Parallel 'Breakout Room' Sessions – Timetable and Abstracts

There are 7 Streams of Parallel Sessions programmed across the two days of conference.

The sessions have been paired [1A or 1B, 2A or 2B etc.], and on the day, delegates will be able to **self-select** which session they wish to attend by opting to join the appropriate **Breakout Room** when prompted. There is no need to book your preferred sessions in advance, but it is advisable to look through the abstracts for each of the sessions, detailed below, and to make a note of the sessions you wish to attend.

Breakout Rooms will be labelled [1A or 1B, 2A or 2B etc.]. and **you will therefore need to have a note of which parallel session you wish to attend**.

NB Zoom version 5.3.0 or higher will be required to self- select.

Abstracts for all the sessions are detailed below to help you to plan your conference.

You may wish to make a note of your Parallel Session choices here:

Parallel Session Stream:	A or B?
Stream 1 Tues 7th 11:00-11:20	
Stream 2 Tues 7th 11:40-12:00	
Stream 3 Tues 7th 12:40-13:00	
Stream 4 Wed 8th 11:00-11:20	
Stream 5 Wed 8th 11:30-11:50	
Stream 6 Wed 8th 11:50-12:05	
Stream 7 Wed 8th 12:10-12:25	

Tuesday 7 September

Stream	Breakout Room A	Breakout Room B
Stream 1 **11:00-11:20** **Practitioner Solutions to Student Engagement during the Pandemic**	**1A** Keeping it real: embedding employer challenges to enhance student engagement **Charlie King, Phil Lang, Tom Coward** *University of York*	**1B** Embedding work based and placement learning through the undergraduate curriculum **Ben Powell, Natalia Ciofu, Christine Zarb** *University of Westminster*
Stream 2 **11:40-12:00** **Practitioner Solutions to Student Engagement during the Pandemic**	**2A** Enabling Disability Studies students' engagement with disabled people's organisations: Approaches to embedding praxis in curricular **Dr Ella Houston** *Liverpool Hope University*	**2B** Overcoming Challenges with Graduate Engagement- Swansea University Graduate Support Programme **Robert Yarr and Helyn Taylor** *Swansea University*
Stream 3 **12:40-13:00** **Practitioner Solutions to Student Engagement during the Pandemic**	**3A** Are placement visits sustainable? -placement support in a post-COVID world **Tom Meadows, Helen Robertson, Kate Hastings** *Newcastle University*	**3B** INTER: Using Work Based Learning for interdisciplinary student collaborative projects with social impact **Ruth Cochrane** *Edinburgh Napier University*

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Wednesday 8 September

Stream	Breakout Room A	Breakout Room B
Stream 4 **11:00-11:20** **Practitioner Solutions to Student Engagement during the Pandemic**	**4A** An evaluation of an Innovative placement model for students in Belfast School of Art, to promote Civic and Economic Recovery, as a result of COVID-19 **Alison Gault** *Ulster University*	**4B** ConnectMe, developing a new employability and networking scheme to improve career readiness of undergraduate students **Louise Tarrant, Nicky Cooney, Madelaine Fallow** *Northumbria University*
Stream 5 **11:30-11:50** **Practitioner Solutions to Student Engagement during the Pandemic**	**5A** Adapting a pre-placement learning programme for widening participation students in response to the global pandemic **Laura Pacey** *Nottingham Trent University*	**5B** Development of a Self-Directed Placement **Miriam Bray, Nicola Kalmanovitch Kirsty Tyre** *Bournemouth University*
Stream 6 **11:50-12:05** **Digital Innovation**	**6A** Fintech Fortnight: supporting students to gain insights into a fast-growing industry **Duncan McDonald** *Durham University*	**6B** Digital Marketing Academy – a multi-collaborative initiative nurturing local talent for the benefit of the Nottingham digital space **Aga Kelly, Hanna Luetkemeier, Anna Beacroft** *Nottingham Trent University*
Stream 7 **12:10-12:25** **Digital Innovation**	**7A** Online placements for the digital future: the Peer Enhanced e-Placement (PEEP) **Lisa Taylor, Gilly Salmon, Matthew Aldrich, Evan Hancock** *University of East Anglia*	**7B** Remote International Internships, at the forefront of employability **Sabrina Starke + University partner** *Absolute Internships*

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Parallel Sessions

Practitioner Solutions to Student Engagement during the Pandemic

Tuesday 7th September
Stream 1: 11:00 – 11:20

Title: Keeping it real: embedding employer challenges to enhance student engagement

Presenter(s): Charlie King, Phil Lang, Tom Coward, University of York
Time: 11:00 – 11:20

Abstract

Careers and Placements at the University of York have worked with a range of external partners over the past year to bring work based learning to students at scale. These challenges provide students with valuable and interesting employer related experiences for their CVs; using the taught curriculum to help mitigate the loss of work based opportunities resulting from the pandemic. They helped students discuss actual real-world problems related to the context of their academic disciplines, whilst developing their employability at the same time.

Through this presentation Phil Lang (Biology), Charlie King (Politics) and Tom Coward (Sociology) will showcase four scalable examples of employer-led challenges and consider their impact on student engagement and onward placement plans throughout the pandemic.

The initiatives are 'Grand Challenges' in Biology, 'Policy School' and 'The Transform Challenge' in the social sciences and Benenden Health. All four have been delivered during the pandemic. The challenges focused on the collaborative solving of real-world problems, presented and monitored by employer organisations. All four challenges were delivered at scale to nearly 300 students, providing meaningful interactions with employers, exposure to interdisciplinary working and allowing students to develop meaningful work based learning experiences for their CV's and applications.

Title: Embedding work based and placement learning through the undergraduate curriculum

Presenter(s): Ben Powell, Natalia Ciofu, Christine Zarb, University of Westminster
Time: 11:00 – 11:20

Abstract

The Work Based and Placement Learning (WBPL) Project is part of the University's Employability Strategy and aims to embed WBPL throughout the undergraduate curriculum. Following the onset of COVID-19 and the challenge of cancellation of live WBPL opportunities, innovation has been key to the success of this project. We needed to quickly find new ways to ensure students could fulfil their employability objectives, improve their professional development, and compete in a tough graduate market.

Through developing a bespoke set of "Student Journey" resources for academics, establishing new collaborative partnerships, facilitating staff training and introducing new virtual internship experiences, thousands of UoW students are new taking advantage of these valuable resources. Through our partnership with Forage, based in Sydney, Australia, we now have the most students taking part in their scheme globally. Feedback from students has been extremely positive and many courses have now embedded this and other WBPL initiatives into their employability modules.

This presentation sets out the context to the WBPL project, the alternatives to the more traditional placement model and the range of resources both developed and "off the shelf." It also features an interesting and informative video by our students giving feedback about their experiences of WBPL.

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Parallel Sessions

Practitioner Solutions to Student Engagement during the Pandemic

Tuesday 7th September
Stream 2: 11:40 – 12:00

Session 2A

Title: Enabling Disability Studies students' engagement with disabled people's organisations: Approaches to embedding praxis in curricular

Presenter(s): Dr Ella Houston, Liverpool Hope University

Abstract

This presentation discusses how praxis – which refers to the application of academic theory in practical, work-based scenarios – can be embedded in curricular. I present my approach to managing work placements for second-year Disability Studies undergraduate students at Liverpool Hope University, as a case study that highlights how Disability Studies theory and research informs the development of students' professional identities. Disabled people's rights and an understanding of the societal, educational and cultural barriers that disable people with impairments are central to the subject of Disability Studies. It is critical that Disability Studies students develop an appreciation of the ways in which their studies are relevant to the complex issues and scenarios they will face in professional practice. As well as being of interest to ASET members who are interested in facilitating students' engagement with disabled people's organisations, this presentation will be relevant to those who are invested in organisations and curricular aligned with social justice issues and concerns. I will also offer my reflections on designing virtual placements (in response to the pandemic), which are informed by Disability Studies values and concepts.

Session 2B

Title: Overcoming Challenges with Graduate Engagement- Swansea University Graduate Support Programme

Presenter(s): Robert Yarr, Helyn Taylor, Swansea University

Abstract

Swansea University's Graduate Support Programme supports historically harder to reach groups most affected by the pandemic. The programme aims to develop employability and help graduates to secure internships and graduate level employment. The programme has met almost all its annual targets within six months of starting, using a wide variety of methods to engage alumni, whilst offering a bespoke and tailored offering of internships, bursaries, events, training, and opportunities. The project is guided by a combination of research and input from graduates themselves. In this presentation, Helyn and Rob will discuss their strategy, their effective methods of engagement, as well as looking at the successes and challenges faced in delivering the programme, summarising with a suggested best practice for graduate engagement with employability and placements.

Parallel Sessions

Practitioner Solutions to Student Engagement during the Pandemic

Tuesday 7th September
Stream 3: 12:40 – 13:00

Session 3A

Title: Are placement visits sustainable? – placement support in a post-COVID world

Presenter(s): Tom Meadows, Helen Robertson, Kate Hastings, Newcastle University

Abstract

Moving away from a traditional placement visit model to group workshops in 2019/20 felt like a significant (and controversial) change for our team within the Careers Service at Newcastle University. Little did we know then that we'd quickly be faced with taking our new way of engaging with students on a yearlong placement firmly into the world of virtual delivery.

Having now run two years of pre- and on-placement workshops with students both in person and online, we've weathered the storm of COVID-19 and had time to reflect and evaluate. With overwhelmingly positive feedback from students and vast amounts of both time and money saved, we will share with you how we are planning to take these changes forward into a post-COVID world.

The session will cover:

- **Pre-COVID** and the shift from individual visits – the decision to move from individual placement visits to a group workshop format.
- **COVID-19** and the shift to online delivery – how we moved on-placement group workshops online and the benefits and challenges that presented.
- **Lessons for a post-COVID offer** – a blended approach. What we'll keep online and what we hope to take back to in-person delivery.

Session 3B

Title: INTER: Using Work Based Learning for interdisciplinary student collaborative projects with social impact

Presenter(s): Ruth Cochrane, Edinburgh Napier University

Abstract

INTER: a platform for interdisciplinary student teams to respond to a theme proposed by commercial sponsor. In 2021, Scotia Gas Networks challenged students to reimagine legacy fossil fuel sites for social good, considering the of reuse of vacant land considering climate change prevention, adaption, biodiversity and community engagement. INTER provides a container for existing credit bearing modules such as work based learning, group work and live projects from across the University from SCQF level 7 to 11 accruing between 20 and 60 credits. Students are assessed by their own module leaders based on agreed deliverables aligned to existing LOs. (e.g. portfolio, reflective blog, peer assessment)

In response to COVID, SGN staff, ENU academics and support staff contributed online lectures, tutorials, and workshops, to support interdisciplinary student teams to research, innovate and communicate their response to the challenge.   The programme was predominantly self-directed with student groups using a variety of digital tools to organise and manage their projects. Underpinned by design thinking methodology, INTER encourages the development of employability skills; project management, interdisciplinary working, critical thinking and creative problem solving.

In return for contribution of sponsorship and expertise, SGN received creative proposals which have significantly impacted their future land development strategy.

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Parallel Sessions

Practitioner Solutions to Student Engagement during the Pandemic

Wednesday 8th September
Stream 4: 11:00 – 11:20

Session 4A

Title: An evaluation of an Innovative placement model for students in Belfast School of Art to promote Civic and Economic Recovery, as a result of COVID-19

Presenter(s): Alison Gault, Ulster University

Abstract

This research paper considers the responses of Belfast School of Art's staff, students, and industry stakeholders to the civic and economic crisis within a Northern Ireland context because of COVID-19. With many student plans for placement paused, or even abandoned by March 2020 The design and offer of a Civic and Economic Recovery (CER) module created to provide students with a real-world learning and work-related practice model. It was also an opportunity for students to respond to the current civic or economic challenges within the context of a regional, local, or global economy. The 20 credit CER module combined with 15 weeks industry experience was accepted by the Department of Education as an equivalent model to the traditional 26+ weeks required to achieve the Diploma in Professional Practice. The first 6 weeks of the module covered themes of global challenges, future work, CPD strategy, professional competencies, business continuity, contingency planning, embedding sustainability, digital tools, communication styles, design thinking all supporting recovery and innovation. The final 5 weeks of the module focussed on industry-led projects, using online design sprints and digital solutions. This research will provide an evaluation of the year exploring both the CER module and the 15-week placements and the impact of further lockdown restrictions throughout the year.

Session 4B

Title: ConnectMe, developing a new employability and networking scheme to improve career readiness of undergraduate students

Presenter(s): Louise Tarrant, Nicky Cooney, Madelaine Fallow, Northumbria University

Abstract

Aim: To establish an employability and networking intervention to support undergraduate student cohorts with low career readiness and improve their confidence in their career planning.
Method: Analysis of Career Readiness and Inclusion Data, publicity and promotion of the scheme leading to devising administrative matching processes and feedback mechanisms
Results: A successful pilot scheme which ran across the academic year leading to 61 foundation and undergraduate student participating in informational interviews with academic and Professional Services members of staff across the University. Results showed that 92% of participants gained improved their confidence in planning their career, 33% of students stated they would seek to gain work experience, 25% of students stated they would engage with the university careers service, 25% of students stated they would increase their networking activity and 17% of students stated they would undertake more research into career options.
Conclusion: Originally developed for Psychology students, ConnectMe has grown to include numerous departments and programmes, along with a growing number of academic colleagues in support. Future actions include widening networks both internally and externally, along with events and workshops to develop peer to peer mentoring.

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Parallel Sessions

Practitioner Solutions to Student Engagement during the Pandemic

Wednesday 8th September
Stream 5: 11:30 – 11:50

Session 5A
Title: Adapting a pre-placement learning programme for widening participation students in response to the global pandemic

Presenter(s): Laura Pacey, Nottingham Trent University

Abstract

Nottingham Trent University Employability's pre-placement development programme (the Rise PLAN) was originally created to deliver hands-on activities and networking spaces designed to build social capital and confidence in our widening participation cohort. Taking place twice a year, the programme covers 6 key themes often overlooked by students in the placement-seeking process; active listening, personal brand, commercial awareness, business communication, growth mindset and resilience. Employers, alumni, former placement students and colleagues from NTU's student finance team also have key roles within the programme.

The pandemic forced us to reconsider our approach to this programme in 2020/21, ultimately changing it from a two-day in-person programme to a four half-day online experience. This presentation details our successful transition to online learning, and how we identified ways to replicate the in-person experience for our students using the technologies available to us. It also highlights some of the challenges we faced in doing so, and what we learnt from our Term 1 programme to adapt our approach further for Term 2. Finally, the presentation will outline how we plan to adapt the programme once more as we move to a more blended approach for the upcoming academic year.

Session 5B
Title: Development of a Self-Directed Placement

Presenter(s): Miriam Bray, Nicola Kalmanovitch, Kirsty Tyre, Bournemouth University

Abstract

During the COVID-19 pandemic, many traditional placement opportunities became challenging to source and by the start of the 2020/21 academic year a significant number of Bournemouth University Business School students were still searching for mandatory sandwich placements. This led a team of Business School Placement Development Advisers to develop a "Self-directed placement" option which would enable students to build a portfolio of experiences to maximise and create development opportunities, whilst providing clear support structures and tangible outcomes. Students undertaking a Self-directed placement were encouraged to reflect on their individual needs and career goals and engage in problem-based learning to address skills, knowledge and competency gaps. They were then empowered to build their own professional development programme, potentially comprising paid/unpaid work, internships, Personal and Professional Development training, and self-employment/enterprise, with collaborative support from an external professional mentor. This presentation will explain how the Self-Directed Placement was developed, the key components which have made it successful and share some of the experiences of our students who have undertaken this route as well as the impact it has had on their employability.

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Parallel Sessions

Digital Innovation

Wednesday 8th September
Stream 6: 11:50 – 12:05

Session 6A
Title: Fintech Fortnight; supporting students to gain insights into a fast-growing industry

Presenter(s): Duncan McDonald, *Durham University*

Abstract

'Fintech Fortnight' is a virtual events series at Durham University, which aims to shine a light on the wide range of internships, placements, and other work experience opportunities available to Computer Science students within the fast-growing Fintech space. This contribution aims to discuss the positive impacts of this entirely virtual events series on the student experience; reflecting on how students are able to gain key industry insights, contacts and pre-application tips from both local and global firms, whilst engaging remotely.

The presentation also aims to reflect on the benefits of bringing together a diverse range of employers and speakers from a specific industry, which has continued to grow during the pandemic, on the student's search for work experience over the last academic year. We will also explore how the series has supported students to develop new digital skills, as well as considering the pros and cons to the student, the employer and to the institution of this type of event delivery, which will likely be more commonplace in the future.

Session 6B
Title: Digital Marketing Academy – a multi-collaborative initiative nurturing local talent for the benefit of the Nottingham digital space

Presenter(s): Aga Kelly, Hanna Luetkemeier, Anna Beacroft, *Nottingham Trent University*

Abstract

The session will showcase the Digital Marketing Academy (DMA), a joint initiative between Nottingham Trent University (NTU) and the University of Nottingham (UoN) that addresses the high-level digital skills gap identified by Nottingham City Council and supports the Universities for Nottingham initiative by strengthening our links with local employers and supporting graduate retention in the city. DMA includes a mixture of employer-led workshops, elements of online self-study, Insight Days with local digital marketing agencies and a challenge based on a real-life brief.

We will be discussing how the DMA started with 2 leading digital marketing agencies in Nottingham, how it has evolved to include several employer partnerships that contribute to delivery, and how it has grown to ensure the best student experience through our choice of delivery.

The 20/21 DMA had to be shifted to a fully online model as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, which meant that both universities had to redesign the programme into a joint online approach. We will explore how we ensured student engagement, hosted employer led online workshops and tracked progress.

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Parallel Sessions

Digital Innovation

Wednesday 8th September
Stream 7: 12:10 – 12:25

Session 7A
Title: Online placements for the digital future: the Peer Enhanced e-Placement (PEEP)

Presenter(s): Lisa Taylor, Gilly Salmon, Matthew Aldrich, Evan Hancock, *University of East Anglia*

Abstract
The Peer Enhanced E-placement (PEEP) was created to provide 'emergency' placement learning to students in response to COVID-19 suspensions. The strong underpinning pedagogy and the adaptability of the PEEP model has resulted in it becoming a sector leader in online placement innovation. The collaborative partners who engaged with the subsequent development and scaling of the PEEP report how the PEEP model not only meets but exceeds some of the traditional placement learning outcomes. The PEEP is delivered by innovative use of existing digital technologies and develops digital skills for staff and students at every stage of the journey, preparing the students for the future digital work environment. The PEEP has been adopted nationwide across multiple health and social care professions. At an institutional level the PEEP has been integrated into the placement policy that has been developed by the university employability executive team. This presentation will take the audience through our journey of emergency response, reimagination of placement models of delivery and the resilience of the online placement model. It will present how the PEEP is now being embedded within a university placement strategy, to impact on students from all disciplines across the university.

Session 7B
Title: Remote International Internships, at the forefront of employability

Presenter(s): Sabrina Starke + University partner, *Absolute Internships*

Abstract
Remote international internships have been at the forefront of employability since the beginning of the pandemic. University students around the world had their local placements and internships abruptly cancelled due to COVID-19. A lack of local work and learning opportunities which threatened their ability to complete their studies on time and eventually be employed, resulted in new remote opportunities with international firms. Remote international internships have allowed students to access work integrated learning opportunities with companies, industries and countries less affected by the virus worldwide. Presenters will give an in-depth overview of the top industries students have been seeking and excelling at, as well as the international destinations most in demand. Additionally, presenters will discuss the various levels of support that have been improved and innovative, such as international career development, navigating the remote workspace and working cross-culturally across time zones. Student and employer feedback will be the basis of the information shared.

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