

Title - Introduction to Career Development Planning

Keywords - Personal Development Planning, Employability

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School / Department - Division of Media, Language and Leisure Management

Subject - Leisure

Institution - Glasgow Caledonian University

Activity - Introduction to the basic elements of career development

Group - Level 1 students taking the compulsory Introduction to Leisure Module

Aim - This exercise is designed to introduce and support students in their adoption of Personal Development Planning (PDP). During the module, which runs in the first semester of their studies, students are guided towards formulating their own career development plan.

Context / Background - The provision of PDP for students in HE is soon to become a requirement of academic programmes. Prior to this requirement, Glasgow Caledonian was already including a version of PDP within their Leisure Programmes. Recently this provision has been further developed to fulfill the QAA requirements for PDP. The process starts in the Introduction to Leisure Module, which is reported here.

Example - A key aspect of the assessment for the Introduction to Leisure Module is a career plan completed individually by students with support from tutors. Career Development Planning forms part of the module curriculum and tutors provide guidance to students on writing and formulating the plans. In addition, visiting alumni also provide understanding regarding the type of skills and qualifications needed in a range of leisure industry jobs today.

Students are then required to review 2/3 job advertisements that interest them. They will achieve this through contact with people working in their chosen jobs, and the review will encompass areas such as the positive/negative aspects of the jobs and the transferable skills and qualifications (including any vocational qualifications) required.

Following this, students provide a plan of what they will need to do and learn in order to prepare themselves for these chosen roles; this includes an element of critical self-reflection. This preparation may relate to learning within the university or outside of the university. In addition, students are also required to submit a CV which outlines their experience, skills and qualifications to date.

Results / Feedback - The students believe that having alumni speak to them about the transferable skills and qualifications needed to obtain specific jobs are particularly useful. Feedback suggests this helps to focus students about their degree pathway and career route. Students put quite a lot of effort into this piece of work as it is worth 30% of the module and leads into their personal development planning in Semester B.

Other comments - The career plans completed during this introductory module form the basis of the PDP process that continues throughout the course. The PDP programme includes structured support from academic and personal tutors to help students engage in: self-reflection, the creation and maintenance of personal records, planning and monitoring progress towards the achievement of personal objectives, and the transferability of knowledge and learning to different contexts.

The PDP is continued throughout Semester B where students start learning diaries and start to log work experience. Students have to gain 400 hours of work experience before their third year, in order to take a module called Capable Professional Practice.

Further information - If anyone wishes to discuss any of these details further then contact: Dr Gayle McPherson - gmp@gcal.ac.uk