

ASET e-Bulletin

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ASET

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

0114 234 5197
aset@asetonline.org

@ASETOnline

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There's a bounce in our step here at ASET HQ this month as the 2016 Regional Hub meetings get underway (details below). Do get in touch if you would like to host a meeting for ASET colleagues in your area. These are free events, supported and led by ASET and a great way to extend your network

In this issue we are also celebrating our 5th year of supporting the Helena Kennedy Foundation awards scheme, with a visit to the House of Lords for ASET Trustee, Jo Eaton to convey hearty congratulations to ASET award winner, Ashli Reid.

Look out for news of more award winners in next month's ASET members' e-Bulletin as the results of the student competition and ASET Bursaries are revealed. The next e-bulletin will be issued w/c 18th April so do forward your news as soon as you can.

Debbie Siva-Jothy aset@asetonline.org www.asetonline.org

Postgraduate Placements – a changing landscape

by Emily Timson, ASET Trustee and Employability Manager,

Faculty of Engineering, University of Leeds

Undergraduate placements generally dominate the landscape which many of us work in. Post graduate placements however are another matter, last year ASET supported a Research Bursary on *The Impact of Placement Experience on Returning Doctoral Students* which highlighted an ever growing uptake of placements for PhD students and the benefits these can have for students and supervisors. Whilst there are examples of best practice as can be seen from the report supervised by Dr Hilary Jones at the University of Sheffield <http://bit.ly/1P7FFTS> , for many institutions, embedded placements for taught postgraduate and research postgraduate programmes are not as

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commonplace. In fact some institutions are only coming around to the idea of undergraduate work placements in some subject areas!

It's safe to say that postgraduate degree courses, with the option of a work placement in some form will be an area we will see continue to grow, due to student demand and universities utilising this as an attractive recruitment tool for international students in a competitive marketplace. From my experience there are far more challenges with developing work placement opportunities for postgraduate students as part of their programme as there are for undergraduates, barriers don't mean we shouldn't seek to increase our student work placement offering at the postgraduate level. Therefore we'd love to hear from our members about their views, experiences, or plans for this area. I've listed a few thoughts below to stimulate conversation – we've set up a LinkedIn discussion if anyone wants to start the ball rolling, we know there is some great practice out there, and members with lots of expertise to share.

1. Are Postgraduate programmes flexible enough to accommodate work placements?

Semester long, yearlong, summer, 6 months could all be possibilities, however when looking to accommodate a work placement, programme structure, administrative procedures, existing teaching patterns and staff appetite are just a few points to consider.

2. About a third of the UK postgraduate market is made up of international students, and in certain subject areas, they account for more than half of the cohort.¹

International students can struggle in a competitive recruitment process to articulate their skills and experiences. With many larger employers having recruitment processes that focus predominately on interpersonal, rather than technical skills, this can make it harder for them to succeed when competing for placements. How many institutions could support the demand in this area if postgraduate were to replicate undergraduate provision?

3. Employer appetite?

Many recruiters I've spoken to are keen to recruit postgraduate students, however, given the statistics above, when asked if an international student would be considered, the dreaded "Would we need to sponsor a visa to keep them?" crops up. Considering the figures above, would employers only be keen on employing postgraduate student they can guarantee can join them without requiring a Tier 2 visa afterwards? Do we see this at the undergraduate level?

4. The UK graduate recruitment market is predominately tailored towards undergraduate students and programmes, we have 'first year insights', 'summer internships', 'industrial placements' and anything in between. The majority of employers aren't set up to accommodate postgraduates, many may consider postgraduate applications for their schemes, but a shift change in the graduate recruitment sector would be required to have the same offering available for postgraduate students.

¹ Overview of postgraduate education - HEFCE 2013

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Regional Hub Meetings

Following our successful launch of Regional Hub meetings last year, in the South East and in the Midlands region, I am delighted to inform you that ASET will soon be at an institution near to more of you, as we launch our 2016 events:

- North 4th April, University of Leeds
- South East 6th April, Bournemouth University
- South West 12th April, Plymouth University

Our regional hubs are themed, and begin by looking at:

Consumer Protection Law and the Competition and Markets Authority

What do placement practitioners need to know?

This is an ideal opportunity to get together with colleagues to discuss one of the most significant changes to the university-student contract in recent years, the inclusion of Higher Education under consumer protection law by the Competition and Markets Authority. Consumer law generally applies to our relationship with undergraduate students, and institutions across the country are having to think about how this impacts on their information provision, terms and conditions, and complaint handling.

All provision, **including placements and employability** support, that is part of the programme is covered and if obligations are not met, we risk; being in breach of consumer law, potential enforcement action, and in some cases students could have the right to take legal action. This hub meeting will focus discussion on the impact for those managing placement provision around points such as:

- Students need accurate information before they apply; what kind of costs are there associated with placement fees, how is the course structured – what is the impact of taking a placement?
- They need to know what support is available, and you must be clear about how much of a guaranteed experience you are promoting as part of the course
- Are you clear about the balance of effort required between you and the students in building relationships with employers, locating vacancies and securing placement opportunities?

With an introduction to the topic from ASET, discussions will then be led by the host institution in a collegiate and relaxed environment. The purpose of the ASET Regional Hubs is for the sharing of good practice, and challenges, and as a networking opportunity. There will also be 'Open House' time for those attending to share or raise anything of interest that is outside the main topic.

This is a free event for ASET member institutions in each region, if you are based at an institution in the North, South East or South West, you should already have received a booking form – if not please contact the ASET

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office. Places are limited and allocated on a first come first served basis. Up to two delegates per institution may register.

If you would like to host the next Regional Hub event for ASET colleagues in your region please contact the ASET office to find out how to get involved.

Spring Staff Development Workshop Programme

We are currently looking at the programme for Autumn 2016, so if there are workshops you would like us to run, or re-run, do get in touch.

Date	Location	W'shop No.	Title
25-Feb	Manchester Metropolitan University	1	Risk Assessment and Due Diligence <small>Booking closed</small>
01-Mar	Manchester Metropolitan University	2	Introduction to Work Placement Management <small>Booking closed</small>
22-Mar	ASET Offices, Sheffield	3	Supporting Disabled Students with Placements <small>Booking closed</small>
19-Apr	Glasgow Caledonian University	4	Placements with SMEs
26-Apr	Manchester Metropolitan University	5	From Placements to Employability
03-May	London - Senate House	6	Placements, Work Based Learning and Social Mobility
17-May	Manchester Metropolitan University	7	Developing Overseas Placements
09-Jun	London - Senate House	8	Marketing for Placements
21-Jun	Manchester Metropolitan University	9	Placements with SMEs
05-Jul	London - Senate House	10	Facing Facebook, Tackling Twitter and Living with LinkedIn
14-Jul	Manchester Metropolitan University	11	Innovation in Placement Assessment

4. Placements with SMEs – engaging and supporting employers and students (SMEs)

Tuesday 19th April (10am-4pm) Glasgow Caledonian University

£165 ASET members/£195 non-members

Engaging with SMEs can be an effective way of generating new and more varied placement opportunities for students. However, considering that many SMEs do not have formal summer or year-long internship/placement recruitment processes, or may not have considered taking on a student/graduate before, there can be barriers that make engagement difficult. In addition, how many of your students are keen to apply for roles with SMEs or understand the value that such experiences can offer?

This participative, staff development workshop aims to show:

- the sources and means by which to locate suitable SMEs
 - the methods for engaging with SMEs (marketing the benefits of taking on students/graduates)
 - ways to overcome student disengagement

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- the service level agreements or contracts to have in place
- how to make life easier for SMEs: things to do before, during and after the internships

Last day for booking : Monday 11th April

5. From Placements to Employability: thinking about the whole student experience (PI-E)

Tuesday 26th April (10am-4pm) Manchester Metropolitan University
£165 ASET members/£195 non-members

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

Last day for booking : Monday 18th April

6. Placements, work based learning and social mobility: exploring pathways to success

Tuesday 3rd May (10am-4pm) Senate House, London
£165 ASET members/£195 non-members

The issues surrounding the social mobility of our students are, again, high on the agenda of late. The Government's Green paper *Teaching Excellence, Social Mobility and Student Choice* (Nov 2015) proposes to "provide greater focus on graduate employability" and "widen participation in higher education" whilst the newly formed (Jan 2016) think tank, the Learning and Work Institute, aims to promote "lifelong learning, full employment and inclusion".

For those of us on the ground, what can we do, practically, to increase the take up of placements by students from disadvantaged backgrounds? Furthermore, what solutions can we share to better engage employers in our communities and nationally in order to further these broad strategic social aims?

In an interactive day of participation and discussion, this workshop will examine ways to support the employability of our students, as well as employers who offer work placements and the like. Delegates will build up a tool-kit of ideas and suggested techniques to use at their institutions.

Last day for booking : Monday 25th April

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7. Developing Overseas Placements (DOP)

Tuesday 17th May (10am-4pm) Manchester Metropolitan University
£165 ASET members/£195 non-members

Graduate employers want students with multicultural awareness, flexibility, adaptability and who are robust enough to deal with business on a global scale.

International placements enable students to develop these highly transferable skills which are proven to increase employability, but Higher Education Institutions can find the development and management of these placements daunting.

“Spending time abroad in a structured way improves student outcomes and prospects in ways that make its encouragement a valid aim for both HE providers and government”. Topics such as insurance, health and safety and visas have the potential to detract from the positive benefits which such placements can offer the parties in these partnerships. Issues relating to visiting students whilst overseas on placements, the costs for HEIs and students, as well as students’ expectations are prevalent too. This highly interactive one-day workshop, led by experienced placement practitioners, will guide you through these areas and many more, with robust frameworks and examples being shared and discussed. The day will also include sound networking opportunities with other delegates and course leaders, as well as the chance to share experiences and good practice in this field.

Last day for booking : Monday 9th May

8. Marketing for Placements (MP)

Thursday 9th June (10am-4pm) Senate House, London
£165 ASET members/£195 non-members

Marketing placements and what we do needs to be adapted to our audiences, of which there are many – students, prospective students (and their parents), academic colleagues, the sector, employers and HE management. Better promotion can lead to an increase in the number of students taking up placements and/or more opportunities being made available by employers to your students. With available technologies naturally evolving, we also need to think about innovative ways to market placements.

In this practical workshop, our facilitators will discuss techniques you can employ to market placements and work based learning programmes to these audiences, and will encourage your participation to share your experiences.

Last day for booking : Thursday 2nd June

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9. Placements with SMEs – engaging and supporting employers and students (SMEs)

Tuesday 21st June (10am-4pm) Manchester Metropolitan University

£165 ASET members/£195 non-members

Engaging with SMEs can be an effective way of generating new and more varied placement opportunities for students. However, considering that many SMEs do not have formal summer or year-long internship/placement recruitment processes, or may not have considered taking on a student/graduate before, there can be barriers that make engagement difficult. In addition, how many of your students are keen to apply for roles with SMEs or understand the value that such experiences can offer?

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- ways to overcome student disengagement
- the service level agreements or contracts to have in place
- how to make life easier for SMEs: things to do before, during and after the internships

Last day for booking : Monday 13th June

10. Facing Facebook, Tackling Twitter and Living with Linked In (#FFTTLL)

Tuesday 5th July (10am-4pm) Senate House, London

£165 ASET members/£195 non-members

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

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

Last day for booking : Monday 27th June

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11. Innovation in Placement Assessment (IPA)

Thursday 14th July (10am-4pm) Manchester Metropolitan University
£165 ASET members/£195 non-members

There's more than one way to....assess a placement. From vlogs and blogs, to PDP and journals, essays and reports, posters and presentations, self-reflective practice and peer-assisted assessment, our facilitators will introduce contemporary, relevant and authentic methods of assessment for placements and work based learning models. In this participative workshop, delegates will be invited to engage in discussion and dialogue on the topic including exploring issues such as:

- What are you assessing?
- Who is involved in the assessment?
- Is it fit for purpose?
- How to encourage your students to engage in reflective practice

Last day for booking : Monday 4th July

Helena Kennedy Foundation Awards Scheme

Baroness Helena Kennedy works tirelessly with her charitable organisation that provides funding and opportunity to young people who typically do not have access to Higher Education, whether that be because of their social situation or because of lack of access to funds.

Each year ASET funds one of the many bursaries that the foundation awards to students from across the UK to enable them to study for an HE qualification that contains an element of placement within the course.

I was recently honoured to represent ASET at the ceremony where students were awarded with certificates to mark their bursaries in front of an audience of proud parents, guests and mentors which was held on the terrace at the House of Lords.

The occasion was a celebration of all that is good about Widening Participation in Higher Education and showcased some emotional stories of how the bursary had changed the student's journey, not just in their educational careers but in all aspects of their lives.

This year the ASET bursary has been awarded to a mature student in her late twenties who had returned to study Law at Liverpool John Moores after her two children reached school age. She plans to work in either the Prison, or Probation



Baroness Helena Kennedy and Ashli Reid

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service when she graduates, and when I spoke to her about why she was undertaking her degree, she showed real drive and determination to succeed in her chosen career. She also felt it was important to her to be a strong female role model to her daughters.

She had used her bursary to purchase a good quality laptop and set up an office space in her home as was treating her degree 'like a job'. She was adamant she would have not have been able to succeed in her degree without the support that ASET and the Helena Kennedy Foundation had given her.

For more information about how students from your institutions can benefit from a Helena Kennedy bursary or to find out how to become a sponsor institution, visit <http://www.hkf.org.uk>

The Frame

ASET colleagues at Goldsmith's, University of London have recently launched their Careers Service publication **The Frame**. [Issue 1](#) looked at Academic Skills, and [Issue 2](#) Co-curricular Activities.

The latest https://issuu.com/theframe/docs/the_frame_3 is focused on approaches to supporting students' personal and professional development in HE, in particular the value and impact of careers education, work placements and internships.

ASET Chair Sarah Flynn was delighted to be invited to contribute to this edition, and her article can be seen on page 35.

And Finally

Please send your contributions for next month's e-Bulletin by Friday 15th April