ENCOURAGING FUTURES

Developing Employability at the University Of Stirling

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02 - DEVELOPING EMPLOYABILITY AT THE UNIVERSITY OF STIRLING
By John Gardner
Welcome to the first issue of ‘Encouraging Futures’. This will be a regular publication to keep you up to date with internal and external news and best practice relating to employability matters.

Issue 1 of the magazine focuses on the abundance of innovative practice currently being developed and delivered here at Stirling. We hope that sharing this good practice will inspire and help to inform your approach in the future.

The ambition of the University’s new employability strategy is to develop graduates who can successfully manage the transition into higher education, and from higher education into the economy. There is a strong commitment to providing an empowering student experience that will equip Stirling graduates to continue to develop in their careers in a lifelong setting. The strategy aims to have a cohesive approach across the institution with common understandings and goals for enhancing employability built around the development of the Stirling Graduate Attributes.

### Stirling University Graduate Attributes

- Knowledgeable and skilled within and between the discipline(s)
- Critical and intellectually curious thinkers
- Active global and local citizens
- Employable

### How Will the Strategy Be Implemented?

Lesley Grayburn and Pam Crawford have been appointed to lead on the implementation of the employability strategy, and will manage a new, “Careers and Employability Services” team. Their first priority is to set up an in-house employability hub that will provide tangible and practical support to staff throughout the University to consider how to enhance the employability of students and graduates. The article on page 1 outlines the priorities and ambitions of the strategy and how the implementation plan will progress.
WHAT IS EMPLOYABILITY?

COMPONENTS OF EMPLOYABILITY DEVELOPMENT IN HIGHER EDUCATION

Diagram 1.

Our vision as an institution is to be acknowledged for our commitment to developing employable, confident graduates with the requisite skills, knowledge and experience to contribute and succeed in an ever changing environment locally, nationally and globally and to be ambitious in providing the opportunities for our students to develop the skills and attributes that will enhance their employability.

Employability is an often misunderstood term within higher education, and is usually associated solely with the term ‘careers’ and ‘finding a job’. The complexity of what employability means for our institution and how we work towards developing employable graduates in the curriculum and co-curriculum is illustrated in diagram 1 above.

EMPLOYABILITY IS RECOGNISED IN THE UNIVERSITY OF STIRLING AS:

“A set of achievements, understandings and personal attributes that make individuals more likely to gain employment and be successful in their chosen careers, which benefit themselves, the workforce, the community and the economy.”

(Yorke, LTSN Generic Centre et al. 2004)
HOW DO WE PUT THIS INTO PRACTICE?

Issue one is littered with examples of the components of employability development noted in diagram 1. The implementation of the strategy will focus on supporting staff to develop aspects that are appropriate and pertinent to their remit and programme. It is not a “one size fits all”.

The employability hub will be a central resource to support and enable schools and service areas to implement these objectives. The hub will support the planning processes in schools relating to employability. It will also develop materials and toolkits for staff to use in employability development, and communicate and share good practice across the institution. One of its first priorities will be to create an employability working group to share practice and review progress. Pam and Lesley are looking forward to getting out into the schools to meet and discuss the work already being done, and to look at how we can build and support employability practice across the institution going forward.

We would really like to hear your thoughts and views on employability at Stirling.

Email or contact us at pamela.crawford@stir.ac.uk & lesley.grayburn@stir.ac.uk or call 01786 467070.

THE EMPLOYABILITY STRATEGY
HAS 5 KEY AND AMBITIOUS OBJECTIVES:

- To review the existing structures and resources for employability development and its integration into the University-wide curriculum for all students
- To embed the development of employability in the curriculum, co-curriculum and extra curriculum
- To engage students with the development and articulation of their employability
- To establish Stirling’s reputation as an institution that effectively engages with, and is responsive to, employers
- To consolidate Stirling’s reputation as an institution that prioritises the employability of its students
EMPLOYABILITY IN ARTS & HUMANITIES

The School takes the employability of its students extremely seriously and, through its Teaching & Learning Committee, have put employability firmly on the School agenda. Through a portfolio review of undergraduate programmes, which has been carried out over the past few months, areas of good practice in employability have been identified and are being developed elsewhere.

We are involved in a range of initiatives from developing our website with information on employability, to developing modules where students can go on placements through law and media. In 2013 25 Arts and Humanities students were paired with alumni mentors to support them on a range of topics from careers advice, job searching, CV advice, interview skills and much more. Feedback from the pilot scheme has been very positive.

We are also trying to improve communication of the huge range of services and opportunities that are available for our students, to develop their employability.

We have specialist careers advisors on hand in Pathfoot to help students with careers queries. We also have a Literary Fellow based in Pathfoot, who helps students develop their writing skills. This not only helps them in their studies but is a key skill identified as essential by employers.

There is a lot more to do but we are making real progress in supporting our students.

Alison Green
Deputy Director of Learning & Teaching
(Employability) School of Arts & Humanities

STUDENTS PLAY A KEY ROLE IN THE SCOTTISH CULTURAL MEMORY PROJECT

In 2012 the Division of Communications, Media & Culture worked in partnership with Peter Broughan (Producer) and Creative Scotland to establish the Scottish Cultural Memory Project (SCMP), an important initiative whose aim is to capture and preserve the first-person memories and accounts of prominent Scottish film & TV practitioners. Several interviews featured on the Film & Media curriculum throughout the semester, including a session with the director Richard Jobson for FMS9X1, the first year core module, and a session with writer Phil Differ for FMS9SW, the Scriptwriting module. Several students also played a key role in the project by serving as part of the production team filming the interviews.
HISTORY BUILDING
A BRIGHT FUTURE

All undergraduate modules in History and Politics have clear skills sections embedded in every course hand out identifying the transferable skills that students are attaining through their academic work. The Division co-operates with Careers by making time available at the beginning of classes when requested.

Information sent by Careers to the Division is then distributed to students both electronically and by posters on the Divisional noticeboard. At undergraduate level employability is embedded into the History BA within the compulsory semester 6 module, ‘Approaches and Methods in History’. Two slots in the timetable are operated jointly with Careers which allows direct advice via workshops and talks from History graduates (both alumni and non-alumni). The Division has a particularly close connection with a local firm [www.trossachs.co.uk] which provides a tourist information service on the Trossachs and the Loch Lomond National Park and a number of our students have had successful internships there. In addition the Division offers placements for students on some its own flagship research projects such as the Scottish Political Archive, ‘Lest Scotland Forgets’, and the Records of the Forth Valley Health Board, the latter in co-operation with the University archives.

Jim Smyth
Senior Lecturer, History

POSTGRADUATE STUDENTS
ARE NOT FORGOTTEN

The majority of taught postgraduate masters students in the School of Arts & Humanities have access to a module which does not only develop research methods but also gives them the opportunity to explore an ever increasing range of employability skills and opportunities. The module is run across the School but co-ordinated by Colin Nicolson in History & Politics, who is continuing to develop the content of the module for students. This is an exciting opportunity to target training and information to postgraduate students.
HELPING LEGAL EAGLES FLY

Students studying law are finding it is harder than ever to ignore employability. Law courses have key employability skills embedded in the curriculum already as they lead to professional qualifications.

In addition all students now receive a weekly newsletter which highlights career opportunities; opportunities to develop skills and tips and advice. In spring semester Lorraine Wilson will host a number of events including a Careers with Law seminar bringing law graduates to Stirling to meet students and share their insight into the wide range of careers open to law graduates. ‘Mini Law fairs are run in spring also where a range of lawyers from private partnerships to the Faculty of Advocates, and including in-house lawyers come to talk to students about recruitment issues as well as to offer information about the many different opportunities that are out there. This programme has been running for a number of years.

This year for the first time, students will take part in a placement module which allows them to undertake a 10 week placement with a legal employer as part of their course. This has been extremely popular and will give our students access to a range of legal employers where they will undertake a legal project.

PHILOSOPHY

Building on Philosophy’s on-going success in the National Student Survey, in the spring we will be involving the student Philosophy Society in discussion of the many careers and employment options for Philosophy graduates. Academic career options are currently discussed in detailed sessions with postgraduate students; there is a dedicated postgraduate placement officer who organises employment workshops, generic skills programmes are offered.

A CREATIVE ENLIGHTENMENT:
A UNIQUE PROGRAMME FOR ENTERPRISING RESEARCHERS FROM THE SCHOOL OF ARTS AND HUMANITIES

The University of Stirling, in collaboration with seven other Scottish universities including Glasgow, the lead organisation, has won funding from the Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC) for an entrepreneurship training programme for arts and humanities PhD students and early career researchers.

The training programme has the aim of encouraging entrepreneurial attitudes among researchers, allowing them to grown in confidence and develop skills that can be applied in non-academic settings, to deliver economic, social or cultural benefits.

The programme will be delivered via a series of workshops, one of which will be held at Stirling. Focusing on publishing, it will be hosted by the internationally recognised Stirling Centre for International Publishing and Communication. Professor Claire Squires, Director of the Centre, has said: ‘This is a great opportunity for early researchers to come into contact with those engaged in the creative and cultural industries, and to develop their own skills and attributes.’

Alison Green
Deputy Director of Learning and Teaching
Various initiatives are underway in the Journalism Studies programme to enhance the employability of our graduates. We are currently proactively strengthening ties with employers in the region and are busy establishing an advisory panel for the programme made up of representatives from industry. We recently visited BBC Scotland and were shown around the facilities at Pacific Quay in Glasgow, agreeing on a number of areas of future collaboration.

Spring term (2013) saw the launch of a new work experience module in which our best Year 3 students spent time at media and communications employers in the region. It is hoped this will be expanded in future years. The programme also appointed an Honorary Professor this term, John McLellan, a former editor-in-chief of The Scotsman. John has been working with the student newspaper, Brig, and has given a number of guest lectures and workshops to share his insights and experiences after several decades in the press.

Adrian Hadland
Director of Journalism

An exciting and innovative conference for all final year Arts and Humanities students took place on the first day of the autumn semester. All students heard from key note speakers and take part in both academic and employability skills workshops. The conference was designed to encourage students to focus both on the serious academic nature of their final year and also to plan for their life after graduating from Stirling.

The conference was jointly organised by members of staff from the School and the Career Development Centre and was held in the MacRobert Arts Centre. It is hoped that this pilot conference will become an annual event in the calendar.
EMPLOYABILITY IN EDUCATION

DIRECTOR FOR LOCAL AUTHORITY PARTNERSHIPS

The School of Education has appointed Dr Alison Fox as Director for Local Authority Partnerships (DLAP). This role was established in response to the proposals put forward by the National Partnership Group on Teacher Education (SG, 2012). Alison will work with colleagues from the school, along with colleagues in our local education services to develop more effective ways of working in partnership to enhance outcomes for children and young people through teaching and research.

The first meeting has taken place with colleagues from Clackmannanshire and Stirling, Falkirk, Perth and Kinross, and West Lothian which are the destination local authorities (LAs) for the vast majority of University of Stirling Initial Teacher Education students. The group will be called the Central Local Authorities Stirling Partnership (CLASP).

Work is now underway to develop a creative and innovative integrated approach to initial teacher education and the induction year in which new teachers are employed on a temporary full-time basis within a local authority school leading to full registration. It is hoped that the enhanced partnership will work to ensure that Stirling graduates are very well placed to gain permanent employment thereafter.

The CLASP group will also build on the work already done with the School of Education in relation to professional education for established teachers and school leaders. The work-based Masters programmes offered by the School contribute to the professional learning of teachers thus enhancing their CVs, and leading to continuing employment and promotion. In partnership we will consider the specific needs of employees and employers in order to continue to focus on relevant and appropriate programmes. In this way, employers will be strategically engaged in aspects of the curriculum, including its design, teaching and assessment.

A further priority is to open up dialogue regarding potential research and knowledge exchange activities with LA partners. Bids have already been discussed and submitted which should further contribute to developing an agenda for the future.

Alison Fox
Senior Teaching Fellow, School of Education
EMPLOYABILITY IN APPLIED SOCIAL SCIENCE

DIPLOMA IN HOUSING STUDIES

Potential students are attracted to the full-time Diploma in Housing Studies programme for a number of reasons; most see that good quality housing is key to everyone’s health and well-being, they appreciate that working in housing presents variety and challenge, they are attracted by previous students’ success in securing employment and they value the internships and work based learning incorporated in the programme.

Emily became a postgraduate student in September 2011. She had completed an undergraduate degree some time ago and worked in administrative roles in housing organisations for a number of years. Emily had been feeling frustrated and was keen to develop her career. She took the decision, and a big risk, to leave permanent employment and embark on the Housing Studies programme.

In the first semester visits were organised to housing organisations and building sites to support academic learning and for students to use as the basis for developing reflective skills. At the end of that semester Emily spent three days with a workplace link organisation: she had a list of questions to help structure that time; this was also her first opportunity to apply reflection to her learning experience.

Our students on the Social Work programme have been viewed as well prepared for practice placements and as result we manage to have consistent offers of placements for a range of agencies. This leads to recruitment opportunities for the agencies concerned. For instance Fife Council has appointed 3 final year students to front line children and families teams on the basis of their ‘strong’ applications and their ‘refreshing and motivated’ attitude in interview. City of Edinburgh Council has appointed 6 of the final year cohort to similar posts – 2 of whom are UGs still to complete their dissertation- they are happy to wait for them. Their feedback indicated ‘well prepared and enthusiastic with a good range of placement experience’. Last year Perth & Kinross Council appointed 4 students from those who had undertaken placements with them. It is worth noting that this group of students had a ‘helpful’ session with the Career Development Centre last semester with some seeking additional advice about interview technique.

Judy Kerr
Senior Teaching Fellow
The second semester provided different learning opportunities: full-time housing students get free admission to the sector’s annual 3 day conference in Glasgow and access to the exhibition that runs alongside. A visit to a supported housing project for young people illustrated some of the issues covered in the housing, health and well-being module.

From early in 2012 Emily was giving a lot of thought to what she wanted to get out of her summer internship and to discussing her options with her internship tutor.

“We want to ensure that by the end of the programme every student has a CV which demonstrates experience of different housing organisations and the skills needed to support his/her future career” Fiona Russell, Internship Tutor.

Emily had previous experience of housing work and was able to use the internship to build on that and become involved in a new and more specialist area – involving the private sector in providing housing for homeless people.

Emily’s internship started in June and finished in early September 2012. She worked on a range of projects during that time including researching flat sharing models for people under 35.

The internship allowed Emily access to internal appointments and by the end of September she had been offered a post developing the work she had been piloting during the internship. Emily is now planning to register to do the MSc over the course of the next year, linking her research to her day to day work in order to develop greater insights into the impact of policy and to allow further development of her practice.
EMPLOYABILITY IN SPORT
MAXIMISING THE WIDER STUDENT EXPERIENCE

The School of Sport provides a substantial range of extra curricular opportunities for volunteering, coaching and personal development through the Sports Development Service and the International Sports Scholarship Scheme. The Sports Development Service has well established partnerships with national governing bodies of sport and delivers, hosts and organises development pathways in volunteering and coaching so that students can gain specific and relevant experiences that will equip them for graduate employment. Students can engage in these activities throughout the four years of their study starting with basic qualifications in sports leadership awards and involvement in participation sport before moving to more sport-specific coaching qualifications and volunteering at major games and projects such as the IDEALs project in which students spend a five week summer coaching block in Zambia. The School of Sport also provides a three-year Coach Development Programme in partnership with the local authority, Active Stirling. This programme enables students to volunteer, obtain coaching experience and help manage events on a regular and paid basis alongside their academic programme.

The International Sports Scholarship Scheme provides funding, facilities and support for talented athletes who wish to combine academic study with a programme of training and competition in their chosen sport. These International Sports Scholars engage in training and competition throughout the UK, Europe and beyond and may enter the world of professional sport following their graduation. Whilst the world of professional and competitive sport may provide a career for only the most talented student-athletes, all of the ISSP athletes can experience the training, competition, coaching and performance planning associated with elite performance in golf, swimming, tennis, football and triathlon. These experiences undoubtedly help the student mature and develop through their education and provide useful bowstrings for future employment.
The School of Sport has introduced a new level 10 module that allows students to combine a 30 hour work placement in a sports organisation with a variety of skills-based workshops on the University campus. This module is designed to allow students to reflect on their current workplace skills and then develop them through a discrete project that is of value to the student and the placement organisation. Students on this module will also create a plan of career, academic and personal development to equip them for life in the graduate workplace.

These placements reflect the three knowledge streams within the School of Sport and incorporate opportunities in sports science, sports management and socio-cultural elements of sport. Students are currently engaged in science-based projects with the Scottish Football Association and Falkirk Football Club, marketing-based projects within the Gannochy Sports Centre’s Community Fitness Programme, research projects on the Club Accreditation Scheme and the transition from school to club sport within Falkirk Community Trust. Other placements include work that aims to monitor and evaluate disability sport within the Central Sporting Partnership, a National Squad communications and support officer within Scottish Basketball and research and design work of a special exhibit at Hampden’s Scottish Football Museum. In addition to the formal work-based learning, these placements provide an opportunity for students to network with prospective employers, uncover research questions for final year dissertation topics and strengthen the links between the University and the external sports environment.

John Mathers
Director of Learning and Teaching, School of Sport
The Zambian Project

Stirling is one of six British universities working together on the UK Sport initiative - International Development through Leadership and Excellence in Sport (IDEALS) Zambia Project.

Each summer, sport and media students from the University are selected and trained to deliver a wide range of sports and activities to young Zambians in the capital city Lusaka. It offers students the opportunity to add value to their University education, enhance their global awareness, develop their leadership skills and improve their teaching abilities or media know-how.

Students work alongside the Zambian non-government organisations of Sport in Action and EduSport to run a wide range of sports and physical activities. The initiative focuses on the positive impact that sport can have upon impoverished communities, helping to improve the quality of their lives and delivering key health messages. The Stirling Fund has provided funding to support the IDEALS Zambia project since 2011.

The seven universities involved, collectively known as the Wallace Group, are:

- University of St Andrews
- University of Bath
- Cardiff Metropolitan University
- Durham University
- Loughborough University
- Northumbria University
- University of Stirling

Zambia 2013

Students to represent the University on the Zambia Project in 2013 are:

Kayleigh MacGillivray, Sports Studies Physical and Professional Education

Leigh Phillips, Sports Studies Physical and Professional Education

Callum Murray, Sports Studies Physical and Professional Education

Gavin Ellis, Sports Studies

Daniel Caw, Film and Media
SPORTS SCHOLARSHIPS

We offer sports scholarships to talented student athletes helping them to fulfil their potential. The University’s International Sports Scholarship Programme is one of the largest high performance sports programmes in the UK and has supported more than 700 student athletes since its inception in 1981, sending athletes to Olympic, World and Commonwealth Games.

Students receive: funding support; academic flexibility; national standard coaching; essential equipment and the opportunity to stay on campus.

To be considered for a scholarship, applicants must hold, or be in the process of applying for, a place on an undergraduate or postgraduate degree programme at the University of Stirling. Students must also meet the sport-specific qualification criteria.

We support students competing in:

- Football
- Golf
- Swimming
- Tennis
- Triathlon
EMPLOYABILITY INITIATIVES

In order to focus students’ minds towards the importance of preparing themselves for life after graduation at an earlier stage of their student journey, Stirling Management School has introduced a dedicated programme of careers and employability-related events which are promoted to students throughout each semester.

These include a range of employer-led skills-based workshops which focus upon CV-writing and preparing for interviews; effective communication and teamworking; creativity, initiative and problem solving; as well as important business qualities not explicitly found within the curriculum such as negotiation and influencing skills.

These workshops are being organised by the School’s new Employability Manager, Lynn Whiteside who has been brought in to lead on the development and growth of all employability and employer-engagement activities within the School. This includes working with academic colleagues to explore opportunities to embed employability across the School’s curriculum as well as sourcing company-focused student projects.

EMPLOYABILITY IN THE STIRLING MANAGEMENT SCHOOL

MBA PERSONAL & PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The MBA Personal & Professional Development (PPD) module is being introduced as part of the revised full-time MBA programme for 2013/14 - it carries 2 - credits, and runs as an integrated theme throughout the year. The module aims to enable students to become reflective practitioners, drawing upon and interpreting their own individual experiences in relation to their personal and professional development. It seeks to help students develop the self-awareness, critical thinking, leadership skills and team-working competences that are vital to becoming an effective and resilient manager. Students are assessed at key stages of the programme through a series of reflective essays.

PPD activities begin at the very start of the programme during an intensive 2-week induction period which will focus upon individual, team and leadership skill assessment and development, academic writing and essential study skills, coaching, and an external residential leadership component. The spring semester will focus on developing effective consulting skills as well as specific career support, CV development, interviewing, and assessment centre skills which aim to help students make the transition back into organisational life.

The introduction of this module builds upon the range of non-compulsory activities which were previously made available to students. This includes the series of guest lectures and workshops featuring both alumni and senior executives from IBM, the Social Enterprise Academy, the Co-operative Group, Enterprise Rent-A-Car, the Chartered Management Institute and Dell. Site visits have previously included the Scottish Parliament, Scott & Fyfe Ltd, Baxters Food Group, Bloomberg, Enterprise Rent-A-Car, Skyscanner, The Bank of England, and New Lanark Visitor Centre.
Since 2007, the Strip Steel Challenge Business Game (a business simulation activity set in the European Steel Market) has run for two weeks in January. It was first introduced to provide the School’s international students with something to help bridge the gap between semesters.

This activity provides students with an opportunity to gain an insight into management decision-making in a European context, whilst at the same time discovering how best to handle financial, production and sales data on which these management decisions are based.

Throughout the two weeks, students are put through various scenarios including: pitching their product to potential customers, dealing with disgruntled employees and union representatives, and explaining decisions to their company shareholders. This experience helps develop an awareness of how business functions relate to one another and improves essential teamworking, communication and presentation skills that graduate employers are looking for.
EMPLOYER ENGAGEMENT

Over the past 18 months, the School has been striving to further strengthen its links with industry. Examples of the range of employer-led activities that have taken place this year include:

ENTERPRISE RENT-A-CAR
GUEST LECTURE, ORGANISATIONAL VISIT AND WORK SHADOWING OPPORTUNITIES

The School’s partnership with Enterprise Rent-A-Car has brought about an exciting range of new opportunities for students. Diane Mulholland, General Manager/Vice President for Scotland & Northern Ireland delivered a guest lecture on the organisation’s recent growth strategies. Alongside several of her senior managers, Diane welcomed a group of students to their head office in Stirling where students obtained an invaluable insight into the history, strategy and practical operations of Enterprise. This year also saw the establishment of the 3rd Year Business Studies Student of the Year Award where the top 10% of students were invited to present to Diane Mulholland on a given topic. Such was the standard of presentations, that two winners were identified - both of whom will shortly be undertaking a period of work shadowing with senior managers across the various functions of Enterprise.

[ Winners of the 3rd year Business Studies Student of the Year, Scott Coutts & Iona Turnbull with Diane Mulholland from Enterprise Rent-A-Car]
CHARTERED MANAGEMENT INSTITUTE
NEGOTIATION AND INFLUENCING SKILLS: ESSENTIAL TOOLS FOR AN EFFECTIVE MANAGER

The Chartered Management Institute (Scotland Branch) hosted an interactive workshop providing students with an insight into how negotiation is essential in different business contexts. Tony McCandless, CMI Scotland Board Member and UK Sales Operations Director (Dell) explored the concept that, throughout their career, students would need to negotiate situations that can be the difference between success and failure in the business world. The workshop focused on how students could play to their strengths in order to improve their own negotiation skills and be successful in their chosen field.

MORGAN STANLEY
EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT THE GRADUATE AND INTERN RECRUITMENT PROCESS

After its success last year, Morgan Stanley returned to deliver this workshop which took students through the graduate and intern recruitment process journey. Key aspects explored during this session included: recognising the benefits of work experience and extra-curricular activities; interpreting and presenting the skills attained through these activities within CVs and applications; successfully preparing for online testing and interviews. Students also gained an insight into what to expect from the graduate and intern opportunities available at Morgan Stanley.

IBM
BUILDING A SMARTER PLANET

Four years ago, IBM issued the call to build a smarter planet – they believe that, across the world, a distinctly different group of leaders is announcing its arrival. They are making decisions based on evidence, not on habit or opinion or ‘gut.’ They are anticipating, rather than merely reacting, to events. They are seizing competitive advantage, but at least as often, they are re-framing the issues - in unexpected, often counter-intuitive ways. Representatives from IBM challenged a group of Stirling Management School students (ranging from first year to masters level) to identify and implement their own smarter planet idea. Following an introduction to the concept, students worked in competing teams to identify a Smarter Planet business problem before presenting their conclusions and recommended solutions.

A PROFESSIONAL INSIGHT INTO THE ENERGY SECTOR

Masters students studying the Seminar in Energy Management / Environmental Economics are being given the opportunity to deepen their understanding of the environmental, global, strategic and financial issues in energy management (broadly defined) through active participation in weekly discussions with energy sector professionals who speak about a topic that is crucial to the firms’ outlook. Not only are students provided with an insight into the different positions available across the sector, they are also offered advice on what type of skills these organisations are looking for in new recruits. Assessment throughout the module focuses on the development of practical skills/competences including: an energy/environmental business simulation activity; the delivery of a policy brief summarising the main points for their ‘employer’ of one of the presentations; a cover letter specifying how their key skills fit with the requirements of a position within one of the organisations presenting; and the submission of their dissertation proposal.
The School of NM&H has a leading reputation for research excellence in nursing and midwifery and this expertise is used to enhance the employability of our students by enabling them to acquire practical research skills. For instance, undergraduate students with an interest in research, and who are considering progressing to our Masters in Health Research (MRes), are encouraged to obtain research experience, when opportunities arise. Currently, a third year mental health student is working with a member of staff on a primary care based asthma study. This involves attending research team meetings, participating in interviewer training workshops and observing data coding using Nivivo. Such experience has provided her with new skills and knowledge. Recently, this student also shared her research experience with our 2nd year students by lecturing to a class of approximately 150 students in the Logie Lecture Theatre. This teaching opportunity further enhanced her CV and, hopefully, will encourage other undergraduates to consider taking advantage of similar research experiences when they become available.

For newly qualified nursing and midwifery graduates, our MRes Health also helps increase their employability as graduates can study single modules for continuing professional development reasons or study more modules with the intention of obtaining a qualification. Our MRes philosophy is to teach the theory and practice of research.
We have creative assessments which reflect research in real life e.g. teams have to respond to a research tender. We also have health research placement modules (single or double credit) in which students work alongside an experienced researcher. Placements are bespoke and offer a range of learning opportunities focusing on skills development. For instance, students have worked on NHS ethics applications, grant applications, conference presentations, journal papers, data collection and data analysis. Students report how the research placements enable them to acquire practical research skills in areas of relevance to them and their professional practice. Importantly, students really value this ‘hands on’ learning, reporting that such experiential knowledge can not be obtained from theoretical texts.

Critically, the School aims to promote research capacity and capability amongst nurses and midwives specifically, as well as health professionals generally. As such, most of our students are in employment and need to fit their studies around their work – this can be a real challenge as many work shifts. We have therefore developed a fully flexible MRes which can be accessed remotely online. The option of flexible postgraduate study has been of particular importance to our recently qualified students who want to enhance their CVs through further study but are not sure where they will be living after graduation. The flexibility of online learning has enabled MRes students to study for modules (including research placements) remotely whilst living across the UK (mainland and islands) and overseas.

The enhanced employability of SNM&H students as developing researchers is evident as increasing numbers of our former under-graduate students progress to MRes study. Importantly, since our MRes started in 2010, we have had four graduates. Two of these are now employed in the University of Stirling. Two others remain employed in healthcare practice but continue to pursue their research interests – one has since registered for a PhD with the UoS.

Julia A. Scott
School of Nursing, Midwifery and Health Director of Learning, Teaching and Quality Enhancement Director of Undergraduate Programmes

The School aims to promote research capacity and capability amongst nurses and midwives specifically, as well as health professionals generally.
The important values that inform the MSc in Health and Wellbeing of the Older Person reflect the growing priorities that have been identified to provide an improved and more responsive level of health care for older people. There is a longstanding, recognised need to develop coherent career pathways for nurses working with older people, additionally new professional nursing roles need to be developed, and career pathways mapped out and strengthened to support professional capacity. Professional capability frameworks further emphasise the need to promote care of older people as an attractive and specialised area of practice with clear employment pathways for practitioners. This programme offers a unique pathway of study that develops skills in older person care that helps to meet the needs of the modern nursing workforce whilst providing students with the knowledge, confidence and skills to enter the workforce or to enhance their existing professional roles within practice.

Not only an incentive to research and keep up to date with contemporary issues within the health and social care context, but a good opportunity to further career prospects.

Freya Conway
MSc Student

Completing this course will help to enhance my career path in nursing older people and contribute to exciting new opportunities.

Rebecca Matthews
MSc student
Seventeen postgraduate taught students from the University of Stirling undertook projects with SMEs, national and indeed global businesses over the summer months. All of these projects were proposed by businesses and saw students being hosted by that business for some, if not all, of their project. Although employer-led, work based projects are supported by academics in the same traditional way to ensure academic rigour and quality. Many of these projects were scoped as a result of an employer engagement event held in November 2012. Although primarily aimed at students from the School of Natural Sciences, this event also welcomed staff and students from the Schools of Management and Arts & Humanities. Attended by 26 employer organisations it provided a fantastic opportunity for students to network with employers. For many students this was their first opportunity to meet directly with employers. This event was jointly organised by the Career Development Centre and the newly appointed Making the Most of Masters (MMM) Project Coordinator at Stirling and can be summarised by one of the feedback comments: ‘Very useful and productive!’

The route to the final dissertation is designed to provide students with skills to enhance their attributes and involves academic staff being involved in discussions with businesses. This resulted in unforeseen bonuses such as businesses delivering talks to undergraduates and students visiting businesses sometimes for work placements, all of which enhance employability. Once project proposals were received by the MMM Project Coordinator, an academic supervisor was sought who met with the organisations to discuss, and if needed refine, the topic. Recruitment to the work based project was often competitive with students having to submit a CV and in some cases, also going through an interview process. Students were supported through this by the Career Development Centre often with bespoke sessions. Postgraduate taught students in Computing & Mathematics, many of whom have a MMM project, also had the opportunity to attend an “Image and Impact” workshop delivered by an external consultant that helped develop their confidence and self-presentation skills.
The University is also delighted to have received ‘Highly Skilled Workforce’ funding, from the Scottish Funding Council for masters students in 2013/14. The bid was supported by MMM and focusses on programmes that collaborate with industry and third sector partners in terms of course design, teaching and/or work-based project opportunities. Programmes have been specifically selected by the Scottish Funding Council as those that will supply graduates with relevant knowledge and skills relevant to Scotland’s key economic sectors.

MMM (www.mastersprojects.ac.uk) is a consortium between the Universities of Stirling, Aberdeen and Edinburgh funded by the SFC under Learning to Work 2. The Making the Most of Masters team have developed materials to facilitate the process of work based learning such as Partnership Agreements that set out the roles and responsibilities of all the stakeholders. The summer also saw students in the School of Natural Sciences piloting educational material developed by the MMM Careers Education Developer which will support the student through their journey into the workplace and into a long-term career. This trial will help shape the materials for use at Stirling in the next academic year.

For further information on MMM and work-based learning opportunities for PGTs contact the University of Stirling Project Co-ordinator, Eunice J Atkins.

Dr Eunice J Atkins,
University of Stirling MMM Project Coordinator
eunice.atkins@stir.ac.uk

“Work based MSc projects give a taste to the student of working in the software industry applying their newly acquired knowledge in a commercial setting. They are an ideal preparation for the time after their studies and ease the transition from university into a career.”

Mario Kolberg
Programme Director for MSc Advanced Computing
EMPLOYABILITY IN LEARNING AND TEACHING

The Employability agenda seems to increasingly dominate the world of HE, though actually what I hear being discussed often relates to the employment of graduates (usually in the form of first destination statistics). Mantz Yorke (2006) states that ‘employability, understood as suitability for graduate employment, is clearly not the same as graduate employment’. The Scottish Funding Council (SFC) use the following definition of employability:

Providing work related opportunities clearly helps the development of employable graduates, however those opportunities are not the only way to support your students in developing their potential. Knight and Yorke (2004) developed the USEM model to underpin their work on employability, Table 1 explains the model.

So what does this all mean? Well for me it means that the curriculum and its delivery is a key component in supporting the development of employability skills in students. Although the U and the S parts of the model are well developed in the majority of academic programmes, the E and M parts are very often less well developed. Therefore, from a curriculum point of view, these areas demand greater attention and focus.

There are numerous examples of developed curricula in the literature, see for example Pegg et al (2012) and Knight & Yorke (2004), and the resources on the HEA website: www.heacademy.ac.uk.

The ‘E’ part of the model can be enhanced in the curriculum and co-curriculum by setting challenging open-ended project work. Students should also be encouraged to take part in extra-curricular and co-curricular activities such as the Student Leadership programme, run by the Students’ Union. This programme supports the development and enhancement of valuable the leadership skills.

The ‘M’ part is about getting your students to stop and think (reflect if you like) about the whole of their university experience, the academic, the personal, part-time job, life away from home, working in groups, outside interests – e.g. clubs and societies – and being able to articulate what they have developed from it all. As one employer commented, she often asked students, “You’ve got a degree – SO WHAT”? Being able to articulate what they have got from the whole HE experience is a really vital part of being a graduate. So encourage reflection in your students and direct them to the Personal Development Planning (PDP) modules that are available.

Bob Matthew
**Table 1**: The USEM Model, from Knight & Yorke (2004)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Element</th>
<th>Explanation</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>U—understanding of subject matter</td>
<td>The mastery of the subject matter of the degree</td>
<td>Many employers are indifferent to subject of degree – they use ‘good – grades’ as a proxy for critical thinking, perseverance, information handling etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S – Skilful Practice</td>
<td>The generic and subject specific skills</td>
<td>These are practices of the individual, not always transferable, but they can be improved by further practice.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E – efficacy beliefs</td>
<td>The belief that you can make a difference (a can do attitude)</td>
<td>Beliefs affect one’s willingness to act. For many employers they are interested in how individuals, even high achievers, respond to new and difficult problems.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M—metacognition</td>
<td>Awareness of what you know and can do, and of how you learn more</td>
<td>The ability to reflect, which is a metacognitive process, is widely associated with superior performance. Metacognition is about being mindful and disposed to keep learning.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**References:**


STIRLING’S STUDENT PEER SUPPORT SCHEME

Stirling’s Student Peer Support Scheme (STEER) offers all undergraduates (including direct entry and international exchange students) a mentor during their first year and all taught postgraduates a buddy [www.steer.stir.ac.uk]. Mentors are undergraduates in later years of the same programme, or a cognate discipline, as their mentees, providing confidential personal/social/cultural and basic study skills transitional support. Buddies provide no study skills support as they may be studying a different discipline and/or may be at the same or a lower level of study. All mentors/buddies are trained, disclosure-checked current student volunteers. Experienced senior mentors/buddies and interns support those new to the role. Paired mentors/buddies work in partnership with groups of mentees who benefit from both vertical and horizontal support.

Participants are encouraged to reflect upon their experiences, skills and achievements (linking to PDP). Optional workshops for further developing mentoring skills and associated employability, include sessions on mental health (by USSU), making the most of mentoring (by the CDC) and study skills support (by SLS). These sessions aim to enable participants to extend their existing skills and to identify, articulate and apply them appropriately as part of their support role and their overall employability development. An optional train-the-trainer session prepares interns and senior mentors/buddies to deliver mandatory training for new mentors/buddies. These facilitation and presentation skills, along with the autonomy associated with this activity, are highly valued by the students who run all training on the Stirling campus.

Internships involve a competitive application process, providing ‘real world’ experience of applying for a post. All eligible applicants are guaranteed an interview with the STEER Co-ordinator and current Interns, enabling them to gain a unique insight into the post from current incumbents. Interns receive a small honorarium, as a thank you for their substantial input to managing and developing STEER. Intern contracts last 15 months, in recognition of the need for management continuity, enabling new interns to benefit from the experience of their predecessors, while those leaving the post further develop their training skills (in a one-to-one setting).

STÉER FEEDBACK

Interns present results from annual evaluations of STEER at EduFair (Stirling’s Internal Learning and Teaching Conference), enabling them to further develop their research and communication skills, along with their confidence. These evaluations show that participants identify strongly with altruistic aspects of their STEER role:

“It is a brilliant feeling and experience helping somebody out with university life. I feel like some of the bad times in [my] first year were made worthwhile thanks to STEER - I was able to help people not to make the same mistakes I did!” (STEER mentor, 2012/13)

Increased confidence and development of work-related skills are consistently highlighted by mentors and buddies (as in 2012/13):

“Lots of valuable experience, a feeling of pride after having helped several students settle into University and something useful to cite on my CV.”

“Employability skills I would not have obtained elsewhere”

“I feel like I have gained confidence and knowledge about the university and about myself too.”
A new Alumni Mentor role further contributes to STEER employability development. Graduating mentors/buddies can elect to continue with STEER by e-mentoring final year STEER participants exploring options on transition from University.

The Higher Education Achievement Record (HEAR) officially documents skills developed and applied through the scheme, however STEER’s Annual Awards Ceremony marks an occasion when all STEER participants can gather to recognise and celebrate individual and collective achievements. The University Registrar hands out certificates and personally thanks individuals, sending a clear message about the value placed upon their contribution to student support.

Currently STEER is considering extending peer support into Peer Assisted Learning, based upon an extensive body of literature recognising the role of peer tutoring in promoting academic success and supporting employability development in higher education (eg. Andrews & Clark, 2011; Capstick & Fleming, 2002; Falchikov, 2001; Fleming, 2009; Hampton & Potter, 2009; Ody & Carey, 2009; Topping, 1996, 2005). Partnership working with course teams and/or programme directors would be a core component of such a development. The Co-ordinator (Ginny Saich) would be delighted to hear from any colleagues interested in participating in a pilot (email: v.a.saich@stir.ac.uk).

References:


Two new degree courses created by Forth Valley College and the University of Stirling are already attracting interest from enthusiastic students across Central Scotland. The bodies are jointly offering a BA (Hons) in Heritage and Conservation and a BSc (Hons) in Applied Biological Sciences from August this year. Both courses are linked to key growth areas for Scotland, offering increased employment opportunities in the future.

Abbie Granger (17) from Falkirk has been offered a place on the applied biological science course which will initially be based at the College’s Falkirk Campus. She said: “I think that studying for two years at college, followed by two years at university is a great idea.”

“I personally don’t feel that I’m ready to go straight from school to university and think that this course will give me opportunities to become familiar with the University of Stirling, making me better prepared when I eventually make the transition. It’s an ideal stepping stone!”

“The new HN/Degree course jumped out at me, particularly with the progression to the University of Stirling – what an opportunity! I am really looking forward to it and am very excited to be going to study at Forth Valley College.”

“I enjoyed both science and computing at school so it made sense to look at courses in the Applied Science and Computing Department. The application process was straightforward. I completed an online application, which took just a few minutes and then received a letter asking me to attend a selection day. This selection day involved a lab test, a maths test and a ten minute interview. The staff were all very friendly and welcoming so I really enjoyed it.”

“Everything about the course sounds interesting. In particular, I am looking forward to studying genetics and microbiology. I am very excited about starting in August and it sounds like a great course. I can’t wait to get started. It’s such a great opportunity. At the moment I am unsure of the exact career path I will eventually take – perhaps a Research Scientist or Microbiologist?”
Philippe Maron has secured a place on the BA (Hons) in Heritage and Conservation. Philippe is from Paris and studied Archaeology and History at la Sorbonne, but now lives in Stirling. He said: “I’m very eager to start and discover this new course at the FVC Stirling Campus and to see the different interactions between the technical business of tourism and the reality of heritage management.

“I studied Archaeology and History at la Sorbonne in Paris which gave me a solid background for making brass fittings and ornament replicas for museum model boats for 17 years.

“When my wife and I decided to move to Scotland, a career move seemed necessary. Discovering this new course on FVC’s website offered an opportunity to go back to my roots. I applied the same day!

“The process was extremely straightforward and quick and a few days after applying I received a letter for an interview. The day after the interview at the Stirling Campus I got a phone call telling me I’d been offered an unconditional offer for the course. It couldn’t have gone better or quicker.

“It’s a great opportunity, both for new students out of school and for ‘adult returner students’ like me, as the first part of the course allows us to get into gear and build our momentum to be prepared for university studies. I have been a student before but I also have been out of education for a long time therefore this way of studying can only be beneficial.

“The first two years will be a new experience as I’ve never studied the business of history through tourism and heritage management. I am quite curious to start learning about this as I’m more familiar with the content of the second part of the course. This makes the whole course very exciting for me!

“In the future it would be good to work with Historic Scotland and dealing with local heritage is something I’d love to do. Stirling Castle would be a great place to go to work every day. I want to start the course now!”

For more information, contact Kathryn Lee kathryn.lee@stir.ac.uk

Students supporting and developing other students at Stirling
Unemployment amongst our graduates fell from 5.8% to 4.35%.

The percentage of our graduates in work (full or part time) at 76.3% was up 1.3% on the previous year.

The percentage of our graduates working part time increased from 16.7% to 17.4%.

The percentage going on to full time further study fell again to 6.6% from last year’s figure of 7.9%.

Stirling’s Employability Indicator (calculated and published by the Higher Education Statistics Agency) represents the percentage of UK domiciled students obtaining first degrees from full time courses that are working or studying) increased to 94% from 93% the year before.

Increasingly league tables are focusing on the percentage of graduates in ‘professional’ level employment. The figure for Stirling graduates in professional or managerial jobs six months after graduation remains unchanged at 73%.

DESTINATION OF LEAVERS FROM HIGHER EDUCATION SURVEY 2011/12

The Destination of Leavers from Higher Education (DLHE) is a national survey of graduates six months after graduation that every higher education institution in the UK is required to conduct.

The DLHE results are used widely in league tables, publications and websites by applicants and their families to compare universities and courses. The results now also form a central part of the Key Information Sets.

The survey population is a sample of our graduates and in 2011/12 totalled 2434 for home and EU students. A return of 1952 was achieved, giving an overall response rate of 80%. In addition to these figures the survey included a sample of international students for the first time.

It is particularly worth noting that while the level of graduates in employment has increased despite the economic conditions, there are continuing concerns around the percentage of graduates unemployed and those that are working part time and/or are underemployed.

Lesley Grayburn
Joint Head of Career Development Centre
INTERNISHIPS AND GRADUATE PLACEMENTS

TALENT SCOTLAND PLACEMENT PROGRAMME REBRANDING AS ‘SCOTGRAD’

The TalentScotland Placement Programme places skilled graduates and undergraduates in organisations across all sectors throughout Scotland to conduct innovative projects and support business growth.

The programme offers the opportunity for recent graduates to gain valuable work experience with a private sector business or social enterprise. The graduate will work on an innovative project for up to 12 months, receiving a minimum salary of £16,000 pro-rata. Projects cross a range of disciplines and can involve new product and process development, market research and target marketing and many more. During the placement, the graduate attends a residential training course on business development, project management and innovation.

The Career Development Centre works closely with Talent Scotland to ensure that Stirling students are fully aware of these opportunities. Over the past couple of years a number of Stirling graduates have gained employment through this placement programme.

The graduate placement programme is soon to be rebranded as ScotGrad. In addition to the placements they currently offer university graduates, they will also extend placements to HNC/HND graduates.

http://www.scotgrad.co.uk/

THIRD SECTOR INTERNSHIPS SCOTLAND (TSIS)

Third Sector Internships Scotland helps students to find paid work experience in the Third Sector. TSIS is being delivered by Queen Margaret University, The Open University in Scotland and the Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations, with support from universities across Scotland. The Steering Group includes representatives from Glasgow Caledonian University, University of Dundee, University of Aberdeen, University of the West of Scotland, University of Stirling, and Student Volunteering Scotland.

Through the TSIS programme, students are offered outstanding opportunities to develop their skills and experience whilst contributing to the vital work of Scotland’s third sector.

Positions are open to all levels of undergraduate and postgraduate students. Internships vary in terms of their focus, duration and location. Internships can be up to the equivalent of 10 weeks’ full-time work (350 hrs) and can be offered on both a full-time and part-time basis.

www.3rdsectorintern.com
TSIS CASE STUDY: MICHAEL BROWN

In February I began a 6 month internship at Cruse Bereavement Care Scotland, where I was responsible for planning and implementing an effective social media strategy for the charity. Cruse have over 300 committed volunteers, offering help and support for those who may be struggling with the loss of someone close.

My role at Cruse involved researching the current trend in charities using social media as a communications channel. It was my responsibility to determine the most effective way of launching Cruse into the online market, from deciding which social networks they join to suggesting the content that they post to their friends and followers. During my internship, both myself and the team at Cruse aimed to further raise the profile of this amazing charity and bring in new opportunities that come with a strong online presence.

The internship was set up through Third Sector Internships Scotland, an organisation who provide funding for students to complete paid work placements at a wide range of charities and non-profit companies across Scotland. With over 3000 applicants a year for just a few hundred positions I know that I’m in a very fortunate position to have had this experience.

TSIS CASE STUDY: JENNI PRINGLE

I started the TSIS internship on Monday the 7th of January at Allan Park South Church in Stirling and felt very welcomed and supported in this new role. I was recruited to conduct a 6 month research project exploring young people’s spiritual needs and more specifically; the disconnection between young people and the church. As the hours were part-time the position offered flexibility which suited my current stage at University - finishing a postgraduate research degree. The internship built on skills I learned at University whilst providing the new experience of working as part of a team, which student life often lacks. TSIS have played a prominent role with supervision phonecalls and ongoing support if needed. The internship gave me a valuable experience in how research operates within the third sector. Furthermore, I gained experience in research having a direct impact as this study is built on previously established community relationships which will hopefully favour the recommendations being acted on. I would thoroughly recommend students to apply for a TSIS internship as it provides a practical experience for applying the skills you have learned within a supportive environment.
TSIS CASE STUDY: JANA FLIESHART

I am currently the Research Design and Development Intern at Volunteer Development Scotland (VDS), a position that was offered by Third Sector Internships Scotland (TSIS). When I applied for the internship, I would have never dreamed of the amazing experience I am now having.

With the support of the team, I am carrying out an exciting project on unusual and unique volunteer experiences in Scotland. We want to understand what volunteering really means for the people involved and what difference it makes to them and others. People often think that volunteering isn’t for them; that it only involves middle aged ladies who chatter in a charity shop or help out in a social care setting. That’s exactly the perception we want to challenge – because volunteering can be exciting, rewarding, meaningful and fun!

Throughout the internship, I have been treated as a valued member of the team and could not ask for more support from VDS or TSIS. I am very grateful to for the chance to create this amazing and meaningful project and for the wonderful collaboration with my line manager and team.

This internship rocks!

THE SALTIRE FOUNDATION

This programme offers Scotland’s talented students the chance to experience life in some of the world’s top companies. By broadening horizons and opening doors, it aims is to encourage candidates to develop their confidence, skills and capacity to succeed. It equips participating students with a positive, can-do attitude and an enterprising outlook.

In 2012 there were 92 Saltire Scholars representing 13 Scottish universities interning across 5 continents within a variety of sectors. The 2012 Scholar cohort included a professional model, world class piper, student newspaper editor, champion boxer and several student entrepreneurs.

Last year’s cohort worked in companies such as Barclays Wealth, the National Trust for Scotland Foundation USA, GE, Liberty Mutual, The Edrington Group, Moorbrook Textiles, Aggreko, Wood Group and the ChicagoScots. In 2012 they had 70 international internships and 21 internships in Scotland.

The Saltire Foundation will cover the cost of return flights (from Scotland to placement destination), accommodation, insurance, visa fees and a generous living allowance.

This year 2 students from the University Stirling were awarded a place on the programme: Omari Whyne, Digital Marketing and Pricing Analyst, Edinburgh Airport and Kaysha Hughes, Rotational Intern, Wood Group (Houston).

www.saltirefoundation.com
ENCOURAGING FUTURES

Past Saltire Scholars

- Nicole French, Liberty Mutual, 2009
- Robert Steele, Wood Group, 2009
- Julie Ann Day, BAE Systems, 2010
- Eilidh Dillon, GSK, 2010
- Louise Hamill, Jabil Circuits, 2010
- Gail MacIntyre, Quintiles Transnational Corporation, 2010
- Stacey McGill, Jabil Circuits, 2011
- Kai Bestmann, NSC, 2011
- Eilidh MacKay, Football Aid, 2012
- Ross Shepard, Celtic Football Club, 2012

Opportunities to start your own business

For 10 years now, Stirling students wishing to start their own business have been able to join the Enterprise Programme run from the Research and Enterprise Office (REO). The programme has seen numerous businesses started in that time and there are ventures operating all over the world that had their genesis in Stirling. The REO has also supported enterprises from members of staff. Talking Mats is one such successful venture started by Dr Joan Murphy. Joan’s business is now based on the Innovation Park and is flourishing globally.

Currently, the incubation service is able to provide office space, IT infrastructure and support, admin services, professional advice, business advice, signposting to external support agencies, focussed networking, practical coaching and a range of other measures designed to facilitate the creation of your business.

People start businesses for a variety of reasons and many find it a fulfilling and worthwhile pursuit. If you have an idea for a business, why not arrange to meet Alasdair Gammack, the Enterprise Manager, who will be delighted to help talk you through the process. An informal chat is a great way to start exploring the possibilities. Get in touch with Alasdair by email or telephone, he’ll even pay for the coffee! His office is 3B1 Cottrell Building, his email is alasdair.gammack@stir.ac.uk or call him on 01786 466693 or 07966 445566.
PARTNERSHIP MODULES

This spring semester saw the launch of 3 new academic modules delivered in partnership with the School of Sport; the Division of Law (BA Law & LLB Law); the Division of Media and Culture (Honours Journalism) and the Career Development Centre. These 22 credit, SCQF level 10 modules provided a mix of class based study and practical work placement experience. Students undertook projects, relevant to their subject of study, in local and national organisations such as Stirling Observer, Scottish Child Law Centre, Central FM Radio, Basketball Scotland, The Scottish Football Museum Hampden, and Legal Services Team at Virgin Money in Edinburgh. Academic staff in each of the subject areas worked collaboratively with staff in the Career Development Centre to deliver class-based sessions designed to support the practical work placements. In total, across the three subject areas, 47 students benefited from the opportunity to put their academic knowledge to practical use and to establish links and contacts within their chosen field.

Additional tangible output from these modules has been students obtaining paid work opportunities; continued volunteering opportunities; ideas for future dissertations and one Sports Studies student who achieved an award from Falkirk Council for his volunteering efforts as part of the module.

These modules compliment the successful partnership module that has run between CDC and the Division of Social Work for the last decade. It is planned that they will be an option for students in these subject areas each Spring Semester who are keen to obtain academic credit and develop their employability skills.

‘LIFT OFF’: CONFIDENCE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

This Semester the Career Development Centre delivered its third successful ‘Lift-Off’, Confidence Development Programme.

Confidence is increasingly recognised as a key graduate attribute, and can be crucial for success, but it is something that many students lack. This can have a significant impact on their self-belief, aspirations and approach to their time at university (both socially and academically) and, crucially, to their employability. Graduates in an increasingly competitive and challenging climate need the confidence to be proactive, to network, to take the initiative and to present themselves and what they have to offer to employers.

MODULE FEEDBACK

Feedback from students, employers and external examiners has been overwhelmingly positive.

**JOURNALISM**

“It is definitely the most useful module I have done during my university life and would recommend it to as many students as possible.”

(Journalism student).

**LAW**

“It has been a great success from our point of view and we are delighted that ……….wishes to stay on as a volunteer”

(Law Placement Mentor).

“This is an interesting and innovative module, congratulations on trying something different”

(Law External Examiner).

**SPORT**

“This module closes the gap between the fantasy and reality of a job”

(Sport Studies student).
The programme, developed and delivered by Career Development Adviser, Elaine Watson and external personal development trainer Kate Donne, provides participants with a ‘confidence toolkit’ to enable them to meet these challenges head on, to build their graduate attributes, and to develop their lifelong employability skills. It is delivered through six practical, interactive workshops and participants have been a mix of home and international undergraduates, postgraduates and graduates.

**WHAT WAS THE OUTCOME?**

Student interest, participation and feedback have been fantastic and the impact is clear. Students involved have reported success at delivering presentations, interviews, assessment centres and in their current workplaces. Each set of workshops have been oversubscribed and Google analytics show that the confidence section of the CDC website is one of the most popular with visitors. Here is some of the feedback from the most recent set of workshops:

“...I cannot stress enough how much it has made a difference in all aspects of my life; in university, in my work place and in my day to day life too. I will take what I have learned from you and use it for the rest of my life. Thank you!”

“One of the best experiences I had during my studies”

“Lift-Off was a life changing experience for me.”

“I have a better awareness of my own ability and how I present myself!!”

“I feel much more confident in myself and my ability to present myself to others.”

**WHAT NEXT?**

In addition to running the Lift-off workshops we are looking at how we can incorporate the confidence toolkit into our broader work with schools.

Elaine Watson,
Career Development Centre
NEXT SEMESTER

CDC JOBSHOP

The Career Development Centre continues to develop effective working relationships and partnerships with local, national and international employers, to generate a range of employment opportunities for students and graduates and to engage employers in related activities on campus. The CDC provides employers with the means of advertising their vacancies online at no cost.

The Jobshop, part of the Career Development Centre, is the student employment service for the University of Stirling. Its function is to help students find work including: internships, part time jobs, volunteering and graduate vacancies. From the autumn semester all students became registered users of the Jobshop allowing them to have direct access to this vacancy system without registering. We would encourage all staff to make students aware of this vacancy system and the variety of opportunities that are available to students. As staff you may also wish to make use of this vacancy service and advertise any opportunities you have that may be of interest to students. http://www.stir.ac.uk/careers/

CONTACT DETAILS

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Web: www.careers.stir.ac.uk

SANTANDER INTERNSHIPS

A programme to place current students and graduates from UK universities on internships with small- and medium-sized firms has been launched by Santander.

Announcing the launch of 1500 new internships, Santander said the programme – a link-up between the bank and 69 partner universities including University of Stirling – aims to encourage “entrepreneurialism” and promote the benefits of working for an SME to final-year and recently graduated students, while also providing firms with limited resources an injection of talent.

Santander will work with the Universities to find the individuals and companies that will benefit most from the scheme, and is promising to help with placement and administration. Crucially, it will fund 50% of a basic salary for those who participate. Santander said this was the first scheme of its kind from a bank in the UK.

The University of Stirling’s Career Development Centre has been the main coordinator for the Santander internships and has been successful in arranging 12 internships this year. 7 of the 12 Interns went on to secure full time employment within the companies. This academic year the placements have increased from 12 to 30.

Additional formats are available.

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