

“I now understand exactly what skills we can expect to see from the graduates we recruit according to their subject of study. I have even rewritten my interviewing frameworks and questions to align to the student employability profiles.”

Linsey Perry, Head of Graduate Recruitment, Network Rail

Employability and Enterprise



**The
Higher
Education
Academy**



Employability is ...

a set of skills that make an individual more likely to secure employment and be successful in their chosen occupation.

Employability and Enterprise

Higher education institutions are coming under increasing pressure to ensure their graduates have relevant employability skills. Institutions are also being encouraged to help students develop enterprise skills so that more graduates have the confidence and knowledge to set up businesses.

Senior managers and academics are looking for support at all levels to embed employability and enterprise into the higher education experience.

The Higher Education Academy is committed to helping institutions improve the employability and entrepreneurship of all students. The Academy has worked with a number of partners to provide a range of tools and resources in these areas.

Student Employability Profiles

The Higher Education Academy Subject Network is working on a range of

student employability profiles. Each profile identifies skills that can be developed through the study of a particular discipline. They are based on subject benchmark statements developed by UK higher education academic communities and copyrighted by the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA).

These skills are then mapped against input from the Council for Industry and Higher Education (CIHE) Employer membership regarding competencies, skills and attributes valued when recruiting. This enables the learning experiences to be translated into language helpful to employers.

Publications

The Academy (and its predecessor organisations) have produced a number of useful, evidence-based publications on student employability. These outline different perspectives and approaches as well as giving practical guidance on integrating employability into the curriculum.

The **Learning and Employability Series** demonstrates that employability is a broad issue which needs to be addressed academically. A number of titles focus on the curriculum while others examine key themes.

Perspectives is a series of briefing papers which explore employability issues as they relate to different phases in the student life-cycle.

www.heacademy.ac.uk/employability.htm



The **Employability Briefings** approach employability from the perspective of a range of different stakeholders such as teachers, careers advisers, employers and heads of department.

There are also a range of **case studies** exemplifying institutional approaches to embedding employability.

Context case materials

The Higher Education Academy has a database of context cases which use real-life scenarios. These allow students to apply their academic learning to the workplace without an actual work placement. These materials complement other ways of providing work experience and can be easily adapted for use by academics.

Online Directory of Employability Resources

A searchable database of annotated employability publications and materials available throughout the sector, updated and maintained on a regular basis.

Entrepreneurship Case Studies

There are a number of discipline-specific case studies of graduate entrepreneurs. These have been designed for a student audience for use by staff in their teaching.

The entrepreneurial skills matrix

This matrix shows the knowledge, skills, aptitude, and motivation required to start, develop and run a small business. It contains a range of teaching slides, lecturer support and student activities which can help draw out entrepreneurial skills.

“As a graduate recruiter, I have used the student employability profiles to improve my knowledge of the skills sets and experiences that a graduate might expect to gain from various degrees, helping me to cast the net wider when looking for new graduate talent for our company.”

Gary Argent, UK Graduate
Recruitment Manager, LogicaCMG



“Encouraging graduates to become more entrepreneurial produces more enterprising individuals whose skills and flexibility of approach are applicable to any employment situation.”

Useful Links

There is an annotated list of links on the Academy Enterprise web pages which highlight a range of different websites which are useful in supporting and encouraging entrepreneurship.

Discipline approaches

A number of the Higher Education Academy Subject Centres are developing strategies to promote employability and entrepreneurship in

their subject communities. Each Subject Centre is at a different stage of developing and implementing their plans.

There are many definitions of what it is to be ‘employable’ and views on the processes that develop this attribute. The Academy’s web pages on Employability and Enterprise offer a wide range of perspectives on the employability of graduates, based on the premise that, in higher education, ‘employability’ is about good learning. The Academy will work with the Sector Skills Councils and the Sector Skills Development Agency, forging partnerships between the councils and Subject Centres.

For more information, please visit the Higher Education Academy website. www.heacademy.ac.uk/employability.htm

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