



Partnership and reflection: Embedding Employability in English

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Supported by:





The Nottingham HEA project: Embedding Employability in English: work related learning and reflection in the creative industries

Key challenges:

- How can we create opportunities for students to develop vocational skills and experience work related learning in the context of the particular skills and knowledges being developed through their *subject-based study*?
- How can we ensure that such work related activity is appropriately framed and supported to ensure 'learning' takes place, particularly as the numbers of students involved increases?



£18,000

Average salary six months after the course ⁱ

Typical salary range: £14,000.00 - £21,000.00 ⁱ

Average salary across the UK after taking a similar course

£18,000.00 after six months (salary range: £14,000.00 - £21,000.00)

£24,000.00 after 40 months (salary range: £20,000.00 - £28,000.00)

84%

Go on to work and/or study ⁱ

This is what students are doing six months after finishing the course.



Chart labels explained ⁱ

Preparation for future employment: University Of Nottingham ^g

Employment six months after the course ⁱ

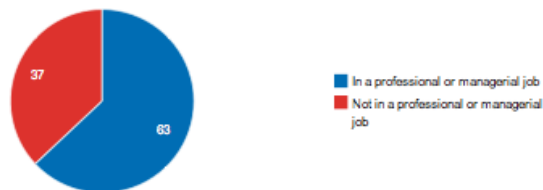


Chart labels explained ⁱ

KIS data on employment for
BA English, University of Nottingham

<http://unistats.direct.gov.uk/subjects/employment/10007154-Q300>

Problems with this model:

‘But they’re here to study English,
not employability’

‘What about the *content* of my
module?’

‘My module is research led –
what has that got to do with
employability?’



As Day (2010) notes: ‘The concern that “the discourse of employability could jeopardize the established quest for wisdom” (Barnett cited in Knight and Yorke 2004: 19) goes straight to the heart of the matter’.

Key initial focus group findings:

Students

- Were articulate and enthusiastic about what the study of English had given them in terms of knowledge, empathy and independence
- Knew they were learning these skills, but wanted to be able to show prospective employers evidence of having done so in a real world context
- Were keen to link work placement activity into their curriculum learning
- Wanted high quality placement experiences which developed skills (pg students in particular)
- Were anxious about managing placement activity alongside subject learning activities

Key initial focus group findings:

Students







- Were uncertain whether they wanted placement experiences as part of their curriculum/as part of the Nottingham Advantage Award/as a stand-alone activity.

Achieve more

The Nottingham Advantage Award

The Advantage Award offers a wide range of credit-bearing activities for you to take part in. Please click on the links below to find out more about individual modules.

View by category

<p>Employability and career skills modules</p> 	<p>Enterprise, events and project management modules</p> 	<p>Peer support, mentoring and buddying modules</p> 
<p>Volunteering and work experience modules</p> 	<p>Study abroad, cultural awareness and language-learning modules</p> 	<p>Employer-led modules</p> 

Key initial focus group findings:

Employers

- Saw the key 'employability' skill as being able to take notice of the job spec!
- Were keen to find out what skills English students could bring
- Were as concerned as we were about offering placements which used students' discipline specific and 'pre-graduate' skills
- Clearly saw students as offering something to their organisation which would otherwise be difficult for them to access (social media, anyone?)

Key initial focus group findings:

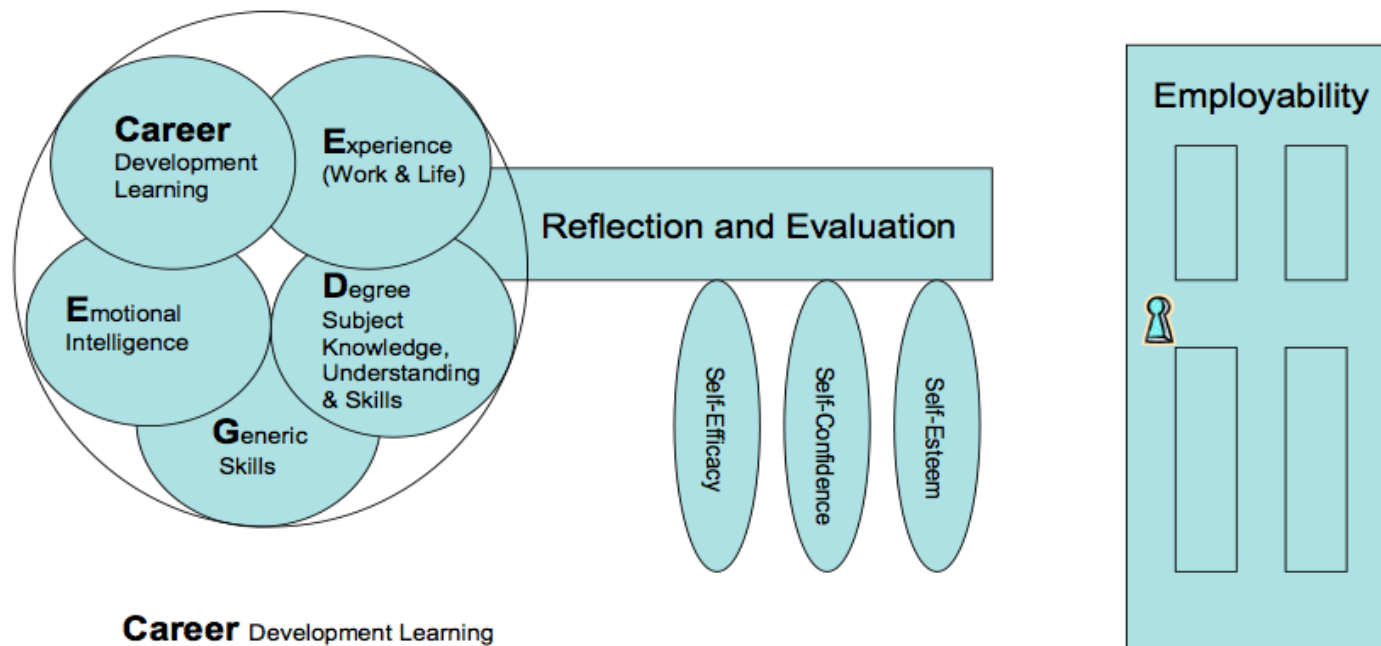
Staff

English colleagues:

- Expressed anxiety over how to teach employability, and whether they wanted to do so
- Expressed anxiety over assessing and measuring these skills as part of a degree

Careers and Employability Service:

- Welcomed the chance to embed activities within Schools rather than just alongside them
- Stressed the importance of sharing activity and knowledge



Career Development Learning
Experience (Work & Life)
Degree Subject Knowledge, Understanding & Skills
Generic Skills
Emotional Intelligence

CareerEDGE - The Key to Employability

'The Key to Employability: Developing a practical model of graduate employability', Lorraine Dacre Pool and Peter Sewell, 2007

http://www.heacademy.ac.uk/assets/documents/employability/EEL_repository_KTE_CETL_thekeytoemployability.pdf

Project aims:

- To build on existing employability frameworks to develop our own framework model of work related learning, teaching and assessment for UG and PG students of English - what are the discipline specific employability skills that work related engagements can develop?
- To map and model the differences between work related engagements at different levels of learning – UG and PG.
- To explore and articulate the ways in which ‘English’ can help employers in the creative industries and beyond.
- To develop and evaluate the use of ePortfolios and learning sets for English placements.
- And finally, to disseminate and share good practice with colleagues in English disciplines and beyond ...



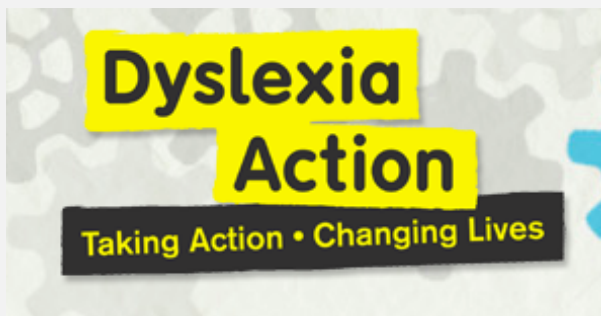
**Nottingham
Playhouse**



The University of
Nottingham

UNITED KINGDOM • CHINA • MALAYSIA

NEW PERSPECTIVES
THEATRE COMPANY




**LAKE
SIDE**





- Identification of projects/roles/skills profile
- Health and safety/risk assessments
- ‘Real world’ application experience –
 - application form listing two preferred roles,
 - shortlisting,
 - interview
 - (with feedback to unsuccessful candidates at each stage)
- Placement one day a week (initially outside curriculum during project trial)
- Encouragement of reflective learning – Mahara ePortfolio





Open Source ePortfolios
(mah-rah-verb): to think, thinking, thought

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Search Users

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School of English Work Related Learning Placements 2012-13

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Placement Shared space

This group is for those students in the School of English who are undertaking work related learning placements as part of the HEA project, 'Embedding Employability within English'.

It provides a central support area where you can access important information and documents and a space to enable you to connect with others on placements and your placement administrator.

Using the group

Connect with other members


Click on "members" tab to view and send messages to other placement students and your Placement Administrator.

Click on the "Forums" tab to join discussions and post comments about your placement experiences.

Accessing documents

Click the "Files" tab to access relevant documents and materials to support you in your placement.

Creative Industries



Before you start your placement

Make sure you have done the following


Read the following pages

- Health and Safety
- Building your portfolio

Carry out a Skills Audit

Employers are looking for a wide range of skills, some of which be specialist, but many will be the skills you have developed through a variety of experiences throughout your life.

Read the "self awareness" page to discover more about the skills employers are looking for, identify which of them you already have and focus on what you need to develop.



Key Dates

Latest Forum Posts

There are no posts in this group yet

[Go to forums »](#)

During your placement

Record and reflect


Reflection is a very personal activity and different people will have different preferences for how they choose to reflect.

Visit the "Record and Reflect" page to find links to the files you will need to upload as weekly reflections in written format; here you can also find information on how to create and post video diaries and reflective blogs and see examples of reflection in different formats.

Jo Robinson

My Groups:

- School of English Work Related Learning Placements 2012-13 (Admin)



School of English Work Related Learning Placements 2012-13

- About
- Members
- Forums
 - General Discussion
- Pages
- Share
- Files

Online users

(Last 10 minutes)

- Jo Robinson
- Pei-Chun Lin
- Dan Lu

<http://uilaplep01.nottingham.ac.uk/maharaNew/group/view.php?id=100>

26 March 2013

Embedding Employability in English and
the Wider Humanities
University of Nottingham

13

Conclusions and queries going forward:

- MA level students still very hard to address!
- Initial engagement with trusted partners – build from a small base
- Embed within or alongside the discipline curriculum?
 - Enforcing or embedding reflection
- The problem of numbers ... how to get more students involved?
 - Not just the ones who already have work experience
 - Not just the ones who don't need paid employment
 - Not just the high achievers ... without risking relations with employers
 - International dimension – exchange students too?
- Administrative resource and support needed *within* the School
- Importance of whole school engagement, activity and support – employability is not just about employment, or about placements...



Employability everywhere: embedded rather than added on

Rethinking curriculum and assessment: 'applied' Englishes mean employability is central concern

Open Days:

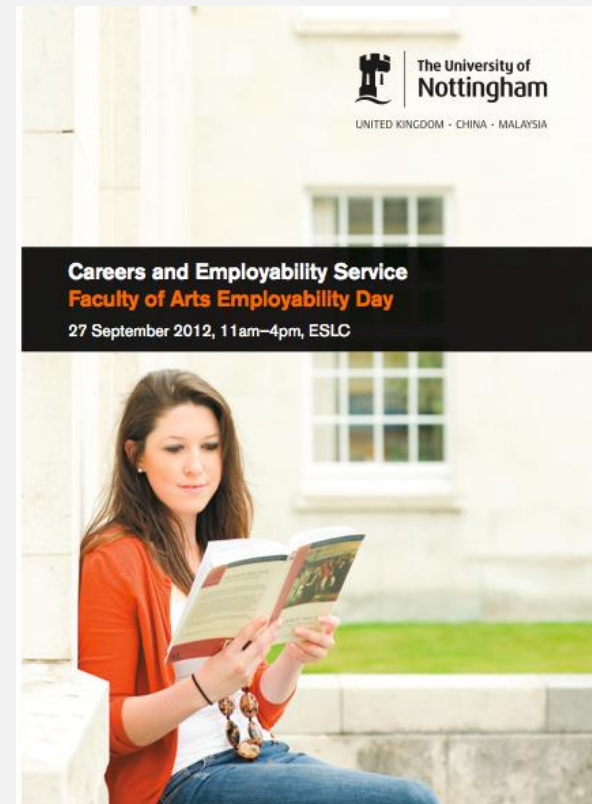
New publicity materials and talks on employability activities to prospective students and families

Year 1:

With the Arts Faculty and Careers and Employability Service:
'Beginning my career journey' activity day in Freshers' Week
– 600 students across Arts Faculty

Sessions on core English module, Academic Community, on:

- Personal development planning and careers
- English in the world – impact case studies from outside academia
- Tailoring written and oral communication to different audiences



Year 2:

Opportunity to take discipline specific Advantage Award modules:

- Careers Skills in English
- Literacy Volunteering (over 100 of our students volunteer through our literacy mentoring scheme in local secondary and primary schools)

Module fair: employability skills tied to module choices and advice on careers

Re-thinking second year curriculum to embed skills to allow for area-specific placement activity in year 3



Year 3:

Project-based dissertations: collaborative projects

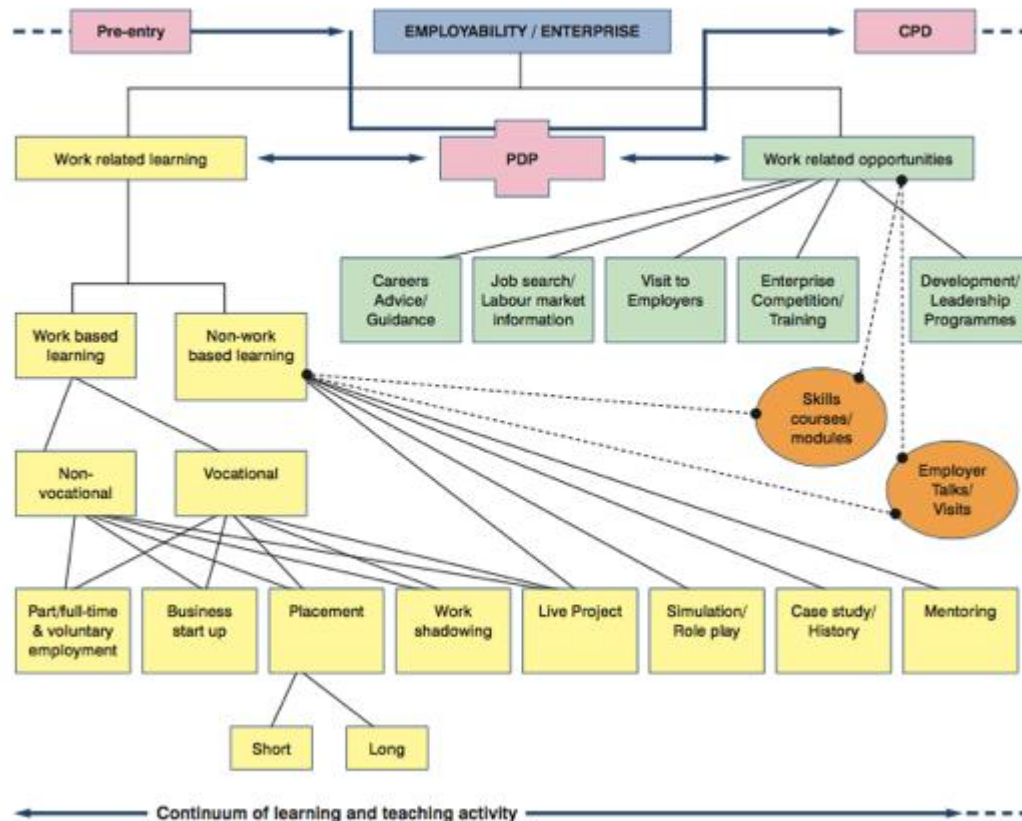
- currently 12 students; next year 14
- 5 applications for every one project place, and 14 for the 4 Journal places

Work related learning placements (29 students in trial year)

Re-thinking curriculum – ‘applied’ English in different disciplinary areas

Re-thinking assessment – embedding assessment of oracy skills

Work Related Learning (WRL) Model



Taken from *Models of Recognition for Work Related Learning in Higher Education*, Aiming University Learning@Work publication, 2010.

AUL@W Team: Irene Bell, Margaret Berrie and Lynn Naven.



Any questions?

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Materials will be added to the project site:
<http://nottingham.ac.uk/english/teachinglearning/embedding-employability-in-english.aspx>