Embedding Employability in the Curriculum

SIMON ROBSON
What was the challenge?

What was the initiative?

What are the results?

WANT to give your career the edge?
The employability challenge

- Competitive graduate employment market
- Bridging the gap between students and employers
- Traditional delivery mechanisms are not making students ‘work ready’
- Not all students are gaining work experience
- Student engagement with employability is occurring too late
- Students struggle to articulate their experiences
Addressing the challenge

- **At institutional level**
  - Programme Framework for Northumbria Awards (PFNA)
  - Personal tutoring/interim HEAR

- **At programme level**
  - Work related learning opportunities
  - A cumulative approach to employability

- **At module level**
  - Flipped learning
  - Graduate enterprise
  - Assessment
Institutional level

THE VISION

Our graduates are distinguished by their intellectual expertise and prowess, their leadership capability and their employability.
Institutional level
A NEW PROGRAMME FRAMEWORK

- Cross-institutional consistency to the structure and delivery of programmes
- Enrich the student experience
- Common goal of the “Graduate Characteristics”
Institutional level
NORTHUMBRIA
GRADUATE
CHARACTERISTICS

Challenge Thinking
Communicate Effectively
Solve problems

Think independently
Apply Knowledge
Value Curiosity

Work constructively in teams
It is about supporting students to develop a range of knowledge, skills, behaviours, attributes and attitudes which enable them to be successful not just in employment but in life.
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Stage 3
Prioritising actions
Institutional level

- Engage students in career related learning early
- Opportunity for students to reflect on their experiences
- Personal and professional development
- Stand out from the crowd

BENCHMARK
What sports or activities have you previously undertaken?

ASPIRATION
Do you have any clear career ambitions at this stage?

DEVELOPMENT
What are your personal strengths and weaknesses?

DISCOVER
You can find out further information at...
Programme level

WORK RELATED LEARNING

Integrated work placement available to all Northumbria students:

Student Advice Centres – students provide a semi-professional consultancy service to the public e.g. The Business Clinic.

Live Briefs – external organisations provide students a real world challenge for them to problem solve e.g. Multidisciplinary Innovation.

Start-up experiences – students gain a practical insight into the initial setting up and operation of a small business e.g. Entrepreneurial Business Management.
Programme level
A CUMULATIVE APPROACH TO EMPLOYABILITY

BA Childhood and Early Years Studies

BSc Applied Sport and Exercise

BA Business Management
Building on current initiatives with EEE plan

**AWARENESS**

Students are aware of the opportunities available to them to support their skills development and professional employment.

**OPPORTUNITIES**

Students have access to work related learning experience to apply their skills in practice.

**DELIVERY**

Programme teams explicitly embed employability and enterprise into learning and teaching.
Strong links with the Careers and Employment Service
Student and Graduate Enterprise
Students’ Union
OPPORTUNITIES

- Encouraging students to undertake a work placement
- Greater employer engagement to provide work related learning experiences
- Increasing student engagement in entrepreneurship
Exemplary employability practice webpages

Departmental champions

Employability forum for sharing best practice
- Attendance, satisfaction and achievement has increased
- Positive employer feedback
- Employability has been put on the agenda for both staff and students
- Students have a clearer sense of career trajectory/identity
- Greater engagement with placements
- More engagement with career related events
- Improved DLHE results
- Strengthening of links with local employers
“On leaving university soft skill development was the only thing that was not at the level I would have liked it to be.” Graduate

“More attention should have been given to teaching students to develop their CV, skills and competencies for employment post-graduation.” Graduate

“Graduates lack employability skills coming out of University because they may have never worked or do not fully understand industry.” Graduate Employer