

Research Showcase

Wednesday 8th September

10:00-10:45

Our Research Showcase is an ideal opportunity to share current research **under any Placement, Work based learning, or Employability related topic.**

3 slides and 5 minutes

Using **three** slides, Presenters have **five** minutes to take us on a fast-paced, informative and entertaining journey through their recent research.

We have 5 Research Showcases, some will be presented live, and some pre-recorded.

The showcases have been divided into two groups, and there will be an opportunity for Q&A after each group.

The Research Showcase presentations will be in the **Main** session, rather than using breakout rooms and delegates will be able to hear about all 5 pieces of research. The abstracts for all the sessions are detailed below.

Research Showcase	Topic	Presenter(s)
Showcase 1 LIVE	Connecting the dots: how research is informing a Placement Practitioner Toolkit	Jo Ramsay, <i>The University of Warwick</i>
Showcase 2 LIVE	Understanding the value of a work placement: benchmarking competencies to support targeted opportunities	Helen Hughes, <i>University of Leeds</i>
Showcase 3 LIVE	Engaging students through Virtual Internships	Sarah Holcombe, Hannah Irwin, Katie Stote, <i>University of Plymouth</i>
	Q&A	
Showcase 4 LIVE	Blended international internships in Barcelona, Spain	Sabrina Starke, <i>Absolute Internships</i>
Showcase 5 PRE	A Methodology to Measure the Impact of Placement	Rachel Shannon, Mark Magill, Rob Ware <i>Ulster University</i>
	Q&A	

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Showcase 1 - LIVE

Title: Connecting the dots: how research is informing a Placement Practitioner Toolkit

Presenter: Jo Ramsay, *The University of Warwick*

Abstract

A Placement Practitioner Toolkit, in development at the University of Warwick, supports the University's strategies to embed employability within the curriculum. As opportunities for placement learning continue to rise, the toolkit brings together internal and external guidance, policies, processes and good practice to support Placement Practitioners and academic departments with administrative work, student support and employer engagement.

In addition to informing content for the toolkit, research is helping to 'connect the dots' between central processes and support for academic departments. The Internships, Placements and Work Experience team, responsible for the toolkit, has identified processes, contacts and areas where further support is required to aid and point practitioners in the right direction. This is resulting in mutually supportive and beneficial relationships, good practice, and the sharing of ideas, knowledge and resources across departments.

This presentation will give a whistle-stop tour of how research has informed content and developed connections across the university, including:

- An overview of the research and basis for content
- How connections have formed and developed to support stakeholder need
- The value of these connections for ongoing review and developments

Showcase 2 - LIVE

Title: Understanding the value of a work placement: benchmarking competencies to support targeted opportunities

Presenter(s): Helen Hughes, *University of Leeds*

Abstract

This presentation will present data from a longitudinal, multi-partnered collaboration, which is studying the development of students' competencies through their 9 to 12-month work placements. Since 2016 (with data collection still ongoing) we have been tracking students' development across more than 100 competencies at three time points (pre-placement, mid-placement and end-of-placement), exploring their proficiency and rates of development, as well as measuring changes in their work attitudes, values and goals. Mid- and end-of placements we have collected parallel data on our students' proficiency from their workplace colleagues. So far, over 1,250 students have taken part in the research from across three faculties within our institution; and over 1,900 Line Managers and workplace peers from more than 280 organizations have provided ratings of students at multiple time points.

The presentation will showcase some key findings from the research, in particular relating to differences in the rates that different competencies develop, as well as highlighting differences that are emerging across genders and disciplines. It will highlight implications for how we best support students before, during, and after placements, and better embed targeted learning opportunities in the wider curriculum.

Showcase 3- LIVE

Title: Engaging students through Virtual Internships

Presenter(s): Sarah Holcombe, Hannah Irwin, Katie Stote, *University of Plymouth*

Abstract

University of Plymouth's Virtual Internship Scheme is providing a powerful step-change in work based and placement learning. Created in response to the unprecedented pressure on students graduating into a turbulent job market and fragile economy in 2020, the scheme pays students and recent graduates to work with a company for 38 hours on the delivery of a project.

One year later, the scheme continues to thrive; successfully expanding across undergraduate and postgraduate students within the Faculty of Arts, Humanities and Business and delivering over 100 diverse and far-reaching placements to date.

In this presentation, we will explore how our specialist placement practitioner developed a new scheme, maximising internal resources and adding value to our existing offer. We will take a deep dive into the findings of our longitudinal evaluation, discuss the challenges faced along the way and demonstrate how our approach has been refined and developed as a result. Finally, we will outline the benefits seen by key stakeholders: interns, academics and external partners.

Showcase 4- LIVE

Title: Blended international internships in Barcelona, Spain

Presenter(s): Sabrina Starke, Absolute Internships

Abstract

Approximately 70% of our on-site Summer 2021 students are undertaking a blended internship, meaning that they go to the office at least once per week and work the rest of the week remotely. In Barcelona, Spain, 20% of our students come from UK universities. In this session, we invite attendees to explore the current blended internship reality, overall demand from companies for flex working, share student and company data regarding their experience as well as a live testimony from a UK university student.

Showcase 5- PRE-Recorded

Title: A Methodology to Measure the Impact of Placement

Presenter(s): Rachel Shannon, Mark Magill, Rob Ware, *Ulster University*

Abstract

On average 1,535 students graduate from Ulster University each year with a Diploma in Professional Practice or equivalent, gained through completion of a yearlong placement in the penultimate year of their study. The COVID-19 pandemic has caused widespread disruption to the placement process, with many companies, faced with prolonged financial uncertainty, withdrawing their placement offering and many students subsequently left without vital work experience that is key to securing graduate employment.

During this period of turbulence, it is essential that the benefits and relevance of the placement model are widely recognised to avoid loss of further opportunities, to encourage employers to engage with the model for their COVID-19 recovery strategies and to promote student appetite and uptake in the model. A team of researchers and data analysts at Ulster University have recently embarked on an 18-month project which aims to measure the impact of Ulster sandwich model placements from a range of stakeholder perspectives. As part of this showcase, members of the team will share the methodology they plan to use which aims to eliminate selection bias around determining the impact of placement on student academic performance. Any preliminary findings from the research will also be presented.

Q&A