

# Parallel Sessions

Day 1

Tuesday 3rd September

**Stream 1 12:45-13:30**

## Regional Hub Sessions



Room N105

N106

N108

N205

N208

Scotland  
and Ireland

South  
West

North

South  
East

Midlands

**Stream 2 16:00-17:00**

### Session 1

**Title:** "I've found this amazing unpaid marketing placement in Venezuela"  
– supporting students with non-standard placement preferences

**Presenter(s):** **Jamie Bettles and Clare Harding**, ASET Conference Sponsor, **Pagoda Projects**

**Time:** 16:00-17:00

**Room:** N105

### Abstract

Not every student makes it onto a product tasting placement with Cadburys or the £25k/year placement scheme with Deloitte. Some students won't leave Sheffield and some will complete their placement in a 'Top 10 Most Dangerous' country.

With post-brexit uncertainty and an ever-competitive placement market, our workshop looks at ways in which you can ensure that all of your students can complete a placement, whether you're pushing the student out of their comfort zone, or they are pushing you outside of yours.

### Session Outline:

*Section 1 (20 mins): Unearthing non-standard placements at home or overseas*

- Outline our experience in locating paid placements in Manchester
- Look at non-standard destinations in which there are paid placements available
- Discuss: How can we encourage students to consider a placement outside of their comfort zone?

*Section 2 (20 mins): Supporting students in non-standard destinations*

- How did we risk-assess Mexico as a placement destination?
- What are the learning points from our first cohort of students?
- Discuss: What would be on your student checklist when they embark on a placement in a non-standard destination?

### Session 2

**Title:** We are all in this together! Assisting Programme Teams to map employability to support TEF developments

**Presenter(s):** Deborah Pownall, Liverpool John Moores University

**Time:** 16:00-17:00

**Room:** N106

#### Abstract

The careers and employability agenda has become an integral part of Higher Education (HE) provision in the UK with graduate employability outcomes now part of the Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) introduced in 2017 as core metrics and institutional quality benchmarks.

The contributors have applied their 'Institutional Employability Mapping Tool' to help Subject Programme Teams to identify where teams could develop student employability strategies.

The impact of the 'Institutional mapping Tool' has already been proven in a number of settings. The authors were engaged by the Algerian Department of Higher Education and Science in 2017, delivering the workshop in three Algerian Universities. One participant stated;

*'It was a pleasure – I've learned so much new information that's useful for developing our institutional employment strategy'.*

The Employability Mapping Tool mapping has now been completed by a number of Liverpool John Moores University Programme Teams with positive feedback being received such as;

*'As a relatively new member of staff, it helped me to think more deeply about how to incorporate employability into my teaching and general programme delivery'.*

The workshop aims to explain how this was achieved, gaining the support of senior leadership during the process of working with Subject Programme Teams.

### Session 3

**Title:** Enhancing student employability in the digital age

**Presenter(s):** Laileng Fong and Joanna Ramsay, *Warwick University*

**Time:** 16:00-17:00

**Room:** N108

#### Abstract

Join us to:

- explore a typical Warwick student's online journey through work-related thinking, learning and practice
- hear about how our online courses were developed and promoted
- find out how research and student feedback are contributing to continuous development

Gen Z, also known as 'digital natives' were born into a world of communications and technologies...

- \* First mobile phone call by Martin Cooper of Motorola, 1973
- \* Internet begins, 1983
- \* Gen Z born, mid-90s to early 00s
- \* LinkedIn launches, 2003
- \* Facebook becomes public, 2004
- \* Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) introduced, 2006
- \* Smartphone/tablet use explodes, 2007-2010
- \* Gen Z starts entering University, 2013

With increased expectations from growing numbers of student consumers and a shortage of resources demanding careers professionals 'do more with less', Gen Z's affinity with technology is the opportunity to increase and enhance engagement with today's students.

Combining knowledge of the employment sector with technology, Warwick launched the "Getting Started with Work Experience" and "Work Experience Learning & Development" Moodle courses in Autumn 2018. Aimed to help students seek, prepare and reflect on work experience, around 1,600 have now enrolled.

The "Internships, Placements and Work Experience" portal has also been developed to support employers working with Warwick students.

#### Session 4

**Title:** 'It takes one to know one' – Reflections from a Peer to Peer employability coaching and mentoring project

**Presenter(s):** **Vianna Renaud**, *Bournemouth University*

**Time:** 16:00-17:00

**Room:** **N205**

#### Abstract

In promoting work based and placement learning opportunities, we have seen the ever constant change of student support needs across the HE sector. Whilst facing challenging times, not only from a resource perspective but also from a student engagement perspective, we as employability professionals need to be creative in how we approach our work.

In this session, lessons gained from a pilot peer to peer employability project will be discussed and explored as something that could greatly impact the student experience. By drawing upon the proven success of Peer Assisted Learning within HE, delegates will be able to discuss how applying the same principles to a more employability focused theme could be developed and gain insight from the researcher and a student participant.

#### Session 5

**Title:** Why are placement visits important for students taking a placement year?

**Presenter(s):** **Helen St-Clair Thompson**, *Newcastle University*

**Time:** 16:00-17:00

**Room:** N208

#### Abstract

In a competitive job market it is becoming increasingly important for Higher Education Providers (HEPs) to focus on employability, including the offering of placement years. Delivering a quality service to students on placement requires institutions to provide support to students throughout the placement process. Often this includes visiting students on placement. However, today, when educational institutions are carefully scrutinising how their money is spent, can we always justify visiting students on their placements?

The current project involved an investigation into the perceived benefits of placement visits, from the student's perspective. Students who were nearing the end of their placement year were invited to complete an online questionnaire. They were asked to rate the usefulness of their placement visit and to indicate their overall level of satisfaction with their placement year. They were then asked to provide their views about whether their placement visit had been useful, and if so why. The results revealed that students valued their placement visit, for example as a sign that they were being supported by their institution. This and other perceived benefits will be discussed in terms of implications for placement processes and placement policies. Discussions will also consider whether alternative methods of maintaining contact with students, for example through video conferencing, afford the same benefits as face-to-face visits.

# Parallel Sessions

## Day 2

### Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> September

#### Stream 3 09:45-10:45

##### Session 6

**Title:** The basis of achieving placement success: A Relational Model?

**Presenter(s):** Jane Scivier, Emily Ramsden and Ben Topping, *Nottingham Trent University*

**Time:** 09:45-10:45

**Room:** N105

##### Abstract

This session will present a model for achieving very high levels of placement success (2018 - 100% of students placed). The work is based on an approach that has been developed to support students on an accelerated sandwich business degree. On this degree, first year students must gain a placement for their second year of study, which is work based. This outcome must be achieved by all students on the programme within the time limit of nine months.

To meet this demanding outcome a programme of activity has been developed based on a relational model. Excellent relationships between the delivery team (both employability professionals and academic staff) combine with a 'joined up' approach to content and delivery, which builds strong relations with the student body and underpins success. The approach is built around a shared purpose, which builds commitment to achieving a placement. It also builds resilience and a mind-set that is open to the challenge of achieving a placement in nine months, whilst competing with more mature second year students. The aim of this workshop is to create an opportunity for you to consider how this approach could be adopted into your own setting.

##### Session 7

**Title:** Placements: Embedded as the norm?

**Presenter(s):** Michael Head and Claire Hughes, *Solent University*

**Time:** 09:45-10:45

**Room:** N106

##### Abstract

It is known from a wide range of research undertaken on the subject (Fishman et al 2017 and NCUB 2016) that work placements have a huge benefit to all stakeholders, student, employer and University,

especially in raising the employability skills, confidence, networks and further job opportunities for students. So why do students opt not to go?

This workshop will give the opportunity for peers to explore the barriers facing students securing short and long term placements and identify some solutions in the form of a case study of the experiences on the Business Management Degree at Solent University. We will show how steps were taken to embed taking up a placement as the expected norm and how this was interwoven into the core curriculum design. Discussion will also take place around the results of the measures which were put in place to encourage an increase in student placement take up. In addition, peers will be given the opportunity, through interactive activities, to work through the challenges and identify best practices in embedding placements as the norm, so as to enhance student employability by gaining vital work experience in a complex and competitive graduate market.

### Session 8

**Title:** Getting Prepared for Placement: Mental toughness, engagement and attainment in undergraduate sport psychology students.

**Presenter(s):** Danielle Anderson and Nicola Smith, *Liverpool John Moores University*

**Time:** 09:45-10:45

**Room:** N108

### Abstract

The CBI/Pearson Education and Skills Survey (2017) indicates that a third of employers are dissatisfied with graduates' attitudes and behaviours of self-management and resilience.

With this in mind, in collaboration with the School of Sport and Exercise Sciences, the Science Placement Learning Support Unit (PLSU) at Liverpool John Moores University have been supporting a project that seeks to explore a non-cognitive construct called Mental Toughness (MT) amongst level four Applied Sport Psychology (ASP) students. The aim is to better understand the skills development needs of our students relating to self-management (engagement and attainment) and resilience/MT.

This is not only for placements but in relation to the expectations that employers have when they become graduates.

Following this pilot, it is planned for the work to be embedded throughout the ASP programme (L4, 5, 6), preparing students for success in their placements at level 6 of the programme. The aim is to empower students to understand more about their MT through the use of the Mental Toughness Questionnaire MTQ48 (Clough, 2002) and how this impacts self-management and resilience. We will discuss the interventions offered to students, including workshops and one-to-one coaching and take our audience through some of the activities that level 4 students undertook.

## Session 9

**Title:** Learning and engagement through games

**Presenter(s):** Francesca Walker and Vicki O'Brien, *University of Central Lancashire*

**Time:** 09:45-10:45

**Room:** N205

### Abstract

What does effective communication look and sound like? How do you know if you have leadership skills? Can you learn to be a good team player? Being creative is often seen on job descriptions, but how can you demonstrate it?

These are some of the questions that we will be exploring through a very practical demonstration of a range of games that we have been using and developing over the last 8 years at the University of Central Lancashire. The tools that we use are inexpensive and easily accessible to all.

Our measure of success is the amount of laughter that we generate.

## Session 10

**Title:** 'Pitch It' – supporting students to develop transferable skills in an interprofessional environment

**Presenter(s):** Emma Pope, *Cardiff University*

**Time:** 09:45-10:45

**Room:** N208

### Abstract

A student's first experience of a placement setting can be daunting and anxiety provoking as they are faced with a new environment and new people from diverse backgrounds and disciplines. This may not reflect the university setting, where often learning opportunities occur within their chosen discipline. This workshop will showcase a way of supporting students to develop transferable skills linked to teamworking, such as communication and decision-making skills, in an interprofessional environment which helps to mirror the diverse nature of a work-based setting.

Interprofessional education (IPE) is well established within the healthcare sciences but may be less well developed in other university disciplines. The Centre for the Advancement of Interprofessional Education [CAIPE] (2002) defines IPE as '*two or more professions learning with, from and about each other to improve collaborative practice*' (cited in CAIPE, 2017 pg 4).

'Pitch It' is a group-based activity where students are engaged in the development of promotional material which is then 'pitched' to fellow students. As part of the process, students are asked to reflect on the teamworking, communication and decision-making skills within their groups, as well as their own contributions.

CAIPE, 2017 Interprofessional education guidelines [Online]

Available at: <https://www.caipe.org/resources/caipe-publications>

## **Stream 4 11:00-12:00**

### **Session 11**

**Title:** How NTU is making the most of technology to support students, employers and the University during the placement process

**Presenter(s):** Sara Jones, Nottingham Trent University on behalf of ASET Conference Sponsor, QuantumIT

**Time:** 11:00 – 12:00

**Room:** N105

### **Abstract**

At Nottingham Trent University, we understand that employers are wanting to recruit graduates who have real world work experience. We are 8th (2016/17 HESA data) in the UK for the number of students taking year-long work placements and have a reputation for not only managing the employer and student relationships whilst out on placement but are known as leaders within the HE sector for offering solution focused approaches for businesses seeking the right student or graduate.

Following on from my presentation last year, when I discussed how all students will have relevant work experience by graduation, in today's session I will be discussing how we are utilising InPlace for all our placement administration. InPlace is now in its fifth year at NTU and it underpins all our work-experience / placement processes.

There will be 3 main themes discussed in the workshop, which will be interactive and allow for questions.

Firstly, prior to students commencing placements, we are using pre-placement forms to understand their interest areas and identify any support needs while on placement in order to make reasonable adjustments.

While on placement, we are introducing the use of the InSight Tool to track and monitor students' performance. This will allow for more flexible and dynamic reporting and further to this we can use the data, year on year to analyse our placements.

Finally, we are exploring the use of the Timesheets functionality to track and monitor placements and give us better understanding of where students are and when.

## Session 12

**Title:** Addressing the Challenges Faced and Resources Needed to Design an Embedded Micro-Placement Module in the Curriculum (Arts, Design and Media).

**Presenter(s):** Nicola Kelly, Jane McAllister and Hilary Weston Jones, *Birmingham City University*

**Time:** 11:00 – 12:00

**Room:** N106

### Abstract

A workshop to explore the challenges faced and resources needed to support and grow an embedded micro-placement module within curriculum – with particular focus on engaging the creative sector. With an overall shift towards micro-placements and apprenticeships being the preferred activity, Birmingham City University's Arts, Design and Media Careers+ team will discuss the importance of an embedded work placement module within the curriculum, that allows students to engage in employability activities during their course without having to take a year out of study.

The workshop will cover the key points of setting up this module in collaboration with academic staff, what considerations were given, resources needed and the support that was delivered to the students in preparation for, and during, their placements – while engaging HE professionals in activities and discussion for sharing of best practice.

## Session 13

**Title:** Gaining Recognition with the Higher Education Academy

**Presenter(s):** Colin Turner, *Ulster University*

**Time:** 11:00-12:00

**Room:** N108

### Abstract

The Higher Education Academy (now part of AdvanceHE) offers recognition as part of its UK Professional Standards Framework for Teaching and Supporting Learning in Higher Education (UKPSF). The framework covers descriptors at four levels: Associate Fellow, Fellow, Senior Fellow and Principal Fellow; providing opportunities for recognition for both Academic and Professional Services staff in various roles and with different levels of experience.

Recognition by the HEA is fast becoming an essential criterion in many job vacancies in Higher Education, and can be a gateway to many activities including the ability to bid for Academy funds.

This workshop will explore all four descriptors and help participants to evaluate the best descriptor for them by beginning the process of mapping their knowledge, skills and experience against the framework. Many institutions have internal accredited recognition schemes and these, and direct application to the HEA will be considered. Common pitfalls of applications at each level will be discussed, arising from the facilitator's experience of assessment at all four levels.

Academics or Professional Services staff can benefit from the workshop, whether they have no HEA recognition as yet, or plan to apply for a new category of fellowship from an existing recognition.

#### **Session 14**

**Title:** Engaging and involving employers in course design and delivery – using the new ASET Good Practice Guide to Work Based Learning for Apprenticeships in HE

**Presenter(s):** Sarah Flynn and Lou Taylor-Murison, ASET

**Time:** 11:00-12:00

**Room:** N205

#### **Abstract**

Whether delivering placements, internships or a work based learning programme like Higher or Degree Apprenticeships, all require employer engagement and involvement through the planning, design, development and delivery of a course. In this workshop we will use prompts from the new ASET Good Practice Guide to facilitate discussions about how this can be done effectively and efficiently, with ideas for getting a good representation of views from a specific sector to focussing on articulating those graduate attributes or transferable skills that apply whichever discipline students are from.

Firstly, the workshop will take a positive approach to looking at what works from the perspective of delegates before moving onto the more challenging aspects of involving employers in course design and

delivery before finally moving onto signpost how the new ASET publication can assist in working with employers.

This workshop is suitable for colleagues working with any type of provision, not simply apprenticeships, but does offer an opportunity for those delegates who wish to connect with others in the ASET community also delivering apprenticeships.

#### **Session 15**

**Title:** Simply Better? The impact of a placement year on final degree performance

**Presenter(s):** Libby Barton and Rob Jack, *University of Southampton*

**Time:** 11:00 – 12:00

**Room:** N208

#### **Abstract**

Many of us will have observed “the placement effect”: students returning from placement and approaching their studies with renewed vigour, increased confidence, or enhanced organisational skills. Several studies have shown that students who undertake a placement year surpass their non-placement peers in final year degree performance. The reasons for this, however, are largely unexplored.

In this research paper, we compare final year results of Business School students who undertake a placement year as part of their studies, and those who do not. We investigate whether placement students are “simply better” by looking at second year results, and consider how placement can impact the success of students when writing a dissertation.

We also look at the results of a survey of past placement students, and several interviews with academic staff, who share their thoughts about the impact of placements on final year learning and teaching.

Importantly, this study sheds light on why placement students generally outperform those who do not take a placement as part of their studies. In doing so, we hope to help colleagues make the case for enhanced placement provision, and to provoke a discussion on how “the placement effect” can be achieved through other, less traditional work-based learning.

# Parallel Sessions

## Day 3

### Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> September

### Stream 5 09:30-10:30

#### Session 16

**Title:** A data-driven, multi-disciplinary approach to understanding student non-engagement with employability initiatives

**Presenter(s):** **Tim Goodall and Kate Watkins**, *University of Leeds*

**Time:** 09:30-10:30

**Room:** N105

#### Abstract

In order to further develop our ideas for how to engage and empower non-traditional students in employability activities, we felt we needed to have a better understanding of the scale of non-engagement across various groups and then explore why those students were not engaging, as well as the effects of non-engagement. The study is data driven, using both empirical and qualitative evidence across two phases.

Phase one included the statistical interrogation of a five-year institutional level dataset (33,434 students, over 1 million data points), supplemented with faculty-specific data. This has allowed investigation into whether student characteristics, such as socio-economic classification have impact on student engagement in employability initiatives, degree classification and graduate prospects.

Phase two has obtained evaluative data from current students and alumni via questionnaires, interviews and focus groups to gain a better understanding of what motivates them to engage and what discourages them. Employability activities include industry year, study abroad, mentoring and professional development modules.

#### Learning Outcomes:

1. Gain a deeper understanding of the barriers to engagement
2. Understand statistically significant associations between particular characteristics of the 'non-engaged' student
3. See whether/how non-engagement affects attainment and graduate outcomes
4. Explore specific interventions to overcome any identified barriers to non-engagement

### Session 17

**Title:** Creating a Culture of Community and Commitment – Swansea University Student Ambassador Scheme

**Presenter(s):** **Stephanie Leech and Paige Windiate**, *Swansea University*

**Time:** 09:30-10:30

**Room:** N106

#### Abstract

Student Ambassador Programmes are nothing new, but maybe they need to be.

At Swansea University, we have brought the ambassador programme into the Employability Academy to ensure it offers excellent work-based learning for all participants while improving student engagement with employability themes. The programme is now entering its 10<sup>th</sup> year and sees over 400 students each year benefiting from this paid, worthwhile work experience.

Ambassadors are not only used for our own University events and Open Days. Student Ambassadors are also external partners for collaborative events across the City, engaging business partners in a new way and offering our Ambassadors a wider professional network and more diverse opportunities.

### Session 18

**Title:** Why is there a disconnect between employers and Higher Education in the context of supply of, and demand for, graduate labour?

**Presenter(s):** **Emily Timson**, *University of Leeds*

**Time:** 09:30-10:30

**Room:** N108

#### Abstract

This workshop is based on research carried out in 2017 at the University of Leeds, which sought to explore the disconnect between employers and Higher Education in the context of supply of, and demand for, graduate labour.

Four themes were researched, including to:

- *Explore the tension around the role of Higher Education in producing graduates who meet the needs of industry.*
- *Locating the problem within the UK graduate labour market and the supply of, and demand for graduate labour.*
- *Identifying what an impactful relationship means to Higher Education and to industrial partners.*

- *Understanding the barriers to an impactful relationship with Higher Education and industrial partners.*

This workshop will give you a unique and honest insight into academic and industry views around supply and demand in the graduate labour market and the apparent skills shortage the UK is facing. Sharing findings from a series of interviews across a range of sectors and academic colleagues, you'll be encouraged to share your experiences and thoughts as we explore this highly nuanced issue which work based learning has sought to address but still doesn't quite seem to have delivered on or to meet industry expectations.

### **Session 19**

**Title:** Leading through change: Seizing opportunities

**Presenter(s):** **Claire Colburn** *University of Sussex*

**Time:** 09:30-10:30

**Room:** N205

#### **Abstract**

As members of the UK's Higher Education community, we are accustomed to working within a constantly changing environment.

In this context of rapid change – and the complexity of our institutions – the traditional hierarchy of leaders and followers can become more fluid. Under these circumstances, leadership roles can sit with expertise rather than seniority.

As placements professionals, our experience places us in an influential role – our knowledge of work-based learning and employability is of increasing importance to students, the government's agenda, and the institution.

In this session I will present the findings of a small-scale research project into leadership at all levels within placements teams. You will have the opportunity to identify your own leadership skills – and also identify opportunities to put them into practice.

## **Stream 6 11:00-12:00**

### **Session 20**

**Title:** ProjectSet: An innovative digital platform to drive scale and diversity in work-based learning

**Presenter(s):** Dhruva Banerjee, *ASET Conference Sponsor*, ProjectSet

**Time:** 11:00-12:00

**Room:** N105

#### **Abstract**

The importance of work-related learning in university curriculum is well acknowledged. However, ~ 10% university students in UK experience meaningful work-based learning programs and diversity candidates are ~25% less likely to access these opportunities. ProjectSet addresses these twin issues of scale and inclusivity by engaging students and employers in virtual projects.

Virtual Projects uses digital technologies to help students connect with employers and collaborate online to execute real-world projects. This model offers students the opportunity to gain work experience and employability skills without commuting, relocating or committing to full-time engagement. It also offers employers a cost-effective and robust approach to find fresh ideas and talent. Most importantly, it offers University tutors, placement and employability teams data and insights to efficiently manage student and employer engagements. Virtual projects complement existing internship and other placement models in terms of its scale, inclusivity and impact.

This session will:

- 1) Clarify how virtual projects help universities drive scale and inclusivity in work-based learning;
- 2) Examine how virtual projects work;
- 3) Review learnings from pilot programs;
- 4) Discuss how Universities can best adopt such models to accelerate impact of their work-related learning programs (incl. key stakeholders, etc.)

### **Session 21**

**Title:** No need to knock; the door is already open.  
New to placements? What can ASET offer *you*?

**Presenter(s):** Nicola Bullivant-Parrish, Vianna Renaud and Mohson Khan, ASET

**Time:** 11:00-12:00

**Room:** N106

#### **Abstract**

Being new to placements and employability is something that we've experienced ourselves – we've been there too and understand that the placement pathways are sometimes difficult to navigate for those of us on the ground. As a membership organisation, ASET can offer you a wide range of tools, resources, information and

guidance to help support you in your role. This workshop will focus on what is available for members, and will also offer participants the opportunity to talk to ASET trustees about their careers in placements as well as their roles with ASET.

### Session 22

**Title:** Work placements in voluntary organisations in a context of austerity and policy change

**Presenter(s):** Lindsey Metcalf and Janine Melvin, *Liverpool John Moores University*

**Time:** 11:00-12:00

**Room:** N108

#### Abstract

This workshop examines the role of student work placements in voluntary organisations within a context of a rapidly changing policy environment and climate of austerity. It considers the challenges and benefits of student work placements in this context - both for students and hosting voluntary organisations. We explore case studies of students with specific needs arising in this wider context and look at how we might support students to access work placement opportunities and to realise the potential benefits.

We draw on our experiences of leading a work placement module for final year criminology students. This is a reimaged module, representing a shift from a School-wide generic work-based learning model to a number of Programme/subject-specific work placement modules (of which Criminology is one). In a changing context whereby criminal justice and other public services are increasingly delivered by voluntary organisations on a contracting basis, work placements in the voluntary sector are an increasingly relevant and popular choice for students taking the work placement route.

### Session 23

**Title:** From call centre to career plan – developing transferable skills through summer work; collaboration between a large international employer and UCLan Careers

**Presenter(s):** Sue Thwaites, *University of Central Lancashire*

**Time:** 11:00-12:00

**Room:** N205

#### Abstract

An innovative enterprise between a large international company based in Preston operating an inbound call centre offering 300 well paid summer jobs for UCLan students. UCLan developed an online skill development programme to enabling students to understand and develop their transferable skills to their career goal.

Careers facilitated recruitment on campus, including awareness raising, CV help, and an assessment centre activity. Full training was provided onsite at the call centre. On successful completion of the contract, the student is given an enhanced reference to support their ongoing career search.

This unique solution provided excellent outcomes for all stakeholders – the call centre achieved their service level agreement with their client, UCLan helped a large number of students gain work experience and understand their skills and career goal, with Careers bridging the gap between employers and the university.