# ASET Annual Conference 2016

Enhancing the Experience, Supporting the Student

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SESSION

Tuesday 6th September

1. Staying Connected – Supporting students during their year out on placement
   René Moolenaar and Kate Thorpe, University of Sussex

2. Supporting Student Success- Going beyond “Embedded Employability”
   Peter Coates, Leeds Beckett University – sponsored by QuantumIT

3. The Benefits of ASET Bursaries
   Vicki O’Brien and Francesca Walker, University of Central Lancashire

4. International Work Placements at Sheffield Business School –
   Transforming our students into Global Graduates
   Cristina Lopez-Moreno, Sheffield Hallam University

5. Reconceiving Work Placements
   Carol-joy Patrick, Griffith University, Queensland, Australia

Wednesday 7th September

6. Service Blueprinting for High Impact, Innovative Placement Preparation
   Claire Colburn, University of Sussex

7. Best Practice when working with third party providers for overseas placements
   Jamie Bettles, Intern China Ltd - ASET Conference Sponsors

8. Swansea University Student’s Placement Journey- from ‘Bootcamp’ to ‘Outduction’
   Lucy Williams and Helyn Taylor, Swansea University

9. The real life benefit of work experience to our company and our interns
   Claire Kennady and Qamar Hashmi, IMI Precision Engineering

10. “A stepping stone to getting this job”: the role of work placements on students’
    perceptions of the transition to work
    Julie Udell, Portsmouth University

11. Working in Partnership with ARC to enhance the students practice learning experience
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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 York, from 6th - 8th September 2016. As Chair of ASET, I have the privilege of working in a sector where I am continuously overwhelmed by the generosity of colleagues who never fail to give us the content and community that make for a splendid conference. Placement practitioners continue to be so supportive of colleagues from across the sector in sharing their innovations, challenges and inspirations at conference, and for this we are ever grateful.

Thanks to Kate Dodd, Academic Registrar for providing such a warm welcome on behalf of the University of York, a beautiful campus which certainly shone in the late summer sunshine. We are extremely grateful to all our speakers and workshop presenters for such interesting and useful sessions, and I would particularly like to thank our keynote contributors Dr Gurnam Singh, Dr Vicky Duckworth and Johnny Rich. Our ‘Q&A Experts’ panel was an opportunity to think about the rich diversity amongst our student body, from a group of people with considerable expertise in supporting students in the context of identity or their protected characteristics. We appreciate the time that these colleagues gave to come along to conference and share their experiences; Sharon Didrichson of Specialisterne Northern Ireland, Vicky Duckworth representing the Helena Kennedy Foundation, Julie Forbes representing Women’s Engineering Society, Jo Holliday the Chair or the Association of International Student Advisers, Naivasha Mwanji of Elevation Networks, Sean Russell, and Mike Wray who is a board member of the National Association of Disability Practitioners. Thanks must be noted to our conference sponsors; ARC Technology Ltd, Intern China, Nicholas Associates, Quantum IT and of course to our longstanding partners RMP Enterprise Ltd. We do hope you found your interactions with them fruitful.

A huge thank you to the team of Trustees, led by Tim Ward and Debbie Siva-Jothy, whose hard work delivers such a brilliant conference. We know that for many of you, the ASET Annual Conference is your essential date for professional development in the work based and placement learning HE sector, so we wanted to confirm this for you as soon as possible. We look forward to seeing you again at Conference next year, 5th-7th September 2017 at the University of Kent.

Sarah Flynn
Chair, ASET
KEYNOTE

BME attainment and the challenges for employability

Dr Gurnam Singh

*Principal Lecturer in Social Work at Coventry University and Visiting Professor of Social Work at the University of Chester.*

Dr Singh has been a leading voice in the UK’s work on the disparities in student attainment, specialising in those from Black and Minority Ethnic backgrounds, including working on key Higher Education Academy projects and most recently a Leadership Foundation publication ‘Race’, Racism and Higher Education Leadership: How can we make not break BME leaders.

Prior to entering academia in 1993, Gurnam worked as a professional social worker and community activist. He completed his PhD from the University of Warwick in 2004 on anti-racist social work, and in 2009 he was awarded a National Teaching Fellowship from the UK Higher Education Academy, in recognition of his contribution to Higher Education.

In addition to his academic work, Gurnam has an extensive media profile and has regularly presented discussions and debates on minority TV channels, including Sikh Channel and Akaal Channel as well as BBC Radio networks.

Gurnam describes himself as an academic activist, inspired both in his teaching and research by the desire to transform individuals and society.

Presentation
Demographic shift: projections for the future.

"If overall net immigration continues as projected by the ONS, and if the ethnic distributions assumed here are even approximately correct, then the ethnic composition of the United Kingdom would be irreversibly transformed within the current century. By 2051 the non-white population would increase to 22 million (29%) and the 'Other White' minority to 8 million (10%). If the same patterns continued beyond the mid-century, the non-white populations would reach 36% by 2076, by which time the White British population would have fallen to just under one half (48%) of the total population, and to two-fifths (38%) by the end of the century."


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Demographic shifts – UK breakdown – 2011 (ONS)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ethnic Group</th>
<th>Population 2011</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>White British</td>
<td>50.6%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Asian British</td>
<td>4.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pakistani/Bangladeshi</td>
<td>4.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other (e.g. Irish)</td>
<td>3.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black British</td>
<td>2.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other White</td>
<td>4.6%</td>
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Students: Ethnicity:
Source: Equality in higher education: statistical report 2015 (Covering 2013/14)

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<th>Degree class and ethnic group – 2014/5 (ECU,2015:287)</th>
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<td>Degree attainment/Awarding</td>
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How do we conceptualise/explain the issue of BAME student under-attainment?
- Traditional (minority view) – BAME lack ability, their theories is a self-fulfilling racist stereotype, they have problems with authority, lower self-esteem, experience negative attitudes from some staff and students.
- Liberal view – BAME’s experience more disadvantage, alienation, lack confidence and self-esteem. Experience negative attitudes from some staff and students.
- Radial view – Curricular curriculum, low teacher expectations, treated more leniently, that while student grades are not cumulative, increasing numbers of students (particularly among ethnic minority students) are subjected to an unfair labelling (labelling) system, material conditions leading to fear of social capital and a devaluation of social capital.
- Even more radical view – Beyond BAME – "Post Racial". "Ethnicity Attraction Gap" or "Ethnicity Attraction Gap". "White supremacy" the whole enterprise of WE is a built on reproduction of white elite, a devaluation of the knowledge and capabilities of the "Other".

So, how we frame the "problem" is important. We should also not become hostages to the endless search for "evidence" – the aim is not only to understand the complex and changing world of education and employment?
We need to disrupt the production and reproduction of elite subjectivity

“Assigning someone to a group of superior essence...causes that person to undergo a subjective transformation that contributes to bringing about a real transformation likely to bring him closer to the assigned definition” (p112)


“People with advantages are loath to believe that they just happen to be people with advantages. They come readily to define themselves as inherently worthy of what they possess; they come to believe themselves “naturally” elite; and, in fact, to imagine their possessions and their privileges as natural extensions of their own elite selves” (p14).”


Commuting Distance

Selected cohort – UK domicile, first degree students who attain a degree before the age of 24.

Term time accommodation.

Over 80% of Pakistani and Bangladeshi live at home compared to 26% of White students.

This impacts on commuting distance.

Commuting distance

Over 56% of White students live <2km from the main campus. 56% of Pakistani students live between 20 and 30 km away.

The degree to which one is able navigate the practical challenges of daily existence and exercise ‘choice’ are correlated to gender, ethnicity, class and disability and these can have a major impact on educational and employment outcomes -

Inclusive Curriculum - 2 different perspectives

1. “Curriculum is not really about race, culture, gender etc. but simply about good course design, good teaching and effective communication with students. The rest is up to the students.”

2. “Our universities are largely white, middle class and male dominated institutions. They are built on a legacy of colonialism, patriarchy and capitalism. Therefore we need to ask: • How do these processes continue to shape the curriculum? • Through what processes can knowledge in the current curriculum be deconstructed? • What approaches are necessary to effect institution-wide changes? • How are oppressed groups/people represented in the curriculum - as absent, as a problem, as deviant, as exotic, as deficient, as dangerous, as passive spectators, as co-producers, role models, intelligent, as ‘normal people’ etc?”

Some new research at Coventry University.

Looking at different variables but it appears that social deprivation is increasingly significant.

What do we know about reasons for BME student attainment?

• Prior attainment does impact HE performance, but more worryingly HE may be contributing to widening the gap!

• Multiple factors - Intersectionality geographic location, demographic, underpinned by sector segmentation (e.g. Russell Group).

• Advantaged students are able to leverage more resources, support whilst at university.

• Impact of external pressures on disadvantaged students

• Pedagogical interventions can make a difference but not on their own – compare with correlation between income inequality and health inequality. “It’s not only about stopping smoking!”

What do we know about reasons for disparities BME student attainment/Degree classification?

• Prior attainment does impact HE performance, but more worryingly HE may be contributing to widening the gap!

• Multiple factors - Intersectionality geographic location.

• Paradox - our system predicated on preservation elitism and differentials underpinned by sector segmentation (e.g. Russell Group).

• Advantaged students are able to leverage more resources, support whilst at university.

• Impact of external pressures on disadvantaged students

• Pedagogical interventions can make a difference but not on their own – compare with correlation between income inequality and health inequality. “It’s not only about stopping smoking!”

Disparities in Student Attainment (DISA) Project

http://goo.gl/L0lHA

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We need a paradigm shift.

“Art is the Tree of Life. Science is the Tree of Death.”

“Attempts to address the issue of BME (under)achievement in HE have been dominated by reactive measures driven less by a moral imperative to do justice and more by regulatory imperatives. This has led to an absolute reliance on positivistic approaches to research the problem and tick box ‘solutions’”


Alternative knowledge claims in and of themselves are rarely threatening to conventional knowledge. Such claims are routinely ignored, discarded, or simply absorbed and marginalised in existing paradigms. Much more threatening is the challenge that alternative epistemologies offer.


Need to move away from a deficit model of attainment focusing on BME students and to shift the spotlight onto the systems, mechanisms and practices that result in disparities in degree classification and outcomes.

Building an effective diversity programme within your organisation.

Conclusion – key lessons for work based learning

- Establish minimum E&D criteria for placements.
- Nurture and develop placements capacity to support diverse students through materials and training opportunities. Diversity, culture, (un)conscious bias.
- Learning agreements should enable the student to register any reasonable cultural needs e.g. protocols for attire.
- Opportunity to be mentored by somebody from ones own ethnic background can be beneficial, but should not be seen as a universal or permanent solution.
- BME support groups can offer opportunity to share experience and strategies as well as social capital.
- But, this should be part of a wider strategy – diversity should be a mainstream core function, not marginal ‘special provision’.
- Need to avoid stigmatisation, creating resentment and reinforcing a sense of otherness.
- BME students must be allowed learn by making mistakes.
KEYNOTE

Further Education:

a critical caring space to empower learners, their families and communities

Dr Vicky Duckworth BA (Hons); PGCE; PG Dip; MEd; MA: PhD

Senior Lecturer, Further Education Research Lead, Edgehill University

Vicky has developed considerable expertise in Adult Literacy and Education and is deeply committed to challenging inequality through critical and emancipatory approaches to education, widening participation, inclusion, community action and engaging in research with a strong social justice agenda. She has researched and added to the debate on the impact of violence and trauma on learning, possibilities, resistance and transformation and its link to class, gender, ethnicity and literacy. She is a member of a number of National and International networks, which includes her role as trustee of the Helena Kennedy Foundation www.hkf.org.uk www.unaglobal.org and membership of the board for the Association for Research in Post-Compulsory Education www.arpce.org.uk/about

Throughout her career Vicky has published widely, authoring and editing books, most recently this includes: Learning Trajectories, Violence and Empowerment amongst Adult Basic Skills Learners (Routledge, 2013); Landscapes of Specific Literacies in Contemporary Society: Exploring a social model of literacy (Routledge 2014); Adult Literacy Policy and Practice: From Intrinsic Values to Instrumentalism (Palgrave 2015).

Presentation
We do this by:

• taking social action to increase the number and enhance the value of bursaries awarded each year.
• encouraging social mobility by increasing the range and types of student support available, particularly for talented students from non-traditional backgrounds.
• promoting social justice by offering more opportunities for students and graduates to participate in peer mentoring, work shadowing, and personal skills training; and by extending the reach of our student support volunteers network.

Helena Kennedy Foundation

Bursary scheme:

The bursaries are available to students currently studying at a FE college or sixth form college and applying to enter university. If students are already on or have undertaken a higher education course they are not eligible to apply. If they are not at a FE college or sixth form college they will not be eligible to apply. The maximum bursary available is £1500.

Helena Kennedy Foundation

What a bursary winner can expect from us:

• A named contact at the Foundation, who can give advice, listen to problems, signpost to other organisations, celebrate your successes and be your point of contact for any questions and concerns.
• Access to free training sessions geared towards improving the skills you need throughout university and employment. These range from confidence building to exam preparation or IT and we are always happy to take suggestions for new sessions.
• Work Shadowing - we are aware of how difficult it can be to boost your CV when employers are always looking for something extra from potential employees. We can help organise work placements for students to help you gain experience and make contacts.
• Opportunities to volunteer within the Foundation.

Helena Kennedy Foundation

• The college in which I worked and the learners studied is set in the former mill town of Oldham, Lancashire, Northern of England

Sharing research

• The study explored how sixteen former Basic Skills learners have been shaped by the public domain of schooling, college and work and the private domain of family, friends and home

Aims

• The study explored how sixteen former Basic Skills learners have been shaped by the public domain of schooling, college and work and the private domain of family, friends and home

Approach

Participatory Action Research
Feminist standpoint theory
Life history
Literacy studies
Ethnographic approaches to exploring social practices

I was politically driven in my initiation of this study and in the choices I made regarding research methods.

My positioning

• My personal position as an ‘insider’ with ‘insider knowledge’ of marginalised communities was a key motivation to becoming a basic skills tutor and becoming involved in this study

Theoretical framework

• The theme of violence (both physical and symbolic), emerged strongly from participant accounts of their experience and became a central focus of my analysis. This theme was linked strongly to trajectories and choices / lack of choices
Marie’s story

Edge Hill University

Schooling

- Big Family
- Labelled at School

‘The teachers didn’t bother phoning up if yer didn’t go in so it was a case of everyone was happy cos yer were out of sight’

Edge Hill University

Motherhood

- Abusive partner
- Single Mother
- Machinist
- Make the break

‘Me relationship breakdown really did it. Knowing that only I can provide for me children no one else can do it. Yer can’t rely on nobody and that’s what did it. Otherwise me children would ’ave - it would ’ave been a vicious circle wouldn’t it , they would ’ave been just the same as me.’

(Marie M 2nd Interview)

Edge Hill University

Wheels in motion

- Lone parent advisor
- Lacking confidence
- Transformation
- Level 2 in Literacy
- Awards – Monetary and emotional benefits
- Impact on Self

The transformation of her aspiration and her life impacted on her children’s progression and the transformation in the dynamics of the family. She no longer felt childlike but empowered to support her children. Their grades improved and Joanne felt much more confident and valued in her role as a mother

Edge Hill University

Literacy and emotions

- Through learning to read and write etc, I now see life differently.

Literacy and emotions

- The development of literacy skills, confidence and self-esteem was linked to the learners seeing other possible choices in their lives. For many of the learners the adult literacy classes were their last hope of education
Gaining an HKF award

- Allowed Marie to go to university and study for a degree in nursing

Transitions and empowerment

Listen to Marie’s story

http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b06qkglk

2.30 seconds

Contact me

- Vicky.duckworth@edgehill.ac.uk

End of presentation

Question time
KEYNOTE

The Employability Edge

Johnny Rich  
*Chief Executive Officer, Push*

Students’ main reason for going to university is to improve their career prospects, but is that really the education that universities aim to provide? Could we be doing better? We need to understand what makes graduates employable. It’s not just knowledge or skills, but harder things to teach like character and social capital. What role do universities have in instilling those qualities?

A renowned public speaker, Johnny Rich has written widely on employability and the links with improving social mobility. Here he explores these questions and suggests how we might start to put ideas into practice.

Johnny has a number of roles including Chief Executive of outreach organisation Push, Executive Director of the Engineering Professors’ Council, Director of Communications & Usability for global universities comparison tool U-Multirank, and a consultant in Higher Education and careers. His clients include the European Commission, HEFCE as well as recruiters, education bodies and media organisations. He is also a director of the Higher Education Academy.

Since founding Push in 1992, Johnny has built it into an influential award-winning social enterprise providing information, advice and research about universities, careers and employability. Push runs an award-winning programme of outreach and training events that visits nearly 400 schools and colleges each year.

With degrees from the Universities of Durham and East Anglia, his background also includes journalism, publishing, media relations, television and the web. He appears regularly on television and radio and is author of the highly acclaimed novel *The Human Script*.

[johnnyrich.com](http://johnnyrich.com) | Twitter: @johnnysrich
WHY DOES EMPLOYABILITY MATTER?

WOULD YOU LIKE TO WIN THE LOTTERY?

WHAT WOULD YOU DO?

WHY DOES EMPLOYABILITY MATTER?

WOULD YOU LIKE TO WIN THE LOTTERY?

0.00000011764706%

= 0%

BUT THERE IS A WAY TO WIN.

WHAT DO YOU ACTUALLY WANT IN LIFE?

A fantasy is a goal that you’re not trying to make real.

WHAT DO YOU ACTUALLY WANT IN LIFE?

Would winning the lottery make you happy?

WHAT DO YOU ACTUALLY WANT IN LIFE?

Do what you love, and you’ll never work a day in your life.

WHY DO STUDENTS GO TO UNI?

The top 3 reasons

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>%</th>
<th>To make more money</th>
<th>To learn more</th>
<th>To have fun</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>53</td>
<td></td>
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Source: THE/Sodexo University Lifestyle Survey 2016
WHY DO THEY GET A BETTER JOB?

BECAUSE THEY HAVE EMPLOYABILITY

BUT WHAT IS ‘EMPLOYABILITY’?

- It’s what gets you a better job
- It’s a mix of education, training and experience

WHAT IS EMPLOYABILITY?

WHAT DO THEY HAVE?

- What you can do (hard skills)
- What you know
- Personality
- How you behave
- Attitude
- Job-specific skills
- Transferable skills
- Social capital
- Knowledge

HOW WELL DO WE DO?

- Attitude
- Personality
- Transferable skills
- Knowledge
- Behaviours

IMPROVE AWARENESS

- Awareness & reflection
- Improve awareness
- Reflection
- Agreed common model of soft skills

A SOFT SKILLS MODEL

- Chemistry
- Philosophy
- Business

BETTER SKILLS

- Improve awareness
- Reflection
- Agreed common model of soft skills

COULD DO BETTER – Please see me.
A SOFT SKILLS MODEL

- Students can find the right course for their career...
- ... or the right career for their course
- Employers can find the right student

A SOFT SKILLS MODEL

- Communicate
- Well organised
- Creative
- Good with numbers
- Business-minded

BETTER SKILLS

- Improve awareness
- Reflection
- Agreed common model of soft skills
- Keep it simple
- Measure and record learning gain

BETTER KNOWLEDGE

- Improve teaching
- Student engagement
- Make learning more experiential
- Embed work-related learning

CHARACTER ATTRIBUTES

- Awareness and reflection
- Embed work-related learning
- 'Character' education

HOW WELL DO WE DO?

- Job-specific skills
- Transferable skills
- Knowledge
- Social capital
- Personality
- Attitude
- Behaviours
CHARACTER EDUCATION

- A growth mindset
- A moral compass
- Self-discipline
- Grit
- Risk-taking
- Resilience

HOW WELL DO WE DO?

- Knowledge
- Transferable skills
- Job-specific skills
- Social capital
- Personality
- Attitude
- Behaviour

BETTER SOCIAL CAPITAL

WHAT IS SOCIAL CAPITAL?

- Who you know: your network
- How you are perceived
- One of us
- One of our customers
- Character

HOW WELL DO WE DO?

- Attitude
- Personality
- Transferable skills
- Knowledge

WORK-RELATED LEARNING

- Placements
- Work experience
- Internships
- Part-time and vacation work
- Earn-while-you-learn & apprenticeships
- Embedded work-related learning

MAKING IT EFFECTIVE

- Unbox the boxed brain
- Awareness
- Preparedness
- Real challenges
- The chance to try new things
- The chance to fail
- Reflection and evaluation
- An on-going relationship

WORK-RELATED LEARNING

EMBEDDING

- Practicals
- Exercises
- Real-world projects

You need the academics on your side
Why does employability matter?

- Happiness
- Making a life, not just a living
- Better job
- Supercharged learning
- Improved employability

Get in touch

johnyrich.com
johny@johnyrich.com | LinkedIn: johnyrich | @johnyrich

johny@push.co.uk | @pushtalks | push.uk | push.co.uk

j.rich@epc.ac.uk | @epc1994 | epc.ac.uk

@umultirank | umultirank.org
ASET on Brexit

This session was a whole conference discussion session led by Dr Geoffrey Copland, President of ASET and Sarah Flynn, Chair of ASET. It was considered important to create a space within conference to air some of the thoughts, concerns and priorities for the work based and placement learning community in relation to the UK vote to leave the European Union. Admittedly there were few certainties on which to base the discussions, bar the Brexit means Brexit rhetoric of the moment, so there was an element of using a crystal ball to look ahead to 2019, following the triggering of article 50 of the Lisbon Treaty scheduled for March 2017.

We started off with some thoughts from our President on the impact to the Higher Education sector generally, and particularly the potential impact of the reduction in EU funded research activities. Some UK institutions have already reported they have been demoted from principal investigator status, or removed entirely from EU research bids, over concerns about the continued eligibility for the UK to access this source of funding. Whilst not directly associated with most of the work based and placement learning activity in the UK, the trickle-down effect could be that for institutions who may be more teaching-focused than research-focused, the research footprint in those institutions will reduce. This would result in fewer supervisors, fewer higher degree opportunities, and importantly will have a significant impact on the availability of placements for postgraduate taught, postgraduate research, and PhD students.

Next we turned to student mobility across Europe, both in terms of full study programmes, exchange schemes, and work placements. The low value of the £ means that currently UK Higher Education is relatively more affordable to international students. The sector saw a flurry of EU applicants this year without confirmation that they would continue to enjoy the same fees as home students beyond 2017-18. It is true that institutions in England, Wales and Northern Ireland can struggle to recover fees, and student loans, once an EU graduate has returned to their home country, and of course at the moment, EU students are studying free in Scotland. Universities UK is lobbying Government to maintain fees, and access to loans would be the same for intakes up to and including 2018-19. There is a working assumption that post-Brexit, EU students will need the same visa as international students and there are some concerns about how favourably, or not, Theresa May’s Government look upon the current numbers of international students. It has been announced that there is no immediate change for the Erasmus scheme for those entering in 2016 and 2017 as funds have been guaranteed until then. Beyond that the UK is highly likely to be excluded, unless we pay to participate like Norway and
Switzerland, but Government has given no indication, formally or otherwise, that they would support this.

Many of our colleagues in the sector are non-UK, EU nationals. For some placement offices, particularly those dependent on language skills, this could have a significant impact. It is our understanding that those from European Economic Area countries can get a permanent residence card if they have been here for five years. It is not clear what will happen for those who have been here less than five years, nor for UK nationals working in EU countries. Politicians have been reasonably guarded when speaking about the potential for EU workers to be asked to leave, despite the popularity of this notion amongst the Brexiteers, as reported in media. If EU workers leave, either voluntarily or not, this will create gaps in the labour market typically in (i) non-graduate jobs (ii) graduate level jobs where there is already a shortage of graduates available, like nursing (iii) jobs that require living in expensive urban areas.

People are concerned about the risk of recession and the slowing down of the graduate job market. History tells us that economic doubt can cause stagnation in the market leading to recession, which would in turn slow down recruitment. Less movement in the labour market means more people hold onto jobs, triggering congestion in the talent pipeline, and more cautious hiring. Charlie Ball of HECSU makes an estimate that 6000 fewer, of the 2016 graduates will find work (2.5%) and 12,000 fewer will find professional level work (5%). Economic pressure disproportionately affects entry level staff roles, which means recruitment is scaled down. With the Destinations of Leavers from Higher Education survey set to play a crucial part in the Teaching Excellence Framework from 2017, this potential suppression of recruitment into entry level roles is a significant risk to the sector.

There has been some early concern about the risk of large companies moving elsewhere, a briefing from the Engineers Professors’ Council suggested this is a real possibility for big names like Rolls Royce, even though they have strong ties to UK Higher Education. This in turn could limit the number, location and attractiveness of placements, particularly to students who are less geographically mobile. However, the recent tax case for Apple presents us with a potentially interesting alternative; will companies be looking for English speaking locations outside the strict EU regulation zone, and if so, will this mean much more opportunity?
New AGR research published at the beginning of the month shows graduate employment positions down 8%, the first drop in four years. It reflects some movement of vacancies from graduate recruitment to higher and degree apprenticeships, but even when this is accounted for there is still a 3% drop. This was against a projected 2% rise, and in comparison, a 13% rise last year. This was not evenly felt across the various industry sectors, with IT and Telecommunications faring favourably with a 5.5% increase, but with a converse reduction almost everywhere else; law (-5%), public sector (-7%), banking, finance, accountancy and professional services (-7.5%). Some sectors have reported double digit reductions in graduate recruitment; -11% in Construction, -14% in Engineering and -16% in Retail.

We finished our session reflecting on the challenges ahead. It was with somewhat gallows humour that we drew an analogy with a famous comedy piece of a father trying to reassure his small daughter about the potential monsters under the bed, by saying that she should be more worried about the burglars coming through the window. Brexit presents an enormous challenge to the Higher Education Sector, Universities have a bumpy few years ahead as we leave the European Union at the very time that population demographics predict the lowest number of school leavers in a decade. It is indeed time for change, and plenty of it. But for those of us primarily concerned with work based and placement learning opportunities? Should we be worried about the Brexit monster under bed? Or should we be more focussed on the degree apprenticeship burglar coming through the window? As of May 2017, any company with a wage bill of over £3million will be paying a 0.5% contribution of that wage bill as an apprenticeship levy, which can only be spent on apprenticeship programmes. How much this has the potential to hit placement and graduate recruitment is yet to be seen. Delivery of degree apprenticeships requires significant understanding of work based learning and as such could be an opportunity for placement practitioners to expand their remits.

This session was a starting point for our community, and the conversation will continue. As always, ASET will work to represent the interests of our membership and this crucial agenda is no different.
Q&A Experts Panel

Francesca Walker, ASET Trustee and co-leader of the Research and Publications Working Group, led a diverse panel of Experts from across the sector to share their experience and expertise of supporting students, in the context of their identity or protected characteristics, to become employable graduates. Throughout the session, delegates had an opportunity to pose questions to the Panel directly, in addition to those which had been submitted anonymously throughout conference via http://tinyurl.com/ASET2016Panel.

This session was followed by a thematic discussion facilitated by an ASET Trustee and a member of the Q&A Panel. These discussions enabled delegates to share current practice, the challenges, what they and ASET would like to do, and what we collectively think the sector needs to do to improve the support for students. Each group focussed on a single theme: disability, socio-economic background, gender and sexual identity, international status and race, with the aim of highlighting areas for development, both within delegates’ own institutions and for ASET, on behalf of the sector.

The Panel:

Sharon Didrichson, Manager, Specialisterne Northern Ireland www.specialisterneni.com

Sharon has managed recruitment campaigns for companies for over 11 years, six in Autism consultancy. After studying Autism Spectrum Disorders to Masters level, she spent 3 years managing programmes for people with social communication difference and their employers, in Ireland, and currently delivers on the Adult Module of the MSc Autistic Spectrum Disorders at Queens University Belfast.

Specialisterne NI is a specialist recruitment consultancy and social enterprise that works to help people on the Autistic Spectrum prepare for, secure, and sustain graduate job roles. It is part of the Specialisterne Foundation, which has worked since 2004 in over 13 countries towards its mission of securing 1 million jobs for people who are on the Autistic Spectrum.

Vicky Duckworth, Senior Lecturer, Further Education Research Lead, Edge Hill University and Helena Kennedy Foundation Trustee

Vicky joined the panel following her thought-provoking keynote, to answer questions on challenging inequality, widening participation, inclusion and community action, drawing on her research base on the impact of violence and trauma on learning, possibilities, resistance and transformation and its link to class, gender, ethnicity and literacy.

Julie Forbes, Women’s Engineering Society, (Ordinary Council Member) www.wes.org.uk

Julie is currently a Certification Engineer with Zodiac Aerospace, having graduated with a Masters in Advanced Aerospace Engineering from the Queen’s University Belfast in 2015. As an undergraduate Julie completed a placement year in Austria and was awarded Highly Commended in the ASET Student Competition for her reflections on her experience. She has since joined the Council of the Women’s Engineering Society and joined the panel to share her early career insights.

Jo Holliday, International Student Adviser, University of Sheffield and Chair of Association of International Student Advisers www.aisa.org.uk

Jo Holliday has been an International Student Adviser at Sheffield Students' Union since 1991 where she became a well-regarded national expert in work and relationship immigration in relation to students. Valued for her ability to identify and clearly communicate solutions for both students and employers navigating the immigration maze, a colleague commented: “Jo manages to make the complexities of applying for work visas clear, comprehensive and even entertaining.” She is currently chair of the Association of International Student Advisers (AISA) which provides a professional network for staff working with international students.
Naivasha Mwanji, University Network Coordinator, Elevation Networks www.elevationnetworks.org

Naivasha has experience in the third sector both nationally and internationally, working on projects impacting communities in Europe, Asia and Africa. She is also experienced in the design and delivery of events and was an elected committee member during her time at University for the African Caribbean Society. She makes regular contributions to conversations on gender, culture and identity and is passionate about changing the status quo of black British women.

Naivasha currently coordinates event delivery for the diversity team at Elevation Networks. Through this she has worked with organisations including The Civil Service, The Financial Conduct Authority and the Investment banks Barclays, Morgan Stanley and Deutsche Bank, to help attract more BAME and female candidates into their organisations.

Sean Russell, Sean Russell Consulting www.seanrussellconsulting.co.uk

Sean Russell was Director of the Careers Services at the University of Birmingham and Director of Student Development at Warwick University and during that time he also worked on employability projects for LGBT students and Stonewall. In 2011 he set up and now co-runs a careers mentoring scheme for LGBT students at the University of Birmingham. He is also a freelance executive coach specialising in HE.

Dr Mike Wray, Learning Support Team Manager, York St John University and Board member at the National Association for Disability Practitioners (NADP) www.nadp-uk.org

Mike oversees the work of the three teams within Learning Support at York St John: the Disability Advice Team, the Study Development Team and the Specialist Tutor Team. He previously worked with the National Disability Team (NDT) and, in the context of widening participation with Action on Access. At NDT he coordinated 23 HEFCE-funded projects in HEIs developing disability services and teaching and learning quality enhancement resources within HE.

NADP is a professional association for staff in the tertiary education sector involved in the management or delivery of services for disabled students. They are committed to improving the professional development and status of disability practitioners in FE and HE by promoting excellence in the quality and consistency of support services provided for disabled students and staff through peer support, education, communication and leadership.

Reflections on the Q&A Panel session

It is interesting to note that the topic of diversity and inclusion is far from new. We as universities, are constantly reviewing our student support offer and ensuring we are compliant within the law, so why are we asking the same questions of ourselves after 20 years of development? The panel were clear on their views in terms of the challenges we have in supporting our students, as they transition into the workplace. We are, for example, mindful of; confidentiality, the student’s right to disclose information to employers, fear of discrimination, and a lack of role models and mentors. However, it seems that many of the topics relating to inclusion are (dare I say it) almost taboo. With this point in mind, the panel were clear: by making advice and guidance to students around challenging issues an embedded part of the curriculum, awareness is raised, and this reduces any potential stigma.

Another interesting point raised was that we as Universities lack data and information about our inclusion issues because students simply don’t or won’t disclose and we, as support teams, are left to pick up the pieces when something goes wrong, or is brought to light when a student is out on placement. I have been surprised on more than one occasion by the challenges faced by students who have chosen not to disclose prior to placement, yet need significant and professional support beyond my knowledge and capabilities.
However, we have the specialist teams in Universities with the skills to provide the appropriate support and guidance to our students. It is important we know who these specialists are, and work with them to provide that support. As Lecturers and Support Staff we also have to be brave enough to ask the awkward questions when working with our students, without fear of reprisal. We need to be nosey, we need to listen, to dig deeper, and to understand student motivations.

It was interesting to note that we could be using our students’ experiences to provide peer to peer mentoring, thereby providing a bridge from the workplace to the university to dispel myths and allay fears.

We are often required to provide student support and guidance within tight (read impossible) timeframes, and we are all committed to excellence and to continuous improvement. So, maybe the answer to the question - ‘Why we are still asking the same questions 20 years on?’ is simply....... because we should.

Francesca Walker
ASET Trustee
ASET BURSARY PROJECTS

2016 ASET Research Bursary

The ASET Research Bursary was established to provide a funded student placement opportunity, and to grow the body of research into placement and work-based learning. The award is now in its 5th year. This year’s bursary was awarded to the University of Portsmouth:

Award Winner: Dr Mark Turner, Associate Head of Education, Department of Psychology, University of Portsmouth

Project Student: Eleanor Scott-Allen, BSc (Hons) Psychology 2013-2016, University of Portsmouth

Project: What determines student success and failure when searching and applying for placements?

Eleanor’s presentation can be seen below, and her final report here.

Presentation
OUR CONTEXT

Psychology third most popular degree choice with over 100,000 applications made annually to study the subject at UK universities (HESA, 2015).

But psychology students are known to take longer than other graduates to develop professional careers following university and less than 20% progress to become practicing psychologists (Trapp et al, 2011).

Many psychology graduates may not therefore use their subject knowledge in the work place.

At Portsmouth 2 types of placement opportunity:

- 30-week sandwich-year placement in between Level 5 and 6
- 175-hour day release placement during Level 6

THE STUDY: PART ONE

Questionnaires on Placement Seeking Attitudes

- 149 Level 5 (second year) University of Portsmouth Psychology Students were surveyed about their placement intentions.
- Rated their (i) certainty about wanting to do a placement, (ii) confidence they would find a placement, (iii) certainty about their preferred employment area and (iv) level of support they felt they needed from the University prior to searching for placements (ratings ranged from 0 - 10).
- Achievement motivation scores were also assessed (range 9 – 45).
- Academic marks from the second year also compared (0 – 100%).
- Of these 149, 33 Students secured placements
- 27 Students who were interested but did not secure a placement
- 89 Students who were not interested in a placement

WHAT DID THE QUESTIONNAIRES SHOW?

Students who had secured placements were more...

- Motivated according to their achievement motivation scores
- Confident about finding a placement
- Certain that they would find a placement
- There was no differences between the groups in…
  - Certainty about career area
  - Level of support students felt they needed

WHAT ABOUT THEIR ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT?

Two Academic marks were examined …

- Average Level 5 Mark
- ‘Employability Skills for Psychologists’ Unit Mark

Students who secured placements had a 3% advantage over their peers in overall degree marks during the second year of their course.

Students who did not attend the questionnaire session had the lowest second year average mark.

Students who secured placements also did better in the Level 5 careers focused unit, ‘Employability Skills for Psychologists’.

WERE THESE FACTORS RELATED?

Some interesting correlations emerged …

- In students who were successful seeking a placement:
  - Search confidence and Certainty about wanting to do a placement were positively associated.
  - Search confidence and Certainty about desired employment area were positively associated.
- No correlations were found between placement search attitudes in students who were unsuccessful when seeking placements.
- Achievement motivation was only related to academic performance in those who were unsuccessful when seeking placements.
THE STUDY: PART TWO

Part Two of the Study
- 2 mini-Focus Groups (held after the placement deadline)
- 7 Psychology Students on their placement seeking experience

To help understand:
- How students approach the placement search experience
- Difficulties faced whilst searching for placements
- Attitudes towards the world of work
- The placement perspectives & motivations for wanting to take a placement

WHAT DID THE FOCUS GROUPS REVEAL?

Several preliminary themes have emerged...

- Barriers as Everywhere...
- "...but I feel like if we were told about how quickly we'd have to find a placement in the first year then I'd be more prepared..." We kind of were, but it's much harder and it's much more than that..."
- "...but I feel like you need to know what you want and you need to know what you need..."

- "...what I thought was drummed into my head, you need experience to get experience..."
- "...what I thought was drummed into my head, you need experience to get experience..."

Future research could ask:
- Can Higher Education Institutions do more to improve 'careers-focused' achievement motivation in their students?
- What different ways to best inform students about placements?
- Would working with students to focus their career aspirations improve placement success?
- What role does confidence play and how can it be improved?
- How can employers who students approach for placements work with students to provide more diversity and better communication, or can HEIs better prepare students?

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR PLACEMENTS?

- Part Two of the Study
- 2 mini-Focus Groups (held after the placement deadline)
- 7 Psychology Students on their placement seeking experience

THANK YOU

University of York, Campus East, 6th - 8th September 2016
ASET BURSARY PROJECTS

2016 Exploration and Enhancement Student Bursary

A second ASET bursary was launched at the 2013 ASET Conference. The Exploration & Enhancement Student Bursary was created to provide a funded student placement opportunity, and also, distinct from the Research Bursary, to facilitate the sharing of innovative practice in placement and work-based learning and is now in its 3rd year. This year’s bursary was awarded to Loughborough University:

Award Winner: Dr Helena Pimlott-Wilson, Placements Director and Lecturer in Human Geography
Loughborough University

Project Student: Ami Harty - PhD School of Business & Economics 2016-2019,
Loughborough University

Project: Developing interest in work placements amongst prospective and current students

Ami’s presentation can be seen below, and the final report here.

Presentation
Methodology

- Eight online questionnaires built using Bristol Online Survey
- Sent out to separate student cohorts using their University email addresses
- Sent reminders out to graduates using personal email addresses

Questionnaires

**First years**
Those registered for the year-long work placement
Students with no work placement added at present

**Second years**
Students about to go on a year-long work placement
Students who had signed up but did not secure a placement

**‘Y’ years**
Current year-long work placement students
Recent graduates
Those who did a work placement
Those who did not do a work placement

Analysis

- **Student’s motivations** to undertake or not undertake a year-long work placement
- **How to promote** year-long work placements at Loughborough
- **Student’s concerns**
- **The support** they require

Students’ views

- Views from Loughborough students are overall positive
- They feel doing a placement is worthwhile
- All of our student cohorts agree that doing a year-long work placement will increase their employability

Students’ motivations

- I am worried about the economic climate
- My friends/family influenced me
- I want to extend the length of my course
- I want to try something new
- I want to gain an extra qualification in addition to my degree (DPS)
- I want to earn a salary for a year
- I want to gain practical experience
- I want to increase my employability

Students’ motivations to not undertake a placement

- I didn’t want to graduate a year later
- I wanted to stay with friendship group/subject cohort
- I didn’t feel adequately informed
- I couldn’t secure a placement
- I didn’t want to pay an extra year of fees
- I didn’t feel it was beneficial

Promoting placements to students

- 60% of students favoured face-to-face methods to promote work placements to include lectures, talks, workshops and fairs
- Only 11% of students preferred receiving information via Social Media

Students’ primary concerns

- Lack of experience
- Not sure my subject is relevant
- Lack of confidence
- Not enough placements relevant to my subject
- Interviews/employer tests
- ...
Bursaries available for 2017
In 2017 there are two ASET bursaries available:

2017 ASET Student Research Bursary
For small-scale research into Work Based and Placement Learning
ASET will provide payments totalling £2400 to fund a current student or recent graduate to carry out a clearly defined piece of small-scale research (of approximately 300hrs / 40 days) designed to grow the body of research into work based and placement learning. The work must be feasible within the timescales but may be used to fund a feasibility study, or early part of a larger project. ASET will provide a further £600 to your institution towards the expenses required to carry out the work.

2017 ASET Summer Project Bursary
For small-scale projects on Work Based and Placement Learning
ASET will provide payments totalling £2400 to a current undergraduate to carry out a project (of approximately 300hrs / 40 days) examining an aspect of your institutional practice, or exploration of a new initiative with the goal of sharing the learning with the ASET community. ASET will provide a further £600 to your institution towards the expenses required to carry out the work.

Full details of the application process for the 2017 ASET Bursaries are available to download from the ASET website.
Staying connected – supporting students during their year out on placement

René Moolenaar and Kate Thorpe
School of Business, Management and Economics, University of Sussex
K.Thorpe@sussex.ac.uk
R.Moolenaar@sussex.ac.uk

Abstract

This workshop will introduce the 4 stage developmental model of internships (Sweitzer and King, 2012) and seek to share reflections on the transitions and developmental stages students go through during their placement year. We will be discussing the initiatives that Universities offer to support the continuation of learning whilst students are on placement, and ask the question “are we doing enough?”

Set against a changing climate of student as consumer and learning partner this question may have increasing importance for placement teams. Building a better understanding of student development whilst out on placement will help to ensure that support during this period meets student needs effectively.

Before the session, participants will be invited to complete a short questionnaire to collect information that will be presented during the workshop and as part of a scoping exercise for planned future research in this area.

Issues addressed:
- Student development during placement
- Student as consumer and learning partner
- Are Universities doing enough to support students during their year out?
- Re-adjusting to student life after placement – how do students stay connected to peers?

Presentation

Agenda

- Introduction to BMEc and the professional placement programme
- Placement support
- Developmental stages of the placement
- Results from two surveys
Some facts 'n figures:

- Business, Management & Economics (BMEc), largest school on campus with over 2,200 students
- Professional Placement Programme started in 2011 with 11 students completing the programme
- 5 courses initially, now 8
- Nearly 200 students have completed a professional placement since the launch
- This year 60 students and 30 supervisors

### Introduction

#### The programme:

- Minimum of 40 weeks
- Average pay of £15,000 pa
- Wide range of industries and locations
- Not credit bearing
- Fee: 20% of course fee
- Assessed
  - 5,000 word report: reflection on learning (1,500 words) and external marketing audit (3,500 words)
- poster of external marketing audit
- weighting: 50%/50%

### Placement support

- Placement team
- Academic advisor
- Bespoke VLE site with forum
- Monthly learning logs
- Webinars
- Mid-term meeting in London
- Supervisor...

### Support (2)

Role of the supervisor

- Provision of support:
  - helping to overcome obstacles, to stay engaged, celebrating success, to listen, encourage learning, etc
- Provides feedback on the monthly learning logs
- Placement visit (at least once)
- Marking the Assessment (essay and poster)

### Student Development

- The changing role of the student -
  - the student as 'customer'
  - the student as 'learning partner'
- Learning whilst on placement
- Impact of placement programme on learning and employability prospects
- Developmental stages of the placement...

### Developmental stages of the placement

Source: Sweitzer & King, 2012

1. Anticipation
   - getting off to a good start, positive expectations, acceptance, anxieties (capability, relationship with supervisor/co-workers/clientele), life context, etc.
2. Exploration
   - building on progress, heightened learning curve, finding new opportunities, adjusting expectations, adequacy of skills and knowledge, real or anticipated problems, etc.
3. Competence
   - high accomplishment, seeking quality, emerging view of self, feeling empowered, exploring professionalism, doing-it-all, ethical issues, worthwhile tasks, etc.
4. Culmination
   - saying goodbye, transfer of responsibilities, completion of tasks, multiple endings, closing rituals, next steps, etc.

### Placement Students Survey

- 20 May 2016
- Pre-placement year meeting with 16/17 Placement Students
- 24 respondents
- We asked...

### Placement Students Survey (2)

- What are you most looking forward to?
  - e.g. applying what you have learned, working in an industry you like, getting away from exams, etc.
- What are your main concerns?
  - e.g. capability, relationship with manager, relationship with co-workers, relocating, financial, etc.
Placement Students Survey (3)

- Sent to approx. 1,800 members of ASET
- Survey period: 28 July to 23 Aug
- 104 responses (approx. 5.78% response rate)

Placement Students Survey (4)

- Sent to approx. 1,800 members of ASET
- Survey period: 28 July to 23 Aug
- 104 responses (approx. 5.78% response rate)

Placement Support Survey

- Q1 - Please provide your view on the contribution your placement programme makes to:
- Q2 - What do you believe are the biggest concerns students have BEFORE starting their placement? Please rank the items below in order with the most important one at the top.
- Q3 - What support do you provide your students during placement? Please select all those that apply.
- Q4 - In the context of future development. Please state your level of agreement/disagreement with the statements below.
Placement Support Survey (7)
Q5 - How many students will you have on placement during the next academic year.

Placement Support Survey (8)
Q6 - Is the number of students on your placement programme growing?

Placement Support Survey (9)
Q7 - Is your placement programme credit bearing?

Placement Support Survey (10)
Q8 - How is your placement assessed (please select all that apply)?

Thank you!

René – r.moolenaar@sussex.ac.uk
Kate – k.thorpe@sussex.ac.uk
Supporting Student Success – Going beyond “Embedded Employability”

Peter Coates
Student Support Services, Leeds Beckett University
Sponsored by QuantumIT

0113 8124913
p.m.coates@leedsbeckett.ac.uk

Abstract
Aims and objectives of the workshop
This workshop aims to stimulate debate about approaches to “whole-person” student development and graduate “Labour-market readiness”. It will highlight the key role which work-related learning plays in modern holistic approaches to student development. The intention is to move the debate on from prevailing and over-worked sector narratives which concern themselves with how employability can be embedded into curriculum, to discussion a more integrated approach to student personal development and labour market responsiveness.

The presentation section will show:

i) Why and how Leeds Beckett is developing its holistic “student journey” approach

ii) The key role that Placements and the InPlace software platform is playing in our own context

iii) The need for control and assurance mechanisms to ensure Quality Assurance in work-related provision, and how systems such as InPlace can support this effectively

iv) How Pre-, during and post-placement phases can be managed effectively – and the critical aspect of student learning gain that should be captured post-placement

v) How this concept can link to an effective HEAR or other “experience and skills capture solution”

vi) How this concept links to newly emerging skills gaps perceived by Employers such as “Managing Up”, Dealing with Conflict, Workplace resilience and Negotiation.

The workshop will be comprised of a short (20 minute) overview of the Leeds Beckett experience in shaping our University’s employability agenda, and the role that work-related experience plays within it. Having covered the operational realities, the rest of the workshop will then move into facilitated group discussion and debate about fundamental questions and concepts relating to graduate labour market readiness. We might even touch on the role of modern universities as economic drivers and the possible mission of universities as “human capital factories”!

The intention is to help colleagues who are implementing placement management solutions and at the same time stimulate an interesting “holistic” debate around employability.

Experiences covered
The Leeds Beckett case will show how we have used the ASET Spectrum of work based and placement learning activity framework to audit the depth and quality of our own provision and the lessons we have learned about our own work-related provision.

Leeds Beckett will show how we have expanded the use of placement management software from Regulated courses to student sourced placements, and now to the capture of volunteering activity.

We will share our own challenges around deriving an accepted taxonomy of work-related experience and share how we have worked with QA partners and academics to forge a common understanding.

Issues to be addressed
• The highly diverse range of work-related activity in a large University.
• Whether (and if so, how) Quality assurance should play a role in placements and wider Employability provision?
• The need for meaningful and tangible employability activities
• Whether student employability data can play a role in solving regional skill shortages
• What are Universities for!??
**Linear Development / Employability Framework**

Year 1
- Pre-Admission
- Graduation Placement Year
- Employment Fundamentals
- Awareness of choices
- Building basic employability skills
- Developing skills – communication
- Work based learning opportunity
- Short-term Placement experience and reflection
- Year-Out preparation

Year 2
- Pre-employment preparation
- CV/Applications
- Recruitment readiness
- Reflection & Consolidation of WBL
- Continued support

Year 3
- Workshop options / “Hothouse”
- “Beckett For Life”
- DLHE – feedback and support to JobSeekers
- Clear Programme of Activities
- Capturing existing experience/skills
- Profiling student attributes
- WBL Experience
- Reflection and Adaptation
- Agility & Resilience
- Personal Networks

But it’s Complex...

**Embedding at Leeds Beckett – 3 Year Evolution**

**Ensuring Quality**

- Section 9 of the QAA Code of Practice (QAA, 2007)

**The Three Phases – Data**

BEFORE
- Quality Assurance
- Systems

DURING
- RELEVANCE & SUITABILITY
- LEARNING OBJECTIVES
- SKILLS REQUIRED
- BEHAVIOURAL
- WHAT TO EXPECT

AFTER
- PROGRESS & SUPERVISION
- CONNECTION & COMMUNICATION
- BEHAVIOURAL
- BELONGING
- LOGISTICS

- LEARNINGS ARTICULATION
- REFLECTION
- INTERPRETATION
- ADJUSTING & RE-ASSIMILATION

Systems can help with: suitability, matching, hurdle criteria
And capture of data during and after placement = Raw Material for student Portfolio

**Current Status**

- Over 3500 external providers
- >2500 placement episodes per year
- c.85% of courses: managed placements
- Student Sourced and optional provision is now the focus for inspection

**Is it working...?**

<table>
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<th>Year</th>
<th>Leeds Beckett Overview</th>
<th>JISC Benchmark</th>
<th>HEA Benchmark</th>
<th>CompGroup Average</th>
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<td>80.0</td>
<td>58.7</td>
<td>95.4</td>
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<tr>
<td>2010/11</td>
<td>89.8</td>
<td>89.2</td>
<td>89.1</td>
<td>65.7</td>
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<tr>
<td>2011/12</td>
<td>90.4</td>
<td>90.4</td>
<td>90.9</td>
<td>80.1</td>
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<td>2012/13</td>
<td>90.4</td>
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<td>2013/14</td>
<td>90.4</td>
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<td>80.1</td>
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<td>2014/15</td>
<td>90.4</td>
<td>90.4</td>
<td>90.9</td>
<td>80.1</td>
<td>92.6</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
CHALLENGES

- Sheer Variation in Courses
- Competing Pressures on Academics
- Scale & Resources
- Institutional Priorities

ENABLERS

- Sector Frameworks
- Quality Code & Guidance
- Systems
- Org Design
- Institutional Prioritisation

The Challenge

Diversity & Flexibility

Rigor & Consistency

How Do We Achieve The Right Balance AND Enhance The Student Experience?

How far can QA go in promoting sound practices?

Are our solutions already proportionate? Do we need anything more?

Do we use placement systems well enough?

Should some courses be purely academic?

Can placement management be both centralised AND localised?

If a job is main reason to go to University why is Employability subordinate to Academic study?

Do we resource well enough for Employability?
The Benefits of ASET Bursaries

Vicki O’Brien and Francesca Walker

GR41, Greenbank Building, University of Central Lancashire, Preston, Lancashire, PR1 2HE

01772 894658

FDWalker@uclan.ac.uk

Abstract

Relevant to colleagues: who are interested in the ASET Bursaries, especially those who are considering making an application for the Research Bursary or the Exploration and Enhancement Bursary or simply interested in what funding can add to their personal and professional development.

This session includes a follow up on the 2014 ASET research Bursary project ‘To what extent does peer to peer support encourage second year students to actively seek placements?’

The ASET Bursaries

Launched in 2011, the ASET Research Bursary has covered a wide variety of subjects including the nitty gritty of placement management, safety critical industries, peer to peer support and the value of placements across the breadth of the student body. Each one has been a piece of ‘live research’ exploring issues directly relevant to placement delivery and critical outcomes.

In addition, the session will review the value of the Exploration and Enhancement Bursaries which were launched for the first time in 2013. As with the research bursaries, the subject areas have been broad, covering: work shadowing, summer internships, media placements and supporting students with mental health issues. The exploration of current practice within member institutions provides essential insight into how we can develop and grow work based learning and placements.

This session will highlight what the bursaries have done for the supervisors, the students who undertook the work and the overall impact of the original study on the institutions involved, the session will be co presented by Vicki O’Brien, ASET Research Bursary recipient 2014, who will discuss the impact of taking part in the research bursary on her career and also the institutions including a follow up of the original study ‘To what extent does peer to peer support encourage second year students to actively seek placements?’ available to read here. http://www.asetonline.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/11/Peer-to-Peer-Support-a-research-project-ASET.pdf

Link to successful bursaries:

http://www.asetonline.org/awards-bursaries/award-bursary-recipients/

Presentation

The Benefits of ASET Bursaries

Francesca Walker – ASET Trustee & Senior Lecturer (Employability Lead)
UCLan

Vicki O’Brien – Projects and Placements Officer & Associate Lecturer in Employability UCLan

The Bursaries

• What are they?
• How do you apply?
• What might stop you from applying?
• Who can you talk to?
The Benefits of ASET Bursaries – The Survey

- Staff
- Students
- Organisation

Case Study – Research Bursary at UCLan 2014

- The project
- Getting the application in
- Getting the bursary
- Getting the student
- The Results...
- What it meant to me
- Impact on practice

Case Study – The Student Experience

- Getting the application in
- Getting the bursary
- Fitting in with studies
- Conducting the research
- Writing up the report
- Conference 2014!
- Beyond the conference

Full Circle

- What did our research do?
- Impact on practice
- Impact on the students
- Impact on the researchers and the Schools of Business and Management
- Creation of new role
- The Future

Your questions please

University of York, Campus East, 6th - 8th September 2016
Introduction

The current move in the UK higher education sector towards employability (Higher Education Academy, 2014b) has resulted, amongst other things, in a greater push to increase the number of students undertaking work placements as part of their undergraduate courses. Several studies from recent years have shown that graduate employers look beyond academic qualifications and regard work placements very favorably; indeed, many feel that "graduates who have had no previous work experience at all are unlikely to be successful during the selection process and have little or no chance of receiving a job offer for their organisations’ graduate programmes." (High Flyers 2016)

This drive to achieve high employability standards has led to closer collaboration with employers and to a better awareness of their recruiting needs. The current globalisation trend, which has been gaining more and more momentum in the last few decades, has brought about numerous changes in the UK labour marketplace. The foreign language skills and global professional attributes required to perform effectively in this context, coupled with the increasing competition from international candidates for high-quality graduate jobs, make for a tough job market for graduates with a traditional, UK-based experience of education. Global skills are now a requirement for many employers; however, British universities are, on the whole, failing to address the critical shortage of global attributes in their UK graduate population.

This paper will argue that outward internationalisation, particularly in terms of promoting the take up of work placements overseas, is one of the most effective ways to fill the current gap in global employability skills. British higher education institutions must continue their efforts to increase the number of students on sandwich awards, but they must do so by opening up their horizons and providing their students with opportunities to undertake their work placements in other countries. Students with such profile will become true global graduates and be able to stand out in the current competitive labour market. I will illustrate this point by discussing a range of Sheffield Business School courses with a compulsory study and work placement element overseas and by analysing the career journey of some of their students and graduates.
The need for Global Graduates

The global graduate concept is increasingly used amongst employers and higher education institutions to define a globally minded young professional, usually with strong multi-cultural skills, who feels at ease interacting in an international environment. These graduates will typically have developed their global skillset through a period of residence abroad, which might include a study and/or a work placement overseas. There is an ample body of research highlighting the additional skills that make global graduates such sought-after recruits (Diamond et al., 2011, Born Global 2015, Higher Education Academy, 2015). Global graduate have the usual professional attributes traditionally expected by employers, which according to Prospects 2015 are:

- Good communication
- Effective leadership
- Planning and research
- Teamwork and interpersonal skills
- Self-management
- Relevant work experience

In addition to the above core competencies, Diamond et al (2011) argue that global graduates possess further global employability skills which are developed through extended exposure to an international environment. The table of attributes below shows the priority order of these skills for the employers taking part in the research (emphasis mine).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Global Competencies</th>
<th>Mean Ranking</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>An ability to work collaboratively with teams of people from a range of backgrounds and countries</td>
<td>8.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Excellent communication skills: both speaking and listening</td>
<td>7.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A high degree of drive and resilience</td>
<td>5.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>An ability to embrace multiple perspectives and challenge thinking</td>
<td>5.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A capacity to develop new skills and behaviours according to role requirements</td>
<td>4.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A high degree of self-awareness</td>
<td>4.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>An ability to negotiate and influence clients across the globe from different cultures</td>
<td>4.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>An ability to form professional, global networks</td>
<td>3.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>An openness to and respect for a range of perspectives from around the world</td>
<td>3.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multi-cultural learning agility (e.g. able to learn in any culture or environment)</td>
<td>2.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge of foreign economies and own industry area overseas</td>
<td>1.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>An understanding of one’s position and role within a global context or economy</td>
<td>1.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A willingness to play an active role in society at a local, national and international level.</td>
<td>0.5</td>
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</table>

AGR, CIHE and CFE: Global Graduates into Global Leaders (2011)

It is interesting to observe that, contrary to what many would perhaps infer, the ability to speak foreign languages is not seen as a priority by many recruiters; however, as we will see below, language
graduates often acquire a highly-developed global skillset through the language learning process, which they later reinforce through their residence abroad.

The differentiation factor
As we have seen, an extended period of international study and especially, work experience, is the quickest and most reliable way to acquire global competencies. The combination of experiential, hands-on learning and the immersion and interaction in a foreign culture provide the right ingredients to develop this sought-after professional profile. Many studies have highlighted the fact that UK employers struggle to recruit graduates with this combination of professional attributes. Such is the scarcity of global graduates in the UK that often businesses resort to recruiting from overseas. As a result, individuals with a global skillset find employment quicker and are less likely to experience long-term unemployment (2014 Erasmus Impact report). Not only that, but in addition to being better positioned for their first role, graduates with international experience can progress through the career ladder quicker.

"Experience of working overseas and immersion in a different culture can catapult a graduate into being considered for rewarding and challenging roles" (Diamond, A et al, 2011)

Despite the much improved employability prospects for graduates with extended residency overseas as part of their course, only a very small minority of British students choose to take part in international mobility programmes. The UK ranks 25th in the world for external mobility in higher education (Riordan, C., 2013). The outward mobility ratio for tertiary students in the UK is 1.2%, which contrasts starkly with the nearly four-fold figure of 4.3% in Germany (UNESCO, Global Flow of Tertiary Education Students, 2016). British universities are to blame to some extent for not doing more to promote outward internationalisation. Their internationalisation efforts in recent years have been driven predominantly by inward student recruitment; in fact, the UK is second only to the US in terms of their international student population. With one student in 6 being from a foreign country, the UK higher education environment is one of the most internationally diverse in the world (Universities UK, 2016). However, whilst the UK hosted 428,724 foreign students in 2016, it only sent 27,337 students overseas on either study or work placements, most of these to English-speaking countries. The unbalance between inward and outward mobility figures is recognised as a weakness in the British higher education sector and some efforts are being made to address this trend. In words of HEFCE Chief Executive, Sir Alan Langlands: “Promoting an international experience is a key factor in preparing [British] graduates for a highly competitive, international marketplace."
Sheffield Business School's international work placements

The Languages Subject Area at Sheffield Business School (Sheffield Hallam University) have been at the forefront of outwards internationalization for decades. Being one of the very few higher education providers embedding a compulsory 18-month residence abroad, we have been producing global graduates for over 30 years now. Our language courses are combined honours where students take one or two languages in addition to their specialism, as illustrated below:

- BA (Hons) International Business with French, German or Spanish
- BA (Hons) Languages with International Business (2 languages)
- BA (Hons) Languages with Tourism (2 languages)
- BA (Hons) Languages with TESOL (2 languages)

As a compulsory part of these courses, all students spend approximately 18 months overseas. This time abroad is split between a study semester in one of our Erasmus partner institutions in Europe, followed by a work placement year in the target country - this might be split into two separate 6-month work placements for students taking two post A-Level languages. Students are required to work in roles which are relevant to their degree specialism. This means that the vast majority of International Business students work for the private sector, often for large corporations in roles that range from marketing, to corporate purchasing, to sales or administration. Tourism students will typically work for large hotel chains, based either in the headquarters or in the actual hotels. TESOL (Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages) students, on the other hand, will undertake a teaching placement overseas, normally through the British Council Language Assistantship Scheme.

The simplified course structure for the language degrees at Sheffield Business School (SBS) can be found below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Semester 1</th>
<th>Semester 2</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Year 1</td>
<td>SBS</td>
<td>SBS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 2</td>
<td>SBS</td>
<td>study semester abroad (Erasmus)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 3</td>
<td>Work placement year abroad</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 4</td>
<td>SBS</td>
<td>SBS</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

By the time our students come back into their final year, they are fluent in one or two languages. Crucially, they have also acquired a global skillset and an international career outlook. As a result, our students tend to find graduate employment relatively quickly and many choose to work outside of the UK once they graduate.
Challenges to the SBS work placement provision

Maintaining a high-quality international work placement programme such as the one we have at Sheffield Business School is not without its challenges. Like most other universities, we are faced with ever-decreasing resources and growing demands on staff time. Managing international work placements can be time-consuming and this is in itself problematic; however, the main challenges are faced by the students rather than by university staff.

The Student Perspectives on Going International 2015 British Council report highlighted the students’ perceived benefits and barriers to outward mobility. Within the context of international work placements, the most relevant perceived barriers, in addition to insufficient foreign language skills, were:

- lack of knowledge of available placement opportunities
- insufficient funding
- fear of isolation

The above issues mirror the challenges we face with our own language students at Sheffield Business School, as will be discussed below.

Challenge 1: Availability of work placement opportunities

The main challenge academic staff face to make these highly internationalised language courses viable is ensuring that all language students have access to suitable placement opportunities. This is critical given that international work placements are compulsory. Teaching placements for Languages with TESOL students can be arranged quite straightforwardly via the British Council Language Assistantship Scheme. However, Tourism and particularly, International Business students, who need to work in a business environment, face an uphill struggle to secure suitable opportunities, which tend to be relatively scarce and highly competitive. An appropriate placement hunting strategy is, therefore, crucial. At SBS, we provide students with a sound placement seeking plan as part of our pre-placement preparation strategy, which also includes cultural information and placement interview techniques (including via Skype). Furthermore, we point students in the direction of the following resources to seek placement opportunities:

- University contacts via their academic placement officers (SBS’s Placement and Employability Tutors)
- Linkedin for placement opportunities with medium to large corporations.
- ErasmusIntern.org, Globalplacement.com and similar sites for opportunities with smaller firms.

We are very proud of the fact that 100% of our students succeed in finding suitable placements abroad. This is due to the hard work of the academics and support staff involved, as well as to the students’ commitment to their course.
Challenge 2: Funding issues
The current UK higher education scenario, with high university fees and the associated high debt level, is commonplace amongst the student population. SBS students, in line with most students at British institutions, are particularly sensitive to the rising costs of their studies. As a result, three-year courses are often seen as the easier and most cost-effective choice. Even amongst those students who are committed to undertake a work placement year, going abroad is seen as an expensive alternative. This is largely because placements in Europe tend to attract much lower wages than in the UK, even when differences in the cost of living are factored in. To add to this, students will often incur rather high travel and resettling expenses.

To help make up for the lower wages, our students rely on their Erasmus+ Work Placement funding. The Erasmus+ programme offers generous grants to all students undertaking a work placement in a EU country, with monthly allowances ranging from €380 to €430 depending on where students work, for up to a year. However, with Brexit looming in the horizon, it is unclear whether our students will be able to continue to benefit from this funding in future years. Discussions on whether the UK will remain a full member country of the Erasmus+ scheme once it comes out of the EU are constant in university meeting rooms - this is certainly a source of great anxiety for the British higher education sector. The potential phasing out of the Erasmus+ programme would have a substantial impact on degrees such as SBS language courses - this would remove not just the much-needed student funding, but also the framework for the international recognition of EU work placements. Therefore, British universities wanting to encourage outward mobility will need to think creatively now and explore alternative business links and sources of funding in preparation for this eventuality.

It is difficult to underestimate the importance of appropriate funding, particularly for universities such as Sheffield Hallam, who attract an above average percentage of students from a working-class background. Even with external sources of funding such as the Erasmus+ grants, some of our students living in capital cities, notably in Paris, claim it can be difficult to make ends meet. In these cases, it is particularly important to remind them that their work placement abroad is an investment in their employability skills and therefore, in their future career.

Challenge 3: Homesickness and the culture shock
As we have seen above, the worry around funding issues or securing suitable work placements are two major challenges for students considering undertaking a work placement abroad. However, although these two issues can cause some anxiety, in my experience the most important challenge is to do with personal matters; particularly, with the fear of isolation and separation from friends and family. Financial matters and the struggle to secure the right placement are, no doubt, two major
issues pre-departure; however, they rarely account for the early termination of a placement once it is
under way.
Homesickness, on the other hand, is the number one reason why some students return to the UK half
way through their placement year abroad. Some students report a strong feeling of isolation in the
foreign country, a sense of "not belonging" and a difficulty to integrate in their work and local
environment. This intensifies their urge to return home and in some extreme cases, may lead to
depression. To avoid or to at least minimise the incidence of homesickness, at Sheffield Business
School we provide thorough cultural preparation for our language undergraduates. This preparation
is partly embedded in the curriculum and partly delivered through freestanding cultural preparation
sessions for each of the target countries. The sessions are very successful at familiarising students with
the foreign culture and business environment. Additionally, students hear about the different stages
of integration in the foreign country through the W-Curve of Cultural Adjustment (Gullahorn and
Gullahorn 1963, see below), thus learning that homesickness is just one of the stages previous to
adjustment to a foreign culture:

Awareness of employability skills
On their return to their final year of studies, our language students have gained hugely from their
international experience. They show higher levels of self-confidence, proficiency in one or two foreign
languages and higher levels of commitment to their course. In addition, they have acquired the much
sought-after global skillset through their engagement with professional organisations abroad and
through living in a foreign country. However, most students at this stage have relatively little
understanding of the employability skills they have acquired and will describe themselves almost
exclusively through their language skills, thus playing down the whole range of global skills they have gained.

It is essential for these students to alter this somewhat narrow mindset in order to maximise their employment potential. Research shows that although employers do value foreign language skills, they are rarely the main attribute they are looking for (Born Global, 2015). It is imperative for students to, first, understand their skills and then, be able to define them in a language that speaks to employers. At Sheffield Business School, we make our language students aware that their international profile is a unique selling point. We advise them to present themselves as value-added recruits and to emphasise the following points in their graduate applications:

- They are **global graduates**, first and foremost, and their international experience of studying, working and living in a foreign country for an extensive period of time is their main differentation factor.

- They have a **global mindset**, as evidenced by their cultural agility, maximum adaptability and by their ability to build a quick rapport with professionals from other nationalities. Demonstrating these attributes with examples taken from the work placement year abroad will reinforce their global label even further.

- They also have a **global skillset** and must draw employers’ attention to their extended experience of working collaboratively in multicultural teams, their resilience and problem-solving abilities and indeed, their foreign language and subject-specific skills.

The challenge for our soon-to-be graduates, therefore, is not acquiring the above skills - which they have already gained through their student journey - but to be aware that they have them and particularly, to be able articulate them appropriately. Also, it is important they appreciate the range of opportunities open to them and to aim high; after all, in Mark Cahill's words, as Managing Director for Manpower Group NEMEA (Speak to the Future Symposium, 2015), "individuals with these skills can pick the work they want."

**Alumni involvement and their impact on student employability**

Research has shown how alumni can be a key resource and an excellent way to reinforce student employability awareness (Jing et al, 2011). Since 2012, at SBS we have encouraged alumni involvement with our undergraduate students to this effect. Alumni contributions have great impact; mostly, because they offer a story of success that students can instantly relate and aspire to. Their collaboration with our language courses is not only a very effective source of student motivation or a useful net-working opportunity - it is also a means to reinforce course identity and to validate an
academic and career choice in a very powerful way. Alumni tend to be very willing to collaborate with SBS; this is partly due to their emotional connection to the university but also to their desire to "give something back" to the institution that contributed to their often rather impressive careers. SBS language alumni regularly credit their international work placement as the main factor to account for their early professional success. This message, together with their heart-felt encouragement to aim high, has a profound and long-lasting effect in the aspirations of our students.

Our **2016-2017 Global Graduate Employability pilot project** is an example of the kind of project in which SBS alumni take part. Its aim is to prepare students for their transition into graduate employment following a two-pronged approach:

- Raising student awareness about their employability skills and helping them articulate them appropriately. To this effect, they need to complete a map of their individual employability skills and demonstrate how they meet them, using the STAR technique.

- Putting final year students in contact with SBS Language Alumni who work in positions that broadly match their career goals. In small groups, students interview the alumni via Skype and discuss the effect of their global skillset throughout their career. They also collect hints and tips to help them in their graduate job search.

This project culminates in a formal event where some guest speakers from the SBS languages alumni community reinforce the above employability messages. A sample of some of the alumni who have volunteered to take part in this project can be found below (their identity has not been revealed for data protection reasons):

- General Manager for BT, Latin America (Sao Paulo, Brazil).
- EMEA Senior Commercial Manager at Beats by Dr. Dre (London)
- Senior position with Europol, The Hague.
- Graduate position in the Civil Service, MOD (London)

**Conclusions**

The 2014 Erasmus Impact report, which analyses, amongst other things, the effects of the Erasmus mobility programme in terms of graduate employability, has shown some remarkable findings. 64% of international recruiters consider an extended period of residence abroad as important. Internationally mobile students are substantially more employable and half as likely to experience long-term unemployment. 1 in 3 students who have undertaken a work placement abroad have been offered a permanent job by their host company.
Work placements abroad are not for the faint-hearted. They present many challenges, such as cost, availability of suitable opportunities, adaptation difficulties and more. But being able to experience these challenges and come out the other way, invariably as stronger, better-rounded individuals, is what makes these young professionals into added-value, global graduates. It is no surprise they are in such high demand.

The advantages of international work placements, however, are not only measured by these excellent employability outcomes. Students often report how they feel "changed", how the time abroad has been "the best experience in their lives". As illustrated by the 2014 Erasmus Impact report, a mobility experience gives students a more international outlook, with participants being far more likely to work abroad after a graduation or have a life partner from a different country. It is estimated, for example, that the Erasmus programme is responsible for the birth of one million babies, often to mixed-nationality couples. The positive, life-changing, transformational impact of these international experiences goes far beyond any academic or career achievements. There is, therefore, a strong case to be made for British universities to pursue outward internationalisation with vigour and with appropriate levels of investment. This is particularly important if the Erasmus programme is eventually phased out in the UK - but let us keep our fingers and toes crossed that this never happens.
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Reconceiving Work Placements

Carol-joy Patrick
Griffith University, Queensland, Australia
Cj.Patrick@griffith.edu.au

Abstract

Worldwide, there are a variety of approaches to obtaining work experience for students as part of their university degree experience. North America has a focus on cooperative education experiences, and in relevant disciplines – service learning. The United Kingdom has a history of sandwich degrees and work placement.

Australia has a long history of work-integrated learning (WIL), with a specific emphasis on ensuring the integration of university learning with the work placement experience. Within this Australian context there is a growing interest in using the North American concept of service learning as a form of WIL and using community organisations as valid places of academic learning, to provide students with more than just career-oriented learning opportunities, but enabling them to understand community needs and configure their view of their future selves to include volunteering and responding to community needs either directly related to their career goals, or as goals for personal growth. While such placements offer opportunities for deep and transformative learning (Mezirow, 1997), they can also be a new and potentially confronting experiences for students. This provides educators with both the responsibility and the opportunity to capitalise on these experiences to support and engage students through the unique learning process that a work-placement in a not-for-profit service-learning provides.

This paper draws on extensive research conducted with students, community partners, and Academics involved in Griffith University’s Community Internship course. The research demonstrates the success of the approaches designed into the course that ensure students from every level of academic proficiency, are facilitated to make the most of the transformative learning experience presented by service-learning. Research will be presented which identifies the success factors contributed by strategic preparation of students, just-in-time curriculum design, and a unique assessment process. The role of Academic Advisors (rather than tutors) will also be described and examined, and the results of evaluations of students, and community partners will be presented.

Griffith’s unique approach has led to powerful transformative learning on the part of students with students reporting not just enhanced learning from the course, but transformed career and personal goals resulting from their guided placement experience.
Reconceiving work placements

Carol-joy Patrick
Griffith University, Australia

WIL: an umbrella term
• a range of approaches and strategies
• integrates discipline theory with the practice of work
• within a purposely designed curriculum
(Patrick, Peach, Pocknee, 2008)

Academic service-learning
• a pedagogical model
• intentionally integrates
• academic learning and relevant community service
(Howard, 2003)

Transformation and beyond…
Community Internship Course

Some goals and outcomes are similar:
• Learning through application of content
• Work place skills and attributes
• Team/group work is common
• Communication and reflection skills
• Self confidence and identity
• Value of education as door to opportunity (self and society)

Some goals and outcomes are different:
WIL is focused on
• Development of student as future professional
• Practice of professional skills and culture
• ‘Practical skills’ – techniques, practices
SL is focused on
• Development of student as a future member of local/global community
• Practice of personal and professional values
• ‘Affective’ skills – ethics, social responsibility, diversity, culture, equality

“Among other things, the study found that service participation positively affects students’ commitment to their communities, to helping others in difficulty, to promoting racial understanding, and to influencing social values. In addition, service participation directly influences the development of important life skills, such as leadership ability, social self-confidence, critical thinking skills, and conflict resolution skills. Service participation also has unique positive effects on academic development, including knowledge gained, grades earned, degrees sought after, and time devoted to academic endeavours.

Astin, A W, Sax, L J and Avalos, J. (2003). Long-Term Effects of Volunteerism during the Undergraduate Years in Campus Compact

Community engagement
• Students working with the community to achieve something worthwhile for the community and themselves – ongoing...

Educational engagement
• Discovering personal values
• Reflecting on career choices and developing professional skills
• Experiencing a meaningful link between theory and practice / education and work / self and society

To date, this course has
• 500-600 enrolments per year,
• been implemented as a listed elective in 16 degree programs, is a core requirement in a Masters program and a core requirement in a new undergraduate program,
• over 2,000 students engaging in structured personal and professional development, while contributing,
• over 100,000 volunteering hours to over 150 community partner organisations.

Design (WIL Plus)
• Methods / pedagogy
• work-integrated learning and transformative learning through scaffolded experiential learning
• Purposes
• professional skills + identity
• personal values epiphany
• meaningful engagement
Design: accessible and equitable
- Free-choice elective, all disciplines (5% over-load)
- 50-60 hours volunteering
- Access and equity (international students, GPA entry requirements, assessment tool)
- Unique credit-bearing assessment approach (disciplinary knowledge growth, professional and personal development, understanding of need for community organisations)
- Flexible delivery (lectures, workshops, modules)
- Peer interaction (workshops, Peer Discussion)
- Personally assigned Academic Advisor for continuous feedback and assistance for assessment preparation

Design Team
- Teaching team
  - Academic lead/convener
  - Academic advisors
- Community partner / WP supervisor
- Administrative team
  - Placement procurement
  - Vetting and matching
  - Marketing and promotions

Design - Values approach
"Educating citizens is one of the oldest aims of liberal learning in the Western tradition, but it has not always coexisted peacefully or on a par with other goals that higher education also serve. Now, after a longish lull, “citizenship” is back on the agenda, and a large and diverse group of educators has signed on."

Design - Experiential - Integrative learning
Careful selection of the theoretical ideas that are to be integrated with
and employability
- The course design incorporates the principles of work-integrated learning; it is based on the assumption that disciplinary knowledge that is relevant to professional practices should be applied/integrated by students in situ (Patrick et al., 2009; Smith, 2014).
- Careful selection of the theoretical ideas that are to be integrated with practice during the Internship is what supports development of professional skills and values and the Griffith Graduate Attributes.

Design Approaches
Values Approach
+ Experiential Approach

= Transformation

In Practice - Civic engagement
- Nearly all (90%) students reported that their Community Internship had strengthened their sense of civic engagement and efficacy (made a positive difference in the community), and
- nearly three-quarters (73%) of students considered this experience was likely to translate into a continuing commitment (continue to volunteer)

In Practice - Social awareness
- Enhances students’ understanding and appreciation of
  - social structures, privilege and disadvantage (85%), and the
  - causes and nature of social and/or environmental challenges (73%), and, most importantly, their
  - individual capacity and civic responsibility for positive influence (71%), and
  - sensitivity and ability to interact with people in culturally diverse contexts (70%)

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Design - Values approach
"... controlling for students’ pre-college disposition toward service, students who spend time volunteering during college, compared to those who do not volunteer, become more convinced that individuals can change society, feel more committed to personally affecting social change, and develop stronger leadership skills."

© Griffith University 2014
In Practice - Survey of students (n=134)

- **Community partners**
  - All means significantly higher than mid-point value "3" (5-point scale)
  - Eighty-six per cent (86%) are "satisfied" or "v. satisfied" with Griffith students

- **Design - Experiential**
  - Following Dewey (1939-19) the course is designed both to expose students to a range of intense, authentic, idiosyncratic and comparatively unpredictable experiences in not-for-profit organisations that deal with poverty, inequality, disability, environmental restoration and protection, and to guide them in using those experiences in a deliberate and purposive way to achieve educational goals and outcomes, deep reflections on personal and professional identity and on the role of citizenship in improving communities.

- **Design for Transformation**
  - "Transformative learning involves experiencing a deep, structural shift in the basic premises of thought, feelings, and actions. It is a shift of consciousness that dramatically and irreversibly alters our way of being in the world. Such a shift involves our understanding of ourselves and our self-locations; our relationships with other humans and with the natural world; our understanding of relations of power in interlocking structures of class, race and gender; our body awareness, our visions of alternative approaches to living, and our sense of possibilities for social justice and peace and personal joy." (Schwartz, Cole, & Ametti, 2000, p. 204).

- **In Practice - Transformative Outcomes**
  - "The course was not what I had expected it to be and I was very grateful to have had the opportunity to think about the world from an entirely new perspective that I now hope to take with me in my career.
  - "This course opened my eyes to the world around me and made me think of how I could make a difference. The staff are extremely accessible. … This has been the best course I have taken in my six years of study with Griffith."
  - "This course has helped me to critically evaluate my life and reflect on areas I can improve on in my personal and professional life."
Transformation and Academic Advisement

- Students transformative “perspective-taking” abilities are “scaffolded” by use of the social theories which facilitate the adoption of sociological (systems) and social-psychological perspectives on the social issues students work on.
- Academic Advisor support empowers students to interpret and negotiate difficult situations themselves, through reflection, allowing them to take responsibility for addressing personal responses that arise.

Academic Advisor Support

- “pastoral” in nature
- Support students growing self awareness
- Encourage autonomy and agentic learning
- Accessible
- Intent on risk mitigation
- Engaged with each student

Community Internship Course - Griffith University

Academic Advisor Support

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Community Internship Course - Griffith University

In Practice - Academic Advisor Support

- 50% of students access their AA four or more times across semester (other than in workshops)
- Student perceived AA as:
  - Effective supervisors (4.3)
  - Providing a safe and supportive working relationship (4.2)
  - Effective in problem-solving issues that arise in their internship (4.0)
  - Help them learn from their experience (4.0)
  - Link theory and practice (4.0)

"The pivotal impact for me was my Academic Advisor. I struggled with certain aspects of my internship, and she was instrumental in growing me and building my confidence and as a result of her mentorship I’m a graduate."

Community Internship Course - Griffith University

In Practice - Testimonials: Academic Advisor Support

- “Wonderful lecturers/convenors.”
- “The organisers did a wonderful job and were highly supportive of students.”
- “Teaching staff were very helpful and clearly outline assignments.”
- “My classes and lectures were on ones i particularly enjoyed because it brought an understanding to what I was doing in the internship.”
- “My academic advisor and supervisor were very friendly and welcoming. I felt that this course enabled me to engage better in learning. Overall, I felt that the course pushed me outside of my comfort zone, which was very helpful and beneficial for me.”
- “Involves a lot of encouragement and support from both my advisor and the course convenor as well and the modules were really helpful and gave me a new understanding of the importance of core values and community values.”
- “This course should be undertaken by all students. Fantastic teaching staff.”

Community Internship Course - Griffith University

In Practice Transformations: the numbers

- Been implemented as a listed elective in 16 degree programs, is a core requirement in a Masters program and a core requirement in a new undergraduate program
- Over 2,000 students engaging in structured personal and professional development, while contributing
- Over 100,000 volunteering hours to 150 community partner organisations.

Community Internship Course - Griffith University

In Practice - Results: academic

- Students’ results (based on criterion referenced assessment) are moderated in a variety of different ways to ensure consistency/reliability and validity of marking:
  - Cross-marking among the academic advisors
  - Cross-marking with the course convenor and/or the senior AA
  - Final moderation meeting at the end of the semester

- We improve student grades by approximately one whole grade point compared with their entry-level GPA

University of York, Campus East, 6th - 8th September 2016
In Practice - SEC feedback over time

- Overall satisfaction
- Assessment is fair
- Feedback is useful

Participants 14 times more likely to recommend the course to others than not.

Satisfaction

Assessment

Feedback

Student quotes

This internship shaped me into an "active participant" in communities.

...Different from normal classes in university, this internship gave me a valuable chance to develop consciousness and skills.

Course feedback (SEC)

Satisfaction Assessment Feedback

Participants 14 times more likely to recommend the course to others than not.

Student quotes

This internship was THE best thing I've done in my life! I've broadened my social conscience.

...My actions can make a real impact on a child's life; it influenced my career...and opened my eyes.

Community Internship was THE best thing I've done in my life! It broadened my social conscience.

...I felt more confident in myself and my own abilities because I had put them to the test compared to my first day where I felt nervous and unsure of myself.

This course was the most engaging training I have ever experienced...grow as a person, settled in the direction of my career, and became committed to joining the [Organisation Name] as a volunteer.

Thank you.
Abstract
Learning outcomes - Theoretical
The term ‘Innovation’ usually brings to mind cutting-edge technology and the latest mobiles, not Higher Education Careers and Employability departments. However using a technique developed for Innovation – Lynn Shostack’s ‘Service Blueprinting’ – can help develop a placement preparation plan that suits the students and doesn’t drain the department’s resources.
Blueprinting starts with the customer (student) at its heart, and follows their journey and experiences through the service in the form of a timeline. By identifying and analysing the points of service, back office operations and independent actions, areas ripe for increases in efficiency and quality are unearthed.
In this workshop, I propose to outline Service Blueprinting’s key concepts as they relate to a Careers Service, or other department delivering placement preparation resources and guidance to students. I will use University of Sussex’s Placement Preparation Programme as a case study. This programme began as a face-to-face, ten week course delivered by a specialist Careers Adviser. Using the Blueprinting model the team developed the programme into a light touch, high impact blended learning plan with strategically-timed guidance and support from professionals.
The group work will centre on putting the model into practice – small groups will be guided through blueprinting their own placement preparation processes. Feedback to the group will focus on the points of service they have identified as suitable for innovations.

References

Presentation
Innovation

Are you thinking of ‘Invention’?
Innovation is a process.
It takes teams of people.
It embraces failure.

Customer Orientation

Example: Employer Event

Very different…

Perspectives!

Blueprinting

Student Phase

Physical evidence

Blueprinting

Student actions

Onstage: customer-facing

Student

Do we have students?

I have some students in class right now.

I work in the shop on Mondays.

That’s my revised day.

Verizon – never heard of them!

Very different…

Staff

When is the employer available?

Who should we invite to attend?

Do students have to come?

Whoah! No, we need to email more students. Can we open it up to First Years?

Student

Oh no! I have lectures.

I have soooo much to read right now.

I work in the shop on Mondays.

That’s my revised day.

Verizon – never heard of them!

Very different…

Student

Student Phase

Final blueprint

Physical evidence

Student actions

Onstage: customer-facing

Blueprinting

Student phase

Blueprinting

Physical evidence

Blueprinting

Student phase + Physical evidence

Blueprinting

Student phase + Physical evidence + Student actions

Blueprinting

Student phase + Physical evidence + Student actions

Blueprinting

Student phase + Physical evidence + Student actions
Blueprinting

Onstage: customer-facing

Blueprinting

Offstage actions

Blueprinting

Pain points

Blueprinting

Our new service

Advantages: Students

Fewer Classes
More:
• Inclusive
• Vacancies
• Personal
• Accessible

Advantages: Staff

Fewer:
• Interactions
• Support processes
More:
• Inclusive
• Vacancies
• Personal
• Time!

Blueprint your service!

20 minutes

Tips
• Break down each stream into actions
• See where the interactions happen
• See if the visual representation helps you identify any pain points
• Can you identify any efficiencies?

First Generation Scholars

Humayra Hussein: Law LLB Y2

Image credit: Ivonne Paula Mulas, Placements Administrator. (Adapted from Bitner (2012))
STEM students

Daniel Roberts: Product Design

Conclusion

- Service blueprinting can identify efficiencies
- Customer orientation helps streamline services
- Different groups of students can be catered to

References


Shostack, L. "How to Design a Service." European Journal of Marketing, Vol 16 Iss 1, 1982

Bitner, M., Ostrom, A., Burkhard, K. "Service Blueprinting: Transforming the Student Experience" EDUCAUSE Review 47.6 (2012): 38
Abstract

The aim of this workshop is for participants to create a checklist for would-be third party providers of work experience opportunities overseas. The checklist should be a useful starting point in the vetting process their institution conducts when working with such organisations. The workshop will also provide useful insight, practical tips and discuss the merits and pitfalls of working with third party providers of overseas placements.

What is a 3rd party provider?
UK Universities’ international strategies are increasingly shifting towards greater exchange and greater outward mobility for their domestic students. The workplace is more international than ever before and according to the UK Higher Education International Unit’s 2015 report, internationally mobile graduates were more likely to gain relevant graduate employment and were likely to earn a higher starting salary than those who were not mobile during their studies.

The focus on increased outward mobility generates exciting new opportunities for students, but poses new challenges for institutions in the process of assessing the relevance of opportunities and safety of workplaces. Institutions are increasingly turning to third party providers who are able to generate relevant work experience opportunities for students and offer support to their home university when it comes to common issues such as on-site support, visa issues, accommodation for students, language barriers, insurance and legal compliance.

Case studies
• Countries in which working with a third party could be beneficial
• Using the institution’s existing international network
• Working through an intermediary such as the British Council
• Examples of third party providers and initial indicators of their reputability

Assessing whether a third party provider is reputable?
• Initial assessment, superficial factors and quick pass/fail criteria
• Methods of formal assessment
• Examples of various ‘approved supplier’ processes completed by InternChina in the past

Creating a checklist for providers
• Split into mini-groups of 2-3 people. Discuss which elements you would like to include in a checklist for would be third party providers
• Mini-groups to propose their ‘top 3’ elements to the group. Eg. ‘Risk assessment document’, ‘University references’ and ‘proof of financial good standing’.
• Group discussion to generate a full checklist of elements and debate the practicality of each assessment criteria from an institutional and a third party’s perspective, with InternChina as an example.
BEST PRACTICE WHEN WORKING WITH THIRD PARTY PROVIDERS FOR OVERSEAS PLACEMENTS

INTRODUCTION

WHAT IS A 3RD PARTY PROVIDER?

Case studies

DESTINATIONS

Creating a checklist

Groups of 3

Questions?
A Swansea University Student’s Placement Journey – from ‘Bootcamp’ to ‘Outduction’

Lucy Williams and Helyn Taylor
Swansea Employability Academy (SEA), Swansea University, Singleton Park, Swansea, SA2 8PP
01792 606362 / 07837048580
l.j.williams@swansea.ac.uk

Abstract
This workshop will take delegates through Swansea University’s journey in preparing its undergraduates, postgraduates and graduates for placement and also provide context by briefly outlining the Swansea Employability Academy’s (SEA’s) Placement services and programmes. Since 2012, we have experimented with the most effective methods in preparing our students for placement, often drawing on information provided by organisations such as ASET and the AGR, regarding recruitment trends and similar. I will discuss the ‘pros and cons’ of various preparation methods, all of which are mandatory at Swansea on joining SEA’s work placement programmes, and ranging from the formal to the informal, including, assessment centres, one-to-one interviews and now SEA’s popular Employability ‘Bootcamp’.

I will highlight how we support students and placement providers during placement, including SEA’s work placement contract and ‘Checklists’ that we have developed for students and employers in order that they know, step-by-step, what is expected of them during placement (avoiding any pitfalls!) and also how to reach us so that we can personally assist, where necessary, or sign-post to other services that we work closely with, such as Student Services. The Employer Checklist covers elements such as completing SEA’s contract, returning SEA’s bursary form and how to pay their student(s). The Student Checklist covers elements such as essential information to glean from employers prior to placement (e.g. dress code, start time etc.), how they can expect to be paid and how they claim their expenses.

I will outline how SEA’s preparation and support increases where a student is not from the UK/EU. I will outline how we interact with other services within the University to assist our international students in being visa-compliant, whilst emphasising to students that it is their responsibility and that it must be taken seriously. I will note the challenges we face in keeping abreast of ever-changing Home Office guidance and how we consolidate this with University regulations e.g. a Tier 4 visa may permit a student to work 20 hours in addition to their studies during term but the University restricts all undergraduates to 15 hours and post-graduates to 6 hours in these circumstances.

Lastly, I will ‘close the loop’ by outlining the methods we have more recently developed to ensure that placement students capitalise on all placements they have completed. For example, in addition to SEA placements counting towards ‘The SEA Award’, we have recently introduced non-compulsory ‘Outduction’ sessions, titled along the lines of ‘Making the most of your placement’, where we teach students how to convert their new work experiences into engaging CV content, robust competencies for use at interview as well as how to gain further experience within the same organisation (e.g. moving from an unpaid to a paid placement) or gain different experiences to further inform their career planning.

Further discussion and questions will follow, as well as a brief overview of our new Placement marketing/guidance materials and visual identity.
Presentation

Who we are

• SEA offers a wide range of services - from Careers Fairs, to an employability award, to advice and guidance etc.
• Myself and Helyn work for a sub-team of SEA. I manage this team and Helyn is one of our Officers. Alongside our colleagues, we manage non credit-bearing work placements and graduate employment programmes.
• We have forged close links with local, national and international employers.
• We are a successful team and this academic year we placed 60% more students than the year before (last year’s growth was also in excess of 50%).

What we do

• Swansea students’ placement experiences are very important to SEA and this has contributed to Swansea University recently being voted 4th in both the ‘Student Support’ and ‘Job Prospects’ Whatuni 2016 categories.
• Here’s how we support our students, each step of the way...

Pre-placement preparation

• Each year, we review preparation methods - surveying students and placement hosts, keeping up-to-date on workplace trends (from ASET, AGR) etc.
• This has lead to continuous development in the preparation of students as a mandatory element of signing up to our placement programmes.

  – Year 1 (12/13): Preparatory lecture and separate 1-2-1 interview
  – Year 2 (13/14): Preparatory ‘Masterclass’ and separate Assessment Centre
  – Year 3 (14/15): Joint Preparatory Masterclass and Assessment Centre
  – Year 4 (15/16): Employability ‘Bootcamp’
  – Year 5 (16/17): Employability Bootcamp – in person or via video video-link

• Regardless of format and trends, certain key information remains, such as: Work place etiquette, CV writing, assessment hints and tips (e.g. ‘STAR’ technique, common assessment centres tasks), recruitment process information etc.
• As a result of this preparation, it is extremely rare for us to receive an employer or student complaint during a placement.

Group discussion 1

• Please now discuss in your groups, for 5 minutes, how you/your team/your University prepares its students for work placements.
• Select a team member to feedback so the whole workshop can share best practice and obtain new ideas.

In-placement support

• In-placement support starts pre-placement – pre-empt potential issues and set expectations.
• The mandatory Employability Bootcamp encourages students to: find out key workplace information before, rather than on, placement e.g. Hours of work, dress code, who you could contact if you are unwell or feel you have been mistreated.
• Placement Officers (POs) encourage disability and health condition self-disclosure to placement hosts prior, rather than on, placement in order that SEA can work with the placement host to appropriately support students.
• POs advise students to adhere to the hours it is recommended by the University that they work on top of studies to avoid stress and an effect on their grades.
• A SEA Student Checklist is issued prior to placement, explaining every step of our placement programmes. Students can refer to this on placement for information such as how to claim expenses, how to keep a log of their experiences to use in future interviews etc.
• Each University college is assigned a specific PO in order that its students can go directly to him/her if preferred with in-placement problems.
• International placements are managed solely by our International Development Office (IDO).
• Students who experience issues whilst on placement know they can contact SEA at any time and that we will do our best to retain the placement for them as well as referring them to additional support they may require from specialists, e.g. A hardship loan or counselling.

Group discussion 2

• Please now discuss in your groups, for 5 minutes, how you/your team/your University provides in-placement support.
• Select a team member to feedback so the whole workshop can share best practice and obtain new ideas.
• Elements to cover off – How and when are support staff available? How do you tackle in-placement problems reported to you? Do you supply placement advice documents?
Non UK / EU Students

- The obligation on international students to adhere to their visa conditions (often Tier 4) is communicated frequently, e.g. A SEA guide for international students is linked on every SEA placement webpage and covered off at length in our Bootcamps
- SEA has regular meetings with the University’s visa compliance specialists, in order to keep abreast of any significant changes
- SEA collects key information on every placement student in order to advise those with non UK/EU passports to be vigilant of the hours they are working
- We assure students that disclosing visa conditions to potential placement hosts early will not go against them and that it allows PO’s to negotiate more appropriate hours with placement providers from an early stage
- For additional, specialist support we refer students to ISAS, the University’s International Student Advisory Service

Placement capitalisation

- PO’s request 200-word placement reflections and offer advice on how to convert these into competency-based interview examples, new CV material etc.
- These reflections counts towards the SEA Award, e.g. A one-week placement, plus 200-word reflection, obtains a Bronze Level SEA Award alone
- SEA's provides non-mandatory ‘Outduction’ sessions including advice on how to use work placement experiences for obtaining further experience or graduate roles, how placements not enjoyed can still be vital towards informing students’ career planning etc.

Group discussion 3

- Please now discuss in your groups, for 5 minutes, how you/your team/your University helps students to capitalise on their placements as well as how you provide support for non UK/EU students
- Select a team member to feedback so the whole workshop can share best practice and obtain new ideas
- Elements to cover off – How do you keep abreast of changes in UK visas? Do you encourage placement reflection? Do you have your own form of placement ‘outduction’?

Where now?

- Welcome Week 2016/2017 will see the Launch of SEA’s new Employment Zone!!!
- Visit: http://www.swansea.ac.uk/employability-academy/ to see how Swansea University is again evolving our placement and employment offer for our student and graduates

To conclude...

If time...is there anything further to share, questions or comments?

Thank you for coming along 😊

l.j.williams@swansea.ac.uk
h.taylor@swansea.ac.uk
The real life benefit of work experience to our company and our interns

Claire Kennady and Qamar Hashmi
IMI Precision Engineering
Claire.kennady@imi-precision.com

Abstract
IMI Precision Engineering won the Best New Provider of Work Experience award category at the National Undergraduate Employability awards in both 2016 and 2015. Claire Kennady, Graduate and Emerging Talent Manager for IMI Precision Engineering, is responsible for rolling out a successful work experience programme providing summer internship opportunities to undergraduate engineers. Qamar Hashmi is the Quality Manager who has supported many of the students taking part in the scheme.

This workshop will explain how valuable the programme has been for the IMI Precision Engineering business in Leeds, as well as IMI as an employer brand. We will demonstrate how our interns have been the best source of advertising for other students to go and seek work experience, as well as how we ended up creating our own ‘groupies’! We will demonstrate how our business has ensured that work experience placements add value and how we guarantee development for each student on placement with us.

As well as our successful work experience programme, we will exhibit some of the varying ways that our business collaborates with Universities; sharing some of the most successful projects and also what some of the challenges have been for us as a business. We will also share our thoughts on how we help increase the employability skills of students through a successful work experience programme.

Presentation
What do we get out of it?

Why is our work experience so good?

Why is our work experience so good?

What do students do for us exactly?

How do Universities help us?

Improving the employability of students – how do we help

Internship Opportunities

- Cost/benefit analysis
- Cost of doing nothing
- Development opportunity?

Just some of what our interns have delivered for us.....

- New life testing facility
- Competitor comparison information
- New key part design validation

- Real sense of responsibility & trust
- The threat of failure!
- Opportunity to work in a work based team
- Access to management
- Work based presentation & report writing (how it differs to University)
“A stepping stone to getting this job”: The role of work placements on students’ perceptions of the transition to work

Julie Udell
Portsmouth University
Julie.Udell@port.ac.uk

Abstract

Objective: This research explores the impact of a year-long work placement on students’ progression into employment. The importance of graduate employability is continuing to grow and is important to everyone who has a stake in the students’ development, from the students and their parents, through to higher education institutions and employers (O’Leary, 2016). Psychology graduates go on to rewarding careers but for the majority of graduates, this may not be within a directly-related psychology field. This is because psychology does not have a direct path from undergraduate degree to professional psychology practice, unlike vocational courses (Trapp et al, 2011; Reddy, Lantz & Hulme, 2013). It is therefore important for less vocationally-tied degree subjects, such as psychology, to provide students with opportunities to gain work-related skills and experience during their degree that will be of benefit to their progression into the workplace. The aim of this study was to monitor the impact of one such initiative within our institution.

Design & Methods: A focus group discussion was held with eight psychology graduates drawn from three different cohorts of students who had successfully completed an optional work placement unit alongside their normal academic units during the final year of their degree. The group were asked to reflect on their placement role, what they felt they had learned from their placement with respect to any challenges they had faced and how they felt the experience had benefitted them personally when beginning work after university. The hour-long discussion elicited participants views about the transition from student to graduate employee, and the impact placement learning had on their career progression up to three years following graduation. Results: Thematic Analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006) was applied to the qualitative transcript of the focus group to identify the key themes in students’ perspectives. Most students perceived their placement as beneficial to their career development, with this influence being more readily expressed in those who undertook placements relevant to their desired career pathway. The discussion also highlighted some important general advantages felt by placement students such as developing confidence in the workplace and being given real responsibility that enabled them to get ahead in their career, but also identified difficulties in breaking away from a student identity when studying and undertaking work experience concurrently, and the need to gain more time on placement.

Conclusion: Overall, placements were found to have a positive impact on students’ learning and life after graduation, helping to facilitate a connection between course and workplace. The study also demonstrates the broader benefit that placement learning may have across a wide range of degree subjects which are not tied to a specific vocational route.
“A STEPPING STONE TO GETTING THIS JOB”
THE ROLE OF WORK PLACEMENTS ON STUDENTS’ PERCEPTIONS OF THE TRANSITION TO WORK

Dr. Julie Udell, Miss Holly Tricker and Dr. Mark Turner
Department of Psychology, University of Portsmouth
Email: julie.udell@port.ac.uk

BACKGROUND
• Psychology - one of the most popular degree choices
• Less than 20% go into a direct psychology related career
• Trapp et al (2011); Van Laar & Udell (2008); Coulthard (2013)
• Not a vocational course

Higher education:
• Encourage students (QAA, 2014)
• Professional development (BPS, 2014)

However:
• Little empirical research
• Opportunities?

AIMS
• To monitor the impact of an optional placement unit
• Impact on psychology student progression into employment
• Graduates’ assessment of their skills and confidence

BACKGROUND TO PLACEMENTS
Psychology Work Placement - Year 3 optional unit
• Students obtain a work placement experience
• Work practice in professional area relevant to psychology
• Developed skills consistent with the Health and Care Professions Council Standards of Proficiency for Practitioner Psychologists (HCPC, 2015)
• Undertaken on a part-time basis during Year 3
• Minimum of 20 days across the year
• Support is provided to help students identify a placement opportunity
• Portfolio of work undertaken, reflection on the company and students overall performance during the placement

METHOD
Focus group discussion on the transition from student to graduate employee
Participants
• Former placement students
• 8 placement students, aged 22 - 25 years
• 3 different cohorts
• Graduating either 2013, 2014 or 2015
• Different placement experiences
• Discussed their roles and activities on placement

Qualitative Thematic Analysis approach (Braun & Clarke, 2006)
• Explore participants’ opinions and experiences of their placements
• How they felt these had impacted (or not) on their transition to work

FINDINGS
• Commonality of participants experience as well as their individuality
• Four main themes emerged from the data:
  • Increasing confidence
  • Gaining skills
  • Using placement experience for applications
  • Presenting the balance

INCREASING CONFIDENCE

Commonly reported
• Reddy & Moores, 2006; Bullock, Gould, Hejmadi & Lock, 2009; Little & Harvey, 2007; Edwards, 2014

However, at the start:
• Going into a new work place as a novice; the new person
• Keenly felt their lack of experience
• Felt that they were a burden

“I think doing the placement alone was a gamble because you go into a team or a service that have already got their place and you’re kind of standing; you kind of feel out of place (...) I think making a good impression as well and like someone they would remember as just cos you carry on in once a week and it’s really easy to forget there’s a student working (laughs) and you kind of feel like a burden sometimes, oh I’m here again and I can’t do something kind of thing so if you like go out of your way and say I can do this can kind of help with that (P1, 2013)”
GAINING CONFIDENCE - STRATEGIES

- Fine to ask for extra information or an explanation
- Do own research into areas where knowledge felt to be lacking
- “Blossoming” (Reddy and Moore’s, 2006) with ability to accept responsibility
  - Ask for extra information or an explanation
  - Fine to ask for extra information or an explanation

BUILDING CONFIDENCE

- Through time and experience
- Gain skills relevant to organisation
- Gain skills relevant to organisation
- InCREASED RESPONSIBILITIES
  - Entry-level expectations of the abilities and skills
  - Responsibilities also increase
- “Responsibilities also increase”
  - More research (Edwards, 2014)
- Long-term: 1 or 2 placements of 40 hours and 120 hours
  - Longer the placement, the more the student is likely to gain (Hepburn, 2010)

GAINING TRANSFERABLE SKILLS

- Longer the placement, the more the student is likely to gain (Hepburn, 2010)

GAINING PRACTICAL SKILLS

- Psychology undergraduates
- Research assistant
- Assistant psychology
- First step: Clinical Psychologist
- Highly competitive (Lantis, 2012; Reddy & Moores, 2006)

PRAC TICAL SKILLS

- Cannot learn all aspects of work through reading about work role
- Direct experience only
- Gain skills relevant to organisation

PRAC TICAL SKILLS

- Miss research (Edwards, 2016)
- Short placements (40 hours) significant impact on students (Edwards (2014)
- Even when ‘just’ doing office-based placements or in a career area different to that

DURATION OF PLACEMENT

- Miss research (Edwards, 2016)
- Short placements (40 hours) significant impact on students (Edwards (2014)
- Longer the placement, the more the student is likely to gain (Hepburn, 2010)
- Current study - one short placements of 60 hours and 120 hours respectively

CONFIDENCE THROUGH RESPONSIBILITY

- Confidence grew through being given more responsibility
- “Blossoming” (Reddy and Moore’s, 2006) with ability to accept responsibility
  - Ask for extra information or an explanation
  - Fine to ask for extra information or an explanation
- “Responsibilities also increase”
  - More research (Edwards, 2014)
- Long-term: 1 or 2 placements of 40 hours and 120 hours
  - Longer the placement, the more the student is likely to gain (Hepburn, 2010)

INCREASING RESPONSIBILITIES

- Entry-level expectations of the abilities and skills
- Responsibilities also increase
- “Responsibilities also increase”
  - More research (Edwards, 2014)
- Long-term: 1 or 2 placements of 40 hours and 120 hours
  - Longer the placement, the more the student is likely to gain (Hepburn, 2010)

INCREASING RESPONSIBILITIES

- Entry-level expectations of the abilities and skills
- Responsibilities also increase
- “Responsibilities also increase”
  - More research (Edwards, 2014)
- Long-term: 1 or 2 placements of 40 hours and 120 hours
  - Longer the placement, the more the student is likely to gain (Hepburn, 2010)
TESTING OUT

- Broks (2012) - placement students better idea of where they would like to work and made targeted approaches/interviews after placements.

- More selective which organisations they applied to

- "I even when I looked at my placements in second year I had already decided that I wanted to go into government so that's why I chose to do it with Portsmouth City Council. It sort of inspired me that that I had already been to that level of working in an environment and it was something I had been exploring it so I knew I really liked the Civil Service and that kind of thing and it wasn't until being on the placements that I was actually working in it and it was something that I could be able to see how that higher level would then impact on the on the ground what it how the chain works and then that sort of influence you then what I wanted to do for my dissertation and then I think those times I wanted to apply to for the graduate scheme, I mean I thought it was something that I wanted to do but it was in the third year with respect to placement and it sort of made those a bit more concrete." (P6; L420)

Usefulness of the career exploration extended to placements which had been in a different area than the students were new working.

- "I suppose although I'm still in Clinical Psychology doing my post, I wasn't really don't want to do Science so I think it was good to learn to be a bit about what the things mean about it was something I had never thought about and it was something that was something that was really interesting and helpful. I've rated that the most as I was move on to something else with it. you know I've found my niche now which is a good." (P10; L290)

TRANSITIONING FROM STUDENT TO EMPLOYEE

- Can prove hard for graduates
- People students with an opportunity to get used to the difference more gradually
- Know what to expect
- Already developed strategies to cope
- Broks mean - learning, self-reflexion Management
- "Content, books like, Francis & Capizzi (2006)
- Placement - ideal environment for developing
- "Broks et al. (2005) Knight & Butler (2005)

- "I think the biggest transition for me is waking up early in the morning, I think it was hard, not in a graduate job. I think it was hard to wake up and I want to work and you have quite an early start and I think to wake up like that I think is very different to the morning when you're still in student and you're doing all the things that you need to do like all the reading and stuff like that then you have to go to work, so I think it was really different." (P1; L520)

- Placement experience gave participants an advantage in two ways;
- Interviewers interested in placement
- Examples that they could draw upon

- "Interviewers interested in placement and examples that they could draw upon" (P10; L290)

IMPROVING EMPLOYMENT PROSPECTS

- Higher likelihood of employment among placement students when compared to non-placement students (Broks, 2012)

- "So they asked me about the placements. I carry out the particular schemes that they do it, then they expect that you do research on them, they did ask play at the end well, they ask you about CBT, in quite a, yeah they sort of, you sort of a bit about the actual piece that I did and if (talking) is for, I think a lot of people don't actually do placements and they too they said I didn't have a lot of research in it and I think I was very specific, and the placement did help me somewhat (indicating). I think doing a job administration, although I don't have much experience and usually people who go for these, would have at least two or three, they would have to get it as a go and get it a bit like it (P6; L420).

ADVANTAGES FOR STUDENTS

- Placement provides many advantages over students who had not done a placement (Broks, 2012)
- "More experienced students actually appear to have some advantage during their first year after graduation in itself. Placement promotion leads to the increased likelihood of employment in the future." (P10; L290)

- "I think it was the placement itself that I rated the most as I was move on to something else with it. you know I've found my niche now which is a good." (P10; L290)

TIME LIMITED EFFECT

- "In the first year I had, I think I found that you've been asked in interviews. if you think the training and then they don't anyone else (I think you're too far behind now when you find it's comes back and you sort of think of it and really thing about it, it sort of was more experience, and how you handle situations." (P10; L290)

PRESENTING THE BALANCE
Can provide many good skills and experience

But ...

"I think it did help um but some of the things didn't write up for me. I think I learned a lot from the placement um but it's not something that I think I could have used in my current role. I think it helped me gain an understanding of the world of work and how things operate but I think it would have been more useful if it was more

organized and was what it said it was going to be. It was stressful and you

continued to feel that you were doing everything yourself and that you

had to prioritize everything and it was very easy in comparison to what I was doing in my current role. I think I could have been more prepared for but it's difficult when you have lectures and

so I think it did help um but some of the things it didn't set me up for was, I think I

struggled with at the beginning was like your phone manner and dealing with customers and you

know building relationships with clients and things um so I think that's an area that I

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"couldn't prepare me for (P7;L428)"


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things to go for so yeah it did help but there were some areas that you know it

"couldn't prepare me for (P7;L428)"
Working in partnership with ARC to enhance the students’ practice learning experience

Michael Adams and Paul Evans
Faculty of Health, Education and Life Sciences, Birmingham City University
sponsored by ARC Technology Ltd
Michael.Adams@bcu.ac.uk

Abstract
This workshop will explore Birmingham City University response to the Mid Staffordshire NHS Foundation Trust Public Inquiry (2013) who recommended the student voice is present and heard and the Council of Deans for Health recently commissioned literature review supporting nursing, midwifery and allied health professional students to raise concerns with the quality of care (2016).

Birmingham City University made the decision to purchase the ARC placement management system to help to manage the operational challenges of the practice learning components of the undergraduate programmes, whilst maintaining effective partnership working with key stakeholders. This has enabled the university to develop rigorous practice quality processes to enhance the students’ practice learning experience.

Birmingham City University have introduced a robust and rigorous practice evaluation process through ARC. This has enhanced the practice partner’s ability to effectively and efficiently manage placement areas, improve the service and support the learning experience for students. The evaluation of practice process is contemporary mapped against the Care Quality Commission criteria. It is a new way of working to RAGG (Red, Amber, Green, Gold) to rate each placement area, this involves data screening, the publication of reports every 3 months and partnership meetings.

ARC has the ability to meet our future plans to develop an educational audit process that meets the requirements of the professional regulators, education commissioners and key stakeholders, mapped against the NMC Quality Assurance Framework (2012), HCPC and QAA for Higher Education (2015). The practice learning educational audit monitors and confirms the placement area is a safe learning environment for learners, working alongside the practice environment profile that aims to support the student to prepare for practice.

The workshop will cover:

- A brief outline of the Birmingham City University ARC journey
- The evaluation process – “making sure the student voice is heard”
- Future plans for Birmingham City University – “developing an improved educational audit process”

Presentation
Purpose of the Session

- Understanding of ARC and BCU’s Journey
- How ARC can benefit staff, students and placement partners
- The evaluation process – making sure the student voice is heard
- Future Plans

ARC Placement Management System

Michael Adams and Paul Evans

What is ARC

- ARC is a placement management system designed to be used by HEIs
- BCU purchased the system in July 2013 and have used the system live since January 2014
- Currently used by nursing, midwifery, ODP, radiography, radiotherapy and education programmes
- Social work, SLT and paramedic science, will also move over to the system in the future and potentially our new life science programmes which start in September 2017

Chaos Theory

Construction of evaluation questions
- Student forums
- Programme Management
- Focus groups
- Student Engagement, Publicity Campaign
- Automatic email reminders sent to students to complete their placement evaluations

The Dolphin Effect

Getting students involved

- Construction of evaluation questions
- Partnership meetings
- Chief Nurse involvement
- Friends and Family request
- Responding to the feedback
  - RAG ratings
  - Red Flags
  - LEAF meetings
  - Acknowledging good practice

Future Developments

- Release of the Practice environment profile (PEP) to our placement providers
- Roll out of the audit portal to take our audits online
- Remaining professions to be included on the ARC system
- Any questions for discussion!

Getting practice partners involved

University of York, Campus East, 6th - 8th September 2016
The Placement App –
an improved way of reviewing and approving work placements

Louise Helps and Liz George
Southampton Solent University, East Park Terrace, Southampton, SO14 0YN
023 8201 6501
louise.helps@solent.ac.uk
liz.george@solent.ac.uk

Abstract
Southampton Solent University has developed a Placement App for students, academic staff and employers. The Placement App is a simplistic and an accessible way for student’s to record important information before starting their work placement. A number of courses across the Southampton Solent University offer work based learning units, the App was introduced to provide ease for both student, academic staff and employers when approving work placements.

The workshop will discuss how the Placement App acts as a connection between students and academic staff which replaces the need for hard-copy records and allows easy accessibility. The Placement App has allowed academic staff to review key information about students placements to ensure that the work experience will be relevant to the work based learning unit, that the student has been given a robust job description and contract and has been approved by both the academic and placement provider.

The Placement App has a number of key functions which can be accessed at any time by the student or tutor.

The functions on the Placement App allow the following:
- Students able to record student and placement provider information
- Upload evidence of placement including, offer letters/ contracts and job description
- Students to complete a Risk Profile
- Ability for tutor to confirm placement or send communication to students
- Ability for the placement provider to agree key responsibilities including Health and Safety arrangements prior to the placement
- Central area of students and tutors to review work placement details
- Method of communication between the student and the tutor
- Automatic correspondence between the university and the placement provider, with key information in relation to roles and responsibilities
- Records placement provider details including employer details

The workshop will focus on the following areas:
• Background: Why Southampton Solent University developed the Placement App
• How the Placement App functions
• The benefits of using the App
• Feedback from Students, Academic staff and Employers
• How the Placement App could be developed further
The Placement App
An improved way of reviewing and approving work placements.

August 2016

Liz George - Student Employability Manager
Louise Helps - Student Employability Adviser

Solent and placements

- 11,000 full time students in 5 Schools (50% from the creative industries)
- 1,800 international students from 100 countries
- Nearly 70% are 'first time entrants'
- Issue around confidence and connections
- 82.4% in employment or further study (2015 leavers)
- 58.2% in managerial or graduate employment
- 'Excellent student employability' is key in the University’s strategic plan
- University has pursued a strategy of embedding employability in the curriculum for the past six years.

Work placements at Solent
Solent’s definition of a work placement includes:
- Accredited unit on a course
- Assessed piece of work (including, self reflection/ placement journal).
- Industry related
- Approved by the academic and tutor
- Length of time varied depending on assessment and unit requirements.

What was the problem?

Our Objectives

- QAA requirements for duty of care.
- All three stakeholder (Student, academic staff and placement provider).
- Automated communication between all three parties.
- Risk profile (completed by student, approved by academic).
- Collection of placement data and in central location!
- Easily accessible to students and employers.

The Placement App was born....

- Created by in-house ICT team at Solent.
- Bespoke for our University.
- Working with academic staff and Employability Team to create a fit for purpose system.

Students – upload the information
Academic Staff – to review and approve the information
Placement Provider/ Employer – to approve

Stages of the App

1. Student details
2. Placement Provider details
3. Risk profile
4. Placement role details
5. Review and approval by academic
6. Email to Placement Provider/ Employer
7. Placement Approved!
3. 6 elements of the online risk profile

1. Work and/or Study Factors
   - Community work with known high risk groups or locations / office work or other low hazard environments and activities

2. Travel and Transportation Factors
   - Significant travel to reach placement or night travel or long daily commuting requirement / no significant travel, comfortable daily commute

3. Location and/or Regional Factors
   - Significant risk of civil disorder, crime or unavoidable lone or remote working / Placements in the UK with no significant local risks

4. General/Environmental Health Factors
   - Regional/local health risks require mandatory and specific health protection measures / no significant environmental health risks

5. Personal Student Factors
   - Knowledge, skills and understanding – too low or relevant

6. Insurance Limitations
   - Employer’s insurance – covers/does not cover the student for personal or third party liability

4. Academic approval via the App

- Academic/Placement tutor can review all information provided by the student.
- Review the Risk Profile and Evidence given by student.
- Academic has the ability to write back notes to students.
- Academic can approve or reject the placement.
6. Employer email via the App

Once the academic or Placement Tutor approves the placement an automated email is sent to the placement provider/employer. Which includes:

- An introduction from the university
- Clarifies the responsibilities of the Student, University and Placement Provider/Employer
- Includes a link to the ‘Employer Handbook’
- Highlights Health and Safety responsibilities and insurances
- Ask them to agree to the conditions online

What can we see....

Administrators have the ability to:

- Re-send tutor and employer email
- Make amendment to details uploaded on App. For example, change email address
- Check information for academics
- Monitor the usage of App
- Access information such as employer details

Feedback

“The Placement App has been incredibly helpful at storing students' details and ensuring relevant data is collected in a timely fashion. It also engages employers in the process, a vital element if the placement is to have a real world educational value.”

“It also provides us with a sound database of placement destinations which students can access when looking for work experience - this has been a tremendous help especially for those students who lack contacts or confidence as they start looking for suitable placements of their own.”

Programme Leader Fashion

Further improvements...

The App isn’t perfect!

- International placements with ability to translate documents
- Ability to record timesheets, conversations and visit upload more information (not just before the placement)

Activity

In your groups:

- What are your current systems to record work placement?
- What is the best part of your system?
- What do you think is missing from the Solent Placement App?

Thank you!

Any Questions??
Abstract
‘The changes in the Higher Education sector will continually increase the importance of employability not only for students, but will also place the onus on universities to ensure they are producing graduates who can ‘hit the ground running’. Trought, (2012:125)
The Wilson report (2012) recommends; ‘Ideally, every full-time undergraduate student should have the opportunity to experience a structured, university-approved undergraduate internship during their period of study.’

Placement Opportunities
The Department of Apparel has strong links within the fashion industry developed and maintained over many years. These contacts are continually evolving through the emergence of new industry contacts, alumni and networking. Many faculty staff have significant industry backgrounds and this brings additional opportunities. As a result, the faculty has an excellent reputation. However, increased competition between universities to offer sandwich degrees has resulted in increased competition, and often placement opportunities are not exclusive to our students. It is therefore important to ensure our students undergo the most effective preparation possible.

Placement Opportunities
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At the start of the academic year students who have undertaken placements return to commence their final year of study. As a result, they possess not only 9-12 months industry experience but also knowledge and experience of the requirements to secure a placement. These students received significant support in their placement search. Simultaneously level five students return with the aim of securing a placement.

Aim & Objectives
The aim of the study is to develop placement preparation and employability skills through peer learning.
Objectives
• To develop level 5 student understanding of the placement process
• To provide a platform for effective peer learning
• To provide an opportunity for development of employability skills of level 6 students returning from placement
• To inform the undergraduate curriculum in terms of placement preparation and employability skills

The Placement Symposium
This event was designed to provide a platform to share knowledge amongst students who have just returned from placement with students hoping to secure a placement.
In the second week of the academic term a two hour session is planned; ‘The Placement Symposium’ Level 6 students are invited to present their ‘placement experience’ to level 5 students on the same course; BA (Hons) Fashion Buying & Merchandising (2 other Apparel courses did a simultaneous event). For the academic year 15/16 approximately 12 students presented to a level 5 audience of
approximately 170 students. Students prepared several slides and talked through their experience. The authenticity of their presentations was powerful and questions were encouraged. For the academic year of 16/17 the plan is to repeat the session and follow with a networking opportunity and get more level 6 students involved.

Presentation

ASET WORKSHOP September 2016

WHO WE ARE...

Caroline Herz MSc, CITex, ATI
Principal Lecturer Apparel
Faculty Placement Manager
c.herz@mmu.ac.uk

Lisa Trencher MA PGCAP BSc (Hons) FHEA
Senior Lecturer in Academic Placements & Work Integrated Learning- Apparel
l.trencher@mmu.ac.uk

ASET WORKSHOP September 2016

“To Develop Placement Preparation and Employability Skills through Peer Learning”….OR...

“Help! I need a placement – let me show you how…”

The changes in the higher education sector will continually increase the importance of employability not only for students, but will also place the onus on universities to ensure they are producing graduates who can ‘hit the ground running’. Trought, (2012:125)

The Wilson report (2012) recommends; ‘ideally, every full-time undergraduate student should have the opportunity to experience a structured, university-approved undergraduate internship during their period of study.’

The Process

The Numbers!

Academic Year 15/16
Students Placed = 129
Number of Companies = 68

Academic Year 16/17
Students Placed = 172*
Number of Companies = 83 ...up by 25%

*still time to secure a few more

Placement requirements: 9 month (36 Week) minimum, full time paid role.

The aim: To develop placement preparation and employability skills through peer learning

OBJECTIVES

• To develop level 5 student understanding of the placement process.
• To enhance confidence/knowledge of level 5 students as they undertake their placement search.
• To provide a platform for effective peer learning.
• To inform the undergraduate curriculum in terms of placement preparation and employability skills.
• To provide an opportunity for development of employability skills of level 6 students returning from placement.
How we feed employability into the curriculum

- Placement & Employability Zone
- Synergy Unit - supports the development of 'Employability Skills'
- Additional 121 support/weekly drop-in throughout the Academic year

The Placement Journey...

- Placement Preparation
- Securing a Placement
- Undertaking a Placement
- Reflecting (and sharing) the placement experience
- Taking those experiences/learning into the final year of study

The Placement Symposium

- Contact returning students asking them to share their experience.
- Collate slides from each student - some students present in small groups. E.g. placed at the same employer.
- Lecture theatre – 250 students level 5. (2 simultaneous sessions for 2 courses each) – informal setting.
- 2 hour session with Q&A.
- Wednesday afternoon session – level 5 students timetabled that day.
  Wednesday is "Employability Day"!

The Placement Symposium

Final year quotes from returning students for the Placement Symposium:

Q. Why would you recommend doing a placement and detail any information you would like to pass onto a student who is considering this option.

"I recommend it! It is not only developed my skill set as well, I have improved my CV, made lasting friends and developed contacts within the industry... doing a placement can open up so many doors to living in a new city to experiencing working life... it really has been an incredible experience... hard work and tiring as an individual but the rewards far outweigh this fact... I feel more employable... keeping in touch with different contacts while outside the graduate jobs... it can make you realise that it is not what you want as a career - which isn’t necessarily a bad thing..."

"I feel now more than ever that I am 100% ready to get into the working world... I am very excited to graduate and get back into an industry I love. There were lots of high pressure moments during my placement, more high pressure than I ever imagined - and they were really tough but looking back now, I am so glad they happened because I feel like I could handle any and every situation possible. That might sound scary but I have learnt to think on my feet - something I never thought I could do before and now I stand back and look at what I have achieved, nothing seems too great."

Emily Taylor
BSc (Hons) Fashion Buying and Merchandising
Boohoo: Buying Sample Coordinator...
Online Styling Internship

Style Edit - for the luxury market

The Level 5 Experience

The Level 6 Experience

Our Experience

Thank you for listening!
The Challenges and Opportunities of International Student Employability and Mobility

Alison Austin
Careers and Employability Service, Plymouth University
01752 587913
A.Austin-1@plymouth.ac.uk

Abstract
In 2015 Plymouth University participated in an international benchmarking exercise hosted by the University of Tasmania, involving 10 universities across 4 countries, to look at the issues faced by the HE sector in preparing students to work in the global marketplace.

The aim of this workshop is to consider the findings of Plymouth University into the preparation of our students and to encourage discussion on the challenges that face us all in motivating and preparing students to engage with employment on a worldwide stage.

Discussion
By identifying areas of best practice and support to enhance employability and career development, can we provide the right framework to ensure students are prepared for international employment opportunities?
What is the role of Placements, Work Based Learning and part time jobs in preparing students for these opportunities?
How do we value our international partnerships, external relationships and the local community in sourcing opportunities?

Presentation

Question?
• Are we looking at International Students or home students who want to work internationally?
Survey of UK employers on their employability and skills needs, asked employers about their levels of satisfaction and their demand, for international cultural awareness and foreign language skills amongst graduates.

- **International cultural awareness**
  The report finds that, in 2016, 30% of employers were dissatisfied with graduates' international cultural awareness, down from 43% the previous year.

- **Language skills**
  The report also finds that 54% of employers were dissatisfied with graduates' foreign language skills, a 6% increase on 2015.

Unemployment rates among mobile students were lower than non-mobile students across almost all socio-economic backgrounds.

A significant lower proportion of graduates from disadvantaged backgrounds who were mobile were unemployed compared to those who were not mobile.

In 2015 an International Benchmarking Project hosted by the University of Tasmania looked at the issues faced by the HE sector across 4 countries, Australia, Canada, New Zealand and the UK in preparing students to work in the global market place.

- What are the challenges?
- Where are the areas for improvement?

**What are the Challenges to international mobility?**

- Language
- Visa restrictions
- Fear of the unknown
- Staff training and involvement
- Employer engagement

**Support**

- Centralised Careers Support with Faculties and Schools having Careers and Employability Leads
- A Careers Adviser with a specific focus on international students.

**Support**

- The English Language Centre offers elective modules where employability is embedded.
- International Student Advice provides a dedicated service for International Students

**Targeted Support**

- Accelerate – workshops offering specialised support
- Mentoring programme for students with disabilities, BAME and Care Leavers

**Employment Opportunities**

- National and International Placements
Placements and WBL

• Preparation sessions
• Employer presentations
• Returning students

Other opportunities

• Student Jobs service offers varied part time jobs to home and international students.
• Volunteering opportunities

Developing and maintaining networks

Local
• Strong community links
  • Plymouth Chamber of Commerce
  • Local employers actively participating in hosting international students

National
Building on contacts and networks

International
• Engaging staff and using international connections
• International Partnerships
• Alumni – Plymouth Connect

Plymouth University Partners

• Erasmus +
• British Council
  – Generation UK and India
  – IAESTE
• Science without Borders

Discussion

1. By identifying areas of best practice and support to enhance employability and career development, can we provide the right framework to ensure students are prepared for international employment opportunities?

2. What is the role of Placements, Work Based Learning and part time jobs in preparing students for these opportunities?

3. How do we maximise our international partnerships, external relationships and the local community in sourcing opportunities?
The direction of reflection: helping students make sense of work placements

Heather Fulford and Erica Cargill
Aberdeen Business School, Robert Gordon University, Aberdeen
01224 263869
H.Fulford@rgu.ac.uk

Abstract
When students are asked to write an account reflecting on a work placement or internship, they have the opportunity to consider their period of work experience from a number of perspectives. For example, they could concentrate on the skills they developed or honed during the placement, which aspects of the role they found challenging, how they believe they benefited from the placement experience, the contribution they feel they made to the host organisation, the ways in which they applied learning from their studies to the workplace, and/or how the placement has influenced their thinking about their future career. However, the reality is that assessors are often left lamenting the quality of the reflective accounts produced by students. A common criticism is that students tend to be descriptive rather than analytical, focusing more on documenting the tasks they undertook while on placement, or simply listing skills without providing clear supporting evidence of how they were developed. It seems students often struggle with making links between their placements and other aspects of their studies and personal development. With a view to providing students with guidance and support to enhance their reflective practice and writing skills, a structured approach to compiling a reflective account of a placement or internship experience is underway. This approach concentrates on direction of thinking and on providing guidance on making links between work, study, career plans and so on. An overview of this structured approach is presented in the paper. It is anticipated that it will make an important contribution to helping students make greater sense of their work placement experiences in the wider context of their own development and preparation for graduate employment. The research presented in this paper forms part of a wider study on developing student skills in reflection.

Keywords: placement; employability; graduate; reflection; reflective writing; reflective practice; graduate recruitment; work-related learning

The whole point about employability in education is how to develop it as much as possible, in advance of the events associated with major employment, and to see it in terms of a lifelong capability. Such thinking transcends short-term ‘fill ups’ of skills. While reflection underpins personal qualities within employment and the preparation for seeking employment, the ability to stand back and assess one’s position in particular circumstances (work, age, education achieved and needed, ambition and other lifespan issues), is a third role for reflection which we will sum up as contributing to ‘lifelong learning’. (Moon 2004:3)
Introduction
The 2012 Wilson Report entitled “A review of business-university collaboration” drew attention to the number of studies that provide evidence of the value of work placements for preparing students for graduate-level employment and enhancing their employability skills (Wilson 2012:37). The report goes on to stress the challenge facing Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) and businesses in co-ordinating and providing appropriate placement for students.

A key challenge facing those Higher Education Institutions which do offer student placements is the task of equipping students effectively with the mindset, knowledge and skills they require to undertake a placement. This challenge includes preparing them for their placement; supporting their transition into a placement; helping students integrate into, and perform successfully within, their placement workplace; maintaining links with their university and programme of study; and then aiding their transition back to their studies and their progression to graduation and graduate employment.

A further challenge facing HEIs is that of helping students to make sense of their placements; enabling them to maximise the value of such experience during their degree course; and ensuring that the placement experience is integrated appropriately into their programme of studies. This challenge involves helping students to understand what they have gained from their placement, as well as how they can present what they have learned and the skills they have acquired to best effect to potential employers in their CVs, job applications, recruitment interviews, and so on. As Moon has noted, a number of studies undertaken in the 1990s suggested that this sense-making and evidencing of experience can be a problematic area for students. She observed, for example, that according to the findings of those studies “while many students had the skills and attributes that employers want, they did not seem to have either the self-awareness or the language in which to express or describe them at recruitment interviews” (Moon 2004:3). In other words, students “were not able to reflect on what they had gained from higher education” (2004:3).

Given the struggles that some students face with reflection, and the fact that some may not have developed advanced reflective capacity, Moon advocates the gradual introduction of reflective tasks rather than “expecting learners to work on the clean white page of a new learning journal without practice” (Moon 1999:173). Taking this as our point of departure, we have been exploring ways of guiding and supporting students in the development of their reflective capacity, their habits of reflection, and their fluency in the production of written reflective accounts. This work has been undertaken in the context of a number of enterprise and work-related learning projects, including
projects associated with year-long placements, shorter placements or internships, and business start-
up and enterprise creation projects.

In the paper, we focus on our work on a project involving short placements (typically of 10-12 weeks),
and introduce a structured approach which we have devised to help students through the process of
preparing to construct a reflective account of their work placement. The underlying aim of the
approach is to help develop students’ skills in reflective practice and reflective writing skills and to
foster the habit of reflection.

Before presenting our approach, we discuss some of the relevant literature on student placements,
and on the challenges of helping students to reflect on those placements.

In defining ‘roles’ for reflection in employability, it is important to recognise the more
general role of reflection as an essential basis for good quality (meaningful) learning.
Encouragement of that role in all learning is central to the activities of higher education,
and while it transcends other aspects of employability, it is an assumed quality of
graduates. (Moon 2004:3)

Background

There is a burgeoning array of books and “how to” guides for students regarding preparation for
graduate employment, career planning, employability and personal development. Many of these
emphasise the value of undertaking some form of work placement or internship during a degree
programme. For example, in "Brilliant Intern", students are advised that:

An internship is a big deal. It’s not quite your first job, but it could lead to one. It won’t tie
you to one industry for the rest of your life, but could go a long way to plotting your career
path. It won’t cement your professional reputation but could cultivate it. In short, a good
internship has the potential to be a defining moment in your passage from student to
worker. (Scherer 2012: xi).

Scherer goes on to highlight the value of a placement for confirming “to a potential employer that you
possess the fundamental skills required for work”, as well as for giving you “a chance to show that you
can transfer those oft-mentioned transferable skills from education to the workplace” (2012:xi).
Further benefits of placements emphasised by Scherer include the opportunity to “get a real insight
into a particular industry before committing to a job in it”, giving exposure to the “day-to-day routine
involved in a job” (2012:xi). He also refers to the value a placement can bring for developing a “raft of
new and relevant contacts, both within your host organisation and outside of it” (2012:xi-xii).

For a placement experience to be of true value, however, students need to understand the difference
between experience and learning. As Cottrell notes:
Experience can be the basis for learning and development. However, just because we have been through an experience it does not mean we have learnt all there is to learn about it – or even that we have learnt anything at all. (Cottrell 2010:190).

Cottrell goes on to note that reflection is about making sense of experience which supports the learning process: “it [reflection] is where we analyse experience, actively attempting to ‘make sense’ or find meaning in it (2010:190). Arguably, only once this sense making process has been undertaken will students be in a position to communicate their learning and the value of their placement experience to potential employers during recruitment activities. In this regard, Rae advocates that:

Students should be given support and encouragement to use a personal development process enabling them to set personal goals for individualised learning, to self-assess and reflect on their learning and skills, thence gaining ownership and retain evidence of their learning and attainment, and applying this to produce useful documents such as career plans, curriculum vitae and job applications. (Rae 207:613).

In Higher Education, such self-evaluative and reflective practice is indeed often employed to tackle this issue of making sense of experience in the context of student placements. A common requirement, for example, is for students to produce some form of written reflective account or report about their placement experience. Bassot highlights the benefit of reflective writing as helping us “link ideas together and discover meaning from the things we see and experience” (Bassot 2013:14). The reflective assignments and activities undertaken in the context of student placements are typically intended to facilitate this process of connecting ideas and thoughts and to draw out meaning from what has been experienced in the workplace. Such assignments are sometimes referred to as “structured reflection” (Hind and Moss 2011:328).

The requirement for students to produce reflective accounts can present a challenge for educators, largely because “not everyone finds reflection an easy manner of working” (Moon 1999:173). Furthermore “myths about reflective practice” exist, and these can “get in the way of its development” leading to some people having a “very superficial or misleading understanding of what is involved”, which in turn can result in a “situation in which reflective practice is blocked – prevented from developing by a failure to appreciate what it is really about” (Thompson and Thompson 2008:148). A superficial understanding of what reflection involves can lead to the belief that it is “simply a matter of pausing for thought from time to time” (2008:148). In this way, the importance is missed of “connecting reflection-in-action and reflection-on-action or of making links between both of them and the underlying professional knowledge base” (2008:148). When it comes to producing a written reflective account, a superficial grasp of what reflection entails is also likely to lead to a lack of appreciation of “the difference between a descriptive account and a reflective or analytical one”. The
Our observations have been that key weaknesses in student reflective accounts about their placement experiences tend to be descriptive rather than analytical, rather limited in scope (perhaps just focusing on one two points or aspects of work), vague with regard to learning and skills development, and lacking in clear connections between studies and work. Other authors have noted similar issues and concerns (see for example Ryan 2013).

Elsewhere, we have reported on our work in the context of student enterprise, to foster skills in the habit of reflection (see Fulford and Bailey 2014; 2015). Here, we focus on the development of an approach to help students survey their placement experience and probe it to draw out learning and meaning from their experience. The intention is to build on our prior work on the habit of reflection to look now at scope for breadth of reflection. A future plan is to move on to consider how we can bring these aspects together to help students increase the depth of their reflection.

The direction of reflection
Taking as our point of departure, Moon’s point about the difficulty of expecting learners to “work on the clean white page of a new learning journal without practice” (Moon 1999:173), and bearing in mind also our own observations regarding the limitations of students’ written reflective accounts, we sought to develop a structured overview of the key elements of a typical student work placement which students can use to help trigger reflection on their placement experience. Drawing inspiration from recent trends in visualisation, particularly visual portrayals of business models and (see for example Osterwalder and Pigneur 2010), we depicted this structured overview of a placement in graphical or diagrammatic form. We denoted it the “Placement Panorama”.

This panorama is presented in Figure 1 below, and then each of its key aspects is explained.
The Placement Panorama depicted above is divided into three key aspects. Working from left to right, these aspects are: transition into placement; the placement itself; and then transition from the placement back to studies. Table 1 below provides an explanation of each of these.

**Table 1: The Placement Panorama Explained**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aspect</th>
<th>Explanation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Transition into placement</strong></td>
<td>Opportunity for the student to consider the nature of the organisation they are joining; the role to which they have been appointed; and the knowledge, skills and experience they bring to that role.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>The placement</strong></td>
<td>Opportunity for the student to consider their workplace activity on placement (role; interactions with colleagues; and communication); their workplace surroundings (the organisation and its context); and personal development (values, growth, and development of thinking).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Transition from placement</strong></td>
<td>Opportunity for the student to consider how they have changed or grown as a result of the placement, including the new skills they have acquired; new situations they have encountered; and the new understanding they have of themselves and their career plans and prospects.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2 below provides some examples of the reflection triggers associated with each aspect of the Placement Panorama.
### Table 2: Sample Reflection Triggers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aspect</th>
<th>Sample reflection triggers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Transition into placement** | What type of organisation am I joining?  
What do I bring to the role?  
Which aspects of my studies to date could I apply in this placement?  
Which other aspects of my background and experience might help me in this placement?  
What are my expectations of this placement? |
| **The placement**        | **Workplace activity**  
• **Role**: what does my role involve? Which aspects do I enjoy/not enjoy? How am I applying my academic knowledge to my role?  
• **Interactions**: structure of organisation? Teamwork opportunities? Understanding of team roles? Leadership experience? Development of my professional network? Conflict management?  
• **Communication**: opportunity to develop presentation skills? Report writing skills? Development of social media skills? |
|                          | **Workplace surroundings**  
• **Workplace**: Nature of workplace (e.g. formal/informal)? Integration/‘fit’ within workplace? Opportunity to explore other roles within workplace?  
• **Business environment**: Understanding of wider business environment? Nature of marketplace? Understanding of clients, competitors, suppliers, etc.? Development of wider business network? |
|                          | **My development**  
• **Values**: Fit between my values and values of organisation? Any conflict of values or challenge to my values? Growth in understanding of my values?  
• **Growth**: Growth in confidence? Resilience?  
• **Thinking**: Development of new views on specific matters? Application of academic thinking to work-based issues? |
| **Transition from placement** | What skills did I acquire during the placement?  
What skills did I enhance during the placement?  
How have I changed as a result of the placement?  
What have I learned about myself during the placement?  
What went well (and why)?  
What did not go well (and why)?  
How has my thinking about future career changed? |
Concluding remarks and next steps

In this paper, a new approach (The Placement Panorama) has been introduced to help students develop their skills and fluency in reflection in the context of a placement experience. The emphasis of the Placement Panorama is on demonstrating to students the scope they have for reflecting on a placement experience by helping them visualise their reflective space, including transition into placement, the placement itself and then transitioning from placement. It is envisaged that this Panorama will help students produce more rounded and comprehensive written accounts of their placement experience by prompting, or directing, them to reflect on a wide range of aspects of that experience.

We are starting to use the Placement Panorama outlined in this paper to guide and direct students as they prepare to compile reflective accounts of their placement experiences. The intention is to highlight to students the importance of taking a broad view when they reflect, scanning the placement experience in its entirety in order to draw out relevant learning from each aspect.

The Placement Panorama can be introduced prior to placement; then used as a tool during placement to gather experience and reflections “on the go”, and then used finally used as a post-placement tool to bring together the placement experience and begin to contextualise it in relation to the student’s studies and their future career aspirations. The Panorama can used by an individual student as they compile they own personal reflections, but can equally well be applied in peer-to-peer discussions, tutor-student meetings, or during placement review visits.

The next phase of our work will involve the compilation of a more comprehensive catalogue of reflection triggers for each aspect of the Placement Panorama. The Panorama will then be evaluated among a range of student groups across different placement types.

References


The complexity of University wide implementation of compulsory, accredited work-related learning in vocational degree programmes

Vanessa Airth
Guildhall School of Business and Law, London Metropolitan University, MG1-07 Electra House, 84 Moorgate, EC2M 6SQ
020 7320 1403
v.airth@londonmet.ac.uk

Abstract
London Metropolitan University’s Strategic Plan, identifies specific student experience enhancement priorities within its Programme for Improved Student Outcomes (PISO). This includes a "Five Star Student Promise", “Star 1” of which pledges to offer all undergraduate students accredited work-related experience. Centred on strengthening student/graduate-outcomes, this academic sustainability plan identifies key targets and milestones to monitor progress over a three year period. Broadly, the new London Met Work-Related Learning agenda, aims to impact the following goals:

1. to integrate “work-related” learning as an accredited and mandatory element in all (undergraduate) programmes of study for those joining the University from 2015/16;
2. students are able to “become what they want to be” on graduation: e.g. they secure employment in their chosen career or a further study opportunity
3. graduate career outcomes and DLHE statistics for the institution are positively impacted.

This workshop will cover the complexities of implementing such a scheme in a large London, new University, focussing on problems resolved and areas still be confronted. It is intended to provide food for thought for institutions undertaking or considering similar approaches and allow sharing of good practice and discussion of ideas.

The session will outline the steps taken, from the initial discussions through to practical planning for 2016/17 and over the three year assigned period, including:

- providing accredited, work-related learning to potentially 3,000 UG students over two years
- what is suitable work-related learning – how boundaries can be set for a wide range of vocational programmes?
- how the programme links with wider employability development across the curriculum aiming to create an employability “culture”
- assessing the suitability of existing accredited work-related learning at undergraduate level
- building links with appropriate organisations to significantly increase the number, depth and breadth of employer engagements and placements
- tapping into part-time work, internal placement opportunities and classroom based placements linked with business
- what assessment approaches were considered ideal for helping to create a “career-ready” graduate and how can these be adapted to different subject areas?
- providing sufficient and developmental student support, before, during and after work-related learning to ensure the learning is beneficial
- effective use of a Virtual Learning Environment to support remote learning and teaching
- monitoring of student engagement
- Tier 4 students and placements abroad
- working collaboratively with academics
- duty of care and UK Quality Code for HE
- potential impact of the new Teaching Excellence Framework and Consumer Rights Act
The complexity of University-wide implementation of compulsory, accredited work-related learning in vocational degree programmes

Vanessa Airth - Head of Employability for the Faculty of Business & Law, London Metropolitan University

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**Context and University need**
- Drivers / requirements
  - Academic / employability functions
- Audit / timeline
  - Modules and Assessment planning
  - Buy-in and resources

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**New Structure / Strategic plan**

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**Work-Related Learning Programme for Improved Student Outcomes (PISO)**

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**Programme for Improve Student Outcomes (PISO) Outcomes particularly relating to Work-Related Learning:**

- "Students become what they want to be" on graduation: e.g. they secure employment in their chosen career or a further study opportunity
- "...to integrate ... work-related” learning as an accredited and mandatory element in all our programmes of [UG] study"

**Quality in employment outcomes:**
- Every first-year undergraduate student commencing in 2015-16 will be afforded the opportunity for at least one significant credit bearing work-related learning or startup opportunity as part of the core curriculum of their programme, during their course at London Met.”

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**Nutshell: Key simple outputs agreed that suit all parties**

- Work placements or real work-related learning in the classroom
- Appropriate pre, during and post module support to help develop employability in relevant to diverse student body

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**Five star Student Promise – Star 1: Get to work**

**www.londonmet.ac.uk/why-london-met/the-london-met-experience/student-promise/**

- "At London Met, you will have access to work-based learning opportunities during your studies which will count towards your degree.
- This will involve real work experience while studying to give you practical knowledge and skills on top of your academic qualification.
- This ambitious and unique scheme is for all undergraduate students who join us from September 2015”

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**Apply: Future Drivers**

**Teaching Excellence Framework**
- one of three metrics is “employment/graduate destinations”
- greater focus on graduate employability
- employers’ skills demands
- graduates can compete for and secure a graduate level job

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Apply: Current / Future Drivers

Success as a Knowledge Economy – Gov. White Paper
- Presents scope and requirements of the TEF
- Employers unhappy with graduates’ skills – not ‘career ready’
- Students have access to “wide array” of work experience

Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) compliance
- Promising and offering
- Ambiguity not acceptable

Government Immigration Laws
- Tier 4 students taking placements

Is it what students want?

Who’s job is it?
Academics? Employability staff?
Careers?

Audit and Buy-in:
- Employability culture
- Expect to students
- Student ownership
- Critical
- Linked to sector
- Assessed AND extra-curricular

Auditing and Buy-in:
- Employability culture
- Explicit to students
- Student ownership
- Critical
- Linked to sector
- Assessed AND extra-curricular

UG Work Related Learning outline: provide models and tools

A. Pre Work-Related Learning Support/Preparation

B. Compulsory Accredited Work Related Learning Activity
(at least 15 credits)

C. Assessment / Next Steps Support

Must be accredited WRL options

B. Compulsory Accredited Work Related Learning Activity
(at least 15 credits)

Placements / Internships / suitable part-time work / volunteering / not-for-profit
NEW MODULE OPTION AVAILABLE

Practical enterprise start-up
NEW MODULE OPTION AVAILABLE

University based ‘real’ business / practitioner environments

Courses teams have control over accredited Work-Related Learning and how it is included (get buy-in)
Keep it simple – work with what works!!

- Compulsory professionally regulated placements
- Placements / Internships / suitable part-time work / volunteering / not-for-profit
- Crucial Resources and University 'buy-in'
  - Vice Chancellor approval via Deans and Pro-Vice Chancellor and working group, tie into University Strategic Plan
  - Support and framework provided for audit
  - Long-term planning 2-3 years – phase in
  - Support offered to assess current course provision, help design curriculum approaches and assist with required amendments prior to review of UG courses
  - Careers and Employability Team (plus Faculty employability teams) will assist with workshops / student support for pre and post accredited Work-Related Learning
  - Employer Engagement Administrators employed to assist in finding opportunities with employers in required subjects / industries

UG Work Related Learning outline

A. PRE WORK-RELATED LEARNING SUPPORT/PREPARATION

- Support in finding suitable employment
- Preparation for self-employment
- Recruitment process guidance
- Mentoring / talks from industry professionals
- Work place ethics, employee rights, health & safety

NEW MODULE OPTION

- Practical enterprise start-up
- University based ‘real’ business / practitioner environments
- NEW MODULE OPTION AVAILABLE
- Mandatory placements / Internships from 16/17 at Levels 5 and 6 for placement OR enterprise

C. ASSESSMENT / NEXT STEPS SUPPORT (forward focussed)

- Updating portfolio of work
- Appointment with Careers Consultant

State what doesn’t count as accredited Work-Related Learning?

- • Simulated case studies (alone)
- • Recruitment process workshops / assessment (alone)
- • Industry / External speakers (alone)
- • Other industry related activities in the curriculum (alone)

Create UG Work Related Learning outline

- Production of CV, application form
- Self-reflection assessment
- Action planning for career goal / enterprise
- Updating portfolio of work

Module design / frameworks

- Clear, understandable language (Rae 2007)
- Practical enterprise start-up (London Met)
- University based ‘real’ business / practitioner environments
- New module option available from 16/17 at Levels 5 and 6 for placement OR enterprise

Feedback / feedforward framework

- Timely, constructive, diagnostic, formative feedback (Gibbs & Simpson 2004, Kumar 2007)
- Emphasis on ‘feeding-forward’ (Dunham 2007) and development (Gibbs & Simpson 2004)
- Frequent / formative feedback at 2-3 week intervals
- Encourage self-awareness, understanding, autonomous learning (Knight & Yorke 2003)
- Personal & employability development (Knight & Yorke 2003, Kumar 2007)

Crucial Resources and University ‘buy-in’

- Vice Chancellor approval via Deans and Pro-Vice Chancellor and working group, tie into University Strategic Plan
- Support and framework provided for audit
- Long-term planning 2-3 years – phase in
- Support offered to assess current course provision, help design curriculum approaches and assist with required amendments prior to review of UG courses
- Careers and Employability Team (plus Faculty employability teams) will assist with workshops / student support for pre and post accredited Work-Related Learning
- Employer Engagement Administrators employed to assist in finding opportunities with employers in required subjects / industries

UG Work Related Learning outline

- • Academically rigorous (Boud et al 2001)
- • Flexible across different contexts (Pegg et al 2012, QAA 2007)
- • Foster responsibility and autonomy (Gale and Griffiths 2007)
- • Self-reflection and critical analysis (Little 2006)
- • Sense making of workplace (Stephenson 2001)
- • Employability / skills development explicit (Pegg et al 2007)
- • Link from theory to work-based learning and back (Lyons and Bament 2007)
- • Clear, understandable language (Rae 2007)
Supporting and Enhancing the Student Experience of placements; managing engagement through the use of IT to increase attainment

James Waring and Stacey Johnson
Nicholas Associates, Unit 8 Europa View, Sheffield Business Park, Sheffield, S9 1XH
0800 198 11 68
james.waring@nicholasassociates.co.uk
stacey.johnson@nicholasassociates.co.uk

Abstract
Aims and objectives
We have been designing and delivering efficient and effective placement management solutions for over 15 years. Over the past year we have worked in partnership with various UK universities to successfully monitor the activities of students in their search for a placement. The slick, online solution enables University’s to track placement related activity and engage with individual students in a supportive role to enhance employability.

In this session we aim to show how our “All Together” product has been extremely effective in maximising placement opportunities, increasing applications and improving student engagement. We will also show how the “All Together” system can be used to streamline and facilitate these processes, and produce quality Management Information (MI).

- We will demonstrate the “All Together” advertisements feature and how it is used by students within their portals
- We will establish how linked in with the above feature; data can then be used by Academic and Admin staff to support students in their placement searching
- We will show how the “All Together” system can be used to support students whilst they are undertaking their placement experience – via assessments, blogs and visits

Issues to be addressed
- Understanding the benefits of placements for employability and the various processes which underpin supporting students in their engagement of placement searching.
- Understanding how such effective data capture can directly improve the number of students undertaking a placement.
- From cradle to grave – supporting the student experience from University to placement and beyond

Presentation
Our brands

About NA Software
Creditability, experience, history

We have over 15 years experience in providing placement management solutions.

Placement Solutions Specialist 15+

We manage and support over 70 live systems.

We have over 15 years experience in providing placement management solutions.

Some of our customers include:

1,283,319 Students/Learners

In 15 years no customer has left us for a competitor.

Long-term partnerships

Why?
Our ethos, approach and services

We operate on the basis of quality over quantity.

Secure, centralised system

Data exchange with key systems

Integrated web portals for stakeholders

Powerful V4 platform!

We collaborate with industry experts and end users.

We focus on usability.

Easy is good.

Microsoft Partner

99
We continuously improve our solutions.

We have years of experience in utilising technology to maximise engagement.

Your solution, your choice.

We conduct regular customer feedback surveys.

We work with our customers to ensure a fit-for-purpose solution.

Secure, centralised system.

Online software for efficient placement management.

Everything in one place, everything all together...

Powerful V4 platform!

All together web portal service.

Secure, centralised back-office system.

Other Systems

Students

MI Portals

Data exchange with back-office systems.

Lightweight web portals for students, employers, staff and managers.

Enables scalability, flexibility, interfacing and connectivity.

Academics

Employers

Robust back-office management tools.

Branded portals for students, academics and employers.

Available 24/7 on multiple devices.

Real time usable data.

Student Engagement and Support

How does the All Together solution improve the process?
Students can find themselves struggling to keep up with the demand… and often having to face rejection on a daily basis.

Unhappy Students?

Secure, centralised back-office system

Other Systems

Students

MI Portals

Data exchange with back-office systems

Lightweight web portals for students, employers, staff and managers

Portals for Students, Employers, Academics and Managers

Focussing on the Students…

Branded portals

Starting with online Placement Agreements… Students can find suitable placement opportunities online

In the Admin view… Activity is fully tracked… Enabling status overviews and easy reporting

Detailed application and engagement statistics sit within the Student record.
As well as being able to monitor student preferences, students can easily apply for opportunities online via tablet or smartphone. All applications are tracked in the admin suite, including online feedback. Secure, centralised back-office system.

Other systems include MI Portals for data exchange with back-office systems. Lightweight web portals for students, employers, staff, and managers. Portals for students, employers, academics, and managers. Focusing on the employers’ viewpoint, effective tracking of interviews by allowing the employer to engage effortlessly.

95% found AT4 “very easy to use” and “very good.” Secure, centralised back-office system.
Secure, centralised back-office system

Enables scalability, flexibility, interfacing and connectivity

Academics

HEI staff can access detailed information via a tablet, to help secure placements.

Further Functionality

What else can the solution do for you?

Student placement confirmation

H&S

Blogs

Visits

Issues and Actions
Thank you
Any questions?

Call us on 0800 108 11 68
Visit us at www.placement-management.co.uk
Understanding data and addressing inequality

Sarah Flynn
University of Hertfordshire
s.j.flynn@herts.ac.uk

Abstract
At a national level, the Equality Challenge Unit (ECU) produce a range of staff and student datasets that allow us to better understand the higher education population. Universities collect an enormous amount of data on individual students, including on their performance and protected characteristics. The University of Hertfordshire is one of only 8 institutions to have been successful in being awarded the Bronze award for the pilot of the Race Equality Charter mark. The Race Equality Charter aims to inspire a strategic approach to making cultural and systemic changes that will make a real difference to minority ethnic staff and students. It covers: professional and academic staff, student attainment, and diversity of the curriculum.

Racial inequalities are a significant issue within higher education. In developing solutions to racial inequalities, it is important that they are aimed at achieving long-term institutional culture change, avoiding a deficit model where solutions are aimed at changing the individual. People from different ethnic backgrounds have different experiences and outcomes of higher education, and that complexity needs to be considered in analysing data and considering actions. All individuals have multiple identities, and the intersection of those different identities should be considered wherever possible.

This workshop will give delegates an opportunity to see some of the data that is available nationally, examples of how local level data can used and practical ideas of placement and employability initiatives that can be implemented to address differential outcomes.

Presentation
Context

National interest in attainment data
- Higher Education Academy programmes
- Equality Challenge Unit
- Improving the degree attainment of BME students (2011)

2015 saw the pilot of the Race Equality Charter Mark, similar to the Athena SWAN charter mark but not linked to research funding
- 37 initial applications of interest
- 23 full submissions
- 8 awarded

Data requirements are challenging!

What is possible?

HESA Student Record 2015/16

- HESA unique identifier
- Providers own identifier
- Date of birth
- Disability
- Ethnicity
- Forenames
- Gender identity
- Nationality
- National identity
- ORCID (research students)
- Religion or belief
- Scottish Candidate number
- Dependents in reporting year

Sex identifier
- Sex orientation
- Family name on 16th birthday
- Student Support Number
- Family name
- Term-time accommodation
- Term-time postcode
- UCAS personal identifier
- Unique Learner Number
- Welsh speaker indicator
- Instance

And much more...

UG students by ethnic group at UH

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ethnic group</th>
<th>2012</th>
<th>2013</th>
<th>2014</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>17.7</td>
<td>17.6</td>
<td>17.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>20.9</td>
<td>22.5</td>
<td>23.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chinese</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>3.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>32.5</td>
<td>32.5</td>
<td>32.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.4: UG/undergraduate student body by ethnic group


All UK domiciled students – ECU data

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ethnic group</th>
<th>2012</th>
<th>2013</th>
<th>2014</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>17.7</td>
<td>17.6</td>
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<tr>
<td>Black</td>
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<td>22.5</td>
<td>23.4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Chinese</td>
<td>3.0</td>
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<td>3.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>32.5</td>
<td>32.5</td>
<td>32.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.5: All UK domiciled students by ethnic group


All staff (UK/nonUK) by ethnic group at UH

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ethnic group</th>
<th>2012</th>
<th>2013</th>
<th>2014</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>17.7</td>
<td>17.6</td>
<td>17.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>20.9</td>
<td>22.5</td>
<td>23.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chinese</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>3.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>32.5</td>
<td>32.5</td>
<td>32.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.6: All staff (UK/nonUK) by ethnic group


All graduates with a “good degree” by ethnic group at UH

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ethnic group</th>
<th>2012</th>
<th>2013</th>
<th>2014</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>17.7</td>
<td>17.6</td>
<td>17.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>20.9</td>
<td>22.5</td>
<td>23.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chinese</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>3.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>32.5</td>
<td>32.5</td>
<td>32.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.7: All graduates with a “good degree” by ethnic group

All UK domiciled graduates with a “good degree” – ECU data

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>White</th>
<th>BME</th>
<th>Predgrad</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>England north</td>
<td>51.6%</td>
<td>21.1%</td>
<td>27.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East Midlands</td>
<td>49.6%</td>
<td>20.7%</td>
<td>28.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Midlands</td>
<td>50.4%</td>
<td>20.5%</td>
<td>28.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South West</td>
<td>50.4%</td>
<td>20.4%</td>
<td>28.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South East</td>
<td>50.3%</td>
<td>20.3%</td>
<td>28.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northern Ireland</td>
<td>48.4%</td>
<td>19.7%</td>
<td>29.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


What about graduate destinations?

What about graduate destinations?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Employment Type</th>
<th>White</th>
<th>BME</th>
<th>Predgrad</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Professional</td>
<td>31.0%</td>
<td>12.1%</td>
<td>14.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Managers</td>
<td>11.7%</td>
<td>4.3%</td>
<td>4.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IT/Telecoms/Software</td>
<td>6.5%</td>
<td>2.3%</td>
<td>2.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other sectors</td>
<td>16.2%</td>
<td>5.8%</td>
<td>6.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-professional</td>
<td>47.2%</td>
<td>18.8%</td>
<td>23.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


The stark reality...

• BME graduates are less likely to possess a good degree leaving university, and more than three times as likely to be unemployed after graduation as compared to White UK and Irish students (The Bow Group, 2012)
• 56.2% of all white respondents secured full-time paid employment within six months, compared to 48.2% of all BME respondents and 55% of all graduates. (AGCAS, 2008)
• 10.1% of all BME respondents were believed to be unemployed, compared to 5.7% of white respondents and 6.4% of graduates overall. (AGCAS, 2008)
• Of those in work, 47.8% of Black / Black British graduates are in non-graduate occupations, compared to 37.4% of white graduates and 37.4% of graduates overall. (AGCAS, 2008)

The bottom line...

Known to be more prevalent amongst BME graduates:
• Lack of full time employment
• Under employment
• Unemployment
• That is assuming they get to graduation; Black students are twice as likely as White students not to complete their studies (13.3%, compared to 6.2%)
• A Black student with “AAA” at A-Level studying at a Russell Group university has less chance of gaining a good degree than a White student with “CCD” at A-Level studying at a post-92 university
Dr Winston Morgan, UEL (2013)

The bottom line...

BME students account for over half of the UH student population – therefore this is a significant issue for our students and graduates, and therefore is a significant challenge for all of us

The race attainment gap impacts on half the criteria commonly used for university league tables:
- Student satisfaction
- Research quality
- Good honours
- Student-staff ratio
- Completion rates
- Entry standards
- Graduate prospects
- Service and facilities spend

These are all expected to be included in the Teaching Excellence Framework

Are the students aware of this?

• Even if they were able to achieve a good degree or qualification, existing discrimination within the workplace meant that their educational background would have little impact on their career and job prospects, greatly affecting their motivation to succeed
• “I think most students from ethnic communities believe no matter how well [they] do there is a ceiling on their career progression compared to whites”. Black British HE student
• “The job prospects for minority people are limited as compared to their white counterparts. Therefore, they feel less encouraged because they know they will be struggling for jobs even when they get qualified”. Black African FE student
What can we do, now that we know?

Used University policies and practice to help...
• Graduate Attributes
• Student Charter
• Embedded work experience
• Employability through the curriculum

But also...
• Networks
• Role models
• Diversity schemes
• Increased student engagement

Networks and Role Models

Creating networks
• Professional bodies and others
• Bright Futures
• Twitter
• Alumni Careers Network
• Mentors

Role models
• Case studies
• Panels of speakers
• Mentors
• Staffing - interns
• Advice to employers
• Within marketing

Diversity Schemes

Carrying out research for the students:
• Work experience
• Mentoring schemes
• Professional bodies
• Scholarships
• BME friendly employers

Promoting to the students:
• Publicise to schools, centrally and to student societies
• Hand outs/online: by school/diversity scheme

Increased student engagement

Use the student voice:
• Careers Links
• Students on event panels
• Student bloggers
• Our interns and placement students

What is possible?

• HESA unique identifier
• Providers own identifier
• Date of birth
• Disability
• Ethnicity
• Gender identity
• Nationality
• National identity
• ORCID (research students)
• Religion or belief
• Scottish Candidate number
• Dependents in reporting year

• Sex identifier
• Sexual orientation
• Family name on 16th birthday
• Student Support Number
• Family name
• Term-time accommodation
• Term-time postcode
• UCAS personal identifier
• Unique Learner Number
• Welsh speaker indicator

In summary

References

• Blyth, C (2008) Black boys can make it
• Morgan, W (2013) Keynote address, University of Hertfordshire Annual Learning and Teaching Conference
• NUS (2011) Race for Equality; a report on the experiences of black students in FE and HE
• Sewell, T (2009) Generating genius: black boys in search of love, ritual and schooling
• The Bow Group (2012) Race to the Top: the experience of black students in HE
A case study approach:
Do students understand the benefits and correlation of engaging in assessed/credit bearing pre-placement and employability activity to support them in the search and securing of an opportunity beyond just being an assessment activity?

Amanda Monteiro
Christchurch Business School,
Canterbury Christchurch University, North Holmes Campus, North Holmes Road, Canterbury, CT1 1QU
01227 782928
Amanda.Monteiro@canterbury.ac.uk

Abstract
Aims of the workshop
This workshop will discuss the question of whether having assessed/credit bearing pre placement and employability activities actually makes a difference to the students in terms of searching, securing and preparing for the placement/internship or do they just see these activities as a tick box activity towards their assessment. The workshop will be a case study following an academic cycle of assessed activity and how this has impacted on the students.

Objective
The workshop will be split into two parts to enable discussion and practical ideas for delegates to take away with them

1) The case Study – How the Business School embeds and assesses placement and employability support for all students, to include students views and outcomes these activities have produced
2) The main part of the workshop will focus on small working groups to discuss and feedback on engaging students beyond assessment, what has worked for their students and how do we communicate with the students so that they are able to translate these skills and knowledge from assessment to application

As part of the workshop I will display visual messages so the delegates can see how this activity looks in the Business School at Canterbury Christchurch.

Experiences covered
• The planning of the activities; resources, timings and management
• Ensuring they will be of interest and relevance to all students across the Business School
• The link to assessment
• Marketing and communications
• Reflection and application by the students

Issues to be addressed
• Engaging students in activities
• Student defining their own success and understanding how to achieve it
• How do we measure the usefulness of these activities
Presentation

The Christchurch Business School model

- 20% of core modules at level 4, 5 & 6 given over to a assessed piece of work relating to Business Futures activities
- 20 credit work based learning module
- Assessment Content
  - 2 weeks of employability activities in November and February – no teaching in these weeks
  - All students recommended to attend 4 sessions over the 2 weeks.
  - 1 FTE (50% of the role)

The Christchurch Business School model

Work Based Learning Module

- 20 credits
- 23 Weeks based around securing a placement – from understanding your skills to securing the job
- 3 week placement
- Assessment split into two parts: pre placement preparation and reflective essay on their experience on placement

So far so good……

The students have got access to lots of activities that are embedded into the curriculum and not having to use ‘their’ spare time for these activities but ……..

There are challenges and more important the understanding of relevance beyond assessment and the support needed

Challenges of the model

- No electronic registration process in place – so difficult to monitor ‘actual’ attendance as opposed to ‘booked’ attendance.
- This is the only seminar I have on Tuesday so not worth coming in for.
- No participation mark for the session
- Students struggle to relate their experience at a session to their assessment.
- I went to that last time/year’ we don’t need to go and no one ever checks
- My bus was delayed so missed the session…. What do I do now ?

The feedback from staff

I asked my academic colleagues who assess the core modules the following questions:

“what impressions do you get that actually attending these sessions has made for a more robust piece of work from the student and do you think any/some of them can see the benefit beyond their assessment.”

“My impression is that most students are driven by the mark. However, the assessment has helped a select few to become more strategic in their approach to job hunting.”

Frankly very little……. as we have previously discussed this is stemming from the very low level of input from Careers around the development of the task of preparing a good CV. If the marks were given as intended for that then yes it would have a positive effect and a meaningful one as we are all aware that a good quality CV is probably at least as important as the qualification in the application process…..

The reflection pieces indicate that for some students there is a glimmer of the demands in the real world coming through and so for that alone it is worth it but for far too many it is not really concentrating their minds on their entry to work as it still seems far off in the second year.”

Yes some students take the skills analysis really seriously and produced an excellent piece of work but they still struggle to see how the material they wrote in this can be translatable to applications and interview situations.”
Students feedback

- “without the mock assessment centre I would have found the real one really tough”
- “The sessions are really good but I struggle to relate them to doing my assignment”

So far I have only heard back from 1 out of the 3 from last week which was enterprise. I have been successful, so starting June 6th I will begin my placement year with enterprise. I really just wanted to thank you more than anything for introducing me to ASI and for putting on such a great business futures event. Should you want me to help out with placement year students/business futures events after my year in industry please feel free to contact me.

“Found the week very helpful especially as my search for a post graduate career has started to heat up, the skills that were taught in the week were skills that I feel will really benefit me in the near future.”
“Believe that the events put on were very good and believe that as a result of these events, I have been placed in a better position when applying for jobs”
“The link between the Management and Leadership assessment and Business Futures is tenuous”

Summa of feedback

What does the feedback tell us:
- Suggestion that activities are worthwhile from both sides
- Glimmer of understanding between translation between assessment and real world
- More work needs to be done around the development of core skills
- Issues around what the ‘centre’ is offering
- Some student as we have seen from the comments can absolutely see the value of these activities because it has translated into tangible outcomes

So we can see the feedback and it all looks positive but this is what happened next ………

Graduate sent through this………
2nd Graduate sent through this

This brings us back

2 things very clear

More work is needed to support the students in their understanding of transferable skills

It works……. It is the support and access to opportunity that are students need to be successful

So what is next for Christchurch Business School

- Business Futures will now be a label used to run Employability events across the year, which students can participate in and use towards their assessment.
- We have decided to run a week of events in January with a calendar of events across the rest of the academic year commencing from September 2016 to strengthen the understanding between assessment and real world.
- Return to some of Core topics
- 2017- all programmes will need to have embedded/assessed activities as part of the offer

What we hope it will achieve……

- The opportunity for students to attend events across the year as well as during the February week
- More flexibility when inviting outside speakers and facilitators.
- A better chance to tailor activities towards different year groups and offer the support that is relevant to them in their journey.
- Have an ongoing skills development programme for the students throughout their time at university.
- Keep the message around employability open all the time and not just something that happens in one week.

Over to you

- Discuss and feedback on engaging students beyond assessment, what has worked for your students and how do we communicate with the students so that they are able to translate these skills and knowledge from assessment to application.
Introduction

This case study provides an analysis of the perspectives of undergraduate students, at Level 4 and 5, towards the completion of mandatory work related learning modules in the School of Human Sciences at Newman University. This analysis also includes a review of the model utilised at the university to enhance student employability experiences.

Within the context of an emerging graduate employability agenda (Helyer, 2016; Huddleston and Stanley, 2012; Knight and Yorke, 2004; Maher and Graves, 2008; Taylor et al, 2016) it has been recognised that the development of employability levels in university students is a key consideration within modern day higher education institutions (HEIs). It has been put forward that “a concern for employability aligns with a concern for academic values and the promotion of good learning” (Knight and Yorke, 2004: 1), and that “higher education at its best, contributes powerfully to well-based claims to employability because it proceeds by those processes and promotes those outcomes that researchers across the world have found to be valued in the graduate labour market” (Knight and Yorke, 2004: 5). It is now the expectation that higher education institutions “should not only provide an excellent grounding in the subject studied but also that they will provide excellent information and resources to enhance employability” (Maher and Graves, 2008: 9).

It has been proposed that employability is “associated with possessing qualities that facilitate and enhance employment opportunities” (Maher and Graves, 2008: 2). Hillage and Pollard (1998) reasoned that employability depends on the knowledge, skills and attributes an individual possesses, and the way they use these assets and present them to employers. In attempting to find a definition of terms, it is widely agreed that graduate employability is defined as a set of achievements – skills, understandings and personal attributes – that makes graduates more likely to gain employment and be successful in their chosen occupation, which benefits themselves, the workforce, the community and the economy (Knight and Yorke, 2004; Yorke and Knight, 2006).
What is interesting is that many researchers (Harvey and Morey, 2002; Lees, 2002; LTSN, 2002) point out that employability is a process rather than a product of education. This means that employability experiences are something students encounter throughout their time at university, by engaging in a variety of activities. In this respect, Tomlinson (2008) identified things that university students can do to improve their employability, which included gaining work experience. A survey of senior graduate recruiters at organisations featured in the Times Top 100 Graduate employers found that “more than half said they would be unlikely to offer a job to an applicant with no previous experience, irrespective of their degree result or the university they had attended” (High Fliers, 2014: 41).

Such a consideration for the advancement of the employability of university students has recently been heightened by developments proposed by the Department for Business Innovation and Skills (DBIS). First, via the publication of a green paper – Fulfilling our potential. Teaching excellence, social mobility and student choice (DBIS, 2015) – and then through a white paper – Success as a knowledge economy: Teaching excellence, social mobility and student choice (DBIS, 2016) – the government has set out that universities should be judged in regards to their work in their area. For example, universities will be required to publish “employment and graduate earnings data” (DBIS, 2015) in order to inform the choices of prospective students.

What is evident is that there is no set model for the development of graduate employability used within HEIs, with little evidence of systematic thinking about how best to do it (Eden, 2014), meaning that “institutions and even individual departments and academics will vary widely in their approaches to developing employability” (Maher and Graves, 2008: 24). Reflecting on such a situation, Maher and Graves (2008) note that “it seems strange that there is so little commonality in approaches taken by universities to enhance employability” (p24). Subsequently, there is interest in the approaches (i.e. models) being used in different HEIs in attempting to enhance the employability of their students (Mason et al, 2003; Yorke, 2004).

The model used at Newman University – the Newman University Graduate Employability Model (NuGEM) – is based upon a strategic decision that all students within the School of Human Sciences, from a range of undergraduate programme areas (including: Art; Business; Counselling; Criminology; Drama; English; Education and Professional Studies; History; PE and Sports Studies; Psychology; Studies in Primary Education; Theology and Working with Children, Young People and Families) should complete mandatory work related learning modules, both at Level 4 and Level 5 (which includes 100 hours of work placement, at a location of the students choosing), with an optional work placement module available at Level 6. Such an approach is designed to ensure that the degrees offered to students are relevant to the modern world, which is a key feature at Newman. Indeed, the provision of work
placement modules is seen as an important part of the curriculum in developing transferable skills useful for further study or employment after graduation (Newman University, 2014).

Newman University – the focus of this case study – is based in the south west of Birmingham. The university was founded in 1968 as Newman College of Higher Education, with an initial focus on teacher training. From 2008 to 2013 it was known as Newman University College, until gaining full university status in 2013. In the 2014/15 academic year, 2725 students were enrolled. Of these, 82% were completing undergraduate programmes (72% full-time and 28% part-time), with all students being domicile in the UK. In line with the widening participation agenda in higher education (Vignoles and Murray, 2016), the student body at Newman University may be seen to be diverse and inclusive. 76% of students are female, 29% are over 21 years of age on entry (i.e. mature), 45% are identified as Black and Minority Ethnic (BME), and 20% come from a socio-economic background classed as professional. Moreover, Newman University tends to recruit from its immediate locality, with 59% of all students coming from Birmingham, and 92% coming from within the West Midlands. As a result, 92% of students live off-site and travel to university.

As a Catholic university, it is committed to a ‘Mission of Service’ which directs all activities towards a demonstrable impact on society and implies making higher education accessible to “the poor or members of minority groups who customarily have been deprived of it” (Pope John Paul II, 1990). Accordingly, Newman University prides itself in its distinctiveness by name and by nature. It is a values-driven university representing an academically excellent community of learning, informed by the Catholic ethos, which provides a clear underpinning of its mission. It is committed to its motto ‘ex umbriis in veritatem’ (out of the shadow into truth) and therefore provides high quality, accessible academic and professional education based on respect for others, social justice and equity. As a Catholic university, it seeks to make a positive difference to individuals and communities via the contribution of its staff, students and graduates. Through a formative approach to education, Newman University is able to allow students “to grow not only to gain employment but to have the capacity to remain employable and manage their career successfully” (Newman University, 2014).

A specific feature of NuGEM is the drive to embed student employability in the curriculum by way of fostering the interaction of networks of individuals and groups, or what has been termed the ‘employability figuration’ (Dunning and Hughes, 2013; Hagan, 2012; Landini, 2013; Taylor et al, 2016). That is to say, NuGEM embraces a wide variety of partners (figure 1), who are engaged in enhancing the employability experiences of Newman University students.
Another significant characteristic of NuGEM is the involvement of the university careers service, acting as an integral partner in the delivery of the mandatory work related learning modules. Specifically, this involves providing guidance to Level 4 students (e.g. how to engage with employers), with support and advice for Level 5 students, especially in how to find and secure a work placement. It is proposed that such a collaborative approach – whereby the careers service works alongside academic staff in the delivery of the work related learning modules – may be seen to be desirable. As a matter of fact, Knight and Yorke (2003: 15) recommend that “a preferred way of enhancing an institution’s contribution to student employability is to strengthen the careers service”, and that this should be “embedded into the curriculum and not merely ‘bolted on’ to courses” (Maher and Graves, 2008: 48). However, this is not always the case, as in many HEIs, the careers service often “lacks a curriculum presence” (Knight and Yorke, 2003: 15). So, although collaboration between academic departments and university careers services is rare, “it is in everyone’s interests for departments to integrate guidance and support provided by specialists [e.g. careers specialists] in generic learning and study practices” (Knight and Yorke, 2004: 138).

**Data collection**

Within this case study, data has been collected from multiple sources in order to provide an evaluation of the mandatory School of Human Sciences Level 4 and Level 5 work related learning modules at Newman University. Feedback has been obtained from key partners in the Newman ‘employability figuration’, namely, students, university (subject specialist) tutors and work placement hosts (i.e. local employers). This has taken the form of: mixed methods questionnaire completed by Level 4 and 5
students (all of whom participate in the mandatory work related learning modules); feedback from tutors involved in the supervision of students during their work placement, in the form of a SWOT analysis; and feedback received from work placement hosts via the completion of a placement evaluation form.

Findings: An evaluation of the mandatory work related learning modules

It was evident from the data collected that students (98%) felt that the completion of a work placement during their undergraduate studies is important. A key reason for this, was the opportunity to gain work-based experience. In the words of one student, “it is an opportunity to gain recent and relevant experiences from a setting that you hope to go into for employment”. Further reasons included: the development of their skills and abilities through placement; a greater understanding of employer expectations; and assistance in making future career choices. Work placements are also seen by students as an opportunity to relate theoretical concepts developed during their degree course to practice in the workplace, or as one student put it: “work placement is great to put theory into practice. Using what we have learnt in lectures towards our placement”.

In specifically evaluating the mandatory Level 4 module (PLU403: Preparation for work placement) just over three quarters (78%) of students actually felt that the module prepared them for their work placement in their second year (figure 2). Features of the module that were identified as being most useful included: hearing from guest speakers (or as was pointed out by one student, “hearing from people in real employment”); subject specific input through seminar sessions delivered by subject specialist tutors; support from the careers service within the modules such as “providing details about all the possibilities” and “CV writing”; the learning resources provided to students via a virtual learning environment (VLE); and “the thorough insight into employability and entrepreneurship”.

![Figure 2: Level 4 students’ perspective on whether module PLU403 prepares them for their second year work placement.](image-url)
However, concerns have been raised in regard to the Level 4 module during the last academic year. For instance, 26% of the students never attended any of the whole group (generic-focused) lecture sessions, with 42% attending once or never. Feedback from the students indicates concerns relating to: the number of ‘generic’ lecture sessions; the amount of work required (particularly outside of lecture times); and the mode of delivery. All of which led one student to suggest that “it does seem rather pointless”. Similarly, in providing feedback, subject tutors involved in the module identified issues such as: poor student attendance; over assessment; students failing to see the relevance of course; a system that does not cater for mature students; not enough subject specific sessions, and too much focus on employability and enterprise.

Within the mandatory Level 5 module (PLU502: Work placement), students are able to select the venue for their 100 hours of work placement. Data (figure 3) shows that 42% of students chose to complete their placement in a school setting, whilst 32% selected a placement connected to services (education, health, social). Such choices on the part of the students may be seen to be reflective of the portfolio of degree programmes offered within the School of Human Sciences (appendix 1), and the long standing reputation of the institution for teacher training.

![Figure 3: Level 5 student work placement destinations (2015-16).](image)

In evaluating the Level 5 work placement module, students identified useful elements to be: the opportunity to learn by working with others; having “the freedom to choose [their] own placement”; and support received [from university staff and workplace supervisors] during the placement. It was also evident that students valued the chance to develop a range of skills and attributes during their placement (figure 4). This may be seen to be of great importance, as a degree has become an essential prerequisite for a wider range of occupations, meaning that graduate employers are becoming
increasingly concerned with evidence of skills and competencies, and less concerned with qualifications (HECSU, 1999). If truth be told, the needs of the economy and employers, is not for young people with an endless list of qualifications, or ‘pieces of paper’, but young people with skills that will be useful in the workplace (Crebert, et al, 2007; Donovan, 2005; Pring, 2004). It has been reported that soft skills such as communication, initiative, interacting with customers and team working need to be taken much more seriously (Coughlan, 2015). In spite of this, it is significant that there has been a persistent undercurrent of opinion amongst employers and politicians, to the effect that, graduates lacked a number of the skills that businesses needed (Yorke, 2004), and that there continues to be “discontent among some employers that university programmes are not producing graduates with appropriate skills” (Maher and Graves, 2008: 10). Knight and Yorke (2004) highlight that within many representative employer groups there is an opinion that “graduates should have better interpersonal skills, writing, presentation, listening and teamwork skills” (p8).

It has been recorded (High Fliers, 2014) that work experience has become a central feature of the graduate recruitment process, and that research makes it clear what a significant difference work experience can have for graduates. Within the current study, as a consequence of completing the Level 5 module, 84% of the students believed that their work placement had positively impacted on their employability by providing more “experience”, whilst developing “new skills” and “confidence”. Consequently, 80% of the students indicated that they felt their work placement had helped prepare them for their future careers. In fact, it was suggested by (Level 5) students that “the experience is vital and helpful”, as it enables them to “work as a member of the team”, whilst also providing “more focus for future employment”.

Figure 4: Skills and attributes Level 5 students felt they developed during their work placement.
In further evaluating the module, feedback from work placement hosts highlighted that they felt students taken for placements were an asset to their company, and that the experience was of value to the student. Comments from placement hosts included:

- “Both students we hosted were excellent and contributed to a major project we are working on”.
- “Your student was an asset to the business and we intend to stay in touch with her moving forward”.
- “The student was such a dedicated person and fitted well with the team, she was a quick learner and diligent with her work ... I am happy to have her volunteer with us post placement”.

Following on, university tutors (involved in supervising Level 5 work placements) highlighted that their students were able to: gain valuable work experience; develop current and new skills; make links between prior taught modules and practice; and reflect on their learning from placement.

**Recommendations**

It is put forward that the Newman University Graduate Employability Model (NuGEM) does provide important experiences for students in respect of improving graduate employability, especially through opportunities for work placements, careers advice and guidance and enterprise opportunities. However, findings from this study indicate that although this model for enhancing student employability experiences has been implemented with the best of intentions, and with the graduate employability agenda in mind, feedback from both students and staff is mixed, as a number of challenges are faced by those involved. As a result, it is noteworthy that there is evidence of resistance, both on the part of both students and staff, towards NuGEM.

Whilst one student reflects the views of some in suggesting that the Level 5 work placement module is the “best taught module so far”, another student appears to represent the views of many in stating that “I do feel PLU is the ‘tick box’ module for the university”. Students further pointed out that issues arise for them in respect of “the difficulty in finding a placement in the area I would like”; the quality of the work placement experience (e.g. “some days I felt unneeded on placement” and “sometimes I didn’t have anything to do all day”); and problems with time management due to “not enough time to do my paid job, placement, essays and look after my family”.

Following on, university tutors have expressed a concern that NuGEM – with its focus on employability – as they feel there is in danger of “promoting a functionalist neo-liberal view of education”, which “promotes learning as a way of getting a job and not in a wider sense i.e.to become a more rounded human being”, and that “the focus on employability can inhibit the development of values”. Such
perceptions may be seen to be rooted to the Newman University ideology of a ‘mission of service’. That is to say, that rather than placing, as various tutors highlighted, too much of a focus upon “employability and enterprise”, a greater consideration should be given to promoting a more values-based approach to work placements, based on developing respect for others, social justice and equity.

Linked to this, it has been previously noted (Lomas, 1997; Tapper and Salter, 1995) that there is an “ideological struggle between those who view higher education as having a primarily economic purpose (arguably the government and employers) and those who are driven to protect the ‘traditional liberal ideal’ of education (the academics). Knight and Yorke (2004) commented that some university lecturers “are suspicious of the idea that higher education can, or should, contribute to student employability” (p18), and that for many of them, a focus on employability is “an intrusion on the proper concerns of academic life”. This may be seen to be the case as “many academics feel that the employability agenda is too driven by government and employers and this represents an attack on academic freedom” (Maher and Graves, 2008: 13). This can lead to a concern, often expressed by academic staff, that the discourse of employability could jeopardize the established quest for wisdom and related academic values (Barnett, 1994; Knight and Yorke, 2004). Instead, many academics feel that the curriculum should focus on developing the students understanding of the subject, with softer employability ‘skills’ (e.g. communication, team working, problem solving, etc.) emerging as a natural by-product of the students’ educational experiences (Knight and Yorke, 2004).

As a result, Knight and Yorke (2004: 14) pointed out that there is a sense that activities focused on employability “occupy the margins of higher education” and that the actual level of interest and activity connected to employability within UK universities “can only be described as low”. Conversely, it is put forward that “there is considerable evidence that higher education is increasingly expected to contribute to the labour market and national wealth by equipping students with skills for employment (Little, 2004). In effect, “universities need to play a central role in up-skilling the workforce” (Maher and Graves, 2008: 1), as it is contended that higher education can, and should, help students develop the ‘assets’ that employers value (CRE, 2005; Knight and Yorke, 2004).

In summary, it is manifest that further developments are needed within the NuGEM. Specifically, this centres on the need to address the current perceptions of both students and staff; a need to create a more positive climate around the mandatory work placement modules, and a need to address issues regarding the structure, content, relevance, and use of differentiation in PLU403. This is particularly important as currently, students are reporting that they do not feel prepared for their Level 5 placement (figure 5).
Figure 5: Level 4 students feeling of preparedness for their work placement in Level 5.
References:


Appendix 1

Undergraduate degree subject areas in the School of Human Sciences (Newman University).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Accounting &amp; Finance</th>
<th>English &amp; Creative Writing</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Applied Social Science</td>
<td>Health &amp; Social Care</td>
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<tr>
<td>Art &amp; Design</td>
<td>History</td>
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<tr>
<td>Business &amp; Management</td>
<td>Mathematics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Computing &amp; IT</td>
<td>PE &amp; Sports Studies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Counselling</td>
<td>Psychology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Criminology</td>
<td>Teacher Training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drama</td>
<td>Theology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Early Childhood Education &amp; Care</td>
<td>Working with Children, Young People &amp; Families</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economics</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education &amp; Multi Professional Practice</td>
<td>Youth &amp; Community Work</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Placement Pal – Tried, tested and proved to work – Final year students as PAL leaders supporting second year students looking for placement

Vianna Renaud
Faculty of Media and Communication, Bournemouth University
01202 752441
vrenaud@bournemouth.ac.uk

Abstract

The aims and objectives of the workshop are to highlight and showcase the experience the Faculty of Media and Communication at Bournemouth University has had with the introduction of a Placement PAL system for the Corporate and Marketing Communications Framework. Designed to increase student engagement and student confidence towards their sandwich placement year, final year students returning from their own third year sandwich placement experience were selected to support second year students.

Experiences Covered

The pilot has been in place for three years. Each year adjustments were made based on student and PAL feedback, in addition to feedback received at our Student Experience forum discussions.

Issues to be addressed

I will discuss the lessons learned throughout the 3 year pilot and how this has been developed further as we are going to expand further, not only as a Faculty, but also as an Institution as the programme will be rolled out across the campus for the 2016-17 academic year.

Presentation
Placement PALs – Programme of topics

- Sharing their personal story about their placement journey, from placement search to placement completion and personal/professional impact.
- Helping students explore their thoughts on employability attributes, identifying suitable placement opportunities, and developing relevant skills.
- Reviewing the importance of having written contracts, Health and Safety inductions, risk assessments, and general awareness of the professional environment.
- Exploring how to make the most of the placement experience by taking personal responsibility and reflecting upon the learning to help steer their final year.

Resources

- ASET – Integrating work and learning: http://www.asetonline.org/
- Association of Graduate Careers Advisory Services (AGCAS): http://www.agcas.org.uk/
- International Association of Student Affairs and Services (IASAS): http://www.iasas.org/
- Guardian Student (Students can sign up: https://www.theguardian.com/education)
- RateMyPlacement - https://www.ratemyplacement.co.uk/
- Higher Education Academy: http://www.heacademy.ac.uk/workstreams-research/themes/employability
- EmplORABILITY (Opportunities for disabled and dyslexic students & graduates): http://www.emplability.org.uk/
- LinkedIn – Vianna Renaud

Contact

- Vianna Renaud
- Placement Development Advisor, Faculty of Media and Communication
- vrenaud@bournemouth.ac.uk
- LinkedIn – Vianna Renaud

References

- National Careers Week, etc.
- More confidence in applying for jobs after having the opportunity to reflect upon their own placements experience to share with second year students.
- Indirect impact to BU – Placement PALs help provide role models and their enthusiasm for the BU community and any previous Placement PALs have maintained contact with PDA / Alumni Coordinator.
- Some have stayed involved with campus through careers talks, National Careers Week, etc.

Potential Pitfalls

- Poor student attendance at Placement PAL sessions
- Lack of academic support for sandwich placement experiences
- Peer group pressures
- Uninformed assumptions about student finance and perceived ‘lack’ of funding
- General lack of student engagement
- Lack of awareness of the industry they are preparing for

Impact on Placement PAL leaders

- Reported skills the Leaders gained from the scheme: facilitation, confidence dealing with large/small groups, reflection, coaching and mentoring, communication, building amongst many more.
- Gaining leadership skills was mentioned by all Leaders.
- All Leaders had added the role to their CV and over half had used it and related examples in interviews for past University work.
- More confidence in applying for jobs after having the opportunity to reflect upon their own placements experience to share with second year students.
- Indirect impact to BU – Placement PALs help provide role models and their enthusiasm for the BU community and any previous Placement PALs have maintained contact with PDA / Alumni Coordinator.

Strategy:

- Sessions will be monthly: October, November, December, February and March
- Placement PALs will link and contribute to:
  - Faculty and University social media channels
  - Deliver sessions at the Faculty Placement talks
  - Attend Placement Office Open Days
  - Work with Academic Programme leaders to raise the awareness of the benefits of sandwich placement years
  - Contribute to any other placement awareness raising activities

For the 2016-17 academic year 74% of second year courses will have Placement PAL within their scheme across all faculties on both campuses.

• EmployABILITY (Opportunities for disabled and dyslexic students & graduates)
• Higher Education Academy (Workstream)
• Jobs.ac.uk (PDF for academics)
• Rate My Placement - https://www.ratemyplacement.co.uk/
• Association of Graduate Careers Advisory Services (AGCAS)
• ASET – Integrating work and learning - http://www.asetonline.org/
Pre-Placement Preparation –
Equipping Students with the Skills to Succeed?

Placements & Employability Team, Sheffield Hallam University, Howard St, Sheffield S1 1WB
0114 225 6716 (Weds-Friday)
t.cavanagh@shu.ac.uk

Abstract
How do we as practitioners equip our students to secure placements within an increasingly competitive marketplace?
This workshop will encourage delegates to share and reflect on best practice for pre placement support exploring

- the requirements of different student groups, e.g. disability support; overseas students
- the benefits of cross team working between curriculum and none curriculum based teams
- the ‘pre-placement bubble’ - is there is such a thing as too much pre placement support

The aim of this workshop is to help delegates take the next steps in ensuring their students are equipped with the skills to succeed.

The Placements & Employability Team is based in the Faculty of Arts, Computing, Engineering and Science at Sheffield Hallam University. Forming part of the Professional Services Team we work alongside Academic staff, Careers Advisors and Central Services teams to support and equip students with the skills required to secure a Sandwich year placement. We work with students across a broad spectrum of subject groups and place annually between 350 - 380 students per year.

Presentation
Workshop objectives

• Help to define placement success
• Share ideas and best practice of pre placement support provided to students
• Identify the level and type of support students need to help them secure a placement

How do we define placement success?

Session aim: to agree the definition of placement success

Defining placement success group exercise

• In groups discuss what you think placement success is/looks like
• As a group, write your definitions of placement success on the flip chart

Definitions of placement success

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Academic</th>
<th>Student</th>
<th>Employer</th>
<th>Student Support</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Motivated student</td>
<td>Improved employability</td>
<td>Potential recruit</td>
<td>Well prepared students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apply their knowledge</td>
<td>Skill development</td>
<td>Uni network</td>
<td>Succeed on their placement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Module accreditation</td>
<td>Character development</td>
<td>Successful project</td>
<td>Encourage new students</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Developing placements for creative and communication students

How much support is too much?

Session aim: Identify the level and type of support students need to help them secure a placement

The pre placement bubble (10 mins)

Think about the pre placement support you currently offer to students

What would you like to:
• Stop
• Start (continue)
• Change
Articulate - a Toolkit to help us support students in the game of understanding and articulating their competencies

Lorna Warnock and Amanda Barnes
Department of Biology, University of York, Heslington, York Y010 5DD
01904 328558
lorna.warnock@york.ac.uk
amanda.barnes@york.ac.uk

Abstract

Through our engagement with placements and internships, we have recognised that many students at all levels of their education are unfamiliar with the concept of competencies. They are often unsure how to write about their skill set when applying for jobs and placements or how to talk about them when preparing for interviews.

To better support our students in their preparation of successful applications for jobs and work based learning placements we applied for funding from the Higher Education Academy (HEA) to write a Competency Framework for Bioscience sector students to reflect the competencies that are valued by employers. The Framework also includes the levels of these competencies that are expected from undergraduate, Master’s and PhD students, which of course differ considerably. The Framework is available at https://www.heaacademy.ac.uk/node/10074.

To enhance the experience of the students’ overall preparation for the work place, with further funding from the HEA we built on the Competency Framework and developed a Toolkit that includes video case studies of students and employers describing competencies that are valued by employers that we now use in our training sessions. The Toolkit also provides interactive Competency Framework and Internship Planner pdfs that students can use to map their individual skill set and chart their continued professional development. An additional resource are training sessions that can be used to support students in the areas of assessing and articulating competencies, preparation for interviews and developing specific skills in the workplace. We aim to demonstrate how participants can ‘Mix and Match’ these flexible resources and develop the confidence to easily adapt them for all levels of students at different stages of their development. The Toolkit is available at https://www.heacademy.ac.uk/resource/mysterious-language-competencies-helping-your-students-understand-and-articulate-their.

In the workshop we will focus on three topics:
the adaptation of the Competency Framework to the expected competencies of students at a particular stage in their degree and for the specific degree programmes that participants are engaged with. The interactive Competency Framework pdf will also be introduced which will enable both staff and students to produce their own personalised version which they can adapt and build on over time.

- Video case studies in which students and employers talk about the skills needed for the workplace and how to develop these skills. Participants will be made aware of the range of video resources in the Toolkit which they can include when planning future training sessions.

- Adapting the training session ‘Talking about your competencies at interview’ to enhance the interview experience of their own specific student cohorts. Following the workshop, participants will be able to continue to edit and update this and the other training sessions to support the changes in the requirements of the students.

We anticipate that following the workshop, participants will explore the Toolkit for themselves and then be able to guide their students to the resources that will be of most benefit to them given their level of competencies and career aspirations.

Presentation

Articulate – A toolkit to help us support students in the game of understanding and articulating their competencies

Dr. Lorna Warnock
Employability Manager
Dr Amanda Barnes
Employability Officer
Department of Biology
University of York

By the end of this session you will:

- have considered some of the principal competencies sought by employers
- Have considered your students’ experiences and achievements in relation to the competencies in the Framework
- Have started to develop a unique Competency Framework for your student cohort(s)
- Be aware of the Articulate resources online to support your students
**Students Using the CF**

Describe a time where you worked in a team?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Situation</th>
<th>Task</th>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Result</th>
</tr>
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</table>

**What do Employers Think?**

The mysterious language of competencies

Take a look at the Competency Framework – see how it relates to your subject and level of student study and then,

1. In your group, discuss how you can use the Competency Framework to create your own Framework
2. Make a start on a bespoke Competency Framework for a specific student cohort – What unique skills will you need to add for your students? How will you articulate that competency?

**What do Students Think?**

The mysterious language of competencies

How easy will it be to adapt the Competency Framework to create your own bespoke Competency Framework?

What areas can you adapt?

What competencies will you need to add?

Will you be able to send your Competency Framework to employers assess the validity of your adaptations?

**Adapting the CF**

Our Framework is specific to students in the STEM subjects

What competencies would be appropriate for your students in your subject area?

What examples could the students use to describe competencies in their subject area?

**Talking about your Competencies**

Stage three of “The Mysterious Language of Competencies: Helping your students to understand and articulate their professional competencies”

Stage three of “The Mysterious Language of Competencies: Helping your students to understand and articulate their professional competencies” includes listing plans and summarising惠州" states, along with competency guidelines for students to understand and articulate their professional competencies.” The following guidelines include listing plans and summarising惠州" states, along with competency guidelines for students to understand and articulate their professional competencies.”
Talking about your Competencies

Stage three of “The Mysterious Language of Competencies: Helping your students to understand and articulate their professional competencies”

Activities Include:

- Discussion on the interview process
- Discussion of competencies students feel are their weakest
- How to answer competency based questions
- Identifying the competencies employers are looking for from job adverts
- What do you worry about?

Using the Competency Framework provided as a starting point, your students can create their own interactive Competency Framework

Summary

- Employers use the language of competencies to describe the skills required for a role
- Students will have gained and will be developing competencies from their degree and other activities
- The Competency Framework is available as a your reference starting material
- You can create unique Competency Frameworks for your student cohort(s)
- Using the interactive pdf, students can develop their own Competency Framework

lorna.warnock@york.ac.uk
amanda.barnes@york.ac.uk

https://www.heacademy.ac.uk/resource/mysterious-language-competencies-helping-your-students-understand-and-articulate-their
International Healthcare Elective Placements in Low Resource Settings: How can they be optimised to maximise student learning and professional development? (WIP)

James Ackers-Johnson and Natalie Tate
School of Nursing, Midwifery, Social Work & Social Sciences
Room L530, Allerton Building, University of Salford, Salford, M6 6PU
0161 295 2823
J.Ackers@Salford.ac.uk

Research Summary
This paper discusses the pilot study currently being conducted at Salford University, UK. Using a mixed method approach, the study aims to identify the learning outcomes associated with health care elective placements in low resource settings for students. The results of the study aim to help devise cost effective model for student placements in low-income settings that could be up scaled and potentially replicated elsewhere.

Introduction and Background
The Ethical Elective Placement Project (EEP) is a pilot project based in the ‘Knowledge and Place research group’ at Salford University. The project was commissioned by Health Education England (HEE) in 2015 to design, implement and evaluate an innovative, efficient, sustainable and ethical model for running undergraduate elective placements in low and middle income countries for Nursing, Midwifery and Allied Health Professional students.

The objectives of the project were to place 80 students from across the North West of the UK in Uganda and India on 4 week elective placements over a 12 month period. The first student placements began in June 2015 and the final placements were completed in August 2016. The main focus of the study is to evaluate and identify the student learning outcomes as well as any positive or negative impacts the placements had on the hosting organisations and local health care systems. The data collection process for this has been longitudinal using qualitative research methods including interviews, focus groups and participant observations. Each student is interviewed before their placement, during and afterwards.

The results of the data collection (thus far) are discussed in the next section of this paper.

The EEP is built on previous expertise of deploying long term professional volunteers (LTV’s) to Uganda through the Sustainable Volunteering Project (SVP)1, during which time the project coordinators arranged a number of sporadic, often medical, student electives. The majority of which were self-
funded by the students who also arranged their own logistics. The students were linked up with the LTV’s who were able to assist them in planning their placements and supervised them for the duration of their time in Uganda. Through continued project evaluation, the impact of the student placements was monitored and the results were very positive. The students benefitted greatly from the supervision of the LTV and the LTV’s appreciated having the students there to work alongside them.

This formed the basis of the EEP student placement model which links short-term student placements to long-term professional volunteer placements for the mutual benefit of both parties and led to the proposed EEP model to HEE.

**Placement Structure and Management**

It is important to note that the EEP placement structure has evolved since the first funded student placements began in June 2015. We have taken an iterative approach, making a number of changes as we have developed our knowledge and understanding of elective placements. An overview of the key elements of our recommended placement structure and model are shown below.

**Placement Length and Timing**

Ideally, placements need to be available throughout the academic year in order to provide opportunities for all disciplines. Most disciplines work within very tight schedules with quite defined ‘mobility windows’; this is especially true for midwifery. The need for flexibility increases further when placements become within program and are assessed.

**Placement Group**

The optimal group for one placement is between 6-8 students. Larger groups tend to fracture internally resulting in tensions and falling out that detracts from the overall experience. Smaller groups are also better absorbed within hosting facilities. Multi-disciplinary (mixed) placement groups work well and provide exposure to new ideas and problem solving both within the UK team but also in their engagement with local health workers and systems. However mixed discipline visits demand more complex project planning and tighter management on the ground.

**Level of Study**

Whilst students at any level benefit from placements, the optimal timing is towards the end of the second year of study both in terms of influencing their own attitudes towards learning on return and sharing these with their peers but also in terms of placement outcomes in the low resource setting.
Many of the students were mature students who had previous experience and/or degrees; these students tended to show greater resilience and input. Having said this, student feedback suggests (strongly) that all students at any stage in their degree program have benefitted hugely. Following a rigorous recruitment process enabled us to select the students most able to benefit. These processes have improved over the last 6 months with a greater emphasis in selection on tenacity, resilience and team-playing.

**Timetable and Schedule Management**

There is a careful balance to be achieved between autonomy and structure. There is a strong demand (in general) for structured and supervised placements: students from nursing, midwifery and allied health professions prefer greater structure and support. Students also express a strong desire for hands-on clinical placements both in terms of their own learning but also their sense of efficacy and desire to ‘make a difference’. This contrasts with medical students who expect and seek out a higher degree of autonomy and intense clinical exposure rather than wider systems-focused placements. Following feedback from students (and based on their experience of UK placements) we now inform them of their specific placements prior to departure from the UK. We endeavour to provide a range of exposures with students working in at least 2 locations. However, we have begun to discourage those students who want to move through a larger number of locations ‘tasting’ different wards etc. as they fail to establish the strength of relationships conducive to effective learning. This approach is generally viewed by local health workers as a form of voyeurism or volunteer tourism which we hope to avoid. Each student was provided with a Placement Agreement which they had to sign before departure. This included a Code of Conduct on behaviour during the placement. We subsequently found it necessary to add a more specific clause relating to excessive consumption of alcohol.

**Supervision**

The supervision model that we have tried and tested (and modified) rests of a number of inter-linked support structures including:

**Dedicated placement management in the UK**

By staff who have in-depth experience of the host setting and of placing students/volunteers in that environment. Clinical expertise is less important in this role than proven project management and grounded experience and relationships with partner organisations in the low resource setting (LRS).

**Dedicated Placement Management in the LRS**
Here our model supports a dedicated LRS placement manager who is firmly integrated in the local institutions (both academic and health sector) with experience of working with UK volunteers/students. The placement manager meets the students at the airport and is there to support them on a daily basis.

**Clinical Supervision by UK Health Professionals**

The EEP funding model uniquely covers the costs of 1 UK professional volunteer at all times. Where possible (and budget permitting) we will have more than 2 on the ground. They will be from different disciplines. Although logistically they cannot be co-present with each student at every point in time, they are readily available. Regular (daily) debriefings take place with the Placement Manager, the UK Professional Volunteers and the students.

The Professional Volunteers are there to provide clinical supervision and de-briefing and support especially in cases where students encounter patient deaths and near misses. Students based on the neonatal unit all witnessed neonatal deaths. In 2 cohorts this happened on their first day. These deaths are traumatic in themselves and the way of dealing with dead neonates in Uganda shocked students. There are clear cultural issues here (regarding the contact between a mother and a dead baby). We have spent some time during induction sessions discussing this to prepare students but the fact remains that this will happen and students will find it stressful at first. Students have coped well with it over the placement. The UK professional volunteer has played an important role in debriefing and supporting these students. It is important to add here that the students also provided strong support for the UK volunteer in similar circumstances.

Indeed it is clear that the presence of UK students has contributed significantly to the learning experience and support available to long term professional volunteers. Students working alongside the long term volunteer often assisted with complex deliveries and particularly with neonatal care and resuscitation (areas where skills are often found lacking in Uganda). The volunteers have really enjoyed mentoring the students gaining motivation from this experience in what are often quite difficult environments. They also provide strong social support for the volunteers and the project as a whole. This contributes in important ways to the overall (integrated) sustainability of our model.

**Ugandan Co-Workers**

In practice, it is impossible in the Ugandan public health setting to guarantee one-to-one supervision in all placement locations given the turnover of staff, shift patterns and also cultural attitudes towards supervision of students. We are working towards this and the possibility of allocating mentors but at present we cannot guarantee this. Given this situation we have placed students in pairs, wherever possible, and required them to report any incidences of lone working to the placement manager as a matter of urgency.
In most situations students have worked alongside excellent staff and students in mutual learning contexts. Given the breadth of disciplinary backgrounds this has been a learning curve for the placement managers and we are now in a better position to select placements and also anticipate situations where students may experience staff shortages and potential lone working. Responding to these situations has proved beneficial both to the students but also to local health systems enabling us to leverage improvements in staffing, in attitudes towards student supervision (which is improving now) and staff behaviour. By emphasising the necessity of supervision during placements for the UK students we are pushing ahead a model of good practice for Ugandan students. Co-locating the students in training sites is making this possible and efficient.

**Insurance & Risk Assessment**

**Insurance Policy**

All students must provide details of their institutional insurance policies prior to departure. In practice, we have experienced no serious health problems in Uganda. In practical terms it makes things much simpler and actions more clear cut if all of the students are covered by one insurance policy (with one emergency number printed in the Induction Pack). In practice, for the pilot, the University of Salford covered all students. The students from universities outside Salford were also covered by their own insurance policies.

Only one situation arose requiring resort to insurance. This concerned a student in India with a serious back problem (unrelated to the placement). This unfortunate situation nevertheless gave us the opportunity to test the system and we are satisfied that it worked well.

**Medical Questionnaire**

Students, institutions and insurers are required to disclose any medical/health conditions that they are aware of. We will endeavour to support students with particular needs respecting principle of equality of opportunity if we are made aware of them and this complies with our risk assessment process.

**Disclosure**

Prior to departure, we wrote to students’ tutors to formally advise them that the students were planning to join our placement and ask if they knew of any reason why this should not take place. We did experience one case of a student with serious mental health problems that we were not informed

**‘Spoking’ and Exposures**

This is where, from a distinct clinical perspective, the learning is most acute and uniquely valuable. With the exception of the above (complex conditions and late presentations etc.) the area where the students have reported great, and otherwise unachievable learning, is through direct exposure to areas of work that fall outside of their current specialisms. Students have referred to this as ‘spoking out’ or
‘exposures’. Examples cited include opportunities to engage in neonatal training, to work with ambulance drivers or to observe surgical procedures. One of the most poignant examples was cited by child nurses who had been able to assist in deliveries and to receive babies during birth. They reported that they had no opportunity to witness births in the UK and now felt far better able to understand some of the problems they encountered on neonatal units (such as cord infections). Adult nurses were able to observe and assist with deliveries also said this would have a significant impact on their work in A&E, where they regularly see pregnant women but have no specific training in pregnancy or birth. Involvement in HIV clinics is another example as is the experience of seeing patients tested in the lab and counselled immediately afterwards.

“It was good to get some paediatric experience, Salford didn’t offer that when I studied, that’s changed now but we couldn’t have paediatric placements so I had never worked with kids before”
(Occupational Therapy Student, University of Salford)

Transferable Skills
All students commented on the importance of Care, Compassion and resilience. Their stark exposure to situations where care and compassion are lacking reinforces the critical importance of these values. They also recognised the importance of having a strong work ethic including dealing with responsibility and personal role modelling; reporting for work on time; behaving professionally at all times and respecting patient confidentiality (to name a few).

“It wasn’t a great start to my placement; on the first day I walked onto NICU and a baby had just died. The mother was wailing, like really upset, but the staff didn’t seem to say much or do anything to console her. And afterwards the baby was just left there for a long while without being transferred or even covered up. I’d never seen a dead baby before and it really affected me at the time, but I’m sure it made me a stronger person in the long run, like better able to deal with death in the future”
(Children & Young People’s Nursing Student, University of Salford)

Communication
Students frequently referred to the importance of communication and how much they had learnt about communication both with other disciplines/cadres and with other cultures and non-English speakers. Many students learnt to communicate effectively with patients who spoke no English. The only students that really struggled with this were the mental health students where communication is so very
important and translation (by local staff) can sometimes distort the meaning (a good experience in itself).

“Communication skills are a big part of being a paramedic and I definitely developed that, and that was good to learn in a different country as we had to learn how to deal with the language barriers as well, many of the people who came in didn’t speak English. We had to use actions rather than words which was good to learn, which can be a problem over here when people can’t hear us”
(Paramedic Student, Liverpool John Moore’s University)

Management and Team-working
Students quickly began to function as multi-disciplinary team; learning from and supporting one another, and calling on the skills of others when necessary. The process of living together in shared accommodation was a big challenge to many students; they learnt a lot from this as well as working both in high pressure contexts and with local health workers.

Confidence building
The pressure to draw on their skills and their ability to think independently and on the spot increases students’ awareness of the skills they already have and their ability to use them effectively. Students gained confidence and ability to work effectively and imaginatively in critical/emergency situations, exercising effective independent decision-making.

“It’s given me an awful lot of confidence, I thought I was quite confident anyway but going over there and seeing such a different setting, especially as we have so many resources here in the UK but over there had so few, you really had to think about what you were doing and to me it was quite satisfying because I was put in situations where I had to think outside the box and use skills that I never knew I had or skills that may be might have been hiding in the background so overall going over there, it kind of enhanced my confidence to step forward with the skills I have, in the UK”
(Adult Nursing Student, University of Salford)

Working with Limited Resources
Without exception, students referred to their improved ability to manage in situations with scarce resources, to deploy innovative ideas and to think holistically. One example saw students introducing the use of cling film to treat burns in children rather than more expensive gauze, packing and medical tape. Students also gained a greater appreciation and recognition of the importance of mundane and often neglected processes; back-to-basics skills and clinical intuition/reflex. This extends beyond patient
care to protecting themselves as health workers from nosocomial infections and other forms of risk. They all gain a real life understanding of the value of audit and record keeping (again through witnessing the consequences of its absence and bad practice).

“I learnt the value of physical examinations, over there it does not seem like the done thing, when really you could rule out a lot from that. There was one patient who had a big infection and I was trying to explain to the doctor that he had sepsis but he just gave the patient a paracetamol and left him. Eventually we managed to get him to hospital. If I hadn’t done the observations before, he could have just been left on the floor. That really show the importance of doing these observations”

(Adult Nursing Student, University of Salford)

Students also developed their ability to engage in systems thinking (and valuing the NHS). Exposure to an entirely different health system and referral processes enables students to engage in systems thinking; this is something they report as being highly unusual in the UK as their training and experience is so compartmentalised. Students are rarely encouraged to, or even have the opportunity to, step outside of the system they are in to view it from the outside. Linked to this, they learn very concretely how systems work, or fail to work, in the absence of effective preventive / public / community based health care, especially in cases such as childhood disability and mental health.

**Teaching and presentational skills**
The vast majority of students have engaged in teaching, either at formal level within local universities or in a mentoring role on the wards. A specific nuance of this involved learning how to convey information and knowledge as foreigners in hierarchical cultural environments without appearing to threaten health workers. This is a daily challenge and a skill that will prove highly useful in their future roles in the NHS.

**Career Benefits**
Arguably all of the above learning achieved by the students will be indirectly beneficial for their future careers and employability. In some cases, however, the experience of having completed an elective placement in a low-resource setting has been directly attributed to students’ career progression within their subsequent professional careers. A number of students, once completing their undergraduate degrees, have been interviewed for roles within the NHS and have reported that speaking about their experiences in Uganda has stood them ahead of other candidates without the same experience; one student reported having spoken only about his experience in Uganda during an interview, for which he
was offered the job. A small number of students have changed their career plans all together; in 2 cases, adult nursing students decided to retrain in midwifery as a result of their placement experiences.

Conclusions and Recommendations

The paper offers a moment of insight into the subjective experiences of health care elective placements in low resource settings for students. The initial analysis of the data collected strongly suggests that the project is having a positive impact on the students, generating a wealth of learning opportunities in the following key areas:

Clinical/explicit skills, cultural awareness, working with limited resources, transferrable skills (such as the nursing 6 c’s values) and an appreciation of the NHS. These are the main learning outcomes the evaluation process has identified from the student experience with the EEP.

The iterative approach we have taken to our placement structure has allowed us to identify the key issues that create an optimum model. We have found that the LTV’s play a critical role in supporting the students as well as enhancing their learning outcomes and mitigating risk. A further and more in depth evaluation of the EEP and other research conducted around elective placements will be available in the forthcoming Palgrave Pivot book publications:


(Post-Placement Interview with Adult Nursing Student, University of Central Lancashire)
The research conducted for this study has enhanced the current understanding of the student elective placement experience and highlighted the main learning outcomes associated with such placements. The results and discussion will contribute to the existing limited literature available in this area of international learning.

Healthcare elective placements are a rapidly growing phenomena; with a steady increase of elective placement providers it is important to ensure continued evaluation and research into the area of student learning outcomes. This will ensure placements are structured and managed with minimal ethical implications to create optimal and positive outcomes for the students, the placement provider and the host country. Continued research will also encourage professional development and gains to the UK workforce as well as enriching the student experience and enhancing a graduate’s skillset and professional development prior to starting their career.

Project Funding and Partners

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<td>Walker Francesca</td>
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<td>Young Cheryl</td>
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<td>Young Diana</td>
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### ASET Staff Team

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Aspinall</td>
<td>Janet</td>
<td>Administrator</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bullivant-Parrish</td>
<td>Nicola</td>
<td>Learning and Development Adviser</td>
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<tr>
<td>Siva-Jothy</td>
<td>Debbie</td>
<td>Development Manager</td>
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### Guests and Speakers

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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Cadwallader</td>
<td>Gareth</td>
<td>RMP Enterprise Ltd</td>
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<tr>
<td>Copland</td>
<td>Geoffrey</td>
<td>ASET President</td>
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<tr>
<td>Didrichson</td>
<td>Sharon</td>
<td>Specialisterne Northern Ireland</td>
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<tr>
<td>Duckworth</td>
<td>Vicky</td>
<td>Edge Hill University/Helena Kennedy Foundation</td>
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<td>Forbes</td>
<td>Julie</td>
<td>Zodiac Aerospace UK / WES Member of Council</td>
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<tr>
<td>Holliday</td>
<td>Jo</td>
<td>Association of International Student Advisors/University of Sheffield</td>
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<td>Mwanji</td>
<td>Naivasha</td>
<td>Elevation Networks</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rich</td>
<td>Johnny</td>
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<tr>
<td>Russell</td>
<td>Sean</td>
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<tr>
<td>Singh</td>
<td>Gurnam</td>
<td>Coventry University</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wray</td>
<td>Mike</td>
<td>National Association of Disability Practitioners/York St John University</td>
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The Placement and Employability Professionals’ Body

ASET is the professional body for placement and employability staff. It has been at the forefront of developments in sandwich courses and other forms of work placements, in both higher and further education, for more than 30 years. We represent over 1800 academic and administrative placement staff at more than 120 HE and FE institutions.

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

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

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

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

If you wish to discuss any aspect of ASET’s work, please contact the ASET office or any of the Executive Committee Members. Contact details are below:

ASET
The Work-Based and Placement Learning Association
The Burton Street Foundation
57 Burton Street
Sheffield
S6 2HH

Tel: +44 (0)114 234 5197

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

ASET Office

Debbie Siva-Jothy     Development Manager
Janet Aspinall     Administrator
Executive Committee Members

Dr Geoffrey Copland  Formerly University of Westminster  President ex-Officio
Ms Sarah Flynn  University of Hertfordshire  Chair
Mr James Corbin  University of Kent  Vice Chair
Ms Rebecca Evans  University of Leeds  Treasurer
Mr Brian Byers  Ulster University
Mrs Susannah Day  University of Exeter
Mr Mike Davies  University of Wales, Trinity Saint David
Mrs Jo Eaton  University of Hertfordshire
Mrs Rebecca Jones  University of York
Ms Amanda Monteiro  Canterbury Christ Church University
Ms Vianna Renaud  Bournemouth University
Ms Emily Timson  University of Leeds
Prof Colin Turner  Ulster University
Ms Francesca Walker  University of Central Lancashire
Mr Tim Ward  University of Salford

Ms Debbie Siva-Jothy  ASET  ex-Officio

ASET Conference 2017

The next Annual Conference will be 5-7 September 2017 at the University of Kent. Further details available on the ASET website.

www.asetonline.org

Disclaimer

Please note that these proceedings of the 2016 ASET Annual Conference are the views of the presenters, together with a description of the discussions that took place. Nothing either expressed or implied is a legal interpretation; nor is it a statement of the policy or intent of ASET.