ASET Annual Conference 2013

Proceedings of the 2013 Placement and Employability Professionals’ Conference

Editor: Debbie Siva-Jothy

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20th Annual Conference
University of Greenwich, Greenwich Campus
3rd - 5th September 2013
## ASET Annual Conference 2013

The “Social” Revolution

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Foreword

ASET is very pleased to be able to share with you the proceedings of the ASET Annual Conference held at the University of Greenwich, from 3rd - 5th September 2013. As Chair, I am immensely proud of my colleagues in the ASET community; their generous spirit in sharing their work, ideas and good humour make our conference what it is - the essential calendar date for professional development in the work based and placement learning HE sector.

The 2013 Conference was sold out well ahead of our usual deadlines; placements and employability are of such value in today’s Higher Education experience that we are all greedy to hear about the next bright idea, ways to innovate whilst being efficient, and solutions to the challenges that thwart us all from time to time. Many thanks to our speakers and workshop presenters for without your contributions, the inspiration for so many conversations, projects and innovations would be diminished. We heard from organisations such as the Higher Education Academy and the National Centre for Universities and Businesses about the clear rationale for working together in partnership. Our keynote speakers also had strong messages for us; Lewis Wiltshire encouraged us to see the potential of Twitter in improving the student experience, Sir Tim Wilson DL challenged us to stop being all things to all men and to champion what we are great at, and Helen Smith gave us our parting call to arms to embrace the change of the social revolution, for resistance is futile. Some excellent words of advice from everyone, I think you’ll agree.

Thanks must be noted to our conference sponsors; the Higher Education Academy, Nicholas Associates and Pearson Education. We do hope you found your conversations with them at conference useful and enjoyable.

And finally, a huge thank you to the Staff Development and Events team of volunteers who quietly work away in the background all year round to make this event so successful, and particularly to Debbie Siva-Jothy our Company Administrator who not only ensures that our delegates have a good experience at conference but whose hard work and tenacity goes into this publication.

We look forward to seeing you again at Conference in September 2014.

Sarah Flynn
Chair, ASET
I have the privilege of giving the Presidential Address at the conference each year, and I try to sketch out what I see as the key issues that Higher Education and its students and staff are likely to face in the future. This can become rather gloomy as it is easy to focus on the matters that trouble the sector rather than its successes. That comes from having been a VC and always looking ahead to see what rocks or other hazards might face institutions and those they support.

Over the years ASET has shown the ability to look forward and to embrace the future and I think that this year’s conference with its focus on the communications technology revolution shows again its ability to look forward. While I am not a great user of these technologies, I do know they are fully embraced by the current generation of students. Their expectations are very different from those of even ten years ago and Higher Education has to adapt to embrace and exploit new ideas.

So I want to engage your thinking today in how HE can help to prepare its students better for their futures through work-based learning and placements, far more than was possible when I was a young academic. You all know that the HE sector, not only in the UK, but internationally is facing a period of great change, driven by technology, economics, ambition for greater participation and performance, standards and environmental issues. So we are preparing our students to thrive in an increasingly competitive, dynamic and globalised world.

I have been convinced for many years that whilst the traditional aim of pure academic thinking is important, most of our students and their sponsors (parents, employers or government) are more concerned about how they can be best prepared for life after their degrees. Many study on vocational courses with professional body recognition as a key aim and these students will be looking for something beyond just laboratory, lecture room and library experience. This is nothing new, yet, to listen to politicians, one might almost believe that this is the latest development. The days of wandering down to the Careers Office at the end of one’s course to find a job should be long passed. HEIs are measured increasingly by the employment of their graduates, note I mean employment not employability. And there is now a much greater emphasis on preparation for employment by all commentators and policy makers as you all know better than me. But let me just summarise three real cases that I came across this year as an outside observer of the scene as a background to our thinking today.
• **Graduate A**, public school, high A levels, Russell Group University, has a choice of blue chip jobs before graduation in London having had related work experience placements in vacations during his undergraduate years, greatly helped by parental influence in high places

• **Graduate B**, LEA school, good A levels, a different Russell Group university, science degree, no pressure to take on meaningful vocational work experience, no job after graduation and no idea even how to start to look for one

• **Graduate C**, LEA school, average A levels, a more recently designated university, good degree but with no parental leverage and little experience of gaining a high quality (or high prestige) work placement or job with a leading employer though had made strenuous efforts, just occasional work helping his father

All three are important, so how can we help them? The common thread is the impact of some form of work experience, easily available in blue chip companies for one, ignored by another and difficult to obtain in any meaningful sense by the third. So how does that link to ASET and this conference?

The ASET accounts that we have just approved sets out the aims of ASET:

• To support and encourage Higher Education work based and placement learning by providing high standard staff development opportunities in whatever area of professional activity may be appropriate to this system

• To strengthen the operation and enhance the quality of Higher Education work based and placement learning by promoting closer and more effective partnership between employers, educationalists and students

• To provide a forum for employers, educationalists, students and other appropriate groups and individuals to discuss and formulate policies on Higher Education work-based and placement learning

• To provide a national voice, for Higher Educational professionals, on matters concerning Higher Education work based and placement learning

• To serve as a central agency for the stimulation, discussion and dissemination of ideas, guidance and information on Higher Education work based and placement learning
To prepare, develop and publish information relating to Higher Education work based and placement learning, or the study thereof, and to disseminate such information through appropriate media or events.

Let’s look at the first aim.

- **To support and encourage Higher Education work based and placement learning by providing high standard staff development opportunities in whatever area of professional activity may be appropriate to this system**

We recognise that supporting and encouraging work based and placement learning does not just happen but needs skilled and dedicated staff to develop and support these. Too often in the past, and I hope it is the past, the task of developing and supporting work based learning and placements was a task handed out to a relatively junior member of departmental staff who has to find his or her own way into this. Some good work was supported by the CETL programme but that is well behind us. While individual institutions may have benefited from this stream of funding, the sector as a whole may not have done. So the existence of ASET and similar organisations is crucial to provide the necessary relevant staff development, and opportunities to spend time with others, for example, at this conference to learn from each other and to share experiences. So use your time this week to share experiences and pick up examples of both good and bad practice.

One of the key challenges for staff in my experience is convincing those back in the department or institution that not only is work based education important for students (and you can always use the league table as a lever here) but that it requires dedication and commitment as much as many of the activities that are traditionally recognised for the purposes of career enhancement within and between institutions. Lord Dearing made that point in 1997 but sadly in too many instances this work is not highly rated for promotion. We need to be making the case consistently that, for institutions to support their mission statements about care for students and the student experience, they actually have to signal that importance in career progression and promotions.

**Partnership or competition?**

The second aim of ASET is “to strengthen the operation and enhance the quality of Higher Education work based and placement learning by promoting closer and more effective partnership between employers, educationalists and students”
Higher Education is a competitive world and it has been for many years despite the recent rhetoric from ministers. I know of no vice-chancellor who has not fought hard to promote and improve their university.

The sector has been centrally controlled, some would say too tightly controlled, but the degree of central control has been relaxed recently, certainly in terms of numbers of high A level scoring students. This is causing instability in the system and many are looking forward with varying degrees of enthusiasm or concern to the student number counts this autumn. But at the same time, there is encouragement for collaboration and partnership to release resources and ideas for new developments, mainly in research. In the field of work based learning and placement a similar dichotomy between insularity and co-operation is developing. Most HEIs want to have the best and most effective work based programmes and placements and good ones are very jealously guarded even from colleagues in the same institution. But there is much to be gained by working together to raise the status and understanding of high quality placements. We must also remember that there are many privately resourced universities and other institutions who are now gaining much more recognition. It is pleasing to see that there are some represented here who will be both potential competitors and partners to the public funded institutions. The distinction raised by the terminology of public and private may well become significantly eroded in a few years.

In this competitive world of HE, HEIs will fight for the best students and best resources. I shall just comment that the best students may not just be those with high A level scores as there are many others who thrive in the HE environment, particularly those bringing their life experiences as mature students.

ASET explicitly aims to promote closer and more effective partnership between employers, educationalists and students. How can we do this? This conference of course is a key part of this and do make the most of it. If this can broker some joint initiatives between institutions to improve the supply and quality of placements and their assessment, then we are on the way. There are of course other bodies that are also strongly interested in work based learning and placement and it is pleasing that some are with us and are participating actively in this event.

Partnership between academics and careers services should be a sine qua non yet too often even now the dialogue between them is strained. I am using the terminology “Careers Service” as a generic term and I am aware that some no longer exist or have been integrated into other services. Academic departments want their students to have the best opportunities and frequently want to take responsibility for finding and organising work based activities. If they do not get beyond seeing
careers services as some sort of service to be called on when there is a problem, then we are not doing our students any favours. On the other hand if the job of finding, nurturing and supporting work based placements is seen simply as a function for some central department in which the academic departments have no influence, this is equally problematic or possibly even more so. So my first requirement for partnership is to be between the academic and services groups within institutions. There may well be internal competition between departments and a reluctance to allow anyone else to develop a relationship with a particular employer. These can be seen as intensely personal relationships but in the longer term this is detrimental to all.

If we look outside the institutions, there are several organisations that have similar or complementary objectives to ASET and where a closer understanding and development of mutual understanding could be very useful to students, employers and institutions. First let me thank the conference sponsors, which is a good way of demonstrating partnership.

There is an alphabet soup of potential partners including QAA, NCUB, HECSU, WACE, LET, NCRA, CBI, Chambers of Commerce. Then of course there are those bodies which rely on placements for professional development and recognition, including the NHS and other health providers, professional bodies including architects, lawyers etc. Some are at this conference and you will have your own knowledge of other potential partners. Of these I will mention a few.

The newly launched National Centre for Universities and Business, which has evolved from the Council for Industry and Higher Education has a clear interest in quality placements. I quote:

_Student placements, internships and work experience programmes benefit business and students alike. Yet there is currently little hard evidence about how the existing system of placements is working and what could be done to improve the impact of placements in future._

_NCUB is setting out to map what is really going on in student placements across the UK. Working with the Higher Education Academy, the Higher Education Careers Service Unit (HECSU) and employment and skills consultancy CFE, NCUB is conducting an in-depth study into the quantity and quality of student placements being provided across the UK._

_Armed with that knowledge, we will be developing good practice guidance to improve the impact of placements and internships for individual students and the businesses in which they work. We will be sharing the findings of the study in the summer of 2013._
I think it a lost opportunity that NCUB did not consult or include ASET at the outset in this study. It appears that they are setting out to repeat work that has been done by ASET. This study may well come up with ideas for improvements in the ASET good practice guidance but working together, using ASET’s more extensive membership might well have been beneficial to this study. Recognition from the outset of ASET’s role could have helped to develop a good working relationship. I look forward to a constructive engagement between NCUB and ASET leading to a longer term relationship.

ASET has developed a productive relationship with QAA through developing codes of practice which needs to be sustained. There are obvious common interests with HECSU which again need to be nurtured. LET, the Learning from Experience Trust which was key to the development of developing robust processes for the evaluation of experiential learning still exists though it has been inactive for a few years following the death of its inspirational founder, Norman Evans. It is now looking to revive its mission.

I am convinced that students gaining international work experience and placements can find them to be highly beneficial and I am pleased that ASET has developed a good relationship with WACE. I quote from the WACE mission:

\[\text{WACE is the only international association dedicated to developing, expanding, branding and advocating for cooperative & work-integrated education programs within industry and educational institutions. Cooperative & Work-Integrated Education (CWIE) is a term created by WACE to acknowledge and embrace all forms of work-integrated learning utilized by industry and educational institutions to prepare the next generation of global professionals. CWIE is an encompassing term that includes: cooperative education, internships, semester in industry, international co-op exchanges, research, clinical rotations, service learning and community service. The WACE Secretariat strives to create, implement and maintain events, programs and services geared to support the entire CWIE community.}\]

There should be opportunities through partnerships at local or national level with employers’ organisations and professional bodies such as CBI, Chambers of Commerce, the Law Society which ASET may be able to broker, but local or regional contacts are likely to be more productive.

So there is much to be done and to talk about. It almost feels as if work experience and work based learning in its many forms has emerged from the twilight realms, of being something that some off
the wall people and institutions do, into the mainstream. This is a fertile area for development and for testing new ideas and approaches to addressing the core problem of producing a truly inclusive Higher Education system that is of international excellence and which serves the needs of students, employment and society to make the world a better place for all. This requires greater working together and partnership rather than strengthening the barricades and scoring cheap points off the competition.

Let me now close by thanking the members of ASET, particularly those who are at this conference, and its leadership through the Executive Committee. ASET is in good health and as an organisation has growing membership and participation in this the annual conference. That is very good news and thank all you of here today for your support and engagement in the work of ASET.

I would like to pay tribute to John Wilson who retired as Chair of ASET a few minutes ago. I have known him for about 7 years and I have been struck throughout that time by his commitment and enthusiasm for the work of ASET. During his time as Chair ASET has moved with the times, modernised its constitution and grown in stature and influence. Higher Education like so many other walks of life tends to move in phases. Sandwich education, which was where John came into the work of ASET has changed. In its classical form of thick or thin sandwich programmes, it has seen a decline in influence despite the valuable influence that it had on the education of many professionals. It still exists of course but taken by a smaller proportion of students and offered by many fewer employers. There has been the remarkable growth in work based learning and placements of shorter duration which are supported by many more employers and students. John’s background in industry before entering academia meant that he had an intrinsic commitment to sandwich education and industrial placement. With that background he has steered ASET into new waters whilst not losing sight of the traditions.

On behalf of ASET and its members, past and present and perhaps most of all those students who have directly or indirectly benefited from his care and wisdom, I would like to thank him and wish him a long and happy retirement.

May I now welcome Sarah Flynn who you have just elected to replace John as Chair of ASET. Sarah has been an exceptionally hard working deputy to John for some years and I am delighted that she has been willing to take up the Chair role.
John and Sarah have been supported in their work by the members of the Executive Committee who give their time freely to steer ASET. Some have just retired from the Executive and I would like to thank Lisa Ward, Ray Wallace, and Douglas McCulloch for their work. Thanks also to those who continue as executive committee members.

Debbie Siva-Jothy, our administrator does a remarkable job for ASET and its members. The annual conference and the smooth communications of ASET are very much the result of her sterling efforts, patience and good humour.

One final word, we are being hosted by the University of Greenwich on this remarkable campus. Do take time to look around you and enjoy this jewel in south east London. Visit the Painted Hall, the Chapel and the Maritime Museum if you can, but of course do not skip conference sessions to do so. You will have noticed, if you came from the Cutty Sark entrance, that there is much music to be heard. This comes from the Trinity Laban Conservatoire of Music and Dance which occupies King Charles Court of the Old Royal Naval College. The dance work is nearby in a Stirling Prize winning building in Deptford, well worth a visit if you are interested in contemporary architecture as well the this classical environment where we are today. I have a special interest in this conservatoire as I am its Vice-Chair and if anyone thinks work based learning, placements and entrepreneurism is just about science, engineering and business I would remind you that all the students at the conservatoire are engaged very heavily in just these modes of work based and placement education, which are indeed at the core of the curriculum. Tonight at the conference dinner, we shall be treated to the output of this work by the highly professional Keat’s Quartet made up of Trinity Laban music students. We are in for a real treat and I look forward to seeing you there.
Review of Lewis Wiltshire’s Keynote

Lewis is Director of Media for Twitter in the UK. He has been with Twitter since March 2012 and is based in the company’s London office. Lewis and his team work with partners across a range of sectors including sport, entertainment, news, and government & politics, advising them on best practice uses of the platform.

Twitter was founded in San Francisco, but it is used by people in nearly every country in the world. In fact, more that 70% of Twitter usage is outside of the US.

- Twitter has more than 200 million active users, more than 15 million of which are in the UK
- There are 500 million Tweets sent every 24 hours
- It took 3 years, 2 months and 1 day from the first Tweet to the billionth tweet. We now see that volume crossing the platform every two-and-a-half-days
- 80% of the UK’s active users are active on mobile as well, compared to 60% globally
- 100% listen but only 60% tweet, 40% of active users never tweet they use it to gather information or simply to follow their interests

Lewis describes Twitter as ‘the shortest distance between you and what interests you’ but it’s not just that; Twitter has the power to support learning in Higher Education. He encouraged us to think about...

- **Twitter as an active part of learning;** using bespoke accounts or a specific hashtag allows a conversation from the relative anonymity of Twitter for students who might be too embarrassed or uncomfortable to ask questions in front of a large group. Managed well within a structure, it is another way of growing dialogue inside and outside the classroom, and there is some emerging evidence of it positively impacting on student performance
- **Twitter as a real time active learning tool;** using the opportunity for searching Tweets to identify trends, by location or theme- a really novel and exciting source of information
- **Twitter as a peer to peer study aid;** as well as an informal and accessible conversation platform for university staff and students alike, Twitter is a great way to interact with peers across the globe sharing experiences and generating knowledge
- **Twitter as a way of connecting people;** allowing students and university staff to interact informally, breaking down barriers which hopefully leads to better working relationships, but also an opportunity to interact with people outside of your regular network

But it’s not just about Twitter and people who tweet; Lewis described the need to engage with people off Twitter as well as those already on Twitter, by thinking about what their interests might be. He used a football metaphor, but given the ASET membership lets use placements instead… Love placements and love Twitter? Love Placements and don’t use Twitter? Love Twitter but don’t love Placements (except everyone we know loves Placements of course....) so when thinking about a strategy for using Twitter effectively in our roles we need to think how to reach the people we need to, and to construct our strategy with “on Twitter” and “off Twitter” elements. Our “off Twitter” strategies should make our “on Twitter” presence known, interesting and enticing for those not already converted to Twitter.

There were some great tips for making the “on Twitter” work...

- **Be the source of breaking news**, the place they have to come to find things out. How could this work for us? What about vacancies for placements announced on the Twitter account the day before anywhere else? Or using Twitter for competitions, prize giveaways, access to exclusive events
• **Use rich media**, not just text. Make sure that you use photos or Vines, which are short videos. How could this work for us? Think about posting behind-the-scenes photos, Vines of employment fairs, photos of promotional materials and office locations so students can find you

• **Engage with other accounts**, remembering that 40% of users don’t tweet they just follow. How could this work for us? Having a conversation with a recruiter on Twitter allows students to listen in as a learning experience before they interact themselves

• **Use hash tags**, they are the glue that holds it all together. How could this work for us? Raising awareness around events #prepareforthefair, create a course based conversation #placementsinarts, or live questions in an event #askLewis

But these tactics only reach people who are already using Twitter, so it is really important to have the “off Twitter” sorted too. This involves things like getting Twitter handles and hashtags out into the physical spaces on campus and on our materials; banners, leaflet footers, walls and projection screens so that people can see what they are missing out on, and join in. Using a predefined hashtag is a great way of tracking conversations, like the #ASET13 we used during conference.

We were all challenged to go away and really think about how our universities are each using Twitter, were we using it to support student learning, to network with people outside our institutions and importantly as a recruitment tool. Innovation and being at the forefront of technological developments is really important to both prospective students and potential employers for your students. In the US, universities are already using it as an essential part of the learning experience, enrolling all staff and students on Twitter and using it in a structured way; there will be big PR buzz for the university that is first to do this in the UK.

Conference was really excited about the potential of Twitter following this excellent keynote presentation; there was a lot of conversation around the campus and on the #ASET13 stream with novice tweeters convened the next day for a getting-started-with-Twitter session. If we had to sum this up in a tweet, how would be do it in just 140 characters?

**Great keynote @LewisWiltshire, inspiring all delegates at #ASET13 to use @twitter to support placements, students and employers #fantastic**

Rebecca Evans and Sarah Flynn
ASET Executive Committee
PLENARY

Sir Tim Wilson DL

Sir Tim Wilson was Vice-Chancellor of the University of Hertfordshire from 2003 to 2010 and its Deputy Vice Chancellor for the previous twelve years. During his time as Vice Chancellor, the University of Hertfordshire was awarded The Queen’s Award for Export in 2004, in recognition of its international successes, and the Entrepreneurial University of the Year in 2010, in recognition of its achievements in promoting enterprise. In 2011 he received a Knighthood for Services to Higher Education and to Business. He is acknowledged as being one of the leading thinkers in university/business collaboration having both chaired and served on several national working parties in the field of knowledge transfer, intellectual property and business/university collaboration.

As part of the Government’s Higher Education White Paper *Putting students at the heart of higher education* (2011) he was commissioned to undertake a fundamental review of university/business collaboration which was published in February 2012. Many of its recommendations have already been implemented by government, business and universities; including the recommendation that the Council for Industry and Higher Education (CIHE) should be invited to develop its structure and its infrastructure to become an independent subscription-based charity that becomes the focus for information on business–university collaboration. It has now become the National Centre for Universities and Businesses.

ASET members will have read with keen interest his recommendations that sandwich degrees should be encouraged through a new compact between students, universities, government and employers; that fees for the sandwich year should be reduced to £1000; that HEFCE should encourage the expansion of sandwich degrees through changes to the control of student numbers and that, aside from the sandwich placement, every full-time undergraduate student should have the opportunity to experience a structured, university-approved undergraduate internship during their period of study.

Sir Tim Wilson studied Mathematics and Computer Science as an undergraduate at the University of Reading, followed by an MA in Operational Research at the University of Lancaster and he received his PhD in Education Management from Walden University in the USA. He is a frequent speaker at both UK and international conferences on leadership and management of universities and on the role of higher education in economic development.

Presentation

Review of University-Business collaboration

Reflections

Professor Sir Tim Wilson DL
ASET Conference September 2013

We also want our universities to look again at how they work with business across their teaching and research activities, to promote better teaching, employer sponsorship, innovation and enterprise. We have asked Professor Sir Tim Wilson, former vice-chancellor of the University of Hertfordshire, to undertake a review into how we make the UK the best place in the world for university–industry collaboration.

White Paper: *Putting students at the heart of higher education*, paragraph 13, June 2011
Just as castles provided the source of strength for medieval towns, and factories provided prosperity in the industrial age, universities are the source of strength in the knowledge-based economy of the twenty-first century.

Lord Dearing, speech at Newcastle University, September 2002

It is not a coincidence that those communities possessing the best research and graduate facilities – from MIT to Cal Tech – tend to attract the new and growing industries.

Speech by President John F Kennedy, undelivered, Dallas November 22nd 1963

“Terman came up with this great idea that did more than anything to cause the tech industry to grow up here”

Steve Jobs 2011

“Graduates of today just do not have the skills needed by industry”

Norman D. Ogg
July 1970

Government reports

- 1993 “Realising our Potential” - Science and technology white paper
- 1997 Dearing Report - Future of higher education
- 2003 Lambert Review - Science and innovation investment framework
- 2006 Worry Report - Impact statements from research projects
- 2006 Leitch Review - Employer led education workforce development
- 2007 Sainsbury Review - Innovation nation white paper
- 2012 Wilson Review - Generic university-business collaboration
- 2013 Heseltine Report - No Stone Unturned
- 2013 Witty Review - Universities and Growth

18 months teamwork
86 pages
30 substantive recommendations
24 reflective recommendations

Impact?
Political and media messages

In a knowledge-based economy
knowledge is not enough

It’s not all about research
exploitation

Skills Development and Awareness:
a challenge to all universities

Specialist skills
Generic skills
Enterprise skills
Entrepreneurial skills

UK University capability
and
Business need

How do we match up?

The landscape of University
capability and capacity

The landscape of business need

Pictures of huge diversity

Improving graduate employability skills
“avoiding the cloister”

• Work based learning
• Curriculum Integration
• Sandwich programmes, internships
• Student entrepreneurship support
• Social enterprise on campus
• Internships for PhDs and post docs
• Matching graduate skills to employer needs

Diversity among universities
provides strength and resilience
to the sector
to our economy
to our society
Industry sponsored programmes

- Employer advice in curriculum design
- Certification (e.g. Cisco, Microsoft)
- Sector Skills Council kitemarking
- Professional body accreditation
- Corporate upskilling: in-company programmes
- Corporate programme fully sponsored: co-design

Employers in partnership with universities

Fee escalation ... Impact?

REF ... Impact?

KIS ... Impact?

HEAR ... Impact?

Wilson Review ... Impact?

Important concepts

Landscape and Domains
Supply chains
People development
Knowledge exchange
The critical role of local partners
Facilitating economic growth

How is your university adapting?

Just as castles provided the source of strength for medieval towns, and factories provided prosperity in the industrial age, universities are the source of strength in the knowledge-based economy of the twenty-first century.

Lord Dearing, speech at Newcastle University, September 2002

Review of University-Business collaboration
Reflections

Professor Sir Tim Wilson • ASET conference September 2013
PLENARY

Launch: ASET Good Practice Guide for Work-Based and Placement Learning in Higher Education
John Wilson and Sarah Flynn, ASET
Anett Loescher, Quality Assurance Agency

ASET has been involved in promoting good practice around placements for over thirty years and our goal remains the same; to advance the prevalence, effectiveness and quality of work-based and placement learning in Higher Education.

For the past year, ASET has worked with the QAA to ensure that this Good Practice Guide assists practitioners in setting up provision and processes for planning, managing, monitoring and evaluating work based and placement learning:

- that enables them to consider how they will demonstrate that their practice is “sound”, in accordance with the benchmarks agreed by the academic community and that are expressed in the Expectations of the UK Quality Code for Higher Education (Quality Code)
- that gives a simple approach with a commitment to continuous enhancement, by providing guiding principles that can be used in the development of “good” practice, which may and should evolve over time

The 2013 Guide focuses on work-based and placement learning opportunities that are a planned and integrated part of a student’s programme of study at a higher education institution. This guidance is intended to be useful to practitioners irrespective of the level or mode of study, the academic subject, whether work-based or placement learning. The Guide is designed to support the work of:

- Professional and administrative staff
- Academic tutors
- Careers teams
- Resource Managers

Higher education providers reviewed by the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA) are required to meet all the Expectations of the Quality Code. The manner in which they do so is their own responsibility; it is important that Institutions respond in the ways that are appropriate for their organisation, internal structures and the range of work-based and placement learning opportunities that they offer. Institutions are also responsible for meeting the requirements of
legislation and any other regulatory requirements placed upon them, for example by funding councils or Professional, Statutory and Regulatory bodies (PSRB).

Following a long tradition of other ASET activity, this Guide has been written to support these endeavours but is neither prescriptive nor regulatory, merely guidance from experienced practitioners to others in the field to support their work in engaging students in high quality, effective work-based and placement learning as part of their higher education experience.

Presentation

ASET: Why a Good Practice Guide?

- ASET was established to advance the prevalence, effectiveness and quality of work based and placement learning in Higher Education and by promoting and publishing research into that system of education

Amongst our aims are to:
- Provide strategic leadership and a national voice as a central agency
- Offer informed and authoritative representation, advice and support to all professionals working in the field
- Provide a forum for groups and individuals to discuss and formulate policies

The Good Practice Guide for Work Based and Placement Learning in Higher Education is designed to help providers and practitioners to shape an effective and high quality experience for students, staff and employers.

The UK Quality Code for Higher Education

- The Quality Code is developed and held by the QAA on behalf of the UK Higher Education sector. It is the nationally-agreed, definitive point of reference
  - Makes clear what providers are required to do, what they can expect of each other, and what the general public can expect of them.
  - Covers all four nations of the UK and UK HE delivered overseas
  - Applies to providers with the power to award their own degrees and to those who deliver HE on behalf of another HE awarding body.
  - The Quality Code protects the interests of all students, regardless of where they are studying or whether they are full-time or part-time, undergraduate or postgraduate students.

Placement Practitioners are often not experts in quality assurance and enhancement...

- Code of Practice for the Assurance of Academic Quality and Standards in Higher Education - Section 9: Work-based and placement learning
  - The Quality Code consists of three parts
    - A: Setting and maintaining academic standards
    - B: Assuring and enhancing academic quality
    - C: Information about higher education provision
And we work in an arena with plenty of challenges...

- Change – institutional structures in flux, both within universities and employers, a definite move towards centralisation in universities alongside ever increasing targets for numbers of students on placement
- Constraint – student mobility declining, concentration of opportunities in certain geographical areas or times of year, resourceing across the whole sector is a constant constraint

All against a backdrop of the expectation of...

Consistency
- Experience and learning opportunity
- Processes and structures
- Risk assessment and due diligence

But also one with lots of opportunities too...

Diversity in...
- Student body - greater range of experiences, skills and interests to offer employers
- Placement types – expansion in those offered from WBL to a year to summer internships to flexible arrangements within the year
- Employer expectations – matched to the range of opportunities, a greater set of expectations – from elementary (level 4) to enhanced (level 7)

An increase in...
- Understanding of the agenda – both students and employers get the employability agenda now
- Wider acceptance of embedding in the curriculum – no longer just practice or year placements, better integration of theory and practice
- Beyond the “one hit wonder” – acceptance that this doesn’t wait until penultimate year before graduation – from level 4 through to level 7

The Good Practice Guide

- Focuses on learning opportunities that are a planned and integrated part of a student’s programme of
- Irrespective of the level or mode of study, the academic subject, whether work based or placement learning
- Supports the development of good practice, but is neither prescriptive nor regulatory
- Considers work based and placement learning in the same manner as other forms of learning, teaching and assessment when it comes to quality and standards in Higher Education.

Principles of Good Practice

1. Accept and recognise the value to employability
2. Are partners in planning and management
3. Clearly understand the responsibilities and expectations of everyone involved
4. Collate to ensure opportunities are inclusive, safe and supported
5. Engage in structured opportunities for learning and development
6. Establish sustainable relationships and networks
7. Record outcomes and evaluate feedback for continuous enhancement
Good Practice Checklists

- Pre-placement, on placement, post-placement
- Higher Education provider, practitioner, students, employers
- Start of a ‘dynamic toolkit’ evolving resource that will be developed over the next year tackling the full range of work based and placement learning opportunities

At a recent QAA event, we called for institutions to...

- Continue to push for ‘Good practice’ alongside ‘Sound practice’
  Threshold standards to ensure consistency for all should not inhibit us from seeking out the good and indeed excellent practice
- Commit to properly resourcing placement learning
  Emergent research work suggests that it takes 20hrs to support a single student placement effectively. Many universities working towards 100% of students doing placements – for a 4000 student cohort this is the workload for 48 members of full-time staff (just focussing on placement)
- Champion the benefits of placement learning
  - Document processes and outcomes
  - Discuss and debate both internally and across the sector
  - Drive forward the excellence that is already in the UK sector
  - Don’t give up, it does make a difference

And now we are calling for you to...

- Use the Good Practice Guide to shape your work
- Raise the profile of the Good Practice Guide within your institution; your work is important and it is important that your institutions recognise it as such – we believe the Guide will help with that
- Consider contributing an example from your Practice to the dynamic toolkit, this will be an online resource designed to support the sector and showcase the excellent practice within it
- Feedback to us: as the Guide will be an online resource we can develop and change it to embrace your feedback and respond to your ideas
PLENARY

Employability at the Higher Education Academy

Employability is a key programme of work for the Higher Education Academy, with a focus on enhancing the academic, personal and professional development of learners to meet the changing needs of employers, the economy and society.

Their work is focused on helping institutions to develop their teaching and learning in ways which will enable graduates to meet the economic and social challenges of the 21st century. They work with practitioners and discipline communities to embed effective employability practice within the curriculum. There is a growing emphasis on the development of institutional level frameworks and, increasingly, they are working with managers and senior staff to develop strategic approaches to employability.

This session will outline the ways in which the Higher Education Academy supports the:

- Development of employability provision in Higher Education programmes, including the commissioning of work such as the Pedagogy for Employability publication (2012)
- Dissemination of articles, projects and activities in the employability field to the wider academic community
- Discussion and innovation, through the Employability Summit and the broader Teaching Development Grants
- Recognition of the expertise of individual practitioners through the UK Professional Standards Framework

We are exceptionally pleased to welcome the Higher Education Academy to the ASET Conference and are grateful for their support as our premier sponsors for 2013.

Presentation
HEA support and services

• Academic practice development
• Discipline and thematic support around employability

• Resources and research
• Funding
• Consultancy
• Training
• Professional development
• Workshops and seminars
• Conferences and events
• Support and networks
• Accreditation and recognition

Accreditation and recognition

• UK Professional Standards Framework - description of dimensions of the roles of teaching and supporting learning within HE
• HEA offers recognition and accreditation service to recognise staff involved in learning support
• Framework has been designed to cover all aspects of teaching and learning support

HEA events

• Annual conference
• Discipline cluster conferences
• Themed conferences
• Themed summits
• Special interest events
• Collaborative events

http://www.heacademy.ac.uk/events

Funding opportunities

• Teaching development grants
  - Create innovative evidence-informed practice in L&T
  - 2013/14 covers ALL HEA themes, including employability
  - Proposals can be individual, departmental, collaborative
  - Next call, collaborative, early 2014

• Mike Baker doctoral programme
  - Funding for extensive study in L&T
  - Call closes noon 23 Sept 2013

• Professor Sir Ron Cooke international scholarship scheme
  - Funding up to £20 000 to spend 3-6 months visiting international institution
  - Allow individuals to undertake investigations focused on learning and teaching on behalf of the HEA, outside the UK
  - Call closes noon 20 Jan 2014

http://www.heacademy.ac.uk/funding

Examples of HEA resources and research to support employability

• Pedagogy for Employability (2012)
• Framework for Employability (2013)
• Discipline related resources to support employability: Employability in psychology’s guide for departments (2013)
• Professional Capabilities in Non-Vocational Subject Disciplines- a HEA funded research project (July 2013)
• Collaborating with and supporting new National Centre for Universities and Business (NCUB) on research into placement provision and good practice (2013)

http://www.heacademy.ac.uk/resources

Learning to Work 2 – employability strategy in Scotland

• Foster and support institutional collaboration to develop and share good practice across the sector
• Promote effective dialogue at a strategic level with student and employer bodies
• To provide an open forum to support and facilitate sharing of work-in-progress between the Learning to Work Two Horizon funded projects
**Sustainability**

- Input into SFC Strategy and Policies
- HEA Employability strand
- Partnerships
- Communities of Practice

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**Placement Scotland**

**Project update August 2013**

630 paid placements created during the two years. Aiming to reach 750 by July 2014.

53% are in SMEs, 45% of placed students are between the 3rd and 4th year.

Proposal for national infrastructure based on sector model. Shaping the stars of tomorrow.

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**Making the Most of Masters**

**Achievements**

- 481 projects taken up by students
- Engage with 148 Masters programmes and 664 organisations
- Enhanced employability for students
- Quality enhancement of PGT programme

**The Future: a growing network**

SFC Funding has allowed the development of architecture for a future network that is:

- Between universities
- Within universities
- With research pools
- With others

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**LTW2: The Student Voice**

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6INBqUZtsOM

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**Keep in touch**

- HEA website: [www.heacademy.ac.uk](http://www.heacademy.ac.uk)
- HEA employability pages for news, employability bulletins and resources: [www.heacademy.ac.uk/employability](http://www.heacademy.ac.uk/employability)
- HEA discipline pages: [www.heacademy.ac.uk/disciplines](http://www.heacademy.ac.uk/disciplines)
- Mailing list: Sign up through MyAcademy: [www.heacademy.ac.uk/my_academy](http://www.heacademy.ac.uk/my_academy)
- Email: employability@heacademy.ac.uk
PLENARY

Developing quality placement opportunities: a survey of provision and good practice
Joe Marshall, National Centre for Universities and Business
Jane Artess, Director of Research Higher Education Careers Services Unit

The session aims to disseminate the findings of NCUB and HEA supported research to map placement provision across HEIs. The research is being carried out by HECSU (Higher Education Career Services Unit) in partnership with CFE, who provide research services to employers and organisations in the world of education and skills. This project is being funded by the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills and in one of the first activities under the banner of the National Centre for Universities and Business.

Specific objectives for the research include:
- review the policy landscape for student placement provision across the HE sector.
- analyse existing data sets to indicate base-line data on the provision of placement opportunities
- audit the likely quantity of placements provided across the UK

Joe and Jane will be presenting on the initial findings of the research; the final outcome of which will be the:
- establishment of baseline data on the quantity and quality of student placements
- development of in-depth case studies that identify how quality student placements are established and the benefits that accrue to students, businesses and universities.
- development of a final report(s) outlining the findings of the above and providing the basis for a series of recommendations for both universities and businesses

Presentation

Overview
- Background on the National Centre
- Overview of the quality placement project
- Areas of focus and early findings
- Discussion questions
NCUB Vision & Mission

- **Vision**
  Increasing the prosperity and wellbeing of the UK through world-leading university and business collaboration.

- **Mission**
  By effective collaboration nurture the right talent, innovation and expertise for the UK’s future growth.

Areas of Focus

Three areas of focus:

- Brokering and facilitating world class collaboration
- Working together to build the high-level talent base for the UK’s future prosperity and well-being.
- Translating inventiveness into innovation

Quality Placement Project

- Wilson Review highlighted importance of placements (in the broadest sense) represent an important interface.
  ![Business → Student → University](image)
- From student employability to strategic engagement with businesses benefits are profound

Yet...

- Provision of placement opportunities not universal (within or across different institutes)
- Challenges of nomenclature, credit bearing, student readiness and business engagement (e.g. SMEs)
- Variability in quality of experience and relevancy to the student experience

NCUB Quality Placement Project

- Recognised important interface for university-business collaboration but with:
  - Limited metrics on level and type of provision across the UK
  - Limited understanding of the characteristics of a quality experience across the UK
- Collaborating with the HEA, CFE and HECSU
  - Embarked on a 4 part research project

Part 1: Collation
Part 2: Measuring
Part 3: Understanding
Part 4: Exemplifying
Early findings: why important

Top 3 benefits to employers for providing placements:
- Helping students (78%)
- Bringing new or innovative ideas into the company (61%)
- Potential to recruit new graduates (50%)

Top 3 benefits to HE institutions for providing placements:
- Student employability (100%)
- Improving relationships with businesses (67%)
- Improving student satisfaction (40%)

Early findings: what facilitates

- Employers are using a range of methods to find students (university websites being one of the most important)
- Trusted and established relationships with the university or department
- Work before, during and after with the university

Early findings: what challenges

- Readiness of the student
- Readiness of the university
- Readiness of the business

Quality

What defines a quality placement activity?

- What are the facets that marks out a high quality experience for the student? For the business?
- ASET Principles for good practice mapped to the Quality Code is enormously helpful

New ASET Guide

- Spectrum of work based and placement learning – length, purpose, and ‘proportionality’
- Work based learning – employee first and student second
- Placement learning – student first and employee second
- Spectrum of work based and placement learning
- Opportunities that are planned and integrated

Some elements of quality

- A challenge
- Real opportunities
- Relevant
- Carefully monitored
- Engaging students’ drive and motivation
Quality - research suggests:

- Stakeholders should benefit
- Quality is context-specific and difficult to control
- Clear guidelines and procedures
- Interface between academic departments and other institutional services
- Continuum of non-work ..... actual work
- Practical issues such as fees, interruptions, pay

Quality assurance

How do you assure a quality placement?

- What are the feedback mechanisms?
- What are the procedural issues that need to be adopted?
- What are the barriers to assuring a quality experience?

Quality challenges:

- Data collection
- Comparability of data
- Monitoring trends - by subject, age, location
- Motivation of students
- Managing supply and demand
- Typical subject trajectories and careers
- Entitlement, parity and equity

What is in name?

- Undergraduate Internship
- Sandwich placement
- Work placement
- Graduate internship
- Work-based learning
- Work experience
- Work-related learning

What’s Next

- Complete the survey and dissemination events in Autumn
- Develop the repository of success stories
- As required, develop practical tools and guides to further support placement activities (especially for small businesses)
PLENARY

What could happen if we don’t embrace the social revolution?
Helen Smith, Loughborough University

Pausing for some time for reflection at the end of our conference, Helen Smith will be leading a plenary session looking at the implications of not embracing the social revolution that is upon us. Building on the contributions of other speakers at the conference, Helen will challenge us to examine what we have heard over the past three days, identify both the challenges and the opportunities that the social revolution presents, and to think about returning to our institutions with ideas, questions and conversations to have with colleagues.

Helen is Head of Careers and Employability at Loughborough University which recently topped the international Student Barometer survey for the quality of its careers and student support. Prior to this she held senior positions in the recruitment industry and, as director of a consulting firm, led award-winning projects to advance co-ordinated partnership approaches to employer engagement and skills development. This included working with public and private-sector employment and skills providers to more closely align provision with employer demand, and broker enhanced employment outcomes across key industry sectors.

A Social Sciences graduate from the University of Newcastle-Upon-Tyne, her early career included management and fashion buying at Harrods, then specialising in training and recruitment for the retail sector.

Presentation

> Discussion

Imagine a service similar to your own where employer and student engagement has gone wrong:
- Employers have deserted them
- Student engagement has declined hugely
- The supply of work experience opportunities is in free-fall
- Latest DLHE outcomes are much worse than comparator HEIs
- Staff are demoralised and likely to leave

It’s the reality – it’s where they are – so, what’s gone wrong?
Avoiding catastrophe!

In groups discuss and list:
1. what you suspect has gone wrong – key themes
2. what could or should have been done to avoid these potentially catastrophic outcomes

General group feedback

Revolution or Evolution?

"New graduates entering the workforce are frequently appalled by the technology their employers use to run their companies.

To be transformative, social can’t be an add-on. Social must be a strategy that is integrated into business processes across the organisation.

Companies that will be successful in the future recognise the need for fundamentally changing the way they engage with their customers.”

Viewpoint by Marc Benioff, Chief Executive, Salesforce.com

BBC News website – 11 May 2012

Natives and Immigrants

Our students and graduates are digital natives
We are, for the most part, digital immigrants
We have different expectations and skills; we approach things differently
We will converge, but at what speed?

Baby Boomers – born between 1946 and 1964
Generation X – born between 1965 and 1975
Generation Y – born between 1975 and 1995
Generation Z – born since 1995, beginning to reach university now

Companies get it

Burberry now has social at the heart of its business with a digital end-to-end solution called Burberry World, which connects customers, suppliers and vendors to the brand. As their CEO remarked: “You have to be totally connected to everyone who touches your brand. If you don’t do that, I don’t know what your business model is in five years.”

KLM, one of the world’s largest airlines, has also unleashed the power of social. It engages customers on the social web where they can ask questions, check in for flights, and have conversations about travel.

According to McKinsey, companies that adopt social technologies can see a 50% increase in customer satisfaction, 48% increase in business leads, and a 24% increase in revenue.

But, do we?

STUDENTS are already there - highly digitally aware and communicating in different ways to many of us
BUSINESSES are getting there – adapting fast to reach customers and meet commercial goals
How should university careers, employability and placement services respond?
Addressing needs

- Understanding the market for skills
- Co-ordinated approach to careers guidance and employability – schools, universities and employers
- Co-ordination of employer engagement activity
- If we relentlessly compete with one another for placements and internships for our students we will frustrate the market
- Appropriate engagement with SMEs
- Considering the needs of all students – international, PG, opportunities for all
- Employability - skills for life
- Communication and collaboration

Challenges and opportunities

- Understanding
- Adapting
- Working in partnership
- Embracing the inevitable

So what will you do?

Just don’t do this!

I had my own blog for a while, but I decided to go back to just pointless, incessant barking.”
ADDITIONAL WORKSHOP

Ten Steps to getting started with Twitter
Sarah Flynn, ASET Chair, University of Hertfordshire

A short workshop to give a practical introduction to using Twitter, with the aim of getting you to your first Tweet!

Presentation

1. Before you start, stop and think
   • What will you use it for?
   • How often will you check it?
   • How will you manage expectations?
   • Twitter is a big part of your digital footprint
   • Do you have an addictive personality??????????

2. Getting signed up to Twitter - registration
   • twitter.com
   • One Twitter handle per email address
   • No limits to the number of Twitter accounts as long as different email addresses
   • Choose a Twitter handle
   • Something meaningful – and ideally short (brevity is everything in Twitter)

3. Your profile
   • Pick a picture or two
   • Write a biography
     – Consider a disclaimer if using for work ‘views expressed are my own and not my employers’ or ‘RT are not endorsements’
     – Consider including a website address if you have one

4. Sort out your settings
5. How will you check your tweets?
- Twitter website - www.twitter.com
- Twitter by mobile app – available on iPhone and Android
- A social media aggregator (?) like
  - Tweetdeck
  - Hootsuite
- Start simply with web access and/or the Twitter app

6. Remember what you say is public...
- Tweets are about a permanent as you get – even if you delete them
- Tweets are very searchable
- Your tweets can escape into the world, so you won’t necessarily know who will see them
- Would you say it to your mother…your students…your manager?

7. Start following others
- Search for Twitter users you already know use Twitter
- Search for names on Twitter and see if they are the people you know
- @ASETOnline is a great place to start
- Click Follow!
- Look at their list of followers, and who they are following – if you see someone you think would be interesting or useful to follow, click on their profile and click Follow
- Look at the suggestions of others to follow

8. Let people follow you
- You’ll get notifications about new followers
  - Polite etiquette is to reply to them and say thank you for the follow, and if you think you want to – follow them back
  - Of course, you’ll get people you think are irrelevant, spam or just plain weird – if you want to, do block them. A good hint about spam accounts is to look at their numbers of followers and the number who they follow.
- Don’t forget that people who look at your profile can see your previous tweets, and who you follow

9. Learn the language
- You tweet, you don’t twitter
- Hashtag – the glue that holds the conversation together, like #ASET13
  - No pre-defined, you can #makeitupsapossible
- If someone re-posts another person’s tweet, this is called a retweet and is displayed in short form in Twitter as RT
- If someone re-posts another person’s tweet, but edits it first this is called a modified tweet and is displayed in short form in Twitter as MT
- If you want to send something privately, this is called a direct message and is displayed in short form in Twitter as DM
- If you see #FF – this is follow Friday and is a way of recommending people to follow to your existing followers
- Conversation – if you click on a tweet you might see the whole conversation, helps to put things in context

10. Start to tweet!
- Don’t worry if you don’t get a reply or a retweet – it is unusual at first
- Try joining a conversation by a hashtag – #ASET13 is a good start
- 140 characters – be succinct, you can let Twitter shorten your tweets but best to learn to be brief so it doesn’t create grammatical atrocities in your name (you can include web addresses, that will shorten automatically)
- If you want to, add a picture – rich media tweets are more popular – but be sensible, and if you are tweeting pictures of people it is very prudent to ask permission first
  - Add from a library
  - Take it live
- Be cautious, find your feet and when you know that you’re doing get going in style
ASET RESEARCH BURSARY

The 2013 ASET Research Bursary was awarded to Dr Fred Sherratt, University of Bolton for her research project outline as detailed below:

Project

Work Placements in Safety Critical Industries: a Built Environment Case Study
Dr Fred Sherratt MCIOB MBEng

Placements and work-based learning opportunities should form an integral and essential component of vocationally directed university courses. Consequently, there is the potential for such placements to be located within safety critical industries, for example within those of the built environment disciplines. Construction is a high risk industry (HSE 2013), yet for students of construction management, civil engineering and other associated disciplines, experience and an understanding of the construction site environment is critical to their learning. Students with on-site experience are also likely to have dramatically improved chances of securing employment on graduation.

For this proposal, the University of Bolton is looking to undertake initial exploratory research of placements within safety critical industries, with a case study focus on the built environment and the construction industry. It is suggested that using a built environment case study approach is not only practical given the scope of the bursary, but will also develop translatable findings to other safety critical industries. Construction sites contain a wide range of different health and safety concerns; large mechanical plant, power tools and hazardous substances are all common and must be considered during work placements, yet the hazards themselves are translatable to other work environments, either individually or in similar complex combinations. This research is intended to inform both academic and industry practice, and will seek to examine placements within safety critical industries from key stakeholder perspectives.

The research will focus on the following question:

Do placements in safety-critical industries limit the placement experience for both students and host organisations?

A qualitative approach is proposed to enable an in-depth exploration of this question through a built environment case study, allowing key stakeholder voices to be heard. The student’s work will initially involve undertaking a comprehensive literature review. This will not only seek out previous research around the placement experience, but also explore the potential limitations of live construction sites for placements, given the safety critical nature of the work. Viewing the former through the lens of the latter, the student will then be able to develop a framework of interview questions, to examine the concerns of key placement stakeholders within this context.
Subsequently, in-depth interviews will be carried out with four members of each stakeholder group; students, host organisations and placement tutors, twelve interviews in total. Qualitative analysis of the interview data will enable key themes and concerns to be drawn out, both within and across the different groups. In examining the lived placement experiences from both industry and educational perspectives, the relationship between a safety critical industry and a positive placement experience can be examined in detail. These findings will illuminate the potential for both safety critical industries and academia to maximise the scope and experience for student placements and work-based learning. It is hoped the findings will be able to indicate what, if any, developments or pre-requisites could be incorporated within current academic programmes to better equip the students for their placements from an industry perspective. The findings will also provide insight as to the scope of such placements, and if industry can seek to develop practices to maximise the student experience during their time on sites. It is likely this work will lead to further research to ultimately develop a framework for both placement tutors and placement organisations in order to maximise the student experience within safety-critical placement environments.

If successful, the following timescales for the project are proposed:

- Student appointment by early April 2013
- Literature reviewed by 31 May 2013
- Interview framework developed 14 June 2013
- Interviews undertaken by 12 July 2013
- Qualitative Analysis of data by 16 August 2013
- Recommendations generated by 26 August 2013
- Presentation and report to ASET 3-5 September 2013

This opportunity will be made available to undergraduate students on the second year of their built environment BSc (Hons) or BEng degree within the Faculty of Advanced Engineering and Sciences. The student will be appointed through an application and interview process, and based on their performance within their recently completed Research Methods module. The university will provide the student with all the necessary resources to complete this project.

The work will be supervised by Dr Fred Sherratt. As tutor for the Foundation Degree (Construction and Surveying) Work Experience module, Fred has been involved with placing students on construction sites for two years. Her research specialism is construction site safety, and she also has close links with industry through the Chartered Institute of Building, all of which will ensure strong supervisory support for the project. Please see attached for a list of her recent publications.
This proposal is fully in line with the University’s strategic commitment to the development of further opportunities for work-related learning for its students. It fits with the University’s industry and business focus and its stress on employer engagement and enhancing the employability of its students. The University’s Pro Vice chancellor (Academic), Professor Rob Campbell, is happy to give this proposal his full support.

References

Dr Fred Sherratt MCIOB MBEng Selected Publications

The project was undertaken by Robert Smith, University of Bolton.

Presentation
**Context – Work Experience**
- Work experience within vocational courses
- Enhancement and balance to vocational education
- Application of theory to real life
- Benefit to student directly related to the placement experience
- Forms invaluable links between educational institutions and host organisations

**Context – Safety Critical Industries**
- Dangers of safety critical work environments
- Potential for student injury or illness
- Potential for student to cause injury or illness to others
- Management and control of work environments
- UK based placements
- Legislation
- Induction
- Limitations to placements?

**Research Method**
- **Approach**
  - Qualitative
- **Method of Data Collection**
  - Semi-structured Interviews
  - Rich data yet retained focus
- **Sample**
  - 4 from each stakeholder group (Tutors, Students, Host Organisations)
  - Students were Foundation Degree students (compulsory placement)
  - Purposive sample
  - Findings are therefore exploratory rather than generalisable

**Interview Framework – Considerations**
- Positive and negative experiences
- Logistical issues
- Participatory issues
- Satisfaction
- Differences
  - What’s different for the Host Organisation?
  - What’s different for the Student?
  - What’s different for the Placement Tutor?

**Analysis**
- Thematic approach to the analysis
- Repeated data passes to develop a coding framework
- Development of key themes
- Identification of patterns within and between the stakeholder groups

**Findings – Host Organisations**
- Clear benefits identified for Students, Host Organisations and Tutors from the placement experience.
- The safety critical nature of the industry results in distinct management practices (Risk Assessments, CSCS cards etc.) which allow for tailoring of the work placement programmes to minimise the impact of health and safety on the overall experience.
- The Tutors and Host Organisations are able to prepare the placement within this management framework, although this does take effort.
- Age of the participating student is an overwhelming factor in the work activities they are able to participate in due to:
  - Mental maturity
  - Insurance
  - Law
- Students are largely unaware of these limitations in their participation.

**Findings – Tutors**
- Clear benefits identified for Students, Host Organisations and Tutors from the placement experience.
- The safety critical nature of the industry results in distinct management practices (Risk Assessments, CSCS cards etc.) which allow for tailoring of the work placement programmes to minimise the impact of health and safety on the overall experience.
- The Tutors and Host Organisations are able to prepare the placement within this management framework, although this does take effort.
- Age of the participating student is an overwhelming factor in the work activities they are able to participate in due to:
  - Mental maturity
  - Insurance
  - Law
- Students are largely unaware of these limitations in their participation.

**Findings – Students**
- Clear benefits identified for Students, Host Organisations and Tutors from the placement experience.
- The safety critical nature of the industry results in distinct management practices (Risk Assessments, CSCS cards etc.) which allow for tailoring of the work placement programmes to minimise the impact of health and safety on the overall experience.
- The Tutors and Host Organisations are able to prepare the placement within this management framework, although this does take effort.
- Age of the participating student is an overwhelming factor in the work activities they are able to participate in due to:
  - Mental maturity
  - Insurance
  - Law
- Students are largely unaware of these limitations in their participation.

**Findings – All Groups**
- Clear benefits identified for Students, Host Organisations and Tutors from the placement experience.
- The safety critical nature of the industry results in distinct management practices (Risk Assessments, CSCS cards etc.) which allow for tailoring of the work placement programmes to minimise the impact of health and safety on the overall experience.
- The Tutors and Host Organisations are able to prepare the placement within this management framework, although this does take effort.
- Age of the participating student is an overwhelming factor in the work activities they are able to participate in due to:
  - Mental maturity
  - Insurance
  - Law
- Students are largely unaware of these limitations in their participation.
- Students are largely unaware of the impact the safety critical nature of the industry has on the placement.
**Conclusions**

1. **The Host Organisations, through their existing work practices in their safety critical industries, are able to easily manage students on placements.**
2. **The Host Organisations placement experience is largely positive and not limited beyond their usual work practice constraints.**
3. **Tutors found the placements overwhelmingly positive and supported the student learning at all levels.**

Consequently, it can be concluded that placements in safety critical industries do not limit the placement experience, in terms of Student expectations.

**Recommendations**

1. A further study is recommended to determine how student age and life experience plays a contributing factor to the placement experience.
2. Older students can participate more.
3. Younger students can participate less.
4. Potentially, this level of participation, and therefore experience, is suitable for the students at this stage in their education or life experience?
5. This is a critical consideration given the likely age of many students attending placements (18-21yrs).
6. Student expectations of the placement are critical and should be explored further, including identification of any relationship with student age.
7. This phenomenon could also be explored for placements outside of safety critical industries.

**Thank you!**
Are there any questions?
### DELEGATE LIST

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**Other Visitors**
- Dr Geoffrey Copland, President of ASET
- Dr John Wilson, Chair of ASET 2004-2013
- Sir Tim Wilson DL
- Lewis Wiltshire, Twitter
- Jane Ar tess, HECSU
- Olivia Jones, National Centre for Universities & Business
- Joe Marshall, National Centre for Universities & Business
The Placement and Employability Professionals' Body

ASET is the professional body for placement and employability staff. It has been at the forefront of developments in sandwich courses and other forms of work placements, in both higher and further education, for 30 years. We represent over 1300 academic and administrative placement staff at more than 100 HE and FE institutions.

ASET has been the catalyst for the development of guidelines in many areas and also the promotion and dissemination of best practice. We also seek to champion the general concept of work-based learning.

ASET is an educational charity run by work-based learning practitioners for work-based learning practitioners and offers support, advice, guidance and representation to all professionals who work in the sector.

As the leading organisation in the work-based and placement learning sector we seek to provide independent and influential strategic leadership for it.

Membership gives all relevant staff at universities, further education colleges and employers the opportunity to benefit from, and contribute to, a wealth of experience and expertise.

If you wish to discuss any aspect of ASET's work, please contact the ASET office or any of the executive members. Contact details are below:

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Sheffield
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Email: aset@asetonline.org
Website: www.asetonline.org

Company Administrator
Debbie Siva-Jothy

ASET
Integrating Work and Learning
Executive Committee

Dr Geoffrey Copland    Formerly University of Westminster    President
Ms Sarah Flynn        University of Hertfordshire        Chair
Miss Rebecca Evans    University of Leeds               Treasurer
Mrs Allison Dunbobbin Loughborough University
Ms Megen Hartley-Clarke Sheffield Hallam University
Ms Amanda Monteiro    London South Bank University
Miss Emily Timson     University of Leeds
Dr Colin Turner       University of Ulster
Mrs Tamsin Turner     The Queen’s University Belfast
Ms Deborah Scott      University of Chester
Mr Tim Ward           University of Salford

ASET Conference 2014

The next Annual Conference will take place 2-4 September 2014. Please keep an eye on the ASET website for further news.

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