This introduction to employability at the University of Stirling outlines:

- Stirling’s strategic commitment to employability;
- Clarity and definition on what employability means for the curriculum and the wider student experience;
- A framework to shape questions on how you wish to develop employability from a faculty perspective.

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)

This includes:

- Acting as a resource to support and enable Faculties and service areas to review, plan and implement employability development;
- Supporting planning processes in Faculties relating to employability;
- Developing materials and toolkits for staff to use in employability development;
- Delivering staff training;
- Co-ordinating and anticipating funding opportunities to develop aspects of the curriculum and co-curriculum;
- Co-ordinating communication and sharing good practice across the institution.

Contact Lesley Grayburn and Pam Crawford for more information, or to arrange a meeting to discuss employability development in your Faculty, division or course.

Our Ambition

The University of Stirling’s Employability Strategy 2016-21 is clear in its ambition to:

“Develop aspirational students and graduates with lifelong employability skills who can compete successfully in a competitive global economy.”
Staff Guide to Developing Employability

Drawing on the University Strategic Plan the Employability Strategy will seek to:

- **Connect** students and staff with employers locally, nationally and globally to create mutually beneficial outcomes
- **Innovate** to create opportunities that ensure all students are equipped with the life long career management skills and the resilience to succeed in the job market
- **Transform** student opportunity by creating an innovative curriculum and student experience that embeds employability practice from pre-arrival through to graduation

### Employability Strategy 2016—21 Key Objectives

#### Objective 1

Students and staff will be successfully networked with employers

#### Objective 2

Students will apply their knowledge, skills and attributes to work related and work based situations

#### Objective 3

All students will successfully manage their employability development from pre-arrival to transition into a positive destination

#### Objective 4

Staff will work in partnership internally and externally to further develop and embed innovative employability practice in the curriculum and co-curriculum

#### Objective 5

Employers will pro-actively seek to recruit students and graduates from the University of Stirling

#### Objective 6

Employability will be measured, reviewed and planned based on robust impact indicators of success and principles of continuous quality improvement
What are the components of employability development in Higher Education?

Diagram 1 illustrates the key components of developing employability in higher education and the student experience. No one component can develop an employable graduate. The complex mix of reflective and mindful learning, the development and articulation of Stirling’s graduate attributes, work experience, the development of career management skills and the engagement in the wider student experience all contribute to the development of employability within a HE institution.

How can we embed these components into the Stirling experience?

Reflection on current practice in each component, benchmarking current indicators of success, informed planning and evaluation of what real and tangible impact we are making on improving student’s employability together equip staff to plan and develop employability.

Graduate Attributes at Stirling

The QAA Enhancement Theme of ‘Graduates for the Twenty-first Century’ highlighted the concept of graduate attributes, and encouraged debate across the sector on the key skills and characteristics that those graduating from Scottish higher education should be able to demonstrate. Each institution has developed its own set of graduate attributes.

Stirling’s Graduate Attributes are:

- Scholarly and skilled within and between disciplines
- Intellectually curious and research minded
- Committed to personal and professional development
- Engaged individuals with a global perspective

Planning employability development in Faculties

Consider where your faculty’s approach fits within the overall strategic plan? What are the timelines for planning?

What data will be necessary to consider in the planning process: surveys; destination statistics; student feedback; current research; analysis of employability development in the wider context.

Who is going to lead and drive employability development within the school from the learning and teaching perspective?

Conduct a review of what is currently being provided in each of the components? Who will drive this? (See page 4)

Where are the gaps in provision and what support and resources are needed to develop them?

What KPIs should be set that are applicable to the school and what measurements can be used to benchmark improvement?
A good starting point for developing employability activities in your school or course is to consider what is in place at present. Consider diagram 2 to map what is in place and what needs to be addressed?

**An audit of employability practice**

**Mapping practice and development needs**

Diagram 2: Reviewing current practice

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Components</th>
<th>Current practice</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Graduate attributes</td>
<td>How do we ensure that Stirling Graduate Attributes are embedded within the curriculum? What planning processes are in place to review this?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provision of work based or work related learning</td>
<td>What work based or work related learning is embedded into the UG and TPG learning experience? How is this information captured? What feedback is available from students on the experience of work based or work related learning? Has the School engaged in Making the Most of Masters, the TPG employer based dissertation project?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employer engagement</td>
<td>What is the faculty approach and strategy towards employer engagement? Why would the faculty wish to engage employer’s strategically? Who drives and reviews this?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reflective practice</td>
<td>How do students reflect and map their learning and development needs What is the role of personal tutors in this process?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Career management skills</td>
<td>How does the partnership working with the Careers and Employability Service manifest itself in the faculty? Is there a strategic approach to engaging students in career planning to maximise the opportunities available to them?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recognising the wider student experience</td>
<td>Is there any form of Personal Development Planning in the Faculty to encourage students to maximise the student experience, record and reflect on their experience? Are they encouraged to take part in the My Stirling Award?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marketing the schools approach to employability to students, staff, employers and potential applicants</td>
<td>How does the School market its approach to employability to all stakeholders: students; applicants; employers; an; staff?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Starting Point**

Lesley Grayburn and Pam Crawford are in post to support you with this planning process, to work in partnership with you to develop employability practice within your faculty and to support you to develop resources for your students. Our aim is support you in the development of confident, employable students, who are equipped with life long career management skills.

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