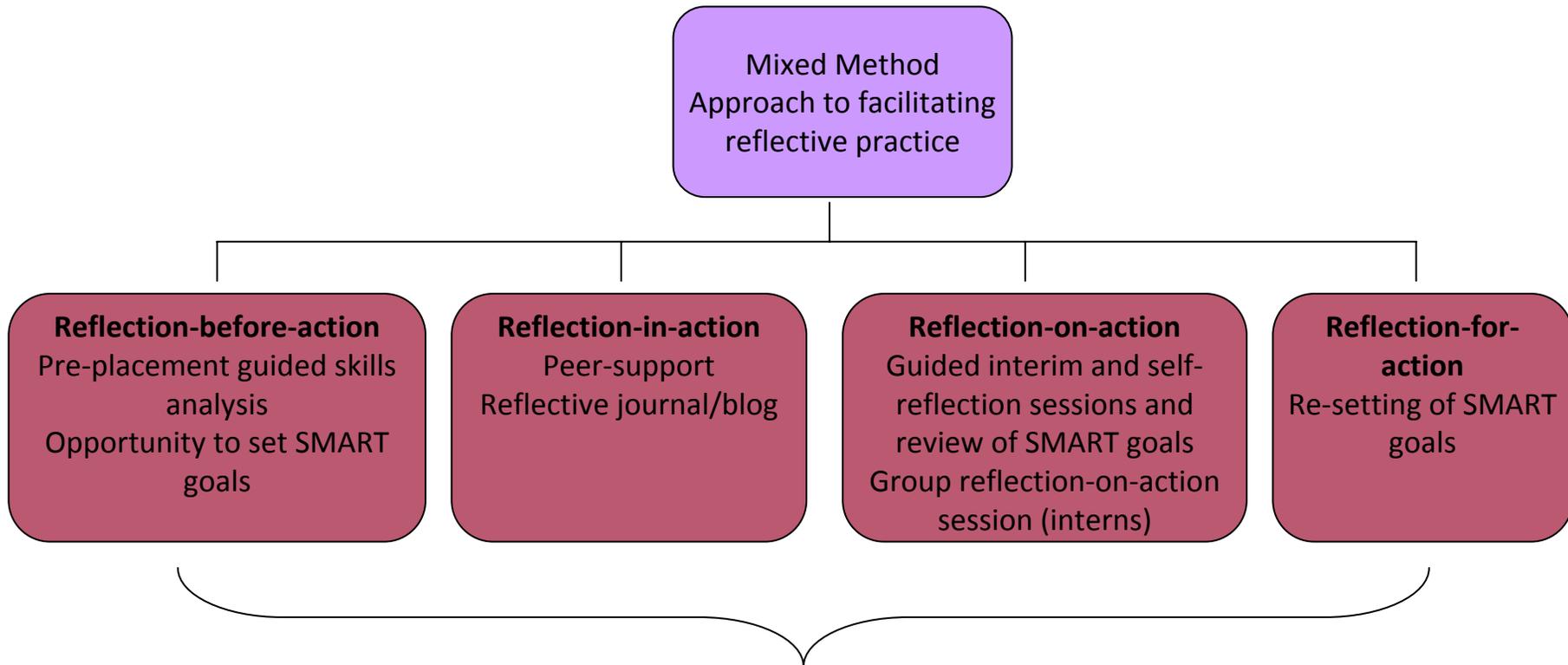
- Donald Schön – *The Reflective Practitioner* (1983)
- Limits of ‘academic thinking’
- Importance of observation and experience
- Significance of ‘artistry’ alongside professional knowledge:

## Reflection-in-action

Within the placement context there are 3 further requirements:

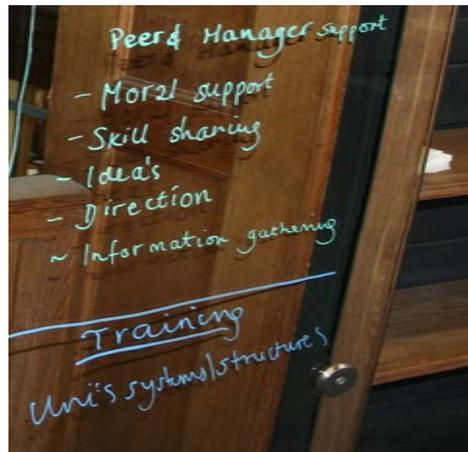
- Reflection-before-action
- Reflection-on-action
- Reflection-for-action

## Method 1 : Mixed-method Facilitation



All students also have the option of one-to-one sessions at any time during the placements to discuss issues or progress.

## Method 2 : Example of Group Reflection-on-Action Session



## Outcomes of Reflective Practice

- Sets the skills agenda
- Establishes the career context
- Maximises experiential learning from a relatively short placement opportunity
- Helps participants to make strong job applications in the future (teaches them to write/talk about their experiences)
- Provide up-to-date data on common skills gaps
- Provide up-to-date information on suitability of host, placement format and support

## Conclusions

- Importance of semi-structured peer support;
- Power of facilitated group reflection;
- Need to take into account impact of personal experience;
- Not everyone will engage with reflective practice to the same extent;
- Scaffold structures and approaches need to be differentiated.



**ASET Annual Conference, 2009**

Learning from and reflecting experience

## **Title: MENTORING IN THE WORKPLACE**

**Presenters: Lee Hurrell, North Devon College and University of Plymouth**

**(Caroline Leeson, University of Plymouth)**

### **Aims of the workshop:**

- To offer a model of mentoring in the workplace for discussion
- To experience mentoring
- To debate the possibilities of mentoring in the workplace
- To experience the reflective process

Employability is the driver for much of the Higher Education experience and work based learning hopes to support this. However we propose that reflective practice within the workplace not only builds employability skills but allows the participants to develop critical thinking skills which enhance their general Higher Education experiences. The ability to construct one's own understanding and to make connections is a key to successful research and is well supported through the reflective process.

What do employers want in employees/students?

reliability, creativity, use of initiative, good communication skills both oral and written, honesty, knowledgeable are just a few qualities and abilities given.

What do students want from the workplace experience?

To gain understanding of the "culture" of the workplace

To have real involvement and not mere allocation of insignificant tasks

To be given feedback on their performance, some affirmation of their abilities

/potential

To investigate career prospects – the concept of “job surfing”

How can these two viewpoints be blended and graduate or employability skills developed?

1. Real involvement to meet the demands of the workplace and student needs
2. Reflective practice or using reflective process
3. Mentoring in the workplace

Reflective practice

The importance of thinking over one's actions is gaining recognition of being seminal to research skills, to achieving in academic study and being an empowered and valuable employee.

The ability to reflect on action and thereby engage in a personal journey of lifelong learning is a defining characteristic of professional practice (Schon 1983)

By keeping a personal-professional journal, you are both the learner and the one that teaches. You can chronicle events as they happen, have a dialogue with facts and interpretations and learn from experience. Holly ( 1989)

Ghaye and Ghaye (1998) suggest that reflective practice is “practice with principle and “being professionally self critical without being destructive and overly negative”. This is how the proposed model of mentoring could be useful.

3. Mentoring

The traditional understanding of the role of the mentor is an ancient one and referred to in Homers Odyssey. It tells of Odysseus leaving his son in care of Mentor, as a surrogate father and advisor. The characteristics of Mentor encapsulates the traditional view of a mentor as being an experienced and trusted advisor, a guru, a master teacher or one who-has-the answers. A mentor is frequently an experienced person, who has

reached a position of power and respect, who offers their knowledge to a younger person. There appears to be a clash of roles in many of these mentoring relationships when evaluation or performance assessment is a prerequisite. As important aspects to mentoring are confidentiality and trust this clash highlights the vulnerability someone new in an environment experiences. It is unlikely that they will expose their inexperience or insecurities to a co worker or supervisor. Students placed in a new or unknown setting may find it hard to relate significantly to a work-place supervisor in a mentoring relationship which has judgemental elements to it. This traditional model may not be appropriate nowadays as many students have significant employment and may have greater currency of knowledge or professional experience than others in the workplace.

Writers refer to this discrepancy but suggest that mentoring occurring between individuals of different levels of experience does not necessarily detract from a mentoring relationship but may enrich it.

To engage in the dialogue model proposed could indicate that the mentor is committed to lifelong learning as a co enquirer or educational companion. They assist students to see and create connections between reality, theory and experience. Mentors may need support to reflect on their own practice (Robins, 2007). In this model the students/mentees are encouraged to take a positive lead in the relationship and with this comes greater responsibility for their own professional development. The process encourages mentees to look at their careers and self-development which could be furthered as students are encouraged to record their skills development. In discovering their ignorance they can propose issues to discuss with their mentor and discover what they want to learn. It is through initiating and sustaining dialogues reflective processes are promoted and the mentee develops a deeper understanding of their learning. Referring to Graduate Attributes and Skills in the report ([managers.org.uk](http://managers.org.uk) 2002) which surveyed workplace managers views on Interpersonal skills; these had improved with greater emphasis from the Higher Education establishments on development and recording of these skills. It is these skills that impacted on the graduates' role in the work-place. The report makes recommendations for greater preparation of these skills in work experience; with students assisted through mentoring and being encouraged to reflect on competencies and own progress.

Mentoring is a recognised activity concerned with the supported professional development of practitioners in work-based practice. It is determined by the culture traditions and philosophy of the organisation. The dialogue model is used by NPQICL (National Professional Qualification for Integrated Centre Leadership) Pemberton (2006) found that mentoring on the NPQICL reassured participants, offered an informed perspective and ways forward. The mentoring model can be sustained through peer

mentoring as it offers a reflective space with a shared understanding of the cultural milieu. By being a critical friend advice or guidance is more readily received. 'The use of a critical friend ".encourages the reflector to look beyond the superficial and think about their feelings and deeper learning.' (Leeson, 2007, p179). It encourages deeper understanding of complexity of work, explores work practices and needs. It provides authenticity through self- awareness and self-knowledge and opportunities for recognition of their own and others reactions and responses to situations. (Whalley et al, 2005)



*Tweets, Wiki's and Widget's*

# *Using the Latest Online Technology to Engage with Your Techno-Savvy Placement Students*

*Ali Lindsay, Cara Redford*



**ASET Conference 2009**

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**RATE MY  
PLACEMENT**  
.co.uk

*Who have we blurred out here?*



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WWW.  
**RATE MY  
PLACEMENT**  
.co.uk

# What Links These People?

90,435



402,624



1,350,721



739,975



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# *What are we describing here?*

- *Founded February 2005*
- *Founders Chad Hurley & Steve Chen*
- *Sold to Google for \$1.65bn*
- *Susan Boyle has been viewed over 120,000,000 times*
- *225 million videos are viewed per day*



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# Facebook

Facebook's mission is to give people the power to share and make the world more open and connected.

The image displays two screenshots of Facebook pages. The left screenshot is for the Cardiff University Careers Service page. It features a header with navigation tabs (Wall, Info, Notes, Events, Video, Boxes) and a 'Become a Fan' button. The main content area includes a post from August 25 at 4:31pm asking if recent graduates have had success applying to big companies, and another post from August 25 at 4:22pm about a new paid placement for a legal assistant. A sidebar on the left provides contact information for the service, including a location in Cardiff, Wales, and phone numbers. The right screenshot is for the Ernst & Young Careers page, also with navigation tabs (Wall, Info, Boxes, Students, Experienced, Discussions) and a 'Become a Fan' button. It shows a post from Novia Zang asking about campus visits, a post from Muhammad Iqbal asking about a polls app, and a post from Dan Black mentioning a holiday weekend. A 'Fans' section lists several users, including Jaya Bhargava, Imam Nurcahyo, Fadzi Azaha, Katty Motta, Katsunori Sugihara, and Jawad Ahmed Khan. A comment from Mari A. is visible at the bottom of the right screenshot.

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WWW.  
**RATE MY  
PLACEMENT**  
.co.uk

# Using LinkedIn

LinkedIn is an interconnected network of experienced professionals from around the world

The screenshot shows a LinkedIn profile for Alastair Lindsay, owner of RateMyPlacement.co.uk. The profile includes sections for 'Current' (Owner at RateMyPlacement.co.uk), 'Past' (Campus Analyst at Stafford Long, Summer Intern at Deutsche Bank, Placement Student at The Bank of England), 'Education' (Loughborough University), 'Connections' (90 connections), 'Industry' (Staffing and Recruiting), and 'Websites' (My Website). The 'Summary' section describes his experience in recruitment advertising. The 'Experience' section is partially visible. To the right, a group page for '3M Graduate and placement opportunities at 3M in the UK' is shown, detailing the company's size, products, and requirements for a graduate program.

**Alastair Lindsay**  
Owner, [www.RateMyPlacement.co.uk](http://www.RateMyPlacement.co.uk)  
Reading, United Kingdom

• Contact Alastair Lindsay  
• Add Alastair Lindsay to your network

LinkedIn People Jobs Answers Companies Account & Settings | Help | Sign Out | Language

Public profile Explore People Search: Engineer at IBM - Internet - Senior Consultant Search People Search Advanced

**Current**

- Owner at [www.RateMyPlacement.co.uk](http://www.RateMyPlacement.co.uk)

**Past**

- Campus Analyst at Stafford Long
- Summer Intern at Deutsche Bank
- Placement Student at The Bank of England

**Education**

- Loughborough University

**Connections** 90 connections

**Industry** Staffing and Recruiting

**Websites**

- My Website

**Alastair Lindsay's Summary**

I completed a couple of internships, which led to a couple of friends of mine and myself coming up with the idea for [www.RateMyPlacement.co.uk](http://www.RateMyPlacement.co.uk).

I stumbled into the Recruitment Advertising world briefly after leaving university and then left to work on [RateMyPlacement.co.uk](http://www.RateMyPlacement.co.uk) full time.

I now live the dream, working from home and chatting about placements all day.

Alastair Lindsay's Specialties:  
I know far too much about placements and internships.

**Alastair Lindsay's Experience**

**3M Graduate and placement opportunities at 3M in the UK**

**About this Group**

Created: July 23, 2009  
Type: Corporate Group  
Members: 13

Owner: **Simon Edwards**

Website: <http://www.3M.co.uk/careers>

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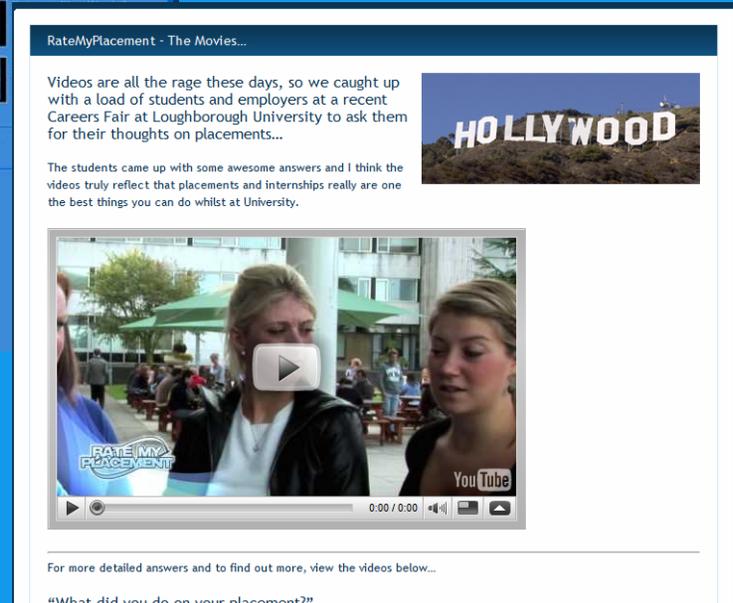


# Videos

*If a picture tells a thousand words, a video tells...?*



IBM Style



RateMyPlacement.co.uk Style

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# Twitter

Share and discover what's happening right now, anywhere in the world.



**twitter** Home Profile Find People Settings Help Sign out

**START@ IBM** **IBMUKcareers**

Following Device updates OFF

Week 9 of the BIG BLUE BROTHER DIARY ROOM is now live - only 3 weeks to go! <http://bit.ly/15DknF>  
22 minutes ago from bit.ly

RT @GuardianCareers IBM is the latest company to join the expert panel for tomorrow's IT careers Q&A <http://tinyurl.com/tzd7d>  
about 5 hours ago from web

Week 8 of the BIG BLUE BROTHER DIARY ROOM now live!  
<http://bit.ly/15DknF>  
10:09 AM Sep 1st from bit.ly

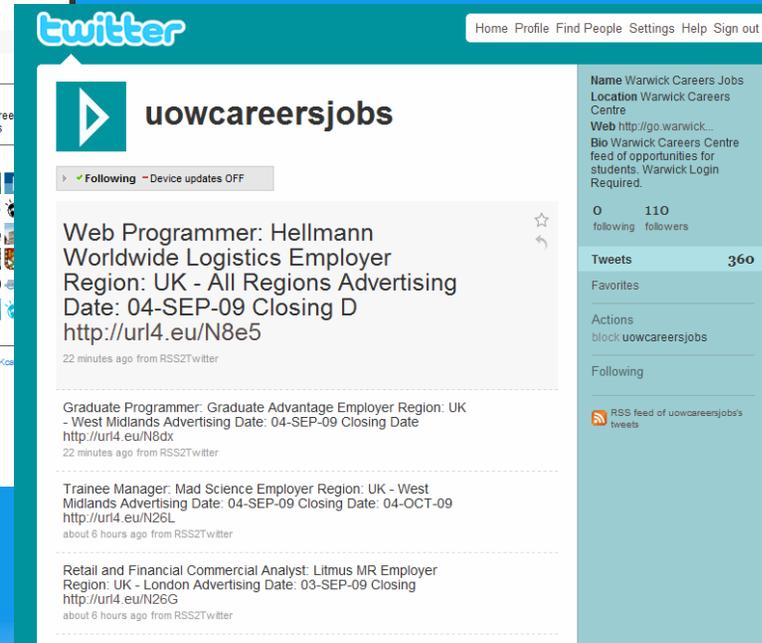
We are now accepting 2010 applications for our Extreme Blue summer internship scheme! Apply now at <http://bit.ly/38VPgd>  
9:26 AM Sep 1st from bit.ly

We are now accepting 2010 applications for our Industrial Trainee Placement year scheme! Apply now at <http://bit.ly/uzx76>  
9:25 AM Sep 1st from bit.ly

Week 7 of the BIG BLUE BROTHER DIARY ROOM now live! Find out how our summer internship students are getting on

Name IBM UK Careers  
Web <http://www.ibm.co...>  
48 following 682 followers

Tweets  
Favourites  
Actions  
Following



**twitter** Home Profile Find People Settings Help Sign out

**uowcareersjobs**

Following Device updates OFF

Web Programmer: Hellmann  
Worldwide Logistics Employer  
Region: UK - All Regions Advertising  
Date: 04-SEP-09 Closing D  
<http://url4.eu/N8e5>  
22 minutes ago from RSS2Twitter

Graduate Programmer: Graduate Advantage Employer Region: UK - West Midlands Advertising Date: 04-SEP-09 Closing Date <http://url4.eu/N8dx>  
22 minutes ago from RSS2Twitter

Trainee Manager: Mad Science Employer Region: UK - West Midlands Advertising Date: 04-SEP-09 Closing Date: 04-OCT-09 <http://url4.eu/N26L>  
about 6 hours ago from RSS2Twitter

Retail and Financial Commercial Analyst: Litmus MR Employer Region: UK - London Advertising Date: 03-SEP-09 Closing <http://url4.eu/N26G>  
about 6 hours ago from RSS2Twitter

Name Warwick Careers Jobs  
Location Warwick Careers Centre  
Web <http://go.warwick...>  
Bio Warwick Careers Centre feed of opportunities for students. Warwick Login Required.

0 following 110 followers

Tweets 360  
Favourites  
Actions  
Following

## ASET Conference 2009

# Blogs

**Contraction of Web-Log. Type of website, usually maintained by an individual with regular entries of commentary, descriptions of events, or other material such as graphics or video.**

### ASET Guest Blogger Lee Mackenzie - Here's to University, Cheers

Find out what the ASET Guest Bloggers are getting up to. Throughout the year we will be following the progress of the ASET competition winners as they find a placement or keep us updated as to what they are doing on their placements. Click [here](#) to read all entries from our bloggers or click [here](#) to meet them.



When I started my year of work in the 'real' world, I assumed that it would be worse than the student. I thought getting up every day at a certain time with such structure and rigour would be honest, 'do my head in'.

It has not been a worse way of life.

Yet it has not been a better one.

Unfortunately and as bleak as it is, the next 40 years of your life will be spent doing very similar things at very similar times and the only thing that will break that cycle will be holidays and hangovers. Bored yet? It was by the end of it.

As fun as meeting a cannibal is, it just doesn't happen enough, usually it just happens once and, generally, it's not pleasant. Yet, I cannot put up with going to the same building every day.

A desk!? The worst creation of man. Kept from the top slot only by nuclear weapons and Noel Edmonds.

Yes, I met a cannibal. Truly fascinating, no? But for every cannibal there are 100 bundles waiting to be sorted, a couple of faxes to send and an annoying person that you have to make idle chit-chat with.



Disillusioned you could say, but not with law. Law is still a noble profession and very interesting to study. I feel focused and excited about the challenges of law.

## Manchester Undergrad Careers

Career options, employability and job-hunting success – before you graduate...

Home | About this Blog | About Us | 'Jobs Seen on the Street' | Recession | Feedback

### My career in... Veterinary Nursing

September 1, 2009

Holly works as a Veterinary Nurse in a small Animal Hospital. Her main responsibilities include assisting vets in theatre; animal aftercare; feeding and cleaning the animals under her care; administering anaesthetics; analysing fluid samples and running weight clinics. [Read the rest of this entry »](#)

1 Comment | Career Options, For Finalists, For First Years, For Pre-Final Years, Work Experience | Tagged: Career Options, veterinary nursing, Work Experience | [Permalink](#)

Posted by Sarah M. (Careers Service)

### Tailoring your CV

August 18, 2009

If you've ever had your CV looked at during a quick query drop in session here at the careers service, you'll probably know that first question we usually ask is 'what are you using this CV for?'. To some, this may seem like a stupid question – I mean, the obvious answer is 'jobs' right? Well, it's not quite that simple... [Read the rest of this entry »](#)

Leave a Comment » | CVs & Applications | [Permalink](#)

Posted by Jenny (Careers Service)

**RECESSION WORRIES?**

We want to know what impact the recession is having on your career planning. Take our quick survey.

**SUBSCRIBE TO OUR FEED**

Feed for posts from this blog

**GET UPDATES BY E-MAIL**

Subscribe to this blog by e-mail

**CATEGORIES**

- o Career Options (25)
- o CVs & Applications (10)
- o Employability (23)
- o Enterprise (3)
- o For Finalists (16)
- o For First Years (10)
- o For Pre-Final Years (10)
- o Graduate Jobs (7)
- o Interviews & Assessment Centres (2)
- o Recession (2)
- o Student Bloggers (1)

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# Forum

An online discussion site. It originated as the modern equivalent of a traditional bulletin board.

The image displays a collage of screenshots from the Rate My Placement website. The top left shows the 'RATE MY PLACEMENT' logo and navigation links: Home, Search, Review, Jobs, Zones, Blog, Advice, Students, Universities, Employers, More. Below this is a 'The Forum' section with a red banner for 'Opportunities for September 2009' and a yellow banner for 'Get the latest jobs by email.' The main content area is divided into 'Categories' (General Discussion, Placement Advice & Stories, Accommodation and Flat Share) and 'Discussions' (Latest, Most popular). A 'The Student Room' banner is also visible. The bottom right shows a 'Forums' table with columns for Forum, Topics, Posts, and Last post. The table lists various industry sectors and their corresponding activity.

Forum	Topics	Posts	Last post
Industry Sectors			
Graduate Jobs, Interview Questions, Accounting, Investment Banking, Law, Consulting			
Accounting & Professional Services	932	6877	Need advice ... by tutor 25 min 27 sec ago
Advertising	16	60	FBG - ... by mrmarmold 19 hours 51 min ago
Consultancy & Consulting Firms	77	982	1st ... by michaels 5 Sep 2009 - 08:01
Energy & Utilities	19	173	CENTRICA ... by Sanna_Uk 1 Sep 2009 - 14:43
Engineering	20	150	From ... by Nick1 7 Aug 2009 - 08:32
Insurance & Actuarial	24	107	Chever ... by eleven86 27 Aug 2009 - 17:39
Investment Banking & Financial Services	332	3132	Deutsche ... by ISD_haurer 26 min 13 sec ago
IT & Technology	38	365	Graduate ... by WikiJob 28 Aug 2009 - 09:23
Legal & Law Firms	98	502	Media ... by rtses36 2 Sep 2009 - 14:57

## ASET Conference 2009

# *The Future of Student Recruitment A Typical Student Viewpoint*



- *In 2007 only 5% of students weren't signed up to any internet site that allowed for networking, chat or sharing photos*
- *Top 10 visited sites in the UK in one month include Google, BBC, EBay, Facebook, Bebo, MySpace and You Tube*

**ASET Conference 2009**

# *The Future of Student Recruitment*

## *What the Industry Is saying*

- 60% of Students don't know how to find a placement*
- “One third of employers are now asking for a 2:2 or above, as well as other skills and relevant work experience”*
- “We try and engage with potential applicants in ways they are comfortable and engaged with, not just ways we are comfortable with”*



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# *The future of Student Recruitment - Thoughts from RateMyPlacement*



- *Changes in the buying habits of our customers*
- *Changing face of RateMyPlacement*
- *Understanding today's students*
- *The importance of Word of mouth and peer to peer evaluation*

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# *Engaging With RateMyPlacement.co.uk*

- *Reviews – Use quotes, host our widget*
- *Jobs – Circulate our emails to your students*
- *Videos – Host and show our videos*
- *Editorial & Advice – Distribute our advice*
- *Contribute on Forum – Ask and answer questions*
- *Follow us on Twitter @ student\_jobs*

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# Conclusion

*Technology will never do our job for us, but it can help to motivate and engage.*



*Thank You for listening. Any Questions?*

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# Social Media Revolution Video

**Social Media Revolution**

China's QZone is larger with over 300 million using their services



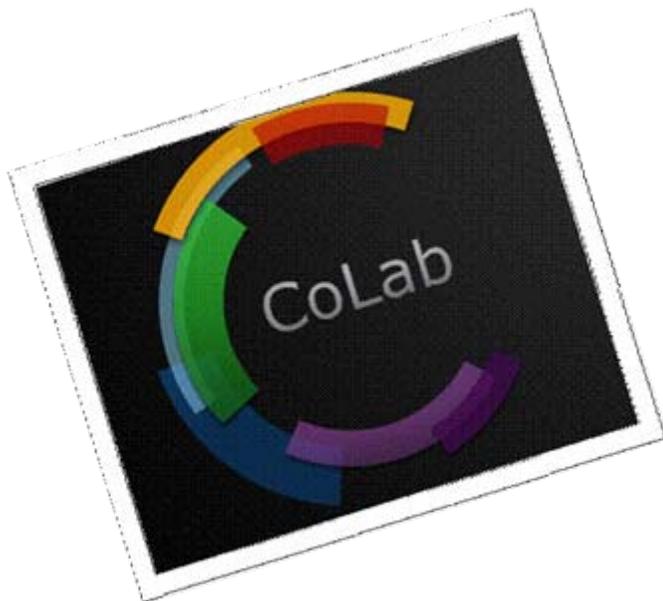
QQ空间  
QZONE.QQ.COM

我的生活, 我的时尚!

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# Students as co-workers and co-researchers in a collaborative university enterprise.

Fostering collaboration between students,  
university, business and community



**Clare Dowding**

**SCEPTrE**

[www.surrey.ac.uk](http://www.surrey.ac.uk)

# Aims and Objectives



- To outline the practical working relationship developed by SCEPTre with students who have been recruited as part-time and full-time (one year placement) employees of the Centre, working under the brand name of CoLab. The CoLab team is made up of students who have networking and/or technology interests and proven skills.
- To explain the new 'Learning through Experience' certificate that has been developed to acknowledge learning achieved outside the formal academic curriculum.
- To consider how such student-led enterprises can be embedded within Faculty.

Established as a university mid 1960s

Research intensive and cultural commitment to professional education.

13,500 students – 9,000 undergraduate, 4,500 postgraduate

27% international – multicultural campus

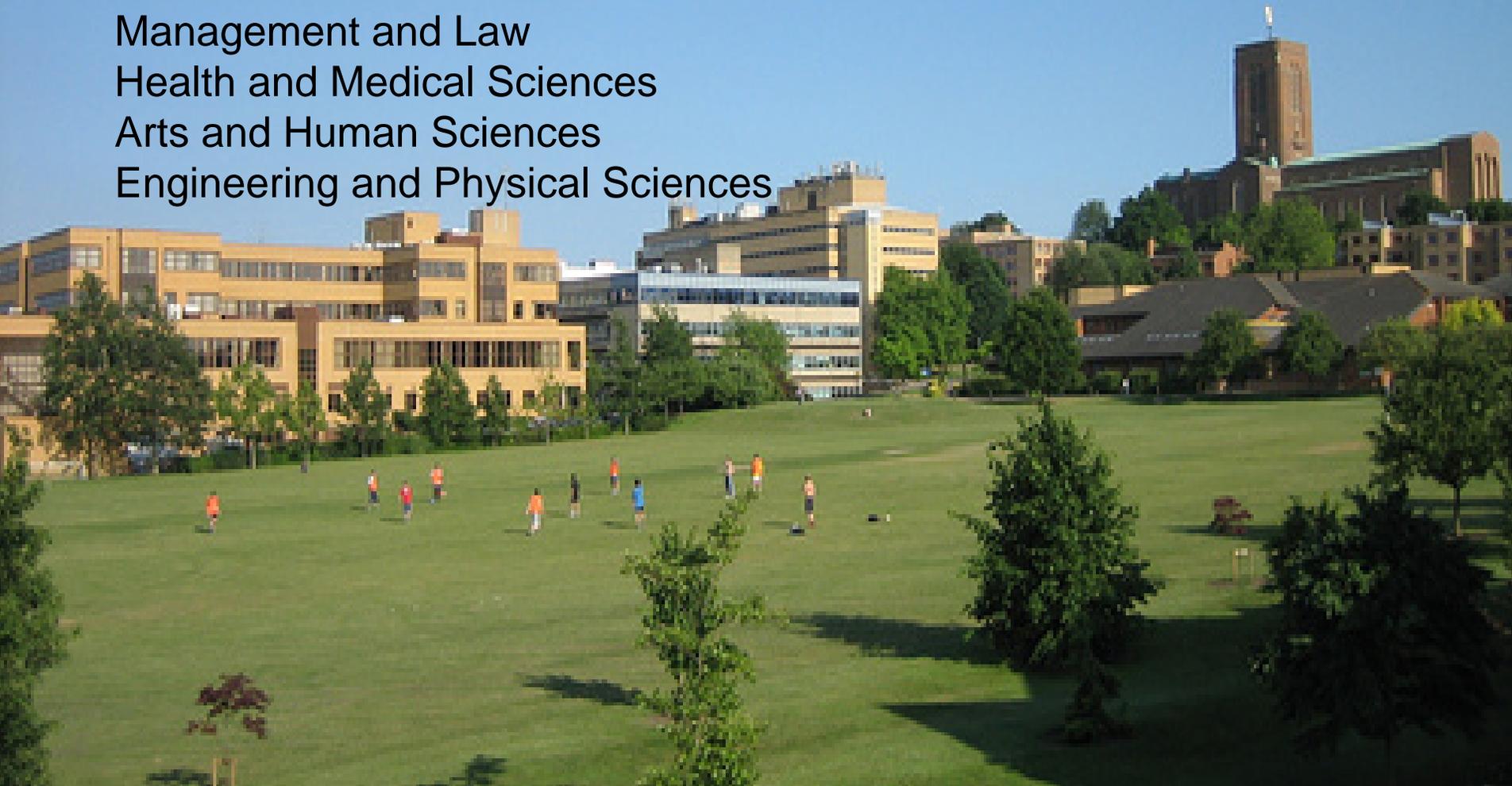
Four Faculties:

Management and Law

Health and Medical Sciences

Arts and Human Sciences

Engineering and Physical Sciences



# What was the vision for CoLab?



In March 2007 CoLab was established to:

- Become an **entrepreneurial student-based organisation** and develop a brand.
- Pilot a **range of workshops** aimed at encouraging the transfer of knowledge and expertise in the use of technology contained within the student body.
- Build a new website/internet **social networking space** for students on placement.
- **Build a website** to present and support the activities of CoLab.

**CoLab website: <http://www.co-lab.eu>**

# The development of CoLab to date

4<sup>th</sup> year

**2006 - 07** Three students  
2 networkers 1 technologist  
(CoLab 'proof of concept' developed)

**2007 - 08** Twelve students  
8 networkers 4 technologists

**2008 - 09** Fourteen students  
1 p/t placement 8 networkers 5 technologists

**2009 - 10** Ten students  
2 f/t placement 4 networkers 4 technologists



# Some of the CoLab team 2008-09



# What is CoLab 2009-10?

**CoLab** is a value-adding, not for profit student organisation providing services to students, the university, business and the local community.

It is a place where University of Surrey students can develop their personal and professional skills and qualities.

CoLab enables the 'Student Voice' to be heard.

CoLab aims to discover and make use of 'Student Talent'.



# Type of projects undertaken

Technology Forum

Employers' Breakfast

New Technologies  
Fair and Networking  
Event

GU2 Radio

“What do you  
think of our multi-  
cultural campus?”

“What is it to be  
enterprising?”

Discovery  
workshops

Trying out  
equipment

Design of  
CoLab website

Level 2  
survey

Level 3  
survey

Filming and  
editing

Analysis and  
Evaluation



# How do we support learning?

## For our CoLab team

- Group learning to support the projects, eg **skills training** for facilitating group interviews, confidentiality issues, filming and editing, etc.
- Individual learning through **concept mapping**, reflection and mentoring, culminating in the narrative report for the **Learning Through Experience Certificate**.
- Engagement in conferences as **presenters, organisers and evaluators**.

## For other students via invitations from the CoLab team

- Through completing surveys and reflecting on the questions posed.
- Technology discovery workshops.
- Attending and presenting or demonstrating at business networking events.



# What have we learnt about facilitating learning through a student-led enterprise ?

1. Getting things done – finding the line between team autonomy and directive management.
2. Leadership within the team is key – which way is best?
3. Students feel valued when they are asked to take responsibility for the project as a whole.
4. Education cultures were acknowledged, explored, challenged and sometimes changed.
5. Size of the teams have an impact on sense of ownership to the whole.
6. The best laid plans....



# What are the opportunities and challenges afforded by a student-led organisation ?

## Opportunities

Different Faculties (or a department) could use a student enterprise in a variety of ways:

- To build capacity
- Raise awareness
- Increase internal and external resources
- Develop staff and student expertise

Students have very good ideas and are able to give excellent advice! They learn from their previous actions/experiences and translate that into different ways of tackling a problem.



# What are the opportunities and challenges afforded by a student-led organisation ?

## Challenges

1. Longer-term projects – the stop/start scenario.
2. Danger of re-inventing the wheel, if the team changes each year.
3. How non-SCEPTrE members of staff relate to student workers.
4. Instilling a work-place sense of commitment to the projects.
5. Long-term viability of the enterprise and acceptance into the university mind-set.



# What do we think students have learnt?

Practical  
learning

Communication  
skills, including  
filming

Expanding  
initial  
concepts –  
concept  
mapping

Broadening  
horizons

Being part of an  
organisation  
and helping to  
form it

Essential  
skills

Being valued as  
an equal member  
of the team

Learning work  
practices in a  
real-world  
work-based  
situation

# What do students say they are learning and experiencing?

Peer learning

Listening rather than talking

Commitment

Mutual respect

Designing questions

Influence of student experts

Confidence building

Learning to think more broadly

Learning what works

How different the team was

Building up a strategy

Using skills effectively

Make the most of what you have & go ahead

Seeing (understanding) other peoples' opinions



# What are the practical outcomes of the CoLab enterprise to date?

- Increased IT skills within the university population.
- Hearing the 'student voice' (via surveys and comment pages).
- Pre-preparation (motivational) workshops for Level 1 students.
- Reviewing the transition from the placement to final year.
- Employers' Breakfast to promote the placement year.
- Increased networking experience for students.
- Productive links with businesses.
- Production of evaluative newsletters.
- Weekly student radio programme 'Mid-day Matters'.
- Film library of learning experiences and activities.
- Production of research materials highlighting students' experiences of life-wide learning, etc.



# Where do we go from here?

## **New initiatives this year**

- Regular discussion forum on a topic of interest to students.
- Organising competitions aimed at connecting the creativity and talents of students to the interests and challenges of the local community.
- Providing a service so that the talents of students can be connected to the needs and interests of the local community.

## **Looking to the future....**

- The feasibility of embedding CoLab within Faculty structures.





- Student Voice
- What is Co-Lab?
- Learning Centre
- Events

# Welcome

Posted by [Chris](#) in [Front](#) on August 18th, 2009

Co-Lab is a real-world paid student enterprise, doing real world work. We undertake a number of projects throughout the year which include:

- Running discovery workshops on modern technologies
- Enterprising activities
- Undertaking surveys of student opinion
- Organising events within the business community
- Film services

Our aim is to foster a culture of collaboration between students, teachers, the university, the business and local community by forging new connections and building new relationships.

**We will be recruiting in October for 4 Technologists and 4 Networkers**

**Keep an eye on the site for Updates**

[No Comments](#)

Search website...

- > CULTURE
- > ENGINEERING & TECHNOLOGY
- > ENTERPRISE
- > GENERAL
- > LEARNING
- > WEEKLY UPDATE

## CURRENT THEME

Each fortnight, Co-Lab will focus on a new theme for discussion. The current theme is:

*Cultural Diversity*

If you have something to say, why not join the debate in the [student voice](#).  
Add a comment to let us know your

# Approaching Placement Extinction?

Exploring the reasons why placement students are  
becoming a rare breed at the  
University of Central Lancashire (UCLAN)

Francesca Walker  
Employability & Alumni Fellow  
Business Centre  
UCLAN

Sue Thwaites  
Placements Officer  
Business Centre  
UCLAN

# Overview

- Background
- Methodology & Rationale
- Findings
  - Year 1
  - Year 2
  - Year 3 – Finalists
  - Year 3 – On Placement
  - Year 4
  - Conclusions & Solutions
  - Challenging Issues
- Questions

# Background

- The great decline 

# Methodology & Rationale

- Pilot Questionnaire
- Final Questionnaires
  - Year 1
  - Year 2
  - Year 3 – Finalists
  - Year 3 – Placement
  - Year 4
- 670 Students Responded

# Findings – Year 1

## Placement Length

- 53% felt that a year was 'just right'
- 37% didn't know whether the length of time was right or not

## Student Mobility

- 37% of students would be willing to travel up to thirty miles for their placement
- 17% were willing to travel over thirty miles
- the remainder indicated a preference for an overseas placement.
  
- 50% lived at home with their families
- 50% had chosen to live in University accommodation or were living with a partner in their own accommodation

# Findings – Year 1 (Continued)

## The Value of Work Experience

- 88% of those surveyed indicated that it was of significant importance to the employer

## Students in Employment

- 66% of students were in employment of some kind, whether paid or voluntary
- 24% indicated that their work was directly related to their course of study

# Findings – Year 2

## Placement Length

- 67% felt that a year was 'just right'
- 20% didn't know whether the length of time was right or not.

## Student Mobility

- 38% of students would be willing to travel up to thirty miles for their placement
- 21% were willing to travel over thirty miles
- the remainder indicated a preference for an overseas placement.
  
- 38% lived at home with their families
- 63% had chosen to live in University accommodation or were living with a partner in their own accommodation

# Findings – Year 2 (Continued)

## The Value of Work Experience

- 88% of those surveyed indicated that it was of significant importance to the employer.

## Students in Employment

- 72% of students were in employment of some kind, whether paid or voluntary
- 32% indicated that their work was directly related to their course of study

# Findings – Year 3 - Finalists

## Reasons for Opting out

### A Shorter Placement?

- 44% indicated that had the placement been shorter, they would have reconsidered it

### What would be the ideal length of time?

- 50% indicated that the placement could be covered over the summer months
- 50% felt that work experience could be incorporated within the three years of their degree.

# Findings – Year 3 – Finalists (Continued)

## Student Mobility

- 60% indicated that they would be willing to travel up to thirty miles for a placement.

## Opt Out – Reflective View

- 56% noted that they had no regrets
- 33% regretted not undertaking a placement, indicating that they now lacked experience and were therefore at a disadvantage when entering the workforce

## The Value of Work Experience

- 58% indicated that work experience was important and that employers expected it
- 29% indicated that employers felt that it was 'quite important'

# Findings – Year 3 – Finalists (Continued)

## Students in Employment

- 76% indicated that they currently had some kind of employment
- 29% of which was related to their course of study

## Preparing for Post-Graduate Employment

- 50% of those surveyed indicated that they had not started looking for post-graduation opportunities
- 11% had secured a job
- 20% had interviews

*This survey has was taken in February & March 2009*

# Findings – Year 3 – Students on Placement

## A Shorter Placement?

- 100% indicated that a year in the workplace was the right length of time to gain experience within a role

## Student Mobility

- 72% of the group travelled between 1 and 30 miles to their place of work
- 24% travelled over 30 miles
- 4% chose a placement overseas

## Other Mobility Issues

- 25% chose their placement so that they could remain at home
- 44% already lived at home with their families when they chose their placement

# Findings – Year 3 – Students on Placement (Continued)

## Value of the Work Placement

- increased confidence
- improved organisation skills
- analytical and decision-making skills were improved

## Skills to be developed

- Literacy was an issue that students would like to improve upon, and is one of the areas noted by employers of graduates as being weak

What would they have done differently?



# Findings – Year 3 – Students on Placement (Continued)

## The Value of Work Experience

- 96% noted that work experience was of importance

# Findings – Year 4

## A Shorter Placement?

- 96% noted that a year was the right amount of time to be in a placement

## Student Mobility

- 57% remained within 30 miles of their homes
- 14% travelled more than 30 miles
- 29% took the option of an overseas placement

## Placement Accommodation

- 61% either found alternative accommodation, or were assisted in the relocation process
- 39% stayed at home

# Findings – Year 4 (Continued)

## Work Placement Value

- increased confidence
- team working
- communication skills

## Areas for Development

- negotiating and influencing skills
- analysis and decision making skills
- numeracy

## What would they have done differently?

- greater research into the companies that they were applying to
- earlier applications to improve the quality and choice of placements available to them

# Findings – Year 4 (Continued)

## Students in Employment

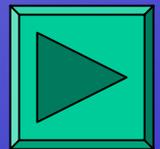
- 65% currently in employment
- 19% of which was related to their course of study

## Preparing for post-graduate employment

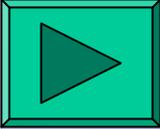
- 22% of this group had already secured work after graduation
- 14% of whom were returning to their placement employer

# Conclusions & Solutions

- Student Mobility 
- Finding the 'Right Role'
- Students in Part-time Employment
- Finance



# Challenging Issues

The interactive part..... 

# Questions

**Francesca Walker**

fdwalker@uclan.ac.uk

**Sue Thwaites**

sethwaites@uclan.ac.uk

# Widening Opportunities for Placements through Partnerships using OPUS Online Placement Management

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**Abstract** — Developing new placement opportunities for students continues to be a challenge, especially during difficult economic circumstances. Practitioners seek continually new areas of expertise, new locations and new cultural experiences to better prepare their students for the globalised marketplace.

Major employers and leading WIL universities emphasise the need to educate undergraduates for a global work environment. Both parties encourage undergraduates to take opportunities for placements ‘away from home’. Furthermore, the economic circumstances force students and placement managers to ‘cast their net wider’ to ensure all achieve placement. However, time and costs for cash-strapped academic departments contrive to limit or prevent significant development of new placements at a distance.

Current development on the University of Ulster’s OPUS online placement management system will enable academic departments which use OPUS to arrange partnerships with other distant universities for the exchange of students in placements. OPUS users may view selected placement opportunities from the other institution (by agreement) and students may apply for them online. Placement managers may select students for potential exchange and agree with their providers which opportunities may be offered to the partner institution(s). In effect, a widened placement community will be developed voluntarily to ensure that students gain career-enhancing placements and fewer vacancies remain unfilled.

The paper develops the operational and technical features of OPUS which will implement voluntary multi-university partnerships securely and with quality assured. With OPUS now being implemented by several universities and under consideration by many others partnering becomes a viable option.

**Keywords** — global placements, OPUS software, placement exchange, work-integrated learning

## 1. PLACEMENT OPPORTUNITIES

The current economic challenges with consequent company draw-down in staff-count have made it more difficult for students and placement practitioners to find adequate placements for all students. While it is hoped this will be a temporary condition there remains the continual need to generate new placements for growing numbers of students and to overcome the natural turbulence in the marketplace.

However, there are other emerging perspectives which add to the need to develop placement opportunities; these may be identified as follows:

- a. Student's Global Perspective. It has been argued by Pratt (2007) that there should be greater use of WIL programmes to develop students' awareness of global issues. Further, experienced placement practitioners, such as Laslett and Ward (2008), present examples of well-developed trans-national WIL programmes and testify to their value to develop students fitted for a role in their global workplace.
- b. Extended Opportunities . As student numbers grow the need to generate new placements grows. Frequently, this need cannot be met within the immediate geographical region, so the net has to be cast wider. This forces placement staff to seek a greater variety and depth of challenge in opportunities which they may offer to their students.
- c. Course Marketing. One of the more powerful appeals to a course of study is to show an impressive range of opportunities and examples of how graduates have succeeded in their profession. With a diverse range of placement opportunities with a global reach any course would be worth a second look, at least. By having high quality placements in rewarding industries and attractive locations will provide excellent marketing material for any course. With the impending relaxation of tuition fees the competition for suitably-qualified students and course reputation will become more intense.

The needs for extending student placements are clear; but there remains a significant problem.

## **2. THE PROBLEM**

No practitioner in the area of WIL or placements management is unaware of the constraints of resources and budget! There is not unlimited time and a credit card to travel widely to generate new and interesting placements, unfortunately. Therefore, how is the need for new placements in out-of-region locations to be generated? Practitioners who have international contacts state that it has taken a long time and considerable expense to build the relationship to a state where it is capable of taking students into placement year on year. Most HEIs do not have the budget and placement practitioners do not have the time for this significant investment, desirable though its outcomes may be.

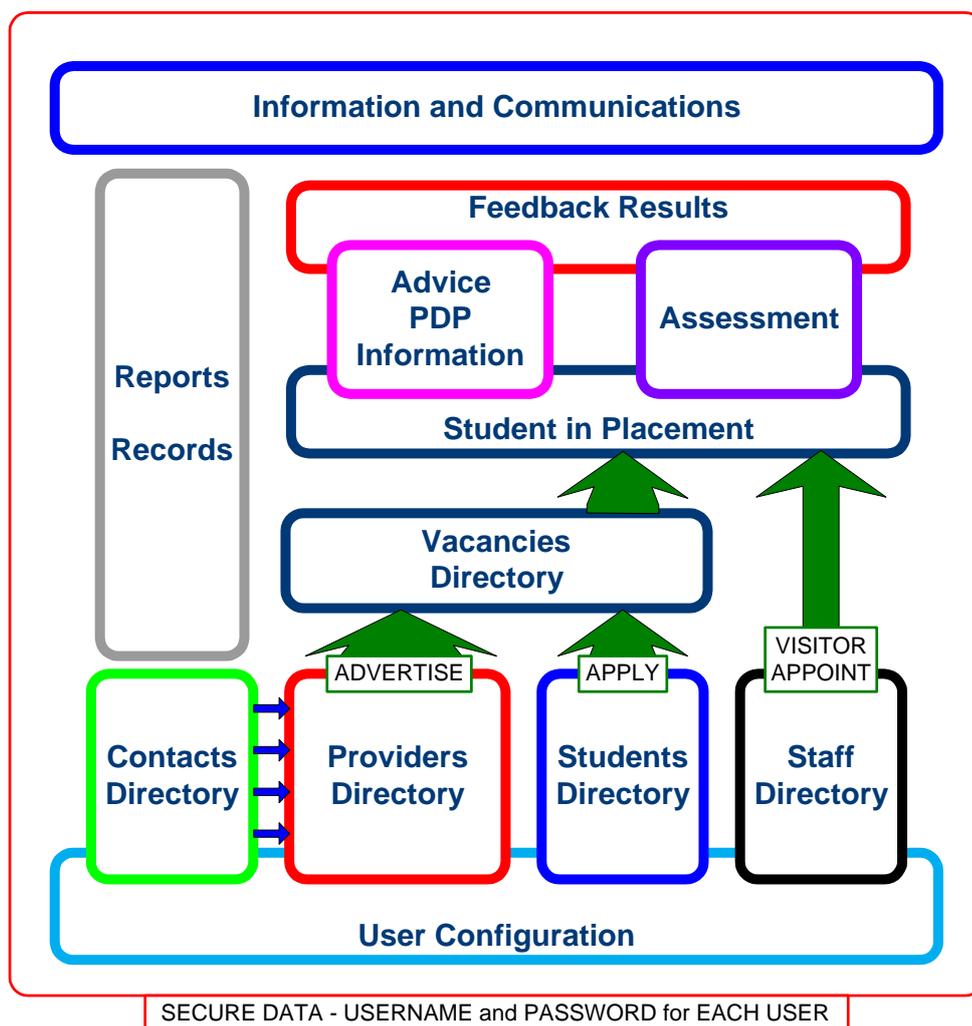
This paper presents a solution based on the University of Ulster's OPUS placement management system for achieving new placements in new locations.

## **3. OPUS PLACEMENT MANAGEMENT**

OPUS is a secure, online system for managing all aspects of placements; it has been developed by placement practitioners at the University of Ulster, School of Engineering since 2001. It is recognised that many student record systems in service with HEIs have a 'placements module' which maintains records of placement episodes. OPUS is more than a recording system – it manages placements into the future where all stakeholders: providers and their representatives, students, academic staff, in-placement mentors and placement management staff all have their slice of information and action. In summary, a placement provider who is 'approved' (ie, meets quality requirements) is entered in the 'companies' directory' with their hiring contact persons in the 'contacts directory'. The provider promotes a vacancy which may be viewed by any student from the 'students' directory' and who may apply online by attaching their CV to that placement opportunity. (Other

methods of application are facilitated also.) This action allows the contact person to view the CVs of all applicants and select using the usual procedures. A selected student is ‘placed’ in the vacancy, an academic tutor is assigned from the ‘academic staff directory’ and all information needed by all participants is made available at ‘resources’ online. Other features include a comprehensive in-placement assessment and feedback capability, extensive senior-user configuration features and the ability to handle students from different faculties with different placement requirements, assessments and instructions. Placement managers may generate easily summary reports and communicate to selected groups of students. The system maintains records and is easily audited, especially with date stamps for data actions. The diagrammatic arrangement of OPUS is presented in Figure 1.

OPUS is open source software and may be taken and used by anyone within the rules of the GPL License (v2). Essentially, this means that the software is available at no cost and the code may be seen and modified by users for additional functionality.



**Figure 1: OPUS Diagrammatic Representation**

OPUS is endorsed by ASET as complying with its code for managing placements with IT and online (ASET 2007). Recently in 2008, the University of Ulster recognised the OPUS development team with the award of Distinguished Learning Support Fellows of the University. The authors claim that OPUS has made the activities of placement management much less onerous and it gives all participants ownership of their part of the action. A much fuller description of OPUS may be found in the paper by Laird and Turner (2008) and at the FOSS web site.

## 4. PARTNERSHIP CONCEPT

The problems for an HEI to generate new placements in out-of-region locations are recognised. However, in other locations similar problems are faced by other HEIs, such as:

- a. need to generate a wider variety of placements,
- b. meet a growing student demand for placements, or
- c. seek more placements of a particular type for a specific cohort.

To overcome any of these needs the concept is to form a partnership involving two or more HEIs in which several mutual benefits will follow:

- a. removal of costs and time to generate placements in out-of-region locations,
- b. access to selected placement opportunities in out-of-region locations,
- c. voluntary sharing of opportunities to facilitate over (or under) availability of opportunities,
- d. the HEI continuing to be supportive of a placement provider's needs by offering students from an partner HEI when the need cannot be met from within,
- e. sharing of the in-placement support to the visiting student by the local HEI so that costs of long-distance travel are removed from the partner HEI, and
- f. benefits for student and HEI as detailed above.

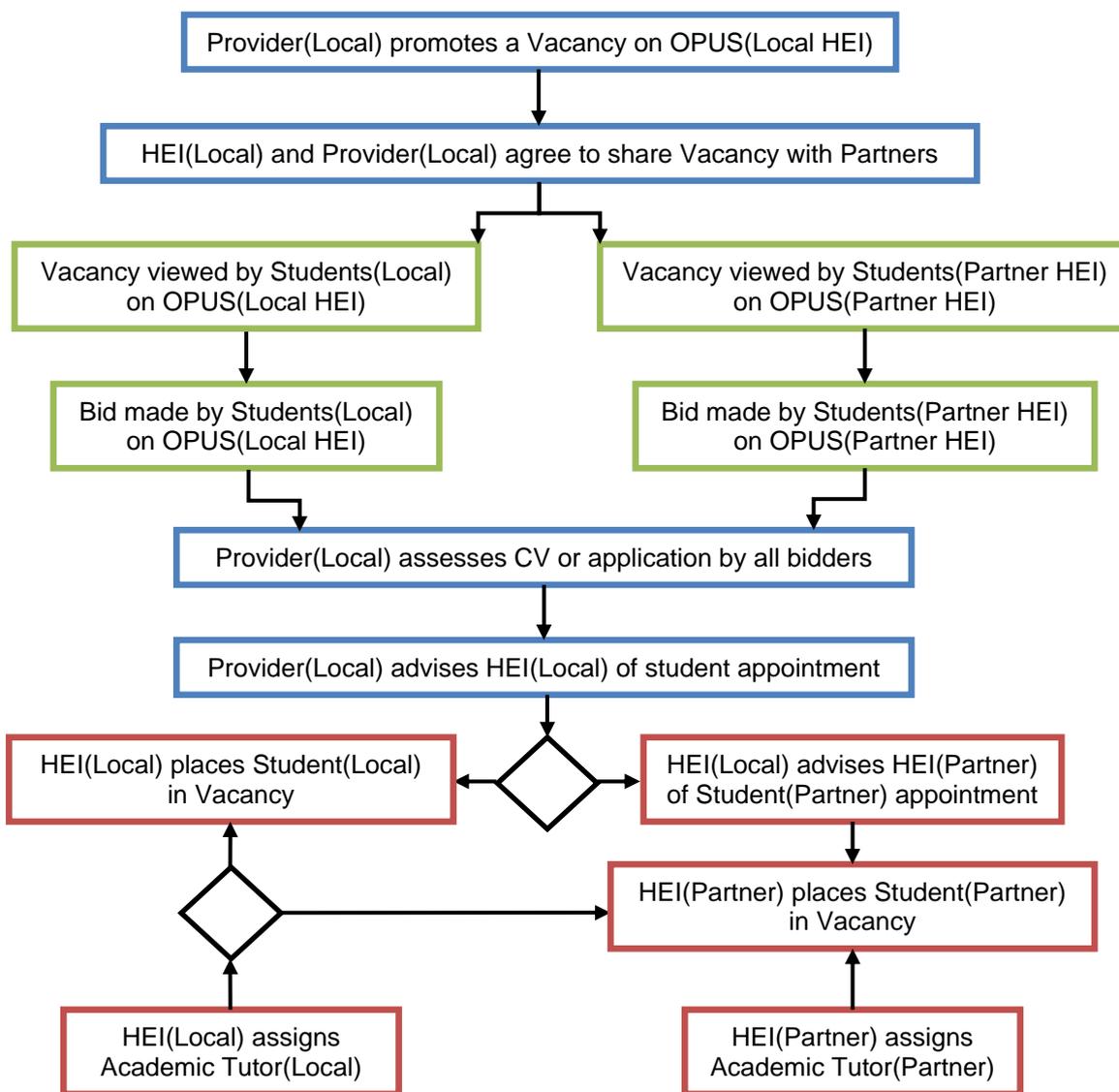
Like the formation of many partnerships the process may start through personal contacts and the sharing of mutual interests. At an appropriate point the representatives of the two or more HEIs agree informally to form a partnership for the sharing of placements. Essential features of the functioning of the partnership will include:

- a. partnerships formed among similar disciplines, eg, engineering with engineering or education with education,
- b. matched, or adequately matched, placement requirements such as timing, duration and experience sought. While this may appear essential it should not be over-played at the expense of a good out-of-region placement experience for the student's development,
- c. the ability to offer a placement vacancy (which is owned by a placement provider) will need agreement from the placement provider so that any applicants from out-of region HEIs in the partnership will be considered fairly,
- d. students who may be permitted to apply for out-of-region vacancies may be 'selected' by their HEI, or not as they choose,
- e. students in the home region will continue to be apply for any vacancy in the home region in addition to those made available in the out-of-region locations,
- f. the home HEI will continue to be the point of contact for 'their' placement provider even though a student from another partner HEI is actually in placement. Due to distance and remoteness (relative!) the best contact for the provider is the local HEI. There may be policy reasons on the part of the provider for maintaining this, such as supporting local HEIs,
- g. when a student is placed in an out-of-region provider the local HEI will undertake student support (and assessment) following the requirements of the student's HEI, and
- h. it is intended that balanced mutual support among partner HEIs would develop without maintaining a one-for-one parity in student exchanges.

While these features should apply it is recognised by the authors that it would be most unlikely for their HEI to offer a placement vacancy to partner HEIs when there were insufficient vacancies for local needs. However, this approach does not over-rule particular circumstances which may benefit from an exchange, eg, a placement provider with a need for an engineering student with a particular foreign language skill.

### 5. PLACEMENT PROCESS IN PARTNERSHIP

With a partnership in place the process by which a student may find a placement and have support during it is presented by the flow chart in Figure 2. Note the interaction between ‘local’ and ‘partner’ designations.



**Figure 2: Key Events in the Placement Process for Local and Partner HEIs**

It should be noted that the partner student placed in a local vacancy will have support from their own HEI, ie, the HEI(Partner) and the local HEI which ‘owns’ the vacancy.

## 6. TECHNICAL CONSIDERATIONS

The model of partnerships for placements exchange assumes that participating HEIs manage their placement processes online, or at least a significant portion of the placement activities are online. If this is not yet the case any HEI may obtain OPUS and install it easily on very basic hardware.

There are several existing and new technical features in which placement practitioners and technical support staff will have an interest. The following list itemises the more significant aspects.

- a. all users of OPUS have a username and unique password so that no unauthorised persons may access the data,
- b. any user may access only the data which is of interest or relevance to their status and level of permissions,
- c. the status and level of permissions may be configured by the senior user of the local OPUS installation,
- d. this paper infers that all members of the partnership will use OPUS. While this may be desirable, the capability to enable partnership placements is being written to allow any online system to participate, ie, an open, documented protocol will be used,
- e. a 'central broker' will be used to allocate serial numbers to HEIs and to define partnerships,
- f. a 'central broker' will be located at the University of Ulster, held securely and maintained,
- g. it is not necessary for the University of Ulster to be part of any partnership. Partnerships may be formed by any two or more HEIs,
- h. it is possible for a discipline within a HEI to be a member of more than one partnership. In these circumstances HEIs in different partnerships will not have inter-visibility of selected information from non-partner HEIs,
- i. within an HEI different disciplines may form partnerships with suitable disciplines in other HEIs,
- j. data will be shared on a peer-to-peer arrangement to give the system a trusted robustness. This ensures trust that data will not be intercepted by a non-partner, and any single system's downtime – particularly that of the broker – does not greatly affect the remainder of the network,
- k. a necessary amount of data will be shared directly between partner HEIs to facilitate the establishment and operation of a placement exchange,
- l. specific users will have enhanced privileges to view information on partner systems (such as OPUS) in addition to their rights within their own system. This will be necessary, for example, for the proxy Academic Tutor so that they may support adequately the student from the partner HEI,
- m. a partnership may be started (technically) by a HEI using information which it was given by a potential partner to form the peer-to-peer arrangement. This 'opening' process will be confirmed by the other partners to establish the partnership technically,
- n. new members may be added to the partnership when agreed by all existing members, initially off line of course, and technically by the exchange of information as in the 'opening' process above,
- o. a member may cease to be in a partnership by a 'sign-off' which will be the reversal of the 'opening' process,
- p. a partner HEI would not have editorial rights over the information 'owned' by another partner. For example, the details of a placement vacancy will be created by the provider or

the placement staff in the local HEI. Both these parties may modify this data, but any other partner may not. However, it may be highly desirable that additional information should be presented for the benefit of partners' students; this may be achieved by working through the relevant HEI in the partnership,

- q. local placement staff should see (but not edit) the names and origin of applicants from partner HEIs for a local vacancy. This is necessary as this staff have a formed relationship with the local provider of the vacancy and are best placed to resolve queries and address questions before and during the placement. To be effective in this role they will need to be well informed,
- r. student applicants do not see the names or number of other applicants, local or from partners, and
- s. for audit purposes it will be necessary to create copies of some information on the systems of both HEIs involved in an exchange placement episode.

This list represents some of the technical matters, but as work proceeds, it is most likely that additional questions will emerge. The principle will be to provide securely sufficient information to enable each participant to be effective in their role and to provide an audit trace.

## 7. CONCLUSION

The case for placements exchange is clear and desirable. In fact WACE, the World Association for Cooperative Education, is considering placement exchange among its Partners to gain the benefits for students of greater appreciation of the global workplace. It is not yet clear how they propose to manage this process in a flexible, secure, reliable and sustainable manner. The authors contend that the partnership concept presented in this paper provides the system and methodology through OPUS to achieve and maintain multiple working partnerships for any discipline in any HEI. The claims of OPUS to manage effectively the placement process may be seen from the statistics in Figure 3. How would other more-traditional systems handle this load?

Item	Number of incidents
Live information downloads	31,998
Company records	1,942
Vacancy descriptions presented to students	2,712
Online applications	26,272
Placements recorded	2,372
Assessments recorded	7,229

**Figure 3: University of Ulster OPUS Statistics, Development Period 2002 – Aug 2009**

(Note: live information downloads do not include downloads of obsolete information which had been removed from the system before compiling these statistics.)

As OPUS is open source software it is quite difficult to establish the number of HEIs which use it. However, it is known that several HEIs in the United Kingdom and one overseas are now using OPUS. The potential for really beneficial partnerships for placement exchanges with controlled inter-visibility of information has arrived.

## 8. REFERENCES

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# ASET Placements (International)

Lisa Fowlie  
Health and Safety Services  
Bangor University  
Sept 2009



# Erasmus

- Must have a formal agreement with a partner in one of the eligible countries
- Must have an Erasmus European Charter
- But...these are academic checks only...so....
- We all have to undertake the risk assessment for the placement to include the '*health and safety checks of a partner establishment*'

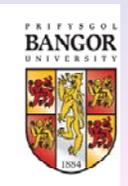
# What is a risk assessment?

“A risk assessment is nothing more than a careful examination of what in your workplace / work activity could cause harm to people, so that you can weigh up whether you have taken enough precautions or should do more to prevent harm”

So what is considered reasonable to do?

You must do something.. You can't do nothing!

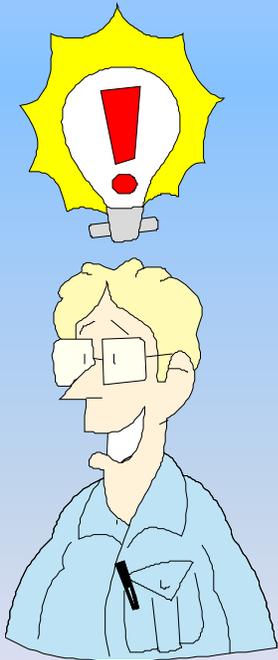
**The problem with a cat?**





# Who does the risk assessment?

Competent person – someone who has the necessary technical expertise, training and experience to carry out the assessment.



Are you competent?

Do you know about the programme / the arrangements / the country / the organisation?

# How do we do a risk assessment?

- There are many different formats for risk assessments and they need to be ‘suitable and sufficient’ - not perfect!
- And, you will need to be able to show that:-
  - a proper check was made
  - you identified those who may be affected
  - you dealt with all the significant hazards
  - you took into account the number of people who might be involved
  - the precautions are reasonable and the remaining risks are low

**“A monkey risk assessment”!**





# 5 Steps

**Step 1:-** Identify the Hazards (Plan the placement)

**Step 2:-** Decide who might be harmed and how (Placement + others)

**Step 3:-** Evaluate the risks and decide on precautions (Provide procedures and information)

**Step 4:-** Record your findings and implement them (Keep a formal written record of what has been done)

**Step 5:-** Review your risk assessment and update if necessary (If something changes or happens)

# Step 1 – Identify the hazards

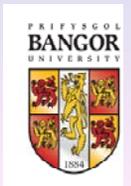
## Plan the placement

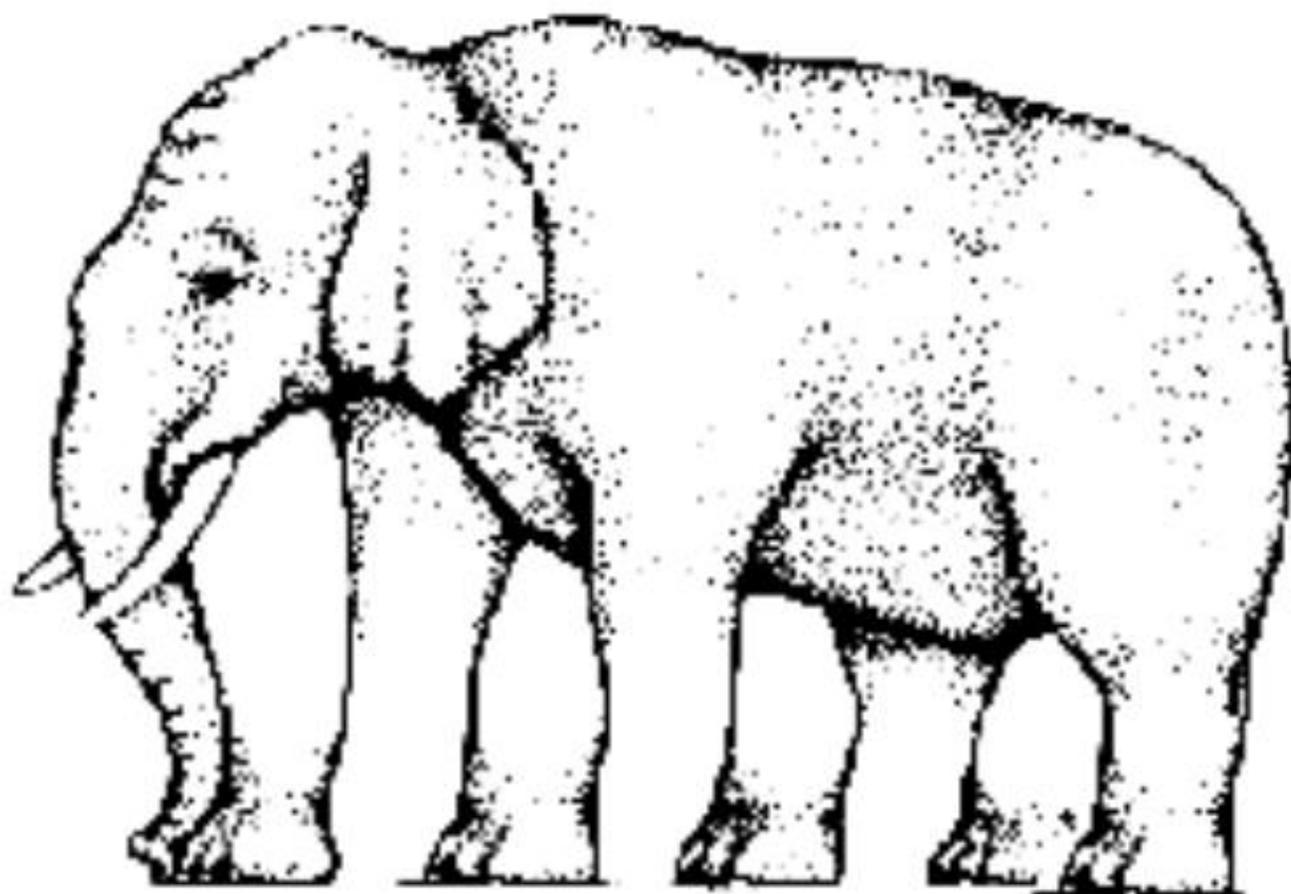
- Who is going ?
- Where are they going – Country ? / Organisation? / Accommodation?
- How are they travelling?
- What activity (at work / at play) are they doing while they are there?
- How long are they staying (term times and / or holidays)?
- What communications will they have?
- What if something goes wrong?

# Who is going?

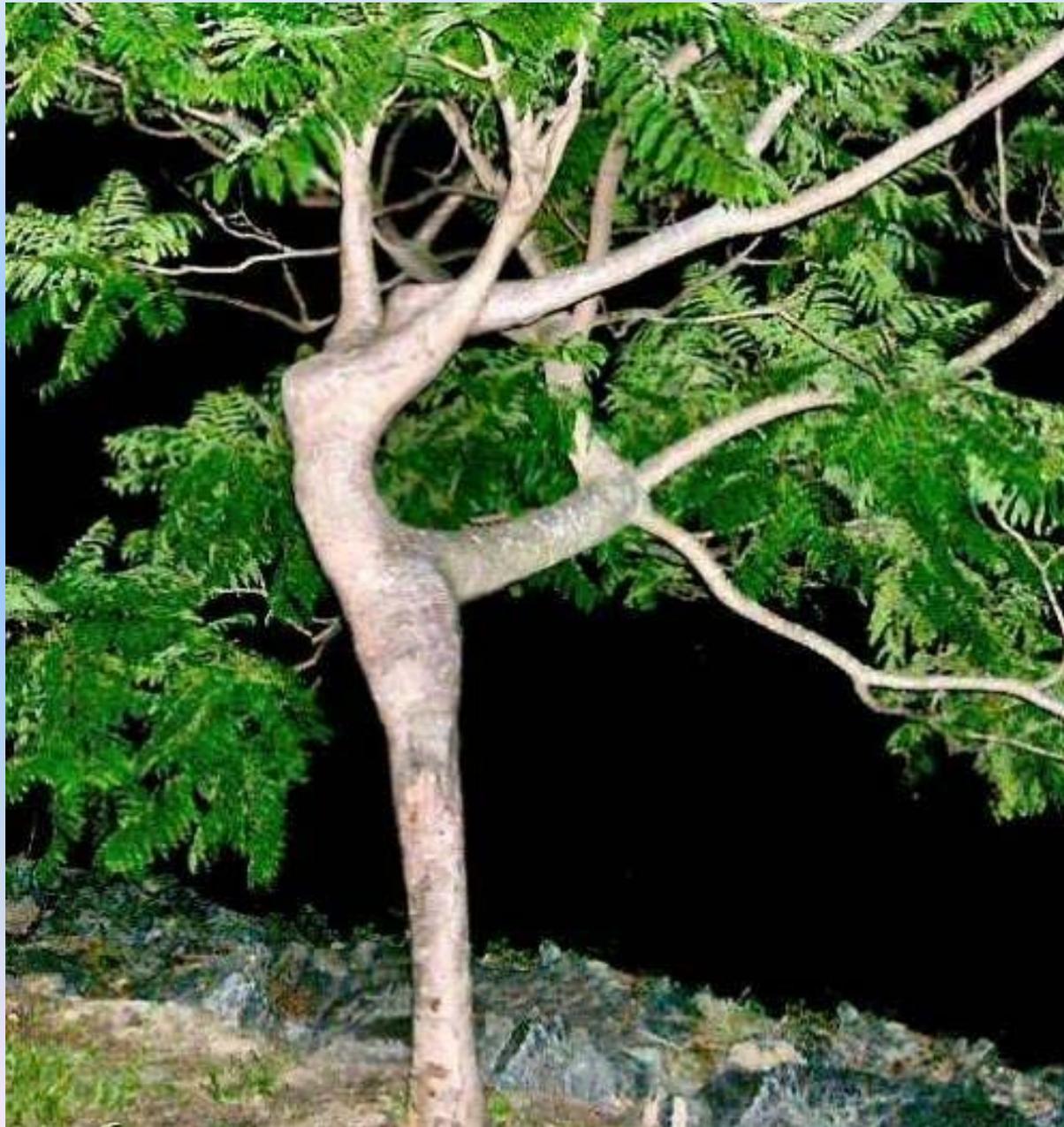
- Age
- Gender
- Nationality
- Allergies
- Physical / Mental abilities
- Experience
- Attitude
- Personality
- Skills
- Language
- Sight- colour blindness, astigmatism, long and short sightedness, monocular vision.
- Hearing- obstructed ear canal, perforated ear drum, middle ear damage, catarrh.
- Taste and smell- lack of sensitivity, genetic limitations, catarrh,.
- Touch senses- severed nerves, genetic defects.
- Balance, Meniere's disease, alcohol consumption, rapid motion, visual effects

**Remember all individuals  
are different!!**





How many legs does this elephant have?





# Where – Country ([www.fco.gov.uk](http://www.fco.gov.uk))

- France 3425
- Spain 2258
- Germany 1575
- Italy 773
- Netherlands 398
- Sweden 287
- Finland 221
- Belgium 184
- Denmark 183
- Austria 170
- Turkey 29
- Hungary 27
- Iceland 23
- Malta 21
- Romania 15
- Slovak Republic 15
- Bulgaria 10
- Slovenia 10
- Lithuania 5
- Latvia 4
- Luxembourg 3
- Liechtenstein 1

# Country information / details

- Emergency numbers
- Phone info (mobile networks)
- Voltage and plugs
- Cultural Issues (holidays)
- Embassies / visas
- Driving licence / insurance requirements
- Local facts
- Weather / climate
- Water / food
- Health issues
- Terrorism
- Smoking / spitting / drinking / chewing gum

# Where - Organisation

- Universities
- Higher education establishments
- Other work / small organisations
- What to expect from them  
....and what they expect from the placement
- Rules and procedures.. and for the placement an ‘induction and introduction’ that covers these expectations

# Where - Accommodation

- Student accommodation
- Rented accommodation
- Family accommodation
- Locality
- Area
- Convenience



# How are they travelling?

- Land
- Sea
- Air
- Combination
- Who arranges?
- Insurance



What activity (at work / at play) are they doing while they are there?



How long are they staying (term times and / or holidays)?

# What communications will they have?

- Notify arrival
- Notify contact details
- Contact for coursework
- Contact at set frequencies
- Emergency contacts .. two ways



# What if something goes wrong?

- Copies of documents
- Emergency money
- Contact details for address
- Contact details for home
- Details of bank cards / cell phones to cancel
- Hospital cover
- Insurance details and contacts



# Step 2 - Decide who might be harmed and how

The Placement and others they may affect?

- The workforce
- The auxiliary workers
- Visitors
- Students / trainees
- Members of the public
- Delivery persons
- Young persons
- Pregnant workers
- Physically, visually, mentally impaired persons
- Contractors
- Trespassers
- Maintenance workers
- Any others you identify

Insurance to cover damage / injury to others



# Step 3 - Evaluate the risks and decide on precautions

Provide procedures and information

- Existing controls
- The legal requirements
- Work practices
- Other risk assessments
- Operation guidelines
- Industry standards

**For us ..our procedures and Guidance make sure people can follow them!**



Risk = Severity of harm x Likelihood of occurrence

# Step 4 - Record your findings and implement them

Keep a formal written record of what has been done

You must record the significant findings of your assessment.

This means writing down the significant hazards and conclusions.

A procedure should be produced for the Placement to follow to include the details to be obtained from the host Organisation at induction and emergency procedures to be followed when away.

This should be provided at a briefing session before leaving and confirmation of induction / introduction on arrival.

# Step 5 - Review your assessment and update if necessary

- Changes in work placement activities
- Changes in individual placement circumstances
- Move to a new Country
- An accident
- A complaint
- A change of legislation
- Any other relevant changes



Always have a final de brief. If something does go wrong learn from it and make sure that it does not happen again !!

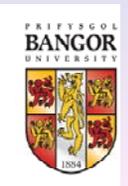
# Risk assessment - final comment?

We took risks, we knew we took them; things have come out against us, and therefore we have no complaint.

‘The Last Message’ in Scott’s Last Expedition (1913)

Robert Falcon Scott 1868-1912

Student life should be fun....!!



It's all about planning.....

# Equal Opportunities 2010 and beyond

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**ASET Annual Conference 2009**



# Equal Opportunities 2010 and beyond

This session will focus on

- Equality Bill 2009
- 'Unleashing Aspiration'
- Our Own Practice

# Equality Bill 2009

“To ensure everyone has a fair chance in life. This is important to individuals, for a strong society and a competitive economy. The Equality Bill will promote equality, fight discrimination in all its forms, including age discrimination, and introduce transparency in the workplace which is key to tackling the gender pay gap.

The Bill will promote fairness and equality of opportunity; tackle disadvantage and discrimination; and modernise and strengthen our law to make it fit for the challenges that our society faces today and in the future.”

<http://www.commonleader.gov.uk/output/page2657.asp>

# Equality Bill 2009

Two main types of legal provisions

- Harmonisation of current equality laws
- Extension of the current public sector duties

<http://www.ecu.ac.uk/law/equality-bill>

[http://www.equalities.gov.uk/equality\\_bill.aspx](http://www.equalities.gov.uk/equality_bill.aspx)

<http://services.parliament.uk/bills/2008-09/equality.html>

# Equality Bill 2009

Proposals most relevant for work-based learning

- Protected Characteristics
- Association and Perception
- Dual Discrimination
- Definitions of Discrimination
- Positive Action

# **‘Unleashing Aspiration’**

Final report of the Panel on Fair Access to Professions

Focus on social mobility and socio-economic background

[www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/accessprofessions](http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/accessprofessions)

# **‘Unleashing Aspiration’**

“Greater equality and more mobility are two sides of the same coin”

Social mobility depends on

- growth in opportunities
- fair chance to access opportunities
- individual drive and ambition

# 'Unleashing Aspiration'

The Panel asked

- what's happening to social mobility?
- are professions becoming more inclusive?
- how does socio-economic background affect individuals' chances of professional careers?

# 'Unleashing Aspiration'

The Panel identified these as barriers to social mobility

- opportunity hoarding
- increasing graduate-only entry to professions
- little or no transfer from vocational routes into the professions
- geographical concentration of opportunities in London and the South East

# 'Unleashing Aspiration'

Panel made a total of 88 recommendations

Recommendations on internships

- fairness and transparency in internship opportunities
- national kitemark for internships and work experience
- ensuring that internships are affordable

# Our Own Practice

How can we use

- the proposed legal changes
- recommendations from research
- equality impact assessments

to promote equality in work-based learning?

# Further Resources 2009

‘Male and Female Participation and Progression in Higher Education’ available from [www.hepi.ac.uk](http://www.hepi.ac.uk)

‘Experience of LGBT Staff and Students in HE: Research Report 2009’ available from [www.ecu.ac.uk](http://www.ecu.ac.uk)

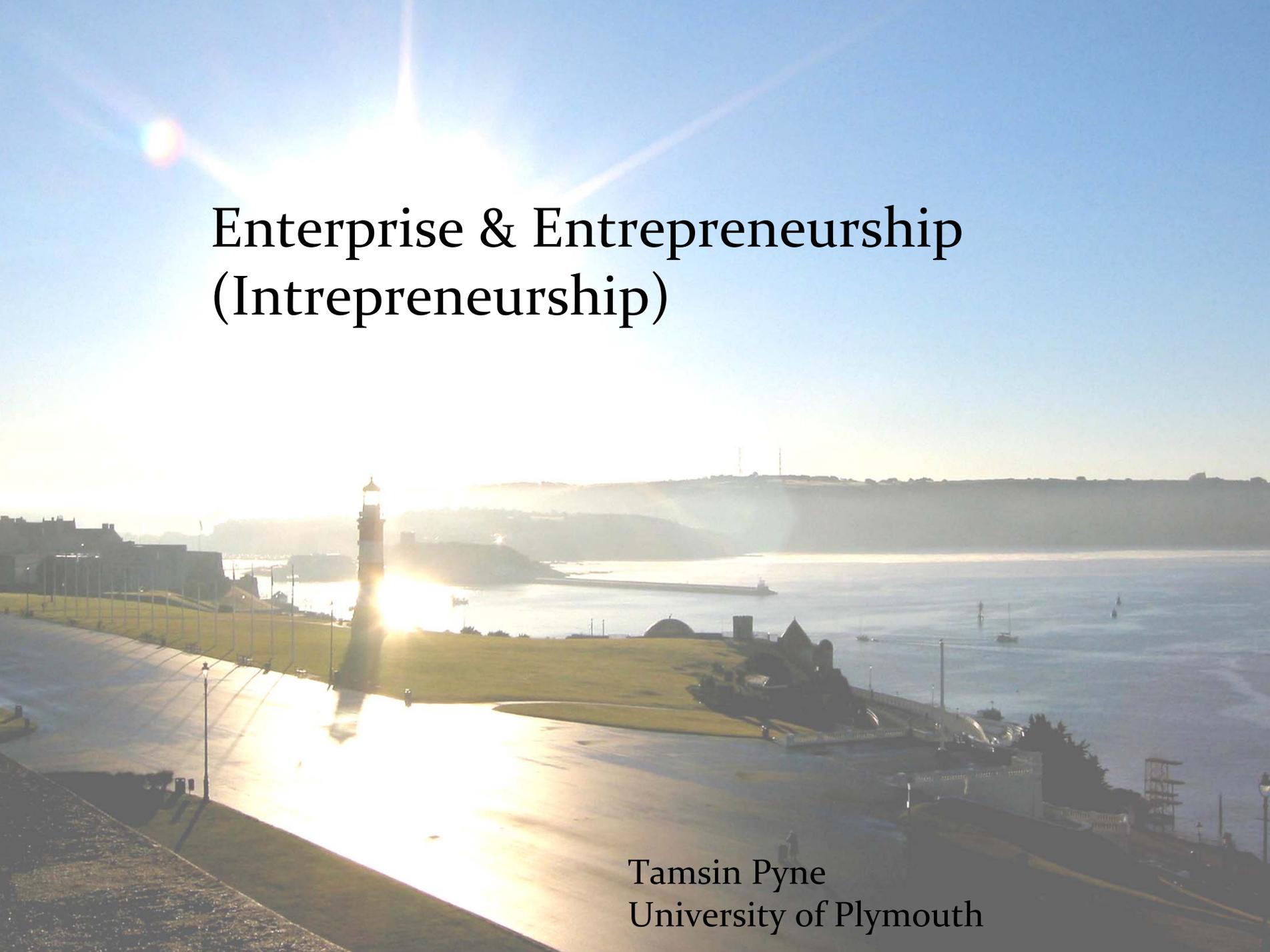
# Equal Opportunities 2010 and beyond

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**ASET Annual Conference 2009**





# Enterprise & Entrepreneurship (Intreprenurship)

Tamsin Pyne  
University of Plymouth

# Session Outline

- Context: how is this topic relevant to placements?
- Audit of current skills development placement preparation practice
- What tools are out there?
- Methods and modes of delivery at Plymouth – practical guidance
- Questions and Resources

# How is this relevant to placements?

- Intrepeneur: ‘a person who has an entrepreneur skill set but who works within an organisation..’ Wikipedia
- Core set of desirable skills as defined by employers and placement providers
  - ‘Employers want recruits who are going to be effective in a changing world. They want people who can deal with change - indeed who thrive on it. They want intelligent, flexible adaptable employees who are quick to learn... They do not need people who are resistant to new approaches or who are slow to respond to cues.’ - HEA

# Desired Skills/Attributes

- Cognitive Skills/Intellect:  
Solve problems
- Generic Competencies:  
Teamwork
- Personal Capabilities:  
Self starter
- Technical Ability:  
Up to date knowledge
- Business/Organisational Awareness:  
Work experience
- Practical and Professional Elements:  
Reflection

# Variety of tools

- Purchased, externally created virtual business challenges
- External organisation specific one-day events
- In-house created business simulations
- And many more...

# Plymouth uses 'Flux'





# Student Briefing



Playing the board game



Experts Briefing



Meetings with experts



Game board complete



Planning the pitch



Pitching the business idea



Feedback from experts



Final Pitch: 'Press Conference' style



Final Pitch: 'Elevator' style



Voting



Awarding the prize 2008



Enjoying the prize 2008!!



# Flux: Methods of Delivery

- Across disciplines
- Appropriate for all stages of study
- From one day event to semester long challenge

# What participants say....

‘Try it – it's exciting, stressful, fun, horrible and good, all at the same time. It's brilliant.’

‘Challenging and worthwhile experience for any student wanting to develop their skills and learn by doing.’

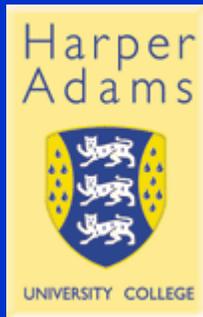
‘Feel more confident that I can articulate my strengths to employers. This experience makes me more confident that I have the skills employers are looking for and that I will succeed.’

‘We are looking for students with something extra, who have a get up and go and are really motivated. This competition for us encompasses everything that we are looking for in graduates.’

KPMG

# Where to go for more information about 'Enterprise Education'

- HEA (Higher Education Academy) – subject centres
- Enterprise Educators UK
- NCGE (National Council for Graduate Enterprise)
- Centres for Excellence in Teaching & Learning
- NICENT (Northern Ireland Centre for Entrepreneurship)
- [www.flux500.com](http://www.flux500.com)
- Flux brochure pdf – by email request



# UNPAID WORK

ASET Annual Conference 2009  
Lancaster

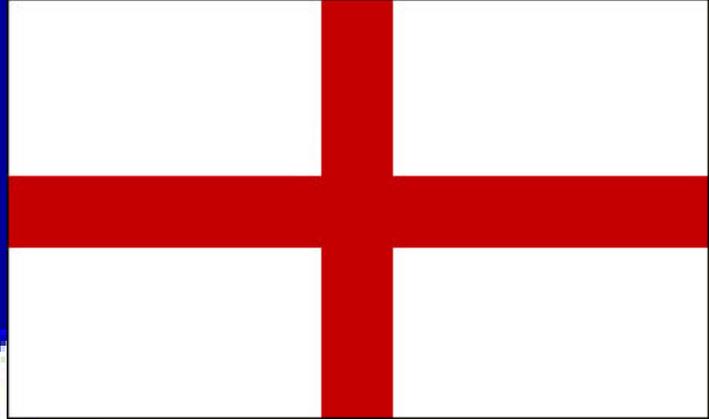


## **Carrie de Silva LL.B (Hons), MA**

Principal Lecturer - Law and Taxation

Land Management Placement Manager

Placement Co-ordinator



Seminar relates to **England and Wales** only.

Northern Ireland largely similar but with different statutory references.

Scotland - largely similar (in this area, but not all) but with different statutory references.

**Does everyone doing 'work' in the UK  
have to be paid the NMW?**

**NO**

# What will affect NMW application?

- age
- nature of activity
- nature of organisation
- student status

# Basic Law

- NMW introduced 1<sup>st</sup> April 1999 under the National Minimum Wage Act 1998 and the National Minimum Wage Regulations 1999 (SI 1999/584)
- 'Workers' to be paid NMW.

# NMW Rates from October 2009

- £5.80 / hour                      22 years +
- £4.83 / hour                      18 – 21 years
- £3.57 / hour                      16 – 17 years
  
- (top rate from 21+ from October 2010)

# Administration

- HMRC

[www.hmrc.gov.uk/nmw/](http://www.hmrc.gov.uk/nmw/)

- NMW Helpline

0845 6000 678

- Pay and Work Rights Helpline

0800 917 2368

# Penalties

- Enforcement notices from HMRC.
- Appeals to Employment Tribunal.
- Increased powers introduced in January 2009 under the Employment Act 2008 giving Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984 powers of entry, search and seizure.
- Prosecution in Magistrates or Crown Court.

# Judgments

- British and Irish Legal Information Institute  
[www.bailii.org/](http://www.bailii.org/)
- Employment Appeals Tribunal  
[www.employmentappeals.gov.uk/Judgments/judgments.htm](http://www.employmentappeals.gov.uk/Judgments/judgments.htm)

# Exceptions and Special Provisions

- Modern apprentices
- Other government training schemes
- ESC funded
- HE up to first degree
- Teacher training
- Schemes assisting homeless back to work
- Share fishermen
- Voluntary workers
- Prisoners
- Agricultural workers (Agricultural Wages Board)
- Family members residing at home, or those treated as such

# Classifications

- Workers
  - Within NMW
  - Exempt
- Voluntary Workers
- Volunteers

# Workers

Most within NMW. Individual cannot contract out  
- s.49 NMW Act.

# 'Workers' but exempt

- NMW Regs 1999, s12(8)(a) those in HE and 'required' to do work experience as part of their course (for up to 1 year) before the course ends are exempt from NMW.
- Modern apprentices.

# Apprentice

- *Dunk v George Waller & Sons Limited* [1972] ALL ER 630  
Payment of wages during the period of the apprenticeship  
Instruction and training to enable the apprentice to acquire valuable skills  
Status on completion of the apprenticeship that gives the individual a good start in the labour market.
- *Flett v Matheson* [2006] IRLR 277 CA  
Modern apprenticeship agreement between employer, employee and training provider construed as contract of apprenticeship, even though some training was not provided employer, so long as the agreement has the essentials of a traditional contract of apprenticeship (per *Dunk*).

- HE, for the purposes of s12(8) includes :
- Higher education course (following SI 2000/1989)
- DipHE
- HND
- HNC – BTech
- Cert. Ed

(Reference is made to the Education Reform Act 1988, Schedule 6.)

# What is a worker?

- Contract - written or oral
- Normal contractual principles
  - Offer, acceptance, consideration, intention to create legal relations.
- Obligation to do something - services performed rather than just shadowing

# Voluntary Worker

- Charity, voluntary sector, fund-raising organisation, amateur sports club, etc.
- Exempt under s44 NMW Act
- NB : not everyone working in this sector are 'voluntary workers'. If people are doing work for remuneration they must be paid NMW.
- Can only be paid expenses and some b-i-k

**No need to pay NMW.**

# Volunteer

- Any sector.
- No contract
  - No obligations / service
  - No intention to create legal relations.
- No money, other than expenses.
- See House of Commons Library SN/BT/697, 27.9.06.

**No need to pay NMW.**

**Does it matter what the student is called?**

**NO**

**In the event of a dispute, tribunals and courts look at the facts - calling someone an 'intern' or a 'volunteer' will not avoid NMW requirements if they are actually *working* (and not within any of the exemptions).**

Examples

- Student doing a compulsory sandwich year with substantial responsibilities under a formal contract of employment.
- *s12 exemption - no NMW requirement.*

- University student carrying out work shadowing in the summer holidays. Not part of formal course requirements although relevant to course subject area and Course Handbook stresses the importance of gaining relevant work experience.
- Carries on this work during term time.
- *No s12 exemption as work not a required part of course - but no work performed therefore not a 'worker' - no NMW requirement.*

- On graduation, three months unpaid internship undertaken. The graduate is promised a permanent job if this period proves satisfactory.
- *No s12 exemption as course finished - should be paid NMW throughout.*

- Trainee home economics teacher does several months of unpaid teaching experience as part of her course. She also works in the evenings at a local restaurant to gain further food industry experience. This is unpaid but she is given dinner and they pay for a one day training session.
- *Teaching - no NMW requirement per s.12.  
Restaurant work not part of course, not voluntary shadowing - work performed and b-i-k received.*

- Young man worked for an electrical firm on leaving school. He then signed up for a College course (governed by LSC) which set up an ILP (Independent Learning Plan) based at his work - a 'modern apprenticeship' tri-partite arrangement between student, employer and training provider.
- *s12 exemption for apprentices.*

# Overseas Students

- **Immigration Directorate Instructions ("IDI") and Rules**

[www.ukba.homeoffice.gov.uk/sitecontent/documents/policyandlaw/IDIs/idischapter3/](http://www.ukba.homeoffice.gov.uk/sitecontent/documents/policyandlaw/IDIs/idischapter3/)

**Students\_ should work no more than 20 hrs / week in term time, except as part of sandwich course or internship. May work full time during vacations and during period following end of course whilst waiting for exam results, prior to attending graduation ceremony or before commencement of a new course. Student\_ cannot fill a permanent full-time vacancy.**

- Education Reform Act 1988
- National Minimum Wage Act 1998
- National Minimum Wage Regulations 1999

[www.hmrc.gov.uk/nmw/](http://www.hmrc.gov.uk/nmw/)

[www.businesslink.gov.uk/bdotg/action/layer  
?topicId=1074402393](http://www.businesslink.gov.uk/bdotg/action/layer?topicId=1074402393)



# Learning Development A deep dark secret?

Diana Young, M.A.  
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## Abstract

An integral part of a student's experience during a co-op placement is the assessment, development, reflection and recognition of learning. This makes the co-op student's experience successful, yet ensuring it is one of the most challenging aspects of a co-op coordinators role. How can a co-op coordinator ensure that this dynamic process is evolving?

Phase 1 of the study has been completed which traced the progress of a group of co-op students with reference to the development of learning goals, depth of self assessment and the attainment of skills and competencies. A control group (n=84) were tested using two tools – the Co-operative Education Self Assessment survey and a Qualitative Analysis of Learning Goals for specificity, breadth and feasibility. It was proposed that explicit goal formation would result in a more reflective self evaluation process, recognition and acquisition of skills.



## Introduction

Co-operative Education at the University of Lethbridge is offered as an experiential learning option in every academic major in the Faculties of Arts, Science and Management. Benefits include the acquisition of direct experience and refining "soft skills" in the workplace, career discovery, relating theory to practise and opportunities for graduate employment.

Co-op practitioners realise that it is the quality of the experience which sets co-op apart from "just getting a job" and it is enhancing this reflective process which can promote an optimum learning situation. Boyd and Fales (1983) commented that reflective learning is "the key element in learning from experience" (p.100). They found that individuals moved from not realising they used reflection in their experience to awareness and use of reflection to guide themselves. Marieneau (1999) reported that reflective learning led to graduate students functioning more effectively, having better motivation to succeed and gaining self agency.

**The purpose of the study was to ascertain whether students were able to identify and develop learning goals and reflect on these and subsequently develop tools and strategies to assist coordinators with enhancing the co-op experience.**

Skills (Questions)	Total Number of Ticks on all Monthly Reports	Mean	SD
1	14	4.67	1.53
2	1	0.33	0.58
3	7	2.33	1.15
4	9	3.00	2.00
5	3	1.00	1.00
6	7	2.33	1.53
7	3	1.00	1.73
8	12	4.00	2.65
9	21	7.00	1.00
10	15	5.00	1.00
11	15	5.00	0.00
12	5	1.67	1.53
13	17	5.67	1.53
14	13	4.33	1.15
15	5	1.67	0.58
16	7	2.33	1.53
17	19	6.33	2.08
18	0	0.00	0.00
19	11	3.67	1.15
20	7	2.33	0.58
21	5	1.67	1.53
22	15	5.00	1.00
23	0	0.00	0.00
24	5	1.67	0.58

## Method

The first phase of the study has been completed which traced the progress of a group of undergraduate Arts and Science co-op students who had gained a placement in 2008.

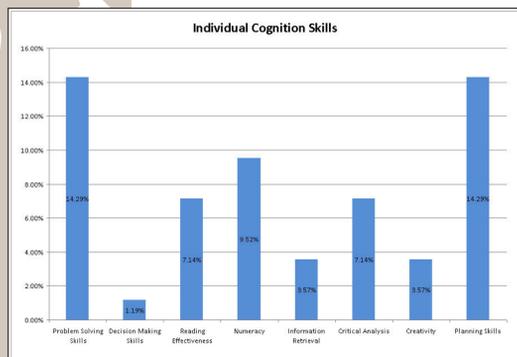
The study utilised two measures of performance. 1) A qualitative analysis of learning goals in terms of specificity, breadth and feasibility and 2) A self assessment survey at the end of the work term. One way to evaluate whether outcomes are enhanced is to look for general skills improvement. The Conference Board of Canada has outlined a set of "Employability Skills 2000" (2000). The Co-operative Education Self Assessment Survey was based on these criteria. The students, as was the usual practise, were requested to form a set of learning goals and submit these along with a monthly introspective log. Several pieces of information were gathered for each student – three monthly reports, a qualitative analysis and the student's final evaluation at the end of the placement – the Co-operative Education Self Assessment Survey.

Data was analyzed in a number of ways. Numbers on the Likert scale for the Co-operative Education Survey were tabulated and a score produced for each student in each of the three sections. The initial goals were evaluated in terms of specificity, breadth and feasibility. Monthly reports were assessed by two markers and were evaluated both in terms of how much the learning goals were mentioned and to the

extent to which they were a) followed and b) seen as valuable in the learning process. Path analysis was used to trace the three-step path between production of the goals, usefulness of goals as indicated by mention in the monthly reports and attainment of skills through the placement as indicated on the final evaluation.

## Data and Results

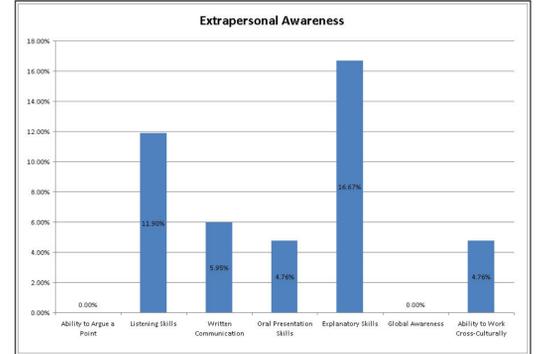
The data from Phase 1 of the study demonstrate that without direction students were rarely able to recognize or reflect on their learning.



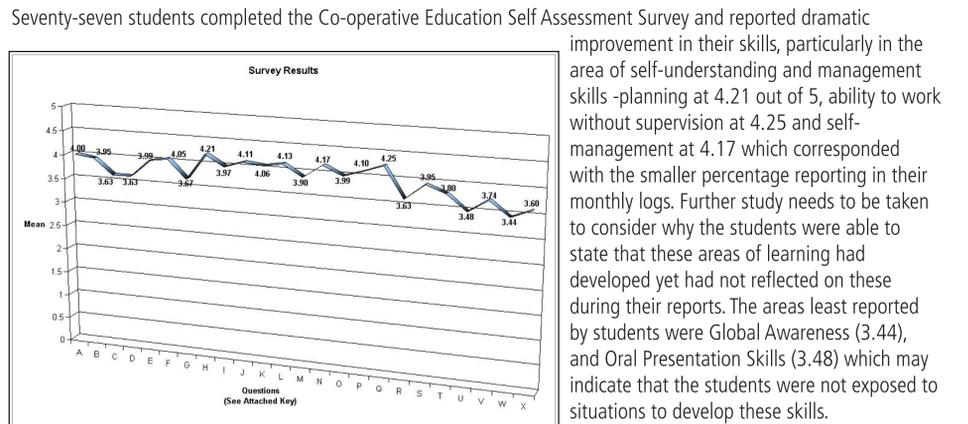
In the Qualitative Analysis based on the monthly reports there was no demonstrated improvement. The percentage of those individuals who commented on developing the 24 skills ranged from 0 to 18 % and 26 of the 84 students did not note any skill enhancement at all in their monthly reports.

There were interesting differences in the areas of improvement which students did report. Fifty-one (61%) noticing improvement in self-understanding and management skills, 36 (43%) in individual cognitive skills and 22 (26%) in extra-personal

skills although students did not report a significant increase in their recognition as the placement developed. The individual skills areas most noted by students were Ability to Work Without Supervision (20.24%), Awareness of Strengths and Weaknesses (20.24 %), Planning Skills (14.29%) and Problem Solving Skills (14.29%). Even without guidance this perhaps suggests that co-op is useful in managing the transition between the student's individualistic focus and the co-operative work environment.



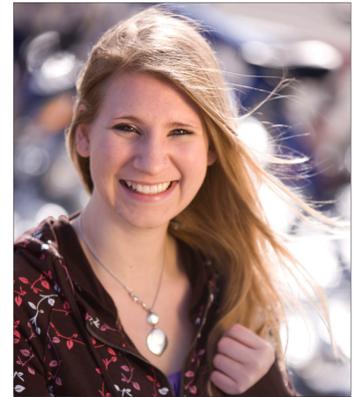
Students did not report more skills as time went on, 4% reported an improvement in each area in the first monthly report, 3.3% in the second monthly report and 3.5% in the third monthly report. Since one assumes that their skill level did increase with time in the placement, their reporting clearly declined. (Linkage across time will be investigated using Path Analysis).



## Discussion

The data from Phase one of the study makes it clear why it is necessary to provide co-op students with guidance to set learning goals and the necessary tools to reflect on them. Students who did not have guidance had great difficulty recognizing or reflecting on their learning during their monthly reports or in any incremental fashion. If reflective learning is fostered by production and assessment of one's goals, then enhancing areas of this process should improve the learning outcomes.

In Phase 2 of the study, tools will be provided to the coordinators and students to assist in the process of formulating learning goals which should enhance the learning outcomes. An online tool is being developed to assist the students in this process. For example, selecting key words and skill development areas via drop down menus. We predict that when students are provided guidance to establish goals and tools for self reflection throughout their placement, numbers will improve dramatically to match the self evaluations. Therefore, we expect that those students with clear learning goals, regardless of group, will reflect more and ultimately attain the associated skills more readily.



These results should demonstrate how a small time investment at the onset of a co-op placement will produce a significant enhancement in student's learning. They will also assist co-op coordinators to develop strategies to mentor and coach students in the experiential learning process.

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ASET

***Integrating Work and Learning***



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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 25 years. We represent over 1300 academic and administrative placement staff at 80 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..

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The 2010 Annual Conference will take place between 7<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> September at Gilbert Murray Hall, Leicester University, Oadby Campus. More details are on the following page and please keep an eye on the ASET website for further news.

#### **Disclaimer**

Please note that these proceedings of the 2009 ASET Annual Conference are the views of the presenters together with a description of the discussions that took place. Nothing either expressed or implied is a legal interpretation; nor is it a statement of the policy or intent of ASET.

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**The Placement and Employability Professionals' Conference**  
**7-9 September 2010**  
**Leicester University**  
**Gilbert Murray Stamford Hall, Oadby Campus**

['Enhancing the Student Experience through Work-Based and Placement Learning'](#)

The 2010 Conference will feature a selection of sector research papers and a wide range of topics, delivered by individuals and teams from a range of UK and international institutions. Our focus this year is to seek to address the challenges of 'Enhancing the Student Experience through Work-Based and Placement Learning'. Our keynote speaker to open the conference is Aaron Porter, President Elect of the National Union of Students. The NUS are one of the strongest voices in the sector for higher education offering the best possible experience for students, including activities which prepare them for life after graduation. The conference is participatory, allowing delegates to share experiences and learn from each other.

The Conference will also incorporate CPD updates on three topics:

- **Implications of the new Equality Act 2010**
- **Making use of technology to support students on work based and placement learning**
- **Taking a position on unpaid work placements**

This is a three-day conference with plenary speakers, workshop sessions and whole group discussions to develop knowledge in, and practice of, work-based and placement learning.

The ASET Conference facilitates the dissemination of the findings and recommendations of employability and work-based learning research, including a keynote presentation from Jane Artess, Director of Research at the Higher Education Career Services Unit.

A key feature of previous ASET conferences has also been the opportunity to hear about work at a broad range of institutions, about new initiatives and projects, and of good practice systems – this conference will continue this strong tradition.

**Other features:**

- Networking sessions
- Organised social activities
- Conference dinners
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More details at [www.asetonline.org/conf](http://www.asetonline.org/conf)

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