

Resource Guide in:

Employability

INTRODUCTION

Employability is a topic currently at the forefront of higher education (HE) policy. It is also closely linked to other HE policy issues such as widening participation and the introduction of Personal Development Planning (PDP). The aim of this guide is to provide information about the wide range of available materials and resources which have been designed to support staff seeking to embed employability within the curriculum.

At its most simplistic level, the term employability refers to the potential of a student to gain a graduate level job following graduation. However, employability is about much more than the acquisition of a first job. It relates to a broader set of achievements that enhance students' capabilities to operate self-sufficiently in the labour market, for example, in being able to maintain employment and have the flexibility to deal with change. Employability has been defined by the Enhancing Student Employability Co-ordination Team (ESECT) as:

“A set of achievements – skills, understandings and personal attributes - that make graduates more likely to gain employment and be successful in their chosen occupations, which benefits themselves, the workforce, the community and the economy.”

Whilst this acts as a good starting point, understanding exactly what makes a graduate employable is complex and will be influenced by a variety of factors. This requires a shift in focus to the view that "...employability goes well beyond the simplistic notion of key skills, and is evidenced in the application of a mix of personal qualities and beliefs, understandings, skilful practices and the ability to reflect productively on experience" (*Employability in Higher Education*, p11 www.heacademy.ac.uk/936.htm).

There are numerous listings which identify the skills and attributes sought by employers, AGCAS (*Employability Briefing 7*, www.heacademy.ac.uk/1434.htm) suggests the most important are: motivation and enthusiasm, interpersonal skills, team working, oral communication, flexibility and adaptability, initiative, productivity, problem solving, planning and organisation, managing own development and written communication. What will be clear to academics is that these are also the skills which are required to succeed in higher education, in order to achieve 'good learning.'

For those that are interested in finding out more about employability, an excellent starting point is the publication, *Pedagogy for Employability*. This takes the stance that there is no conflict between concern to provide good learning within a programme and an interest in promoting employability within the curriculum. It provides an overview of current research and thinking concerning employability in contemporary higher education and an extensive bibliography

http://www.heacademy.ac.uk/resources.asp?process=full_record§ion=generic&id=357

In order to give consideration to the development of employability within the curriculum, Ward and Pierce suggest that:

- Value needs to be given to explicit approaches which promote employability (such as work-based and work-related learning, or career management provision), where relevance and meaning is already, or can be made, clear to students and staff, and outcomes easily articulated to potential employers.
- An audit of the broader core curriculum is required. Knight and Yorke claim that a major goal of the curriculum is to develop subject understanding, named skills, efficacy beliefs and meta-cognition, and that all four matter. www.heacademy.ac.uk/resources.asp?process=full_record§ion=generic&id=248
- There is a need to ensure that approaches to teaching, learning and assessment are consistent with curriculum objectives, not least by creating opportunities that support the desired sorts of learning. In the development of employability, how things are done, and how students are asked to do things, are as important (perhaps more important) than the stated objectives of a particular module. (See for example, Knight and Yorke (2003) *Assessment, Learning and Employability*. Maidenhead; Society for Research in Higher Education and the Open University Press).
- There is a need to ensure that students are 'tuned in' to their learning intentions and to the significance of aspects of learning. They should have a perspective on their achievements, and a clear idea of actions necessary for improvement. Formative assessment can play a key role. Students need to understand that the goals of a programme are wider than academic achievement alone, and to appreciate ways in which the work they do could support their personal development. (See for example, Elias and Purcell (2004) *Is Mass Higher Education Working? Evidence from the Labour Market Experiences of Recent Graduates*. National Institute Economic Review, 190(1), 60-74).
- There is a need to understand more about the career destinations of graduates, not only 'first destinations' but also their longer-term career paths and recognise the increasingly uncertain and less supported career trajectories many graduates are likely to encounter.
- There is a need to provide students with opportunities (and support) when reflecting on – and documenting – their achievements inside and outside the programme of study, thereby raising their capacity to represent their achievements to others. It is vital that students are able to translate what they do during their undergraduate years into a language that appeals to employers. (The processes of Personal Development

Planning are important in this, though employers are unlikely to want to see the records that accompany the process).

(Employability Briefing No 7, www.heacademy.ac.uk/1434.htm)

Employability is already a central aspect within many hospitality, leisure, sport and tourism courses, particularly those that include industrial experience or work placements. There are now many sources of information relating to employability, most of which are generic to higher education rather than subject specific. This resource guide includes both generic and subject specific sources of information, and these have been categorised into the following sections:

- Generic information and guidance on employability
- Employability curriculum tools
- Skills-related reports
- Employability projects
- Hospitality, leisure sport and tourism specific
- Work experience and placements
- For those considering higher education

GENERIC INFORMATION AND GUIDANCE ON EMPLOYABILITY

The Enhancing Student Employability Co-ordination Team (ESECT) has been funded by the HEFCE to support higher education in engaging with this policy priority. Its work began in September 2002 and finishes in February 2005. Their website and publications provide an excellent range of information and resources.

www.heacademy.ac.uk/Employability.htm

Learning & Employability Guides

This series provides an overview of the academic context of employability within the higher education curriculum and in relation to: work-based learning, pedagogy, judging and communicating achievements, reflection, widening participation and entrepreneurship. The bibliographies in these guides provide a comprehensive listing of sources for aspects of further interest.

<http://www.heacademy.ac.uk/learningandemployability.htm>

Employability Briefings

This is a series of shorter briefings written specifically for key stakeholders in employability: employers, students, project initiatives, senior managers, heads of departments, and careers advisers.

www.heacademy.ac.uk/1434.htm

Perspectives

These papers examine the relationship between employability and higher education. They summarise some of the key themes in employability from less common perspectives. Topics include: students' educational experiences before entering higher education, transition into higher education, the undergraduate curriculum, transitions from higher education to work, and international perspectives.

www.heacademy.ac.uk/1432.htm

Developing Strategies for Employability in Higher Education

This paper, aimed at senior managers in HE, includes institutional case studies which outline how three institutions have approached the issue. They are not offered as ideals, however they do illuminate the choices to be made.

www.heacademy.ac.uk/929.htm

Directory of Employability Resources

This is an online searchable database of employability publications and materials. It is updated and maintained on a regular basis.

www.heacademy.ac.uk/1442.htm

Employability Links

This area of the ESECT site provides links to web pages of the main organisations, together with some of their more notable initiatives and projects that provide help, support, information etc regarding employability. The links are grouped into: curriculum development, recording

achievement, career management, work experience, career destinations, labour market intelligence and widening participation.

www.heacademy.ac.uk/1443.htm

The Association of Graduate Careers Advisory Services (AGCAS)

AGCAS provides links to an extensive range of resources from within the employability section of their website. These include information on curriculum based initiatives and work related learning and experience.

www.agcas.org.uk/index.htm

Further useful sources on employability which offer a comprehensive overview of the key debates and issues regarding embedding employability in the curriculum include:

Knight, P T and Yorke, M (2003) *Assessment, Learning and Employability*. Maidenhead; Society for Research in Higher Education and the Open University Press.

Knight, P T and Yorke, M (2004) *Learning, Curriculum and Employability in Higher Education*. London: Routledge.

Shaw, M, Healy, R, Pilkington, R and Houghton P (2003) *Pioneering Employability in the HE Curriculum*. SEDA: SEDA Special 14, ISBN 1 902435 25 7

Details four case studies of externally funded employability projects run between 1996 and 2000 at the University of Central Lancashire.

Personal Development Planning (PDP)

By 2005/6 all UK higher education students should have access to a Progress File that consists of two parts, a transcript, described as a record of their learning and achievement, and a Personal Development Planning (PDP) framework. For more information, see the Quality Assurance Agency website. Needless to say, there are strong linkages between the enhancement of employability within the curriculum and the PDP related activities of students.

<http://www.qaa.ac.uk/default.asp>

The Centre for Recording Achievement (CRA)

The most extensive information on PDP can be found on this website. This includes guidance on practice, case study examples and information on PDP related projects.

www.recordingachievement.org/

The Higher Education Academy

This website also provides a range of information which includes research reports and practical guidance on PDP.

<http://www.heacademy.ac.uk/>

EMPLOYABILITY TOOLS

ESECT provides a growing number of audit and curriculum materials that can be downloaded, and in many cases, adapted to suit the needs of a particular department or programme.

<http://www.heacademy.ac.uk/ESECT.htm>

Employability Audits

Employability audits are designed to offer a framework to help departments to debate and examine employability provision within their existing teaching practice, recognise and build on existing good work and identify areas for action.

www.heacademy.ac.uk/1667.htm

Card Sorts

Employability card sorts are a practical way of helping to motivate students to think about their personal skills and career development.

www.heacademy.ac.uk/1665.htm

Context Case Materials

Context case materials have been designed to offer students experience of work by simulating real work situations in the classroom. Many cases can be used within the subject curriculum and can for example concentrate on specific skills such as creative thinking or team work. There is a searchable database of case studies and the site also includes a guide to running context case sessions.

www.heacademy.ac.uk/938.htm

SKILLS RELATED REPORTS

National Employers Skills Survey 2003: Key Findings

This report, produced through collaboration between the Learning and Skills Council (LSC), the Sector Skills Development Agency (SSDA) and the Department for Education and Skills (DfES), analyses the results from the National Employers Skills Survey (NESS) 2003. It provides detailed information about the extent, causes, and implications of England's recruitment problems and skill gaps.

<http://www.lsc.gov.uk/National/Documents/SubjectListing/Research/LSCcommissionedresearch/NESS2003Findings.htm>

How much does Higher Education Enhance the Employability of Graduates?

This HEFCE report investigates the approaches used in universities to improve students' employability prospects, and seeks to measure their relative success. The study identifies perceived gaps between the employability skills gained at university, and those actually required in the early years of employment following graduation.

http://www.heacademy.ac.uk/employability.asp?process=full_record§ion=generic&id=234&project_area=pa5

Higher Education: Higher Ambitions? Graduate Employability in Scotland

The Scottish Higher Education Funding Council (SHEFC) has published a report on graduate employability in Scotland. The information has been gathered from a literature review, two focus groups of recent graduates, interviews with selected stakeholders and a seminar with sponsors and selected experts. The report focuses on the needs of the student and seeks to find out what is meant by employability and skills for employment, and how graduates can obtain these skills to improve their employability.

www.shefc.ac.uk/publications/other/higher_education_ambition.pdf

Graduate Key Skills and Employability Survey 2002

The Chartered Management Institute has produced a report examining the skills and attributes of graduates from the perspective of employers. The survey aims to assess how well higher education is providing graduates with the key skills that they will require in order to become effective managers.

www.managers.org.uk/institute/content_toc_description_1.asp?category=3&doc=1280&id=234&id=211&id=44

Enhancing Employability, Recognising Diversity – Making Links Between Higher Education and The World of Work

Published by Universities UK, this report investigates how universities are addressing the enhancement of the employability of their students and making closer links between education and work. Examples include new qualifications, developments in the accreditation of work experience and personal development and career planning.

<http://bookshop.universitiesuk.ac.uk/downloads/employability.pdf>

Demand for Graduates: A review of the economic evidence

This report published by the Higher Education Policy Institute, looks at the economic implications of expanding higher education. It will be of interest to those concerned with the employability of graduates and widening participation.

www.hepi.ac.uk/pubs.asp?DOC=Reports

Employers in the New Graduate Labour Market: recruiting from a wider spectrum of graduates

By Purcell, Rowley, and Morley, this report published by the Council for Industry and Higher Education and the Employment Studies Research Unit, identifies leading practice in graduate recruitment from companies which are actively seeking to recruit from the wider pool of the available graduate labour force. ISBN: 1 874223 33 5.

<http://www.cihe-uk.com/docs/PUBS/0205RecruitingWiderSpectrum.pdf>

Graduate Labour Market Forum

The Graduate Labour Market Forum was convened to enable those with an interest in the relationship between higher education and employment to engage with and discuss emerging research findings from a number of research projects being undertaken in collaboration between researchers at Warwick and Bristol.

www2.warwick.ac.uk/fac/soc/ier/research/glmf/

SkillsActive National Employer Skills Survey

This report summarises the findings of the National Employer Skills Survey (NESS) 2003 for the SkillsActive Sector Skills Council. The findings are divided into three areas: caravan parks, sports and recreation and outdoors, based on the Standard Industrial Classification (SIC) codes. The report provides an overview of the sector, identifies skills needs over the next 3 years, and highlights the main causes and nature of recruitment difficulties.

www.ssda.org.uk/ssda/pdf/SkillsActive%20ENG%20TEXT%20&%20COV.pdf

EMPLOYABILITY PROJECTS

Project Finder Database

The Higher Education Academy's Connect service provides a quick search and access facility to learning and teaching projects in HE and FE.

www.heacademy.ac.uk/1590.htm

The Fund for the Development of Teaching and Learning (FDTL)

Funded by the HEFCE and the DEL, these include a number of projects concerned with employability, details can be found via the Higher Education Academy website, including those categorised within an employability theme.

www.heacademy.ac.uk/1057.htm

Generic FDTL Projects linked to Employability

Making Practice Based Learning Work

This project promotes practitioner effectiveness in supporting and supervising students in the workplace across a range of healthcare disciplines. It will identify and document good practice on preparing practitioners for their educational role, develop and evaluate learning materials for practitioners.

www.practicebasedlearning.org/

Embedding Employability Skills in the Curriculum (EPIC)

This is an FDTL Phase 5 project which is commencing in January 2005.

www.heacademy.ac.uk/1057.htm

Enhancing Employability and Vocational Opportunities Through Learning in Virtual Environments

This is an FDTL Phase 5 project which is commencing in January 2005.

www.heacademy.ac.uk/1057.htm

Learning to Work: Working to Learn

This project establishes periods of pre and/or post-graduate work-based learning, and builds mechanisms for universities to work with employers to equip graduates with the skills needed to engage in lifelong learning and continuing professional development.

www.heacademy.ac.uk/1590.htm

The Keynote Project

This project is designed to support the enhancement of key skills of textile, fashion and printing students, thereby enhancing their employability.

www.keynote-project.co.uk

HOSPITALITY, LEISURE SPORT AND TOURISM SPECIFIC

Enhancing Graduate Employability: embedding employability skills development in the curriculum

This FDTL project will develop, implement and evaluate a range of curriculum interventions that will enhance the employability skills of hospitality, leisure, sport and tourism students. A key outcome of the project will be a series of website resources (case studies, learning and teaching materials and a good practice guide) based on experience of embedding employability in the curriculum.

www.hlst.ltsn.ac.uk/projects/fdtl/fdtl5.html

From PDP to CPD: promoting reflection and meta-cognition in hospitality, leisure, sport and tourism students' experiential learning

The focus of this FDTL project is the development and dissemination of support materials for coherent mentoring practices, particularly for student mentors, that can be utilised in relation to personal development planning to encourage deep learning in work contexts. The adoption of such an approach is intended to encourage students, as future industry professionals, to understand themselves in relation to other people and the world around them.

www.hlst.ltsn.ac.uk/projects/fdtl/fdtl5.html

HE Academy Network for Hospitality, Leisure Sport and Tourism: LINK 11 - Learning from Experience

LINK is published three times per year, with each edition focusing on a different topic relevant to learning, teaching and assessment in our subject areas. This issue includes articles on placement learning; other forms of work-based learning; entrepreneurship; skills development; personal development planning; careers education; reflective practice and experiential learning.

www.hlst.ltsn.ac.uk/resources/link11/link11.pdf

Establishing Qualification Requirements for the Hospitality and Catering Industry

The Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) has published a report highlighting the need for improved training and qualifications to meet the skills shortages in the hospitality industry. The paper calls for greater distinction between current A Level and BTEC National courses, and suggests the creation of a new GCSE in hospitality and catering, as well as the development of a new suite of specialist vocational qualifications.

www.qca.org.uk/adultlearning/downloads/27315Q_1.PDF

Hospitality, Leisure Sport and Tourism Adding Value to Employability (HAVE) Project

The HAVE Project was a joint initiative between a group of higher education institutions, the Hotel and Catering International Management Association, Blue Arrow Recruitment and the HE Academy Network for Hospitality, Leisure, Sport & Tourism. Through their work materials have been produced which can be adapted and used within courses to encourage students to reflect on the learning and development achieved through their part-time (often paid) work.

www.hlst.heacademy.ac.uk/HAVE/

Progress Files for use in Sport Studies Workplace Learning

This work was undertaken at Liverpool John Moores University and University College, Worcester and funded by the LTSN for Hospitality, leisure Sport and Tourism. The Project developed materials to assist undergraduate students in assessing their subject specific and personal skills, planning their personal development and recording their experience in a portfolio of evidence (materials can be downloaded from the site).

www.hlst.heacademy.ac.uk/projects/project_611.html

Centres of Vocational Excellence (CoVES)

The CoVE programme is central to the Learning and Skills Council's task of improving skills for employment and national competitiveness. The CoVE programme aims to improve the links between colleges and work based learning providers in order to develop training that meets the needs of employers. On the site it is possible to identify subject related CoVEs.

www.cove.lsc.gov.uk

Industry and subject-related organisations and associations

Association for Tourism in Higher Education (ATHE)

ATHE carries out a range of activities designed to further the interests of tourism in higher education. These include the organisation of an annual conference, representation of the group to government agencies and others, production of guidelines of good practice and liaison with other subject groups. Guidelines include publications on tourism placements and industry links.

www.athe.org.uk

British Association of Sport and Exercise Sciences (BASES)

BASES is the UK professional body for those interested in the science of sport and exercise. Their Supervised Experience (SE) programme aims to provide sport and exercise scientists with the guidance, environment and opportunities that will facilitate the development of the competencies expected for BASES Accreditation for scientific support and/or research.

www.bases.org.uk

British Hospitality Association (BHA)

The British Hospitality Association exists to ensure that the views of the British hospitality industry are represented in a forceful, coherent and co-ordinated way. Their website includes a section for students and academics.

www.bha-online.org.uk

Council for Hospitality Management Education (CHME)

CHME is a voluntary non-profit making body which represents those UK universities and colleges offering courses in the management of hotel and catering businesses. They also have a special interest group for placement advisors for tourism and hospitality (PATH).

www.chme.co.uk

The Council for Industry and Higher Education (CIHE)

CIHE was established by business leaders and senior academics to improve communication and cooperation between higher/further education and business. It seeks to encourage improved employability in all graduates and supports the widening of participation of those from non-traditional backgrounds.

www.cihe-uk.com

The Department for Culture Media and Sport (DCMS)

This is the government department with responsibility to “Improve the quality of life for all through cultural and sporting activities and through the strengthening of the tourism, creative and leisure industries.” Their extensive website includes research publications about the sector and information on education and social policy.

www.culture.gov.uk/default.htm

Hotel & Catering International Management Association (HCIMA)

Is the professional body for hospitality, leisure and tourism management professionals. Their site includes an education centre which provides an online self-assessment tool and a CPD framework.

www.hcima.org.uk

Institute of Leisure and Amenity Management (ILAM)

ILAM represents managers in all aspects of leisure activities. It works on behalf of its members to develop the profession and promote the value of investment in leisure services. It provides an extensive range of services which include ILAM qualifications frameworks and CPD.

www.ilam.co.uk

Leisure Studies Association (LSA)

The LSA provides a multi-disciplinary meeting and communication forum for researchers, practitioners and students involved in all areas of leisure studies and its many related areas of interest.

www.leisure-studies-association.info/LSAWEB/Index.html

People 1st

People 1st is the Sector Skills Council for the hospitality, leisure, travel and tourism industries. Its mission is to have an impact on increased completion rates for qualifications and learning programmes, investment in training, employee skill levels, productivity levels, and reduced staff turnover through lifelong career development.

www.people1st.co.uk

SkillsActive

SkillsActive is the Sector Skills Council for the active leisure and learning sector. It will form part of the Skills for Business network, with the aim of enhancing quality and productivity by improving the skills of the workforce. SkillsActive takes over from SPRITO, which will now focus on product development and European affairs.

www.skillsactive.org.uk

Sport England

Sport England is an organisation committed to creating opportunities for people to start in sport, stay in sport and succeed in sport. The website includes sport related research publications, for example in relation to increasing participation in sport, and also contains information on careers in sport.

www.sportengland.org/

Springboard UK

Springboard UK promotes careers in hospitality, leisure, tourism and travel.

www.springboarduk.org.uk/

Star UK

This is the official site of the UK Research Liaison Group. It provides up to date statistics on UK tourism and useful links to Trade Bodies, Tourist Boards etc.

www.staruk.org.uk/

UK Sport

UK Sport is funded by the DCMS to co-ordinate overall policy for sport and support elite sport at UK and international levels as well as UK-wide programmes such as anti-doping and major events. Their site provides an overview of sport in the UK plus regular publications regarding elite performance. It includes a section on the latest jobs in sport.

www.uk sport.gov.uk

WORK EXPERIENCE AND PLACEMENTS

NASES: National Association of Student Employment Services

NASES is the national representative body for practitioners from all styles of job shops, including those in students' unions, careers services and personnel offices. Their site provides an overview of student employment. There is also a link to their dedicated student website – morethanwork.net

www.nases.org.uk

More than Work

This website, produced by the National Association of Student Employment Services (NASES) can assist students in amongst other services, identifying their skills, building a successful CV, and understanding their employment rights.

www.morethanwork.net

National Council for Work Experience

Promoting, supporting and developing quality work experience for the benefits of students, organisations and the economy. Their site includes a search facility for work experience opportunities.

www.work-experience.org

Prospects.ac.uk - the official Graduate Careers Website

This is an extensive site with sections that include; finding out about the world of work – this offers information on, for example, types of jobs and sectors and graduate employers.

www.prospects.ac.uk

Year In Industry

A national, charity-based organisation which places bright, motivated gap year students and undergraduates with companies for paid 12-month, degree relevant work placements.

www.yini.org.uk

STEP Programme

The Shell Technology Enterprise Programme provides opportunities for undergraduates to undertake a specific business or technical project within a small- or medium-sized company.

www.step.org.uk

Accredited Work-related Learning Programmes for Students: A Guide for Graduate Recruiters

This guide is designed to help employers, careers advisors and teaching staff make sense of the growing range of opportunities open to students for gaining experience which has been accredited 'outside' the academic curriculum and which enhances their employability.

www.heacademy.ac.uk/1431.htm

Skill: Into Work Experience Guide

Skill: The National Bureau for Students with Disabilities has published a guide for disabled students thinking about work experience. The guide provides useful information and advice,

and outlines the legal rights of disabled people under disability discrimination legislation.

www.skill.org.uk/shared/into_we.asp

Placenet

Placenet is a registered Charity and a forum for university placement officers. Its aim is to advance the education of students in Higher Education by enhancing the organisation, management and provision of academic vocational experience for students.

www.placenet.org.uk

FOR THOSE CONSIDERING ENTERING HIGHER EDUCATION

If Only I'd Known: making the most of higher education, a guide for students and parents

This guide for students and parents, is aimed at the younger entrant to HE and is intended to encourage students to make the most of their university experience.

<http://www.heacademy.ac.uk/1430.htm>

Aimhigher

The Aimhigher portal has been developed to provide those contemplating entering HE with access to the necessary information with which to make effective decisions.

www.aimhigher.ac.uk