

May 2020

## In this issue.....

- Regional Hubs  
Covid-19: What works for you?
- *Save the Date*  
Online Regional Hubs - June
- QAA Webinar  
15<sup>th</sup> May 11-12:15
- Staff Development  
Workshops Programme  
**Online delivery 9.30-1.30**

### ASET

The Work Based and Placement Learning  
Association

**We are fully operational  
remotely, please email with any  
enquiries.**

[aset@asetonline.org](mailto:aset@asetonline.org)

[www.asetonline.org](http://www.asetonline.org)

@ASETOnline #ASETGoesOnline

It has been a pleasure to see so many of our members in the last few weeks at our Regional hub sessions and online workshops.

Whilst the transition to online working has its challenges (*introducing Dolly getting in on the Zoom*) it's great to know the ASET Community remains strong and supportive of colleagues through these most challenging days.



With so much learning to share from our Regional Hub meetings last week, condensing the good work, tips and experiences was a challenge. You might need a spare half hour to take a careful read through, and find that special tip that will make all the difference to you, to your students, and to your employers. What is clear is that communication is key. Both with employers and with students, and finding the best way to keep communication open can be a case of trial and trial again to find what works for you. What is also clear is that there is still an appetite for placements, from students and from employers, and that there is a huge amount of work going on to find ways to enable placements to happen, albeit in a different format.

Look out below for details of the upcoming webinar from the QAA :  
**Contingency Planning for Placements**

And don't forget, we are here to support you, to help you, to enable links across the community and to facilitate gatherings of like-minded individuals.

Stay safe, stay well and stay in touch.

**Debbie Siva-Jothy**

[aset@asetonline.org](mailto:aset@asetonline.org)

[www.asetonline.org](http://www.asetonline.org)

@ASETOnline #ASETGoesOnline

## ASET e-Bulletin

### Regional Hubs

#### Covid-19: What Works for you?

Thank you to all of you who joined us for last week's Regional Hub meetings and generously shared your experiences from the last few weeks. Being able to focus on activities that have worked for you, and to share tools being developed – at impressive speed, and insights into the management of your relationships with Students, Employers – and with your own institutions has been useful to all.

Please see below responses gathered from our Regional Hub meetings across the UK. A summary of the huge range of responses to Covid-19 from across our membership – a veritable goodie bag of inspiration. We hope that you will find these useful, and that we can all benefit from the good practice emerging as we strive to find our 'new normal'.

Next month we will be looking at planning for the upcoming academic year – what's happening at your institution, and what steps are you taking now in preparation for 2020/21?

### Students

#### What has worked for your students in terms of placements and work based learning?

- Constant communication has been the key. It's a challenge to keep on top of but we've used - WhatsApp, Teams, Text, Facetime, Skype and Facebook Live
- Zoom calls with "drop-in" hours for all students on-placement, planning to use for outgoing placement students to and currently handling pre-placement briefings via Zoom too
- Weekly detailed emails
- I've set up bookable 1:1 Google Hangouts as well as setting up a YouTube Channel at the start of the week
- We have also been training students on how to manage online interviews
- We carried out a survey, on cognito forms, to find out which students had been let go, etc. and then prioritised calling students individually who had issues
- We will be using Teams for mock virtual interviews
- We're drip feeding content to students – so as not to overwhelm, and to give us time to develop comms
- We put together institution guidance then personalised and sent from departments so that students can feel personally supported from staff they know
- We are trying to encourage students to use this time to prep for career and placement applications - sending out links to careers help and webinars for example.
- I'm trying to keep students as motivated as possible. For example what activities they can be doing now and 'good news stories, such as students placed

## ASET e-Bulletin

- I work with law students only but I have continued to send them opportunity bulletins. Whilst there are few new opportunities there are updates about what the industry is doing / virtual internships to take / ways to 'meet' lawyers electronically / prepping for video interviews etc.
- Our University has raised money from Alumni for students experiencing hardship and financial difficulties
- We have had some grave concerns from students about how they will be able to cope financially over the summer if they cannot work in public facing roles because of vulnerable family members. Signposting them to hardship funds
- Our University has transferred all car parking charges to the student hardship fund (Staff can opt out)
- We have created a specific hardship fund, arranged delivery services for locked-down students, arranged PCs for those without
- We've also had to manage landlord financial concerns as many though rental holiday meant no payment was required
- We're asking Alumni to help with the Hardship funds - this has been working well – its Uni wide however, and not directed to placements.  
[http://www.studentsupport.manchester.ac.uk/finances/funding-opportunities/all/living-cost-support-fund/?gator\\_td=W8L8%2b3brx%2b%2fDMZgykijlahbLDkpaq1bxz5v5rMzbidZb04mvjtsvXluTjR5urbpwZJo%2b%2bJEMGcJ%2fojWYAPr0aZSDYJ7bRFISCzH0GQqbWf0Kr17%2bfTNZO4AOr%2bgJzY8k5rvqR2Hvl7W3z2NiTuWcaxTyRMKx2AYrD9sx1krfKE%3d](http://www.studentsupport.manchester.ac.uk/finances/funding-opportunities/all/living-cost-support-fund/?gator_td=W8L8%2b3brx%2b%2fDMZgykijlahbLDkpaq1bxz5v5rMzbidZb04mvjtsvXluTjR5urbpwZJo%2b%2bJEMGcJ%2fojWYAPr0aZSDYJ7bRFISCzH0GQqbWf0Kr17%2bfTNZO4AOr%2bgJzY8k5rvqR2Hvl7W3z2NiTuWcaxTyRMKx2AYrD9sx1krfKE%3d)
- All my WP students are in computing, which is well suited to remote working, so the majority of students were able to stay on placement and be paid. One is on 3-day week and paid less, but happy with the experience that they're getting
- Some students due to go out on placement may have to graduate rather than do the extra year that would have contained the placement
- We have had a few students withdraw from placement for next year
- We are currently offering virtual mock interviews for all of our first years instead of f2f
- **Chester have written an Employability Skills module** to accommodate circa 1500, level 5 students (not professional programmes so excluding: teaching, nursing, social care, biomedical, dieticians etc.) who would have been on placement for five weeks from 4th May or undertaken an experiential (field) module in the UK or abroad. The module started 27<sup>th</sup> April with five weekly online sessions/resources and an online assignment submission due on 2nd June
- Chester have already reimbursed DBS costs for non-professional students who obtain a DBS as part of their Employability Skills module which historically included a 5 week placement and written assignment. We are monitoring feedback with regards to other expenditure that might have been incurred (e.g. vaccinations and accommodation)
- We are doing weekly informal MS Team coffee catch ups at lunch time as "drop ins" for our placement students, who may be furloughed, had placements finish early, working from home or back in the office - in China
- We didn't need to make any adjustments to assignments but have taken a flexible approach and were encouraged to do so by the university. Our students are on a year- long placement and if their placement had been cut short

## ASET e-Bulletin

or they had been furloughed, we advised them to base the assignment on what they had completed. We offered individual chats via Teams if a student felt they would have any issue completing assignments- mainly to provide reassurance that there would not be any academic penalty. We did give students a blanket 1 month extension for the assignment due in March and this was well received

- I've been calling my students out on placement just to check in and see how they are doing, what their working situation is, etc.. A lot of them are grateful for a short call rather than generic email communication - especially with the volume of emails they are receiving surrounding Covid-19. All of the calls are pre-arranged so don't interfere with any meetings they may have.
- I prepared our advice to students with our Assistant Head of Careers who manages the central placement team [www.herts.ac.uk/coronavirus/students](http://www.herts.ac.uk/coronavirus/students)
- University has issued third term refunds for all students who have left campus
- [https://www.ratemyplacement.co.uk/blog/work-ready-virtual-experience-free/?utm\\_source=email&utm\\_medium=newsletter&utm\\_campaign=int-23042020-uninewsletter-careers&dm\\_i=30Z2,114M2,4HPFP1,3XCFY,1](https://www.ratemyplacement.co.uk/blog/work-ready-virtual-experience-free/?utm_source=email&utm_medium=newsletter&utm_campaign=int-23042020-uninewsletter-careers&dm_i=30Z2,114M2,4HPFP1,3XCFY,1)

### Employers

**Keeping relationships alive is key, there have been some interesting and helpful outcomes:**

- We've found that employers who were already in the process of advertising a role/within the recruitment process, have largely committed to concluding this with a view to being flexible with start dates. We have however seen a drop off in employers advertising roles since the outbreak. Where we have confirmation of offers made for 20/21, we are contacting both students and employers to consolidate as many of these roles as we can
- Some of our employers have agreed to be involved in virtual employer panels, workshops and industry insights
- Employers have been asked and are offering mock recruitment processes online
- Some geographically isolated companies already have virtual placements and internships in place and are now looking to expand that work
- **A couple of our students have had their placements cancelled for next year, but offered as a graduate scheme instead**
- Employers were sent a questionnaire asking their intent for next year and interest in engagement with their university - many, rather than cancelling placements altogether are in early stages of developing alternatives
- We've worked with local employer, Morrisons who are providing food parcels to students left on campus due to being unable to travel home (largely international/exchange students)
- Our local third sector/charities are looking at virtual training for volunteers and working with our students to develop this



## ASET e-Bulletin

- Lots of our employers have been flexible about supporting remote-based placements where a face-to-face placement had originally planned. Personally only had 1 employer drop out
- We're asking employers who make an unpaid offer to pay the placement tuition fee
- We are running 'Tube' sessions on YouTube so businesses are delivering sessions to students and running virtual workshops for us. We have also been offering mock video interviews and online mock assessment centres
- We are focusing on employer relationships rather than what they can do for us. We have a number that are still really keen on engagement opportunities so we are trying to facilitate this
- We have had contact with companies still trying to recruit so it is not all bad news
- We have seen major growth in digital sectors and large employers within the private sector (defence, local govt and some manufacturing) are engaging heavily
- Archaeology maintain that their work will be little changed as they've been pretty similar for the past thousand years!
- Our SMEs are the ones which we have been supporting the most
- We are supporting more modules for digital skills for students going forward to support employers as placement hosts
- We're in touch with the Local Chamber of Commerce
- We are using volunteering as a way to develop new or missing skills for our students. We are pushing opportunities through careers
- Some local companies who are actually seeing an increase in work because of Covid-19 have been in touch to recruit placement students
- There have been a lot more online placements advertised which really is a benefit for some of our WP students, again not all bad news
- I have had the same employer engagement - we are still adding placements to our system.
- Also we are reaching out to students with great opportunities to encourage them to apply.
- (We are lucky to have one-on-one contact with our students so can easily tailor these opportunities to them).
- We've actually had an increase in numbers in the Computing/IT Sector adverts which is very interesting, with some companies coming to us asking for more students
- local marketing firms are still advertising,
- IT sectors are running like the wind - placement students currently at IT companies have NEVER been busier.
- We have been sending newsletter to students advertising companies who are currently recruiting
- Lots of opportunities for virtual / online volunteering too -
- Some of the employers we have been working with for years were already struggling and unfortunately this crisis was the last straw for some of them (high street retailers). However most of them are still recruiting, just pushing the start dates for now
- Encouraging students to do remote volunteering is crucial
- With Biomed placements they are seen as key workers so they are carrying on - and if they were graduates they would also be seen as key workers. Many of our biomed students are doing the testing for COVID-19

## ASET e-Bulletin

- We had a request for our 3rd year nurses to work full time on the covid response. Our initial response was to say no, as we cannot make a decision for a student to put themselves at increased risk, however some students have responded to the Government and have volunteered themselves
- Our healthcare students have been withdrawn from their placements for now and the faculty is setting up a policy that will include an opt out for students from next year on.
- The creative industry still continues to have opportunities in marketing, social media and graphic design which are also remote opportunities.
- I have yet to come across a company who would fall into the 'bad' guy area for covid-19 - there again initial concerns from students were nipped in the bud by a 2 prong attack of both myself and them talking to the manager and sign posting to government advice
- I had issues in the first week or so with furlough when it was launched and nobody really understood how it worked - companies retracted the terminations when they realised students could be covered

### Resources

[https://www.warwick.ac.uk/services/careers/employers/internships/options/warwick\\_employer\\_guide\\_to\\_remote\\_work\\_experience.pdf](https://www.warwick.ac.uk/services/careers/employers/internships/options/warwick_employer_guide_to_remote_work_experience.pdf)

Charlie Ball's article here: <https://luminare.prospects.ac.uk/week-five-of-lockdown-news-from-the-graduate-labour-market>

### Practitioners/Institutions

**Do you have a Covid-19 central planning team? Are you planning for next year already?**

<https://www.qaa.ac.uk/news-events/news/covid-19-support-new-qaa-guidance-for-he-providers-on-maintaining-quality-and-academic-standards>

- We supported a few students getting back to UK from USA who weren't covered by Insurance having not bought a return ticket
- Placements/health sciences - to ensure a continuous supply of dietitians going into NHS roles, we agreed with placement trainers that providing students had met their learning outcomes, all trainers will complete students placement feedback with an "advisory note" to recommend an extra 2 wks supervision at start of new job
- I have spent a lot of time with our External Examiners to change assessments mid-delivery
- We have introduced more flexibility into our modules regarding start date and length of placement
- Many universities are taking this opportunity to enhance their resources/material available online
- Some universities are looking for more opportunities internally within their own institutions

## ASET e-Bulletin

- We have a no detriment policy so students won't be negatively affected - most institutions have a central no detriment policy but a tiny number have included placements overtly in that
- We haven't set extra assessment - I feel quite strongly that that isn't equitable, these are extra activities that have to be submitted with their assessment but isn't marked
- We are working at school level but setting some standard guidance
- Due to the number of discipline requirements (and in places PSRB involvement) it's being done at departmental level with each programme - luckily the format of placements I deal with are non-credit bearing and the PSRB involvement is advisory - so no direct effect on final coursework submissions. We have a mixed bag of practice activity so invoked a minimum level of weeks to be worked, and a reflective portfolio to be produced as normal in the autumn as a minimum - visits have been put on 'hold' and will be reviewed on an as needed basis
- Our faculty is currently trying to set out guidelines but is finding that the placements are so different across the faculty that it is proving very difficult to find something that suits all
- I've been allowed to join our T&L contingencies management team from January and we've had a T&L Dean assigned to supporting me to make decisions about placements for 19/20 and 20/21 and cascade up to senior management
- I'm determined to raise the profile of placements higher up as this has highlighted that they are quite unaware of what is involved
- We are ramping up our use of VLEs, Panopto and student-led video snippets. It's been quite exciting
- We are busier with those students wishing to set up businesses
- We've changed assessments to be more flexible as students don't have access to information to link work to learning. We have developed a programme, through the SU, to employ students in the University whose work (PT or placement) has been cut short due to Covid-19
- Not aware of refunds being made in my area as they have all met the requirements - but for other disciplines such as education and health this maybe being considered
- **HESA definition of a sandwich placement is a minimum of 24wks**
- We have gone from 30 weeks to 15 weeks. If they do not have enough weeks, we have added additional assessment criteria such as an additional reflective essay, etc.
- For study abroad we are creating another series of shell modules which enable us to do some activities remotely and pushing the mobility element later in the year
- If anyone has Abintegro as part of their employability or careers option, they are helping with offering skills training as part of the normal package
- We are hoping to use the 'non-placement' placement module for next year to run alongside our standard 5-week placement module. This may be particularly appropriate for students who might not be fully ready for placements at that point. Covid-19 or not!

### Resources

- ISE : Setting up and managing virtual internships: a university's perspective: You can access the recording at: <https://bit.ly/33Qfvrr>

## ASET e-Bulletin

### Resources

[https://www.qaa.ac.uk/docs/qaa/guidance/covid-19-thematic-guidance-work-based-learning.pdf?sfvrsn=e3cecd81\\_8](https://www.qaa.ac.uk/docs/qaa/guidance/covid-19-thematic-guidance-work-based-learning.pdf?sfvrsn=e3cecd81_8)  
<https://www.qaa.ac.uk/news-events/support-and-guidance-covid-19#>

**RateMyPlacement** have developed a new resources for students '**Work ready virtual experience**', which they have collaborated on with InsideSherpa and Development Beyond Learning, and have sent the following:.

#### ***A bit about what it is:***

*We have seen through our research that many employers highlight the importance of 'work readiness' for students (both with Universities directly and in the ISE surveys), with competence around the softer skills often lacking, especially in relation to more technical skills.*

*To combat this we're launching a series of modules on 7th May to help students upskill themselves by completing an online programme, the first entitled '**Wellbeing & Resilience under lockdown**', the second '**Virtual First Impressions**' and the third '**Remote Networking**'.*

*It's completely free for students to enter (and for Universities and Employers to share with cohorts) and students receive an online certificate at the end for completing it along with feedback on how they performed. We're excited to see the feedback as hopefully that'll be the first of many programmes in the series!*

[here is the link](#) for students to register

### **QAA Webinar - Contingency Planning for Placements webinar**

Sign up for your place

[Contingency planning for placements](#)

**15 May, 11.00-12.00**

In this webinar the QAA will explore what you may need to consider when deciding whether to cancel, defer or replace placements for the next academic year. Four providers will discuss how they are handling disrupted placements, and their thoughts about next year. The NUS will share the latest results of their survey (including placements) and ASET, the work based and placement-learning association will also join.



## ASET e-Bulletin

### **ASET Resources**

Join us on **LinkedIn** – The Placement and Employability Professionals Group 1100 + members and growing daily. Request to join here <https://www.linkedin.com/groups/1929302/>

Follow us **Twitter** @ASETOnline

### **ASET Good Practice Guides**

[ASET Good Practice Guide for Work based and Placement Learning in Higher Education](#) and [TOOLKIT](#)  
[ASET Good Practice Guide for Health and Safety for Student Placements](#)  
[ASET Good Practice Guide for Supporting Students with Disabilities on Placement](#) and [TOOLKIT](#)  
[ASET Good Practice Guide to Successful Work Based Learning for Apprenticeships in Higher Education](#)

### **ASET Viewpoints**

- 1 - [Paid and Unpaid Placements](#)
- 2 - [The Benefits of Placement](#)
- 3 - [HEA Recognition](#)
- 4 - [Alumni Mentoring](#)
- 5 - [The Consumer Rights Act and the Competition and Markets Authority](#)
- 6 - [Making Effective Placement Visits](#)
- 7 - [Insurance and visas for International Placements](#)
- 8 - [Student Engagement](#)
- 9 - [Student Resilience](#)
- 10 - [Degree Apprenticeships](#)
- 11 - [Troubleshooting for Placements – Everyday Troubleshooting](#)
- 12 - [Troubleshooting for Placements – Crisis Management](#)
- 13 - [The impact of budget cuts and steps to mitigate](#)
- 14 - [Making the most of technology to adapt to changes in work and placement opportunities](#)

### **ASET Staff Development Workshops - [Book Online](#)**

<https://www.asetonline.org/events/staff-development-workshops/>

# ASET e-Bulletin

## SAVE THE DATE – Online Regional Hubs early June

### #ASETGoesOnline

Our next Regional Hub meetings are scheduled as follows:

Scotland & Ireland	1 <sup>st</sup> June	10-11.30am	
North	2 <sup>nd</sup> June	2-3.30pm	note this session will run in the afternoon
South West	3 <sup>rd</sup> June	10-11.30am	
South East	4 <sup>th</sup> June	10-11.30am	
Midlands	5 <sup>th</sup> June	10-11.30am	

We aim to keep these sessions open to all our members, and have relaxed the 2 per institution limit. A link to join your next hub, along with meeting protocols, will be issued closer to the date.

## Staff Development Workshops – Online programme

This is a great opportunity to make sure your team are up-to-date with their professional development. We have moved our workshop programme to ONLINE delivery and are offering the same content, with the same trainers via the Zoom platform. Delegates will be sent materials via email along with a link to access each session.

All our sessions are now running 9.30 – 1.30, and reflective of the change to home-based delivery, we have lowered our prices:

**£125 ASET Members (£275 ASET non-members)**

[BOOK ONLINE](#)

Workshops at a glance:

Ref.	Workshop	Date
FPTe	From Placements to Employability <a href="#">video</a>	13 <sup>th</sup> May
RADD	Risk Assessment and Due Diligence <a href="#">video</a>	9 <sup>th</sup> June
RAP	Resilience and Placements <a href="#">video</a>	30 <sup>th</sup> June
SSDP	Supporting Students with Disabilities on Placement <a href="#">video</a>	8 <sup>th</sup> July

## ASET e-Bulletin

### **From Placements to Employability (FPTE)** [video](#)

**Wednesday 13th May 9:30-1:30**

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.

### **Risk Assessment and Due Diligence (RADD)** [video](#)

**Tuesday 9th June 9:30-1:30**

In 2010 ASET published a Good Practice Guide with advice on how to implement the new, risk based approach to Health and Safety, resulting from the release of new policy guidance from UCEA in 2009. The revised and updated edition of the ASET Good Practice Guide for Health and Safety for Student Placements was released in September 2016. This publication is part of a series of ASET Good Practice Guides including the ASET Good Practice Guide for Work Based and Placement Learning in Higher Education (September 2013), which was designed to support practitioners in meeting the expectations of the QAA Quality Code. Discussions across the sector have raised concerns about managing the risk assessment and due diligence processes associated with placement provision in Higher Education.

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

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

## ASET e-Bulletin

### **Resilience and Placements (RAP)** [video](#)

**Tuesday 30th June 9:30-1:30**

In this practical and participatory workshop, the salient topic of resilience will be explored by our facilitators in the context of placements and work-based learning and a world where the future of work is changing. How does resilience (or a lack of it) manifest itself? What can placement practitioners do to support the building of student resilience whilst they navigate the choppy waters of recruitment and selection? What techniques can be put to use to strengthen resilience whilst students embark upon the start of their professional working lives on placement? How can we reflect upon our own capacity for resilience and how can we utilise this to inform our work in HE? Drawing upon a range of perspectives including mental health and growth mind-set theories, ideas will be shared and discussed to enable delegates to create a tool kit of suggestions and approaches.

### **Supporting Students with Disabilities on Placement (SSDP)** [video](#)

**Wednesday 8th July 9:30-1:30**

The aim of this interactive workshop is to provide advice and guidance on the support of disabled students to those working in work experience, work based learning and placement roles, as well as encouraging dialogue and discussion amongst delegates. The following topics will be covered: An overview of the Equality Act; how does it help disabled placement students and how can you help employers interpret and understand what the Act means? Guidance on assisting students with disclosure in the recruitment process. Should they disclose or not? If so, how and when should they disclose? Case study examples to highlight placement success stories. Further resources and support available to students and employers, and others involved in placements.

[BOOK ONLINE](#)

## And Finally

The next ASET members' e-Bulletin will be issued in June.

Please forward your news/copy to [aset@asetonline.org](mailto:aset@asetonline.org) by Friday 12<sup>th</sup> June.

**In the meantime ..... Stay safe and keep in touch.**

**Debbie Siva-Jothy**

[aset@asetonline.org](mailto:aset@asetonline.org)

[www.asetonline.org](http://www.asetonline.org)



Follow ASET on Twitter [@ASETOnline](https://twitter.com/ASETOnline)

[#ASETGoesOnline](https://twitter.com/ASETOnline)



Join the conversation [ASET Placement Employability Professionals LinkedIn Group](#)