



ASET

ASET e-Bulletin

April 2014

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ASET

The Work Based and Placement Learning Association
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HOT OFF THE PRESS!!

ASET Annual Conference 2014
'The Student Journey towards Employability',
2-4 September, Northumbria University



Speakers announced:

Stephen Isherwood,
Chief Executive, AGR
Charles Hardy, LinkedIn

Early Bird booking until 30th April
(see below)

ASET Practice and Research Network: Spring Meeting 2014

By **Debbie Scott**

ASET Trustee and Chair of the Practice led Research Group

ASET Practice and Research Network (PRN) offers an opportunity to share ideas and experiences about developing practice in Work Based and Placement Learning, and in researching particular aspects. Open to all ASET members, it is a great opportunity to network remotely using the PRN subgroup on LinkedIn, as well as meeting up at the ASET conference and the PRN Spring meeting. This year's Spring meeting, held at Aston University on 6th March, offered a varied programme of short presentations and discussion.

**Katharine Hoskyn, via Skype from New Zealand**

Katharine's presentation led to discussion about the role of ethnography in research in work-integrated learning, and the challenges it presents. John Creswell's work, and the *Journal of Ethnography and Education* were recommended by participants as relevant and potentially useful sources. Katharine recommends considering submission of papers for publication to the *Asia-Pacific Journal of Cooperative Education*: they would like to publish more articles from Europe and the feedback process is very supportive. Further discussion about terminology relating to Recognition/Accreditation of Prior Learning and the relevance of RPL for our students led to identification of a possible topic for the ASET conference.

Robert Stott, Glasgow Caledonian University (GCU)

Robert has established an alumni mentoring scheme for full-time undergraduate students in the Department of Construction and Surveying at GCU. With a pilot project last year, and the main scheme now established, he intends to start research towards the end of this academic year: diverse and useful insights are expected.

Ruth Stoker, University of Huddersfield

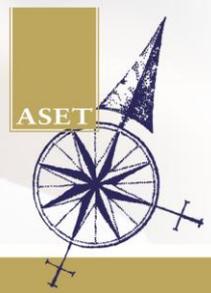
Having refocused her PhD plans following last year's ASET conference, Ruth outlined her thoughts so far on her revised topic – *How Journalists Learn Ethics* – before seeking suggestions for approaches to research and relevant academic theories. Communities of practice seemed to be a relevant area to explore, and examination of how cultural values and practices change over time.

Helen Higson, Aston University

Helen briefly outlined her recent research interest in postgraduate placement learning and employability. She went on to discuss her role as Employability lead for SRHE (Society for Research into Higher Education) and the two events (Dec 2013 and May 2014) she has organised, featuring presentations from members about their research in this area. The upcoming event is proving to be as popular as the first. In addition to this area, Helen indicated that SRHE's work for new researchers is generating a great deal of interest.

Pat Cullum, University of Huddersfield

Pat's department was probably the first History Department in the country to incorporate placement learning, more than twenty years ago. Following a recent HEA event, a Special Interest Group has developed, with a focus on developing student capacity and employability, and Pat and colleagues will be contributing to July's HEA conference. Pat wishes to investigate who placement learning does not work for and why, as this is likely to trigger development of practice and enhance the curriculum. She is keen to work with others on joint projects.



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Jim Reid, University of Huddersfield

Jim challenged some familiar definitions of employability, in which the main focus is on students, on their skills and attributes, and not the wider context. Jim is interested in the concept of **embodiment** of employability, which incorporates a focus on relational aspects: 'employability practices start with a concern for others rather than the market.'

Avril Aslett-Bentley, (Staff member and PhD student) Leeds Metropolitan University

Avril invited suggestions and discussion around data collection methods for her PhD which will include exploration of work-based learning experiences within undergraduate nutrition courses. A range of suggestions were made regarding number and nature of courses from which to develop case studies (e.g. urban/ rural HEIs; two which differ in size; one in London and one elsewhere).

Ruth Helyer, Teeside University and Editor, Higher Education, Skills and Work-based Learning

In Ruth's absence, the group considered her slides, intended to encourage members to offer articles for publication, and to contact her to discuss their ideas. A participant at the meeting described Ruth's great support and detailed response when she had submitted a paper. She confirmed that the experience was very positive and that she had learned much from it.

Debbie Scott, University of Chester

I am keen to encourage a good response rate in my research investigating the impact of the work-based learning module on students' employability and in my session sought suggestions on how to achieve this. Several suggestions were made, including: taking the questionnaire to classes and getting the students to complete there and then; linking with the Students' Union; employing a student researcher; offering a prize.

We were sorry not to hear **Carolyn King's** presentation, via Skype, on her research plans and experience relating to HE placement learning within an FE college, owing to a power cut.

The Spring meeting once again proved to be both interesting and thought-provoking and we are once again we are indebted to our host **Professor Helen Higson, Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Aston University**, for her hospitality.

If you would like to get involved join us on the Practice and Research Network, a subgroup of the ASET Placement and Employability Professionals Group on LinkedIn.

Apply to join here <http://www.linkedin.com/groups?gid=1929302> and start your discussion today.



2014 ASET Spring Workshops

The Spring programme is now underway with a very successful “Introduction to Work Placement Management” day hosted by colleagues at University College London. There are a further four workshops this Spring, including a recent addition - “From Placements to Employability: thinking about the whole student experience”, which will be a great lead in to conference in September where we are considering “The Student Journey towards Employability”. Details for all forthcoming workshops are below with closing dates for booking indicated. **Booking forms are available via the ASET office:**

“Facing Facebook, Tackling Twitter and Living with Linked In”

ASET Offices, Sheffield

Wednesday 14th May (10am-4pm)

£155 (ASET members)/£180(non-members)

A workshop exploring ways in which HE staff can use social media to engage with their students and ideas on how to coach students on the positive and professional use of social media. We will also provide a receptive forum for discussing doubts about using social media and how to manage these.

- Strategies for engaging effectively with students using social media and those not using social media (for example, On Twitter and Off Twitter strategies)
- Dos and don'ts of using social media – how to show students to use social media to positive effect
- Brand Professional Me - how students can develop a successful personal brand for job seeking and networking.
- Platforms discussed: Predominantly Twitter, LinkedIn, Facebook, but also Instagram, Pinterest and emerging platforms such as <https://about.me/>
- A basic appreciation (not expert use) of some of the platforms – Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn would be useful although not essential

Facilitated by colleagues from the University of Salford and Loughborough University.

Please note the last day for booking on this workshop is Wednesday 7th May



Supporting Disabled Students on Placement

ASET Offices, Sheffield

Wednesday 4th June (10am-4pm)

£155 (ASET members)/£180(non-members)

The aim of this workshop is to provide advice and guidance on the support of disabled students to those working in work experience and placement roles . The following topics will be covered:

- An overview of the Equality Act, how does it help disabled placement students and how can you help employers interpret and understand what the Act means?
- Guidance on assisting students with disclosure in the recruitment process. Should they disclose or not? If so, how and when should they disclose?
- Case study examples to highlight placement success stories
- Further resources and support available

This workshop will be delivered at the ASET Offices, which are located within the Burton Street Foundation, Sheffield, and will include a walk-through of this unique facility, which enables adults with difficulties to work and participate in a wide range of activities www.burtonstreet.co.uk

Please note the last day for booking on this workshop is Wednesday 28th May

From Placements to Employability: Thinking about the whole student experience

University College London

Friday 20th June (10am-4pm)

£155 (ASET members)/£180(non-members)

Perhaps you have expertise in supporting placement students but are now being asked to become involved in curriculum design and development more broadly associated with employability? Or you have experience in your subject based curriculum but are new to placements and employability? Do you know what you might do differently if you were assessing a first year undergraduate placement compared to a Masters level placement? Single interventions, like the sandwich placement, are no longer sufficient in terms of determining employment success on graduation – we must consider the whole student experience. We will contrast employability in the curriculum with employability through the curriculum i.e. how broader teaching, learning and assessment strategies throughout a programme can impact on employability. The intended outcome of the session is to enable you to



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use your experience and expertise from placement activities to work with your colleagues in your own institutions to appropriately embed placement and other employability related activities in the curriculum

Please note the last day for booking on this workshop is Friday 13th June

Risk Assessment and Due Diligence

University College London

Friday 4th July (10am-4pm)

£155 (ASET members)/£180(non-members)

In 2010 ASET published a Good Practice Guide with advice on how to implement the new, risk based, approach to Health and Safety resulting from the release of new policy guidance from UCEA in 2009.

This autumn saw the publication of the ASET Good Practice Guide on Managing Placements and Work Based Learning, which was designed to support practitioners in meeting the expectations of the QAA Quality Code. Discussions across the sector have raised concerns about managing the risk assessment and due diligence processes associated with placement provision in Higher Education.

- * Are you confident in your risk assessment processes before placement?
- * Do you know what you should be doing in terms of due diligence?
- * Do you realise the extent of the university's legal liability for all of this?

This workshop, led by two of the co-authors of the ASET Guides, will explain the philosophy behind the both sets of guidance, particularly focusing on establishing manageable, proportionate and appropriate risk assessment and due diligence processes for placement provision. It is aimed at university staff who work with student placements / work experience, whether new to the position, or experienced staff wanting a refresher and update.

Please note the last day for booking on this workshop is Friday 27th June

For booking forms or further information please contact the ASET office:
0114 234 5197/aset@asetonline.org



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2014 ASET Annual Conference

Over the next few weeks we will be updating you on all the plans for Conference 2014, as we finalise the conference programme. Don't forget, if you are planning to submit a workshop or Research Paper, the deadline for both is Friday 16th May.

Northumbria University
2nd – 4th September 2014

The Student Journey towards Employability



University of Northumbria, Business School

The theme for this year's conference is **The Student Journey towards Employability** and will consider the student journey towards Employability, from year 1 through to Postgraduate level, as students seek to complement their studies with those elusive "soft" skills, so often the key to employment success. Conference will focus on the engagement process at each stage of the journey, covering the plethora of options available to students from *Insight days*, to *work-shadowing opportunities*, *mentoring schemes*, *work experience*, *volunteering*, *summer internships*, *international opportunities* as well as the more established *12 month placements*. With such a varied menu of placement opportunities, and with employers increasingly keen to target first years, how can we offer the **right support at the right time** to students at all the stages on their journey? Why is it that some students take advantage of these opportunities and others do not? Who are the key influencers in this process, and how can we encourage all students to engage?

Contributions are invited under **any** placement or employability related topic, though in order to provide a framework for the conference, submissions will be streamed into vertical themes within the programme to allow delegates to follow a line of interest through the conference if they wish to do so.



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Have you booked your place yet? **Booking for conference is now open** and prices are detailed below. An ***early bird discount of £25 is available on these prices** for full conference bookings received by 30th April 2014.

Delegate Rates 2014

Residential Full Conference

ASET Member £620*
Non-Member £775*

Non-Residential Full Conference

ASET Member £500*
Non-Member £625*

Day Delegate Rates

Full day £250 ½ day £125

To reserve your place, please contact the ASET office for a booking form aset@asetonline.org.

Launch of NCUB Student Employability Index

The **NCUB** (National Centre for Universities and Business) launch event for their **Student Employability Index** was held in London last week. ASET Chair, Sarah Flynn



and co-opted Executive Committee member, James Corbin (seen here at the event), were pleased to support the launch of this comprehensive report.

The survey covered more than 4000 students from 20 UK institutions and found significant variation in opportunities across subject areas. The report reveals that more than 90% of university students want access to work experience, placements or internships but that less than half have undertaken them and 25% say there are not enough links between their university and businesses.



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David Docherty, Chief Executive of NCUB said

Students recognise the benefits of closer links between education and business and they want greater access to opportunities in business during their studies.

“Greater collaboration between universities and businesses not only increases graduate employability but also has wider economic benefits that will help the UK to be competitive in a changing global economy.”

The full report can be viewed here [Full Report](#) and a summary of the content from the report’s author, Aaron Porter, here [Summary](#).

And don’t forget.... If you would like to see your news here next month – get in touch via the ASET Office aset@asetonline.org