

RESEARCH

BIS | Department for Business
Innovation & Skills

BIS RESEARCH PAPER NUMBER 40

Supporting Graduate Employability:
HEI Practice in Other Countries

JUNE 2011

A research project for the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills

The International Graduate Insight Group Ltd. (i-graduate)

With contribution from:

Jane Artess, Higher Education Careers Service Unit (HECSU)

Peter Forbes, The Council for Industry and Higher Education (CIHE)

Nannette Ripmeester, Expertise in Labour Mobility (ELM)



The views expressed in this report are that of the authors and not necessarily those of the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills or any other Government Department.

Department for Business, Innovation and Skills

1 Victoria Street

London, SW1H 0ET

BIS Research paper number 40

June 2011

Contents

Contents	3
Executive Summary	7
UK and International Experience	7
1. Introduction	10
2. Methodology.....	11
2.1. Aims and objectives	11
2.2. Structure of research.....	11
2.2.1. Phase One - Desk Research	11
2.2.2. Phase Two - Primary Research	12
3. Phase One: Desk Research	16
3.1. Frameworks and Theoretical Background	16
3.2. Practice	17
3.3. UK Context.....	18
3.4. Global practice	24
3.5. Nature of HE staff involvement in employability support.....	34
3.6. Teaching employability.....	35
3.7. Reflective learning.....	39
3.8. Experiential learning.....	39
3.9. Other opportunities to develop employability	42
3.10. Employer engagement in the curriculum.....	44
3.11. Final thoughts.....	45
4. Phase Two: Primary Research	47
4.1 Nature of HE staff involvement in employability support.....	48

4.1.1. Employability strategy	50
4.1.2. Definition of employability	53
4.1.3. Responsibility for employability	54
4.2. Teaching Employability	61
4.2.1. Hard and soft skills	61
4.2.2. Provision of employability activities	63
4.2.3. Importance of hard and soft skills	66
4.2.4. Employability activities across the student journey	68
4.2.5. Who uses employability activities?	70
4.2.6. Funding employability activities	71
4.2.7. Demand vs. Funding	72
4.2.8. Availability of academic credit	73
4.2.9. Delivery of activities	76
4.2.10. Monitoring employability services	77
4.3. Reflective practice and the place of information, advice and guidance	78
4.4. Experiential and work-based learning	80
4.4.1. Work placements and internships	80
4.4.2. Employability and subjects	81
4.5. Other opportunities for developing employability	83
4.5.1. Extra-curricular activities and voluntary work	84
4.6. Employer engagement in the curriculum	88
4.6.1. How are employers involved?	88
4.6.2. Employer relations by sector	90
5. Conclusions and Recommendations	92
5.1 Nature of HE staff involvement in employability support	92

5.1.1	Employability strategies should be an integral part of learning and teaching	92
5.1.2	Re-visit and review codes of practice for Career Advisory Staff	92
5.1.3	Institutions vary in their approach to 'employability' but must work towards a common definition with a universal goal	93
5.1.4	Students and graduates should be encouraged to take greater responsibility for their employment outcomes	93
5.1.5	The use of academic champions should be explored further.....	93
5.1.6	Employability is increasingly important in student choice of institution	93
5.1.7	Alumni can and should be viewed as a resource for the institution	94
5.1.8	Different models of funding employability activities should be explored further.....	94
5.1.9	Accreditation should be used as a tangible way of demonstrating student employability skills	95
5.1.10	Monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of employability services, from which UK HEIs can learn	95
5.2	Reflective practice and the place of information, advice and guidance	95
5.2.1	Reflective learning could be adopted as a learning approach across all curricula.....	95
5.3	Experiential and workplace learning	96
5.3.1	There is a need to assess the benefit of compulsory work experience for students.....	96
5.3.2	Addressing 'employability' for students across all subject disciplines is required to ensure fair and equal access to employability skills for all.....	96
5.4	Other opportunities for developing employability	96
5.4.1	The extra-curricular aspect of a student experience may sometimes be overlooked, but the learning derived from such activities provides students with opportunities to develop employability	96
5.4.2	A dedicated 'employer engagement' resource is recommended	97
5.5	Final thoughts.....	97
Appendix 1: Glossary		99
Appendix 2: References and Bibliography.....		102

Appendix 3: Data Tables 111

Executive Summary

UK and International Experience

The following study explores the development of employability skills in the UK and in an international setting. It reports on new primary research undertaken by i-graduate (insights from 414 career advisory staff from institutions in 25 countries) and draws together selected best practice examples from UK and international HEIs.

The research demonstrates that UK practice is highly advanced in several areas. These include initiatives such as extra-curricular activities leading to certification and work placements in specific subject areas. The UK also tends to provide more central support (e.g. through funding bodies such as HEFCE) than is the case in other surveyed countries such as the USA and Australia. Likewise, ongoing innovation and practice sharing amongst UK careers advisory staff has meant the incorporation of employability skills into higher education programmes is continually advancing.

However, in parallel with progress in the UK, international examples of good practice provide potential areas for further improvement. Some ideas are large-scale: such as the **University of Melbourne's** "Melbourne model" (see section 4.1.3), which now places employability at the heart of the curriculum as part of a recent institution-wide review. Other ideas are similar in overall approach, but contain innovative features that make the measures more effective: such as the **University of Aalto's** career advisory staff practice of marketing a package of services to employers to engage them in a stronger relationship with the institution (see section 3.4).

In light of the study findings, a set of recommendations has been compiled to highlight areas of further improvement in the UK.

Key Recommendations and Action Points

- **Definition of employability:** It is important to ensure that published definitions of employability are understood by all parties involved (employers, academic staff, career advisory staff, students and parents). In particular there is a need to ensure this definition is aligned with employer expectations and regularly updated.
- **Institutional employability strategies:** 69% of UK institutions surveyed have a strategy for enhancing student employability. However, it is recommended that all institutions incorporate an employability strategy into their development processes to ensure all students have the opportunity to access a common level of employability skills. Within this strategy, it would be worth considering compulsory elements of employability studies in degree programmes – only 10% of UK institutions currently do so.
- **The responsibility of the student:** Asked about primary responsibility for developing employability skills, 52% of respondents pointed to careers services. When asked about those groups that shared responsibility, 69% believe students do: however, there is a significant variation between Australia (75%), the USA

(73%) and the UK (52%). In order to increase and drive motivation, there is therefore a case for the UK to place more responsibility for employability skills with the students themselves.

- **More active involvement of academic staff:** Whilst 91% of UK careers staff felt that academic staff shared responsibility for employability skills, involvement is often limited. It is important to ensure that the involvement of academic staff is widened so there is strong engagement in the development and delivery of employability skills within the curriculum.
- **Engaging prospective students:** Whilst some UK institutions already engage prospective students to determine the role that employability plays in decisions over course of study, this engagement should be more widespread.
- **Making the most of alumni networks:** Alumni relations are well established in many institutions; however, the UK might learn from international case studies where alumni actively assist students by providing an advice network and enhancing relations with employers.
- **Alternative funding models:** 59% of UK respondents (in line with similar percentages of international respondents) stated that funding for careers services was unlikely or very unlikely to increase in the coming few years. In this context, it is important to further explore different models of funding employability activities, to ensure institutions are able to continue provision of services in the challenging economic environment.
- **Applying credit to employability activities:** Whilst UK examples already exist, opportunities for students to gain accreditation for employability activities both within and outside the curriculum should be increased.
- **Role of Co-operative Education:** Co-operative education – which is a prominent concept in the US and Australia – involves integrating work experience, work placements and internships into degree programmes as core elements. The concept should be revisited within an overall review of employability skills in UK institutions.
- **Consistency across subject areas:** Some subject areas are acknowledged as being more successful or proactive at enhancing employability. Whilst 77% of respondents indicated that the Business and Administrative faculty specifically aimed to enhance employability, the next highest faculty was Education (61%). To ensure access to and engagement with all students, it is recommended that a minimum level of employability skills is incorporated into all subject areas.
- **Maximising the value of extra-curricular activities:** 95% of careers staff recognised the value of extra-curricular activities (such as volunteering) as central to enhancing employability. On that basis, employability activities aimed at supporting business development and entrepreneurship in the UK should be further encouraged and exploited where suitable, for instance through accreditation.

- **Engagement with employers:** It is recommended that relations between employers and career advisory staff (CAS) are further fostered and developed. This is particularly true where career services indicated to having the fewest links with employers, for instance in areas such as Linguistics (including Classics), Geography and Veterinary Science and Agriculture related. It is also recommended that employer views on required skills are tracked in a separate study, to ensure that future policy takes account of their changing expectations and needs.

Having reviewed a range of international practice, a strong history of sharing best practice in higher education is noticeable, both within the UK and between institutions in other countries, such as Australia, the USA, Canada, and also across Europe. Furthermore, the study has demonstrated that there is much activity in the area of employability skills development: the enthusiastic response to the survey and telephone interviews has shown that many careers professionals are keen to share their experience.

However – above all – the research has highlighted that students themselves should take responsibility for the development of their own employability skills and be placed at the centre of the process. In order to understand how this may be achieved most effectively and to better appreciate the student perspective on employability skills, it is essential that student opinion is more actively investigated and tracked.

1. Introduction

Supporting Graduate Employability was commissioned by the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (The Department) to examine activities and best practice in international universities with regard to enhancing the employability skills of graduates. The study, undertaken by i-graduate, received support from a number of organisations within the sector with specific employability expertise - including the Higher Education Careers Service Unit (HECSU), The Council for Industry and Higher Education (CIHE) and Expertise in Labour Mobility (ELM).

The origin of this study is to understand further what international Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) are doing to develop and improve the employability of their graduates. How this compares to the UK is of particular interest. In particular, the 2009 Future Fit¹ report brings together related evidence from a cross-section of stakeholders - including institutions, students and employers. The report concludes positively on the interactions between universities and businesses in relation to enhancing graduate career prospects, but suggests a 'gap' still exists between the level of skills sought by employers and the extent to which graduates meet those expectations. The report raises the critical question of whether universities are doing enough to prepare their graduates for the world of work.

This current study focuses on identifying and reviewing careers service and employability practices in HEI's across the world, with the aim of developing approaches to enhancing the employability of graduates from UK institutions. This report draws together the existing wealth of information related to graduate employability and explores best practice in international HEIs regarding the development of employability skills. By gathering examples of what other countries do well, recommendations have been made for how UK graduates can be better equipped by their institutions with the skills and knowledge to join the global work force in the current competitive professional environment.

¹ Universities UK and CBI; Future Fit Preparing graduates for the world of work (March 2009)

<http://www.cbi.org.uk/pdf/20090326-CBI-FutureFit-Preparing-graduates-for-the-world-of-work.pdf>

2. Methodology

2.1. Aims and objectives

The overall aim of the research is to identify best practice by international HEIs in activities relating to developing employability skills in students, with the goal of ensuring that the UK stays at the leading edge in this area and that HEIs can learn from the best of overseas experience to enhance their policies and strategies for developing employability skills.

The specific objectives of the study are to:

- Collect information about activities in international institutions relating to providing students with enhanced employability skills
- Gather examples of best practice from professionals in careers services (or equivalent) in international institutions with relation to student skills training within and outside of the academic area
- Provide recommendations for the UK HE sector in terms of next steps for improving practice for careers services in enhancing the employability skills of students pre-graduation

The following are secondary objectives of the study:

- Gather information relating to the employability skills sought by graduate employers
- Examine current practice and activities within UK institutions with the aim of enhancing these skills

2.2. Structure of research

2.2.1. Phase One - Desk Research

The research was conducted across two key phases. With a wealth of information currently existing on graduate employability and related themes, in the UK and internationally, it was seen as important to ensure that past research was incorporated into the project design and interpretation. Therefore the first phase of the project comprised a thorough review of existing UK and international evidence. The desk research phase set the context of the report and was used to identify key research themes for the primary research (Phase Two).

The following countries were included in the desk research:

- UK
- USA

- Canada
- Europe (Belgium, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Holland, Italy, Norway, Sweden, Poland)
- Australia
- New Zealand
- China/India

Much of the information was sourced from reports published by governments, institutions and professional bodies on their websites. The quantity and content of information collected varied widely from country to country, which may be a reflection of the differing senses of priority towards enhancing employability and the extent to which employability initiatives have been established and embedded in higher education within those countries.

A set of related themes were established in order to ensure a common focus to this phase of the research across the multiple countries/regions involved, as follows:

- Nature of HE staff involvement in employability support
- Teaching of employability
- Reflective learning and the place of information, advice and guidance
- Experiential and work-based learning²
- Other opportunities to develop employability
- Employer engagement in the curriculum

2.2.2. Phase Two - Primary Research

The key aim of Phase Two was to investigate existing practice within non-UK HEIs related to enhancing the employability of graduates in more depth. Primary research was conducted across two stages. Firstly, an online questionnaire of CAS in international HEIs was conducted to enable feedback to be gathered across multiple countries simultaneously. Secondly, semi-structured telephone interviews were conducted with selected career advisory staff.

The objective of the research was to explore as widely as possible and the method was designed to reflect this objective. It should be noted that while the results give a revealing

² See appendix 1 for definitions

insight into international employability practice, the results should not be taken out of context or quoted as globally representative, as from some countries no replies were received, while others are over or under-represented.

The questionnaire covered the following themes:

- Institution approaches to enhancing employability
- Responsibility for activities within institution
- Current activities relating to enhancing student and graduate employability (e.g. careers skills workshops, enhancement of specific skills, help with building up skills portfolios, provision of work placement opportunities (paid/unpaid), summer internships etc.)
- Employability skills development as part of the curriculum
- Employability skills development as part of organised social activities e.g. volunteering
- Activities targeted at enhancing hard skills (specific teachable abilities e.g. numeracy, language skills)
- Activities targeted at enhancing soft skills (personality skills e.g. team working, problem solving)
- Credits and rewards for work-related learning
- Resourcing of employability activities (staff and budgets)
- Popular and effective practices
- Relationship with employers – involvement by sector

The online survey included both closed questions and open-ended questions to provide opportunities for respondents to add further detail of case studies and examples of best practice within their institution. A number of demographic questions were also included to gather information about the respondents in terms of their role (job, responsibilities) and their institution (size, location). At the end of the survey, respondents were invited to forward any material suitable for use as a case study and were also asked to indicate whether they would be willing to participate in a telephone interview.

The online survey was distributed widely to CAS through a range of international networks and professional organisations. The following organisations distributed the survey, covering the countries/regions as stated overleaf.

Organisation	Survey distributed to CAS across following regions	Number of responses received
FEDORA (<i>European Forum for Student Guidance</i>)	Europe	7
NACE (<i>National Association of College Employers</i>)	USA	268
AAGE (<i>Australian Association of Graduate Employers</i>)	Australia	12
IAEVG (<i>International Association of Voluntary Guidance</i>)	Worldwide	83
HECSU (<i>Higher Education Careers Services Unit</i>)	UK	44

i-Graduate provided network organisations with an email invitation which included the hyperlink for the survey, which was then centrally distributed by their staff. The method requested of the networks was to launch the survey link via email to their membership bases and then to send an email reminder once the initial response to the survey had been received. Not all of the networks however followed this process, as detailed in the limitations section.

Membership bases were not known by i-graduate; nor were numbers of potential respondents viewing the invitation, or potential duplicates (potential respondents with more than one membership receiving the email invitation), therefore it was not possible to state an accurate response rate for the survey.

i-graduate conducted a series of semi-structured telephone interviews with respondents to the online survey. The purpose of the interviews was to gain richer, more insightful data to build on the mainly quantitative survey data, and to gather detailed case studies. Staff were selected based on their response to the online survey; to ensure a range of CAS were included in this stage of the research - by role, institution and so on. There was a particular focus on interviewing staff at institutions which undertake unusual or different activities in their approach to employability enhancement, in order to gather a range of best practice examples.

The following telephone interviews were undertaken across the key countries of interest:

Country/Region	Number of telephone interviews
USA	10
Europe (Denmark, Estonia, France, Germany, Ireland, Yugoslavia)	6

Country/Region	Number of telephone interviews
Australia	5
New Zealand	1
Canada	2
South Africa	1

3. Phase One: Desk Research

The following is derived from desk based research into approaches to employability at a higher education level in a number of countries. Summaries of practice in particular countries are included where possible. Approaches to employability are explored by theme, as outlined in the Methodology section, with some case studies for reference.

A full bibliography with links and other resources can be found in Appendix 2.

3.1. Frameworks and Theoretical Background

The desk research has highlighted that some countries may be deemed to be more advanced than others when it comes to the provision of employability activities. Upon close examination, many countries included in this phase have a set of guidelines or frameworks in place at a level higher than the institutions themselves (i.e. state/government level or overarching umbrella body). Institutions use these as a frame of reference to work towards and measure themselves against.

A number of employability and career guidance frameworks have been created around the world which reinforces the notion that employability is high on the political agenda in many countries. These include US National Career Development Guidelines³, Canadian Blueprint⁴, Australian Blueprint for Career Development⁵, European Lifelong Guidance Policy Network⁶ and Competences for Lifelong Learning: European Reference Framework⁷. These are not confined to higher education matters but span school, college and adult career transitions and preparation.

As an example, the Canadian Blueprint ‘maps out the life/work competencies Canadians need to proactively manage their career building process, from kindergarten to adulthood and provides administrators and practitioners with a systematic approach to career development programmes. It ‘provides a common language across Canada for the outcomes of career development initiatives and activities in any setting’.

Whilst this research does not aim to comprehensively capture the theoretical background underpinning the place of employability within higher education, it is noticeable that educational theory influences the approach of academics and careers professionals in this field. For example, Professor Gerhart Rott (the FEDORA representative on the European

³ US National Career Development Guidelines:

http://www.learning4liferesources.com/Nationalcareerdevelopmentguidelines/Aftergraduation_000.pdf

⁴ Canadian Blueprint: <http://206.191.51.163/blueprint/home.cfm>

⁵ Australia Blueprint for Career Development: <http://www.blueprint.edu.au/>

⁶ European Lifelong Guidance Policy Network: <http://ktl.jyu.fi/ktl/elgpn>

⁷ Competences for Lifelong Learning: European Reference Framework:

<http://www.scribd.com/doc/33445618/Key-Competences-for-Lifelong-Learning—A-European-Framework>

Lifelong Guidance Policy Network), has pointed out the value of viewing career preparation and employability skills development in non-linear ways: he refers to Krumboltz's work in social learning theory and how chance events can be reframed into productive opportunities⁸.

A different aspect centres on the place of self-esteem and self-efficacy in career preparation and the future realisation of self and goals. Kateriina Salmela-Aro and Jari-Erik Nurmi at the **University of Jyväskylä**, Finland, have conducted a longitudinal study⁹ examining how self-esteem measured during higher education is reflected in careers 10 years later. This study links with UK interest in emotional intelligence and its impact on performance at work.

The Swedish Research Council funded research published in 2009 by academics at **Goteborg University** on 'Employability in working life: graduates' expectations and possibilities'¹⁰. The report provides a theoretical underpinning to employability policies and initiatives. One of its conclusions is that 'providers of higher education should develop and integrate strategies and launch activities for increasing their students' employability in their educational programs'.

3.2. Practice

The narrative within the UK can be seen as a continuous progression from small beginnings, boosted by Government funded interventions and with the expansion of the professional support base from initially just CAS to include academic course designers and deliverers, life-long learning experts and of course employers. This has taken place alongside a massive growth in student numbers in the UK, bringing new and increased demands for support from students.

It is possible to see experiences and practices in other European countries as illustrations of differing rates of progression on this same continuum, with universities each influenced by the particular economic and social opportunities and imperatives that confront them.

For example, one might expect practice in Eastern Europe to have begun to flourish only from the 1990s with consequently some resources such as careers services being comparatively under-developed. This appears to be the case at the **University of Dubrovnik**, Croatia which was created in 2003 and has just one career advisory staff-member for some 2600 students. Similarly, **Alexandru Cuza University** in Iasi, which is the oldest higher education institution in Romania and has 38,000 students, had by 2008 a career centre with just 4 staff and 2 rooms for premises.

⁸ Rott, Gerhard; C3.8-3 Development of Career Management Competence and the Contribution of Student Services; EUA Bologna Handbook

⁹ Salmela-Aro, K. & Nurmi, J.-E. (2007). Self-esteem during university studies predict career 10 years later. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 70, 463-477.

¹⁰ Rovio-Johansson, Airi & Tengblad, Stefan: Employability in working life: Graduates' expectations and position after graduation, Gothenburg Research Institute (2007)

3.3. UK Context

It is not surprising that 'employability' is high on the agenda in HEIs in the UK as two out of the top three reasons for applying to study are employment related¹¹. What may be surprising is that there is no statutory entitlement to employability support or careers information, advice and guidance for students in higher education in the UK. Nonetheless, many HEIs have well-developed strategies for employability and in the summer of 2010, The Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) encouraged institutions to publish statements on the outcomes of their strategies for prospective students¹² via public outlets, for example, the Unistats¹³ website.

The impetus for development of employability support has a long history with its roots in less uncertain economic times. The work of the Higher Education Academy's Enhancing Student Employability Coordinating Team (ESECT)¹⁴ in the early part of the decade helped to focus academic staff attention on the place of the mainstream curriculum as a vehicle for developing employability skills and provided a foundation for the development of a wide range of learning resources¹⁵. The HEFCE-funded Centre for Excellence in Teaching and Learning (CETL) programme provided many institutions with resources to develop careers and employability-related activities and there have been some notable gains in terms of enhanced websites, research and development projects, curriculum development work and engagement with the employers. There is clear evidence from a wide range of sources that the old model of career advice being provided by advisers remote from the day-to-day experience of HE study is a thing of the past and that careers and employability services are now fully integrated into student support arrangements at every level.

An example of the resources provided by the Higher Education Academy is the portfolio of some 54 student employability profiles which describe the employability skills that can be developed through the study of particular degree subjects¹⁶. Supported by the Quality Assurance Agency, these profiles are available online to pre university students through UCAS and to undergraduates, careers professionals, academics and employers through Prospects, the Council for Industry and Higher Education as well as the Academy's Subject Network.

The employability agenda has more recently shifted to include prospective students. For example, in *Higher Ambitions*¹⁷ the previous Government indicated a requirement that

¹¹ Purcell, Kate, Elias, Peter, Ellison, Ritva, Atfield, Gaby, Adam, Duncan and Livanos, Lias; FutureTrack: Applying for Higher Education-the diversity of career choices, plans and expectations; (March 2008)

¹² <http://www.hefce.ac.uk/news/hefce/2010/qual.htm>

¹³ <http://unistats.direct.gov.uk/>

¹⁴ http://www.heacademy.ac.uk/physsci/home/projects/jisc_del/employabilityproject

¹⁵ Anderson, Julie Dr. And Purcell, Kate Dr.; Beyond the Subject Curriculum; (October 2006)

¹⁶ http://ww2.prospects.ac.uk/cms/ShowPage/Home_page/Student_employability/plfbLLca

¹⁷ Department for Business, Innovation and Skills; Higher Ambitions: The future of universities in a knowledge economy; (November 2009)

universities will be expected to indicate how their courses will contribute to long term employability. Attention has also been focused on the role of parents as careers advisors for their children. This may mask a real issue about how the transition from education to employment in the UK is lengthening. This may be particularly so, in light of the increase in participation in postgraduate study; here debates about the employability of postgraduates are complicated by career trajectories that are highly differentiated by subject.

Transitions into employment are now more frequently accompanied by periods of work experience and there is growing evidence that suggests that the graduate internship¹⁸ has become a 'rite of passage' for those aiming at employment in some occupational sectors. Employers too see benefit in such practices and recent work by the Chartered Institute for Personnel Development (CIPD) calling for an end to unpaid work experience¹⁹ also lays the foundations for agreement about working conditions and processes such as induction. Universities' role in promoting the take up of work experience and integrating work-based learning into courses is extensive. There is clear evidence of academic and careers advisory staff working together²⁰ to maximise opportunities for students and graduates to use periods of unemployment to develop employability. These experiences have also been demonstrated to have a positive impact on learning outcomes.

Within institutions in the UK, the range of practices aimed to develop employability in graduates is diverse and includes: reflection on learning through Personal Development Planning (PDP); coaching and mentoring schemes that are available to all and to specific target groups such as international students; award bearing units of career development learning and the formal accreditation of practice, as well as activities more traditionally associated with job-search, such as CV construction and interview practice. Some employers are becoming actively engaged in providing support to institutions²¹ and the work of the UK Commission for Employment and Skills (UKCES)²² in commissioning skills audits, research projects and 'think pieces' is stimulating employer engagement in high level skills development and promoting higher education/business collaboration.

The Association of Graduate Recruiters (AGR), the Association of Graduate Careers Advisory Services (AGCAS) and the National Union of Students (NUS) have published a statement of best practice on graduate recruitment.²³ In addition, following the recommendations of the Harris Report in 2001, and close collaboration with the then DfES and Guidance Council, AGCAS adopted the Matrix Standard²⁴ as the preferred framework

¹⁸ University of Dundee Case Study p. 28

¹⁹ CIPD; Internships that work; (2009): http://www.cipd.co.uk/publicpolicy/_internships-that-work.htm

²⁰ Kumar, A., SOARing to Success: Personal, Academic and Career Development in Higher Education; (2008)

²¹ http://www.deloitte.com/view/en_GB/uk/about/community-investment/skills-and-education/employability-skills/index.htm

²² <http://www.ukces.org.uk/>

²³ http://ww2.prospects.ac.uk/cms/ShowPage/Home_page/Best_practice_in_graduate_recruitment/plelfif

²⁴ <http://www.agcas.org.uk/pages/24>

for continuous quality improvement in career information, advice and guidance. The approaches in the UK suggest a robust framework for developing effective, good practice on supporting student employability and career preparation.

HEFCE established the 'Economic Challenge Investment Fund' to help the HE sector address rapidly some of the current economic challenges. The primary purpose of the funding was to enable HEIs and further education colleges to support individuals and businesses affected by the recession. The funding aimed to grant these groups access to training, professional development and other support that serves their immediate needs. Over £28 million to support 78 proposals that are leveraging an additional £32 million from universities and local partners has been allocated.

HEFCE has allocated over £1 million to support 1,011 undergraduate internships in universities and colleges during summer 2010. These internships are to support access to the professions for students from disadvantaged backgrounds.

Funding for new graduate internships has been provided by HEFCE. These aim to assist the increased number of unemployed graduates, and to support the Government's priority sectors for economic growth, including small businesses. Funding of over £12 million supported 57 HEIs providing 8,060 places.

The Graduate Talent Pool²⁵ initiative is a partnership between government and employers to help match graduates with internship opportunities. This is an illustration of how work experience/internships are an increasingly important way for graduates to enhance their employability.

The professional and political 'landscape' for employability in higher education in the UK has undergone significant change in recent years and looks set to continue to strengthen against a backdrop of increasing levels of student satisfaction.²⁶ Key themes facing institutions (and those who work alongside them) include how to:

- provide employability support to students and graduates (and alumni) facing turbulent economic conditions
- develop innovative and targeted employability practices with contracting resources
- prepare students for a lengthening transition into graduate employment
- involve employers in curricular and extracurricular activities
- ensure the supply of high level skills appropriate to a changing, local, national and international labour market

²⁵ http://graduatetalentpool.direct.gov.uk/cms/ShowPage/Home_page/plcaaeefg

²⁶ http://www.hefce.ac.uk/pubs/hefce/2010/10_18/

It was with some of these important questions in mind, that the research team set out to investigate how institutions in other countries tackle the important provision of employability support for students, and particularly, whether lessons could be learned to extend and enhance practice in the UK.

Whilst the main aim of the report is to look at practices in institutions worldwide, it is important to acknowledge that there are already good practices in place within the UK. The two case studies below seek to illustrate some of the practices already in place within UK HEIs.

CASE STUDY: The Centre for Career Management Skills, University of Reading, UK

In 2005, a further boost to the graduate employability skills agenda was given with the awarding of government funds to establish some 74 Centres for Excellence in Teaching and Learning (CETLs) in universities in England, a number of which have focused on employability. One example is the University of Reading Centre for Career Management Skills (CCMS).²⁷

What do they do and how?

The CCMS has developed a Career Management Skills module which is not accredited but is compulsory for all undergraduates at the university. Career Management Skills (CMS) is a programme of study that provides students of all ages with advice on all aspects of planning their career. The module is commonly taken during the second undergraduate year and covers topics like:

- What are my skills, interests and values?
- Which sort of job would suit me?
- What careers can I go into using my degree?
- How can I find out about postgraduate options?
- Where should I look for information on international jobs?
- Which sorts of employers recruit people with my qualifications?
- How can I do myself justice when applying for jobs?

The module has been adopted and localised by teaching staff to suit the particular needs and circumstances of their subject areas. Academics, careers staff and

²⁷ <http://www.reading.ac.uk/ccms/>

CASE STUDY: The Centre for Career Management Skills, University of Reading, UK

employers may all be involved and workshops, lectures and online materials are used to help students develop their employability and prepare for the transition in the future to working life.

CCMS has worked in a variety of areas to raise employability awareness with students including:

- Funding for innovative career and employability activities by academic and careers staff.
- Research into development and practice of curriculum based careers education.
- Developing learning, teaching and assessment resources based on research and models of effective practice.
- Supporting research into graduate employment.

What is innovative or interesting?

The Centre has also produced an on line career management portfolio of tools called Destinations. Destinations is an online portal which provides undergraduate and postgraduate taught students with access to a wide-range of resources and information on career management. Whilst this was developed for the University of Reading, Destinations is now also used in around 60 other HEIs, mainly but not only in the UK. Destinations can be adapted to suit each institution's requirements and areas of focus. This portal allows staff to help direct a student's learning and also gives students the opportunity to work through the materials in their own time and reflect on how the content of their degree course can relate to their career preparation.

CETL update

With the CETL initiative ceasing nationally in 2010, the University of Reading Careers Advisory Service has absorbed the on-going work of CCMS and Destinations and other resources will continue to be available to benefit the university and others.

CASE STUDY: Graduate Skills Award, University of Dundee, UK

The University of Dundee strives to lead the way in innovative approaches to employability. The Graduate Skills Award²⁸ was designed in response to the changing conditions the University is facing regarding graduate employability and the importance of work experience.

This is a flagship scheme which looks to provide students with the opportunity to fully prepare themselves for work experience/placements to ensure they and the company get the most out of the work placement.

What do they do and how?

The Graduate Skills Award promotes and tracks the personal development of students through their time at the University. The award offers a tangible, certifiable and approved by graduate recruiter's way of demonstrating a student's ability in certain 'key employability skills'.

The award begins with students assessing their ability against a range of skills. Students need to be honest with themselves about their skills and provide evidence to support their claims. Students are then re-assessed at a later stage to see if and by how much they have developed in these skills. The level of improvement indicates how many points are scored, with 100 being the amount required to gain the award.

The skills areas covered are:

- Communication
- Numerical
- Information Literacy and Learning
- Information Technology
- Interpersonal
- Problem: solving and planning
- Reflection and response for own learning

²⁸ <http://www.dundee.ac.uk/careers/skillsaward/info.php>

CASE STUDY: Graduate Skills Award, University of Dundee, UK

- Professional commercial awareness

The university suggest using placement, volunteering or representation as a way to demonstrate personal development and the skills acquired.

What is innovative or interesting?

The award, whilst facilitated and awarded by the University, places the majority of the responsibility for completing it and gaining it on the student.

The method of assessment means that students have to be honest with themselves about what skills they possess, and think about which ones they would need and how to go about gaining them. Through the use of PDP's students can reflect upon what they have learnt through their course and other activities such as placement and volunteering.

This award and approach could be considered best practice in response to the manner in which it is delivered. Employability is commonly identified as primarily being the responsibility of the student.

As for the institution, the staff hours and resource for running such an award will be less compared to a course that involves teaching. Assessment and recording of achievements and progression can be done online therefore minimising the administrative management.

What can the UK learn?

In a time when resources are becoming more constrained and competition for jobs is high, universities need to find ways to provide students with the chance to develop employability skills and demonstrate their ability in a recognised manner. Awards such as this one which place the onus upon the student and can be managed remotely through online facilities could be a solution to this issue.

3.4. Global practice

The findings discussed below are the general findings from the desk research that was undertaken as part of the project.

Australia

39 universities are members of Universities Australia and enroll the bulk of higher degree students. Their work in developing employability skills for graduates reflects established practice and current Government policy. The term employability as used by Government

refers to Australia's capacity to operate in the global knowledge-based economy. The term refers to the relationship between employee and employer and implies a mutual relationship of skills development and the use of these skills to increase productivity. This includes active engagement of the employee with the employer's strategic direction, hence career progression and by implication, a commitment to lifelong learning or continuing professional education.

The relationship between university education and employers is well established. Graduate Careers Australia²⁹ (GCA) provides an extensive set of resources relating to employment and employability skills, and is used by business throughout Australia and New Zealand. The National Association of Graduate Careers Advisory Services³⁰ (NAGCAS) was established as the professional association for careers staff in higher education. It seems reasonable to conclude that government policy towards employability, professional practice by careers advisers and university employer links are comparable between Australia and the UK. One exception may tentatively be suggested in the possibly greater willingness to innovate with employer links by university staff in the UK. The UK features prominently in Australia in papers and conference sessions on this topic, giving the impression that whilst Australia demonstrates good practice, the UK is considered a leader in this regard.

On the other hand, a claim to be innovative may be made by the Australian Higher Education Workplace Skills Olympiad HEWSO³¹. The Olympiad has support from government, university bodies and employers and connects students with a host employer to work on a real business challenge. Working in multi-disciplinary teams, students' research and report on the problem set in the challenge after one month, making a presentation and providing a report and accompanying website. HEWSO is competitive with teams judged against each other.

What can the UK learn from Australia?

The Higher Education Workplace Skills Olympiad represents an innovative initiative which encourages students to acquire workplace experience and relevant work-related skills, including working in multi-disciplinary teams. This initiative could be readily transferred to other country situations and could represent an interesting new approach that could be adapted to the UK context.

Canada

A number of organisations across Canada help staff working in careers services and organisations to develop and enhance their career service offerings. These include the Canadian Association of Career Educators and Employers³² and The Canadian Career

²⁹ <http://www.graduatecareers.com.au/>

³⁰ <http://www.nagcas.org.au/>

³¹ <http://www.uow.edu.au/careers/discover/HEWSO.html>

³² <http://www.cacee.com/> [accessed December 2009]

Development Foundation³³. The structures have a look and feel comparable to the strong support structures with nationwide coverage in the US. It would seem that there is a lot of information available to universities regarding career development and the skills looked for in graduates.

However, compared with the UK, the putting into practice of development programmes appears to be lacking somewhat in support and direction, with many universities and colleges working alone and providing very different programmes and levels of support to students.

Each province has its own form of Ministry of Education. Seven provinces have taken on full delivery of career development and other services, whilst a further five jointly plan services with the relevant federal department. For example, the Province of New Brunswick has a department of training and employment development. Although the services offered are for all, rather than for any one group of individuals, there is advice specific to graduates.

The OECD study³⁴ in 2000 shows little cohesion across provincial ministries and within each province. Provision of career development support varies across provinces and different levels of education.

A study by the Canadian Career Development Foundation emphasises the significant role secondary schools can play in getting students ready for the world or work. Although secondary schools are not within the remit of this work, it is an interesting point to note and highlights the importance to higher education of pre university students receiving quality support before becoming undergraduates.

A notable feature, compared with UK practice, is the fast developing spread of co-operative education, with classroom based education combined with practical work and students receiving academic credit for structured job experience. There is a national forum, the Canadian Association for Co-operative Education (CAFCE³⁵), for practitioners of co-operative programmes which builds and develops programmes across Canada. The existence of such a forum highlights the prominence of co-operative education in higher education and the importance both students and institutions place upon it.

What can the UK learn from Canada?

Attention is already being given to providing work experience opportunities in UK secondary schools and it plays a part in the curriculum for secondary level pupils. This is a powerful initiative in Canada, underlines the importance of starting preparation for the world of work prior to university entry and the valuable role that can be played by

³³ <http://www.ccdf.ca/ccdf2/> [accessed December 2009]

³⁴ OECD; Review of Career Guidance Policies Canada country note (2002)

³⁵ <http://www.cafce.ca/>

secondary schools in supporting and facilitating work experience and developing links with employers.

USA

Strong evidence at national and college (university) level indicates that in the US the drive to achieve an effective career launch on graduation is a student goal highly supported by key stakeholders. A key organisation is the National Association of Colleges and Employers, (NACE)³⁶ 'dedicated to the employment of the college educated' (university educated). A UK-equivalent would be an organisation that combined the resources and aims of the AGCAS and the AGR.

NACE makes significant contribution to a huge amount of information publicly available through various sources on college enrolment, the benchmarking of careers services, ethnic breakdown, the job market itself and other elements that contribute to supporting student employability. The sheer quantity of information may suggest that graduate employability is a prime driver underpinning higher education. An example of the data readily available is the NACE annual survey of graduating students³⁷. Comparable information in the UK on this and similar topics can be found from the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA), HECSU, AGR and others.

An interesting comparison between the UK and the US lies in the publication of best practice standards. NACE publish detailed Professional Standards for College and University Career Services³⁸ with comparable published standards for both employers and third party agency recruiters. The strong branding behind these standards conveys a sense of authority and authenticity. NACE believes 'that good methodologies promote ...self-assessment, honour institutional uniqueness ...and student characteristics, abilities, and preparation... and demonstrate external and internal accountability'.

What can the UK learn from the USA?

In the UK, practice on this aspect already appears well advanced: AGR, AGCAS and NUS have published a statement of best practice³⁹ on graduate recruitment. In addition, following the recommendations of the Harris Report in 2001⁴⁰, and close collaboration with the then DfES and Guidance Council, AGCAS adopted the Matrix Standard⁴¹ as the preferred framework for continuous quality improvement in career information, advice and

³⁶ <http://www.naceweb.org>

³⁷ http://www.naceweb.org/spotlight/2008/june/2008_Graduating_Student_Survey/

³⁸

https://www.naceweb.org/Knowledge/Career_Services/Assessment/Professional_Standards_for_College_University_Career_Services.aspx

³⁹ See page 24

⁴⁰ http://www.agcas.org.uk/agcas_resources/55-Harris-Report

⁴¹ See page 24

guidance. The approaches both in the UK and US seem to provide a robust framework for developing effective, good practice on supporting student employability and career preparation.

Finland

Many universities have language centres established in response to the Government decree of 2004, which requires all university graduates to be proficient in both Finnish and Swedish and at least one foreign language.

Most universities and all polytechnics have a career centre which helps their students find internships, jobs and internships related to thesis topics. They often also provide advice and workshops on how to write cover letters and CVs.

What can the UK learn from Finland?

Some universities, such as the **Aalto University School of Science and Technology**⁴², organise several events each year that enable students to come into contact with potential future employers. Aalto University was founded in 2010⁴³ and brings together economics, art and design, and science and technology with the goal of enabling multi-disciplinary education and research. Aalto Career Service provides typical support for students and employers in brokering job opportunities and helping students prepare for professional life. What is distinctive is that the university markets the Career Service to employing organisations as part of a package of activities offered including research and development, fund raising and lifelong alumni links. Further investigation may be needed but it appears that links with employers are based on mutual benefit and long term relationships rather than simply on non-strategic transactions like a graduate being offered a job in isolation.

Also **Aalto University** runs Aalto Venture Garage⁴⁴, a new initiative in partnership with Stanford University to kick start entrepreneurship in the Baltic Rim. A free work space, library and other resources are offered where students and entrepreneurs get support and work together to grow their businesses. Four times a year, Bootcamp⁴⁵ is run for students and entrepreneurs to help pre-seed start-ups build up their products and test their ideas with investors and other entrepreneurs. Some 200 start-up teams from around the world are expected to apply for the ten team spaces available at the next two week long Bootcamp in late 2010.

⁴² <http://www.aalto.fi/en/school/technology/>

⁴³ Aalto University was created in 2010 from the merger of three Finnish Universities: The Helsinki School of Economics, Helsinki University of Technology and The University of Art and Design Helsinki.

⁴⁴ <http://www.slideshare.net/lindaliukas/garage-houserules>

⁴⁵ <http://aaltovg.com/sos/>

Poland

In contrast with the fairly limited provision in some of Eastern European countries, there has been much activity in Poland since 1989 and there are now some 200 career service 'units' within universities with 2/3 staff each, mainly with a psychology background. An informal Polish Network of Career Services supports these services.

These units offer key employment market information as well as help with soft skills useful for situations such as job interviews. They also set up contacts with companies and employers in the hope that jobs can be offered to them even before they leave university. A follow-up system investigates the experiences of previous graduates so that success in finding occupations can be evaluated.

British influence on Polish university careers services has been considerable. Their main tasks unsurprisingly mirror the range of services in a UK university careers service. The Careers and Appointments Service at **Nicolaus Copernicus University**⁴⁶ in Torun, for example, was established with British help in 1993 and was the first of its kind in Poland. It is a member of the UK based AGCAS. There are 5 professional staff for some 40,000 students at the university and their training takes place both in Poland and the UK. However, what is different at Torun compared with the UK is that they undertake candidate pre-selection for employers. They are funded jointly by the university and the Torun Regional Labour Office, which has a remit to support vocational education and to help minimise unemployment in the region. The Labour Office is responsible for EU Leonardo and Phare initiatives⁴⁷ such as the Leonardo Media Coach projects and has on its management staff one of the university careers advisers. This is particularly valuable at a time when recent graduates from Polish universities are faced with a high risk of unemployment in their home country, particularly in the period immediately after they graduate.

Estonia

Estonia is a nation which has looked to improve the quality of its students in terms of employability for quite some time. This has been highlighted in schemes both at university and government levels.

Several Estonian universities have established career services, which provide a bridge between study and work, and assist students in planning their careers. The focus is based upon career education, career counselling and career information. This is achieved through using such methods as company presentations and the development of job hunting skills. There are often workshops organised which focus upon soft skills such as self-presentation and CV writing seminars. The concept of lifelong learning has also become of major importance, the idea that education is a continual experience rather than ending with higher education, allowing an individual to be given skills which allow them to remain open to education in later life.

⁴⁶ <http://www.umk.pl/en/>

⁴⁷ <http://www.umk.pl/en/units/careers/>

Tallinn University was created in its present form in 2002 and has 9250 students. In contrast with UK practice, but which is common in many continental universities, there is a combined Career and Counselling Centre. Two of the four staff are career counsellors and there is a student counsellor and a psychologist. Together they help students on career preparation, academic study matters and psychological counselling. This integrated approach might suggest that the imperatives behind students developing employability and finding future work are not the overwhelming dominant factors in the institution. The Rector, Professor Rein Raud⁴⁸, writes that ‘a university should first and foremost be an environment for growth... University education means the cultivation of the critical, constantly questioning mind in concert with personal development, so that each graduate may realise her or his potential to the fullest extent to become a distinct individual with a distinct outlook on life as well as her or his own particular contribution to give to the wider community.’ Nowhere in his key statement on the university’s website is there direct reference to employability or future jobs.

What can the UK learn from Estonia?

In 1998, the Ministry of Education and Research founded the National Resource Centre for Guidance (NRCG) – Estonian Euroguidance Centre⁴⁹ – to support guidance practitioners in promoting mobility and the European dimension within education and training and in the field of guidance. Those they service directly include career counsellors and information specialists, career coordinators and teachers, school psychologists, vocational counsellors at employment offices, consultants at youth information centres and university career services, other guidance and mobility specialists and European network colleagues.

An example of their work is the Euroguidance system, which organises international study visits to increase the international awareness of the students and allow them to forge relationships with those in other countries. NRCG is Estonia’s representative on the EU’s Euroguidance network⁵⁰.

The UK counterpart to NRCG is Careers Europe⁵¹, founded in 1992. Its remit is as broad as NRCG’s which might suggest support for higher education initiatives is not the highest priority. Given the current interest across sector groups including BIS in the formation of a UK national career sector forum, this is an area that may bear further investigation.

Belgium

Belgian universities are involved with the European Alliance on Skills for Employability⁵² which is a multi-stakeholder initiative under the European e-Skills Association umbrella,

⁴⁸ <http://www.tlu.ee/?LangID=2&CatID=1331>

⁴⁹ <http://www.innove.ee/career-services/national-resource-centre-for-guidance>

⁵⁰ <http://www.euroguidance.net/GuidanceSystems/Estonia/Intro.htm>

⁵¹ <http://www.careerseurope.co.uk>

⁵² <http://www.employabilityalliance.eu/>

supporting the EU Growth & Jobs Strategy by working in partnership to help bring technology skills, competencies and training to 20 million people across Europe by 2010.

Besides this, universities in Belgium usually offer some form of advisory service to assist their students in becoming more employable. However, even at major universities in Belgium, some careers services are limited to managerial or business schools and the service does not extend to all students or at least are not made widely known. Furthermore, these services are more often than not geared towards providing graduates with company contacts and direct interaction with potential employers, rather than on working on soft skills.

France

A law regarding a programme of work orientation and an introduction to the labour market organised by the universities was introduced in 2007. Some universities have put in place effective programmes with information on websites on how to find work or an internship. Services are provided to improve CV writing skills and interview techniques. Other universities have set up only basic programmes with limited impact to date.

One specific measure has been introduced which makes it mandatory for Masters students to learn at least one foreign language.

Within grandes ecoles, which are outside the mainstream of the public universities system, career support and employability skills development have been in evidence for a long time. One example can be found at EDHEC⁵³, a top business school based in Lille and Nice – here, the Career Centre provides year round help with comprehensive resources for thorough career preparation.

Germany

In line with the Bologna Process, a twofold structure comprising Bachelor and Master Degrees has been introduced with a key aim to increase the employability of graduates. Research by the Centre for Higher Education Development in Germany⁵⁴ into the impact of the reform has looked at methodological competences, social competences, practical relevance and internationalisation. The general conclusion is that many universities and universities of applied sciences lack experience in enhancing their students' employability skills.

Deutscher Bildungsserver⁵⁵ (The German Education Server) is funded by federal and state governments and provides an internet portal to information on education in all forms. Its investigation into the extent to which Bachelor and Masters degrees are accepted

⁵³ <http://www.edhec.edu/>

⁵⁴ <http://www.che.de/cms/?getObject=302&getLang=en>

⁵⁵ <http://www.bildungsserver.de/>

shows acceptance of the reform in some quarters but others being critical with employability levels remaining unimproved.

There is no standard practice in enhancing graduate employability, due in part to the federal structure of the education sector and the fundamental principle of freedom of teaching and research.

Italy

Employability policies are the responsibility of regions and provinces. With recent reforms to increase university autonomy, there is no uniform policy on employability. There are no real career centres at universities but there are programmes on career information and promotional work, projects to link subjects taught in upper secondary schools and universities, and services supporting integration into work such as placements and work experience, often in conjunction with the vocational training system and with regional enterprises as regards to workers' right to study.

In 2004, a National Guidance Committee was created comprising national and regional government bodies and employers' associations, which promotes initiatives to meet local needs as well as those of young people and their families. There are also specific guidance centres called Informagiovani aimed at improving the transition from education to the work environment.

AlmaLaurea⁵⁶ is supported by the Ministry of Education, University and Research and facilitates graduate access to employment at various levels of university studies. It is an innovative service that provides online curriculum vitae of graduates (1,430,000 at 60 Italian universities as 29/06/2010) acting as a contact point between graduates, universities and companies. Founded in 1994 by the Statistical Centre of the **University of Bologna**, AlmaLaurea has experienced exponential growth in recent years, now reaching 75 per cent of Italian graduates.

Netherlands

Employability is a subject taken up by almost all universities and institutions of higher education. Most offer their students professional skills development, especially for those wanting to pursue very competitive careers. Many institutions have a careers service for students, offering advice from careers guidance workers. Despite this, there is not much offered to students in the way of setting up business links or contacts with potential employers. Institutions do not generally facilitate networking with employers though most universities hold careers fairs on campus.

One explanation for this may be that links between universities and employing organisations are already extensive and deep rooted.

⁵⁶ <http://www.almalaurea.it/>

What can the UK learn from the Netherlands?

The Student Career Centre at the **University of Amsterdam**⁵⁷ runs a Career Week for international Masters Students seeking employment in the Netherlands. It is jointly organised by the Centre and Time Magazine and offers a workshop on do's and don'ts about the Dutch job market. There is also an Expat Networking Borrel where international (non-Dutch) students meet current expats and learn of their experiences (a Borrel is a Dutch tradition of drinking alcohol with snacks in the late afternoon).

Sweden

All major universities in Sweden have a career centre which offers different services. Generally these services include career counselling, CV and cover letter advice, workshops, interview training, company presentations, job fairs and job and internship listings. Some universities offer more extensive services than others, with business schools especially offering a wide variety of services.

India

Some universities in India have specific training programmes to improve the employability of their students. The vast majority focus on developing soft skills in students.

What is noticeable is that the cost of the employability skills courses is paid for by the individual in the vast majority of cases. A university may create training programs of around 20 to 40 hours and ask corporate training consultants to deliver them in a manner similar to their normal style. Training fees are paid by students and are usually added on top of standard school fees.

Some multinational organisations, e.g. Infosys⁵⁸, sponsor Campus to Corporate programmes for which the company pays part of the cost and students pay the remainder. An example is the Finishing School (Campus to Corporate Program) run by private sector training provider Bodhiv Training Solutions⁵⁹ in Bangalore. Among the topics covered are identifying different personalities, creative thinking, emotional quotient, handling criticism, food habits, meditation and goal setting.

New Zealand

New Zealand has some 20 polytechnics and 8 universities. Career planning and guidance principles seem to be used consistently from high school through vocational to higher education. A feature of the careers support literature is the inclusion of Māori education and also South Pacific education and development more generally.

⁵⁷ http://www.studeren.uva.nl/student_life_english/object.cfm/9548584C-BBEC-4850-81B852DE254E184B/5E7CAA52-AFA4-443E-A1F1CD6E72D7564D

⁵⁸ <http://www.infosys.com/pages/index.aspx>

⁵⁹ <http://www.bodhiv.com/>

In New Zealand, a wānanga is a publicly owned tertiary institution that provides education in a Māori cultural context. As of 2009 wānanga offer certificates, diplomas, and bachelor level degrees, and some provide programmes in specialized areas up to Doctorate level. A report by the New Zealand Qualifications Authority on the institution Te Wananga/Aotearoa⁶⁰, which has 30,000 students, notes that contributions to social and cultural outcomes are valued in addition to the successful achievement of qualifications.

3.5. Nature of HE staff involvement in employability support

The following sections provide examples from various countries of interesting or innovative practice categorised by theme with comment on possible learnings for the UK. In some instances, the examples are very similar to comparable examples found in the UK but due to subtle variation suggest additional applications. Such examples can also demonstrate that others similarly place value on them. This is perhaps not surprising, given the borderless flow of information and networking that naturally takes place in higher education, certainly in many countries of the world.

As will be seen in the survey results to the online study conducted as part of this project, university staff most closely involved in providing practical employability support are in career services, regardless of country. In the US and the UK, the national representation of HE Career Service professionals is well developed; however, in the US unlike the UK, the representation of institutions and employers is combined under one umbrella, which facilitates joint co-ordination of policy combining both perspectives.

NACE, the National Association of Colleges and Employers in the US, is dedicated to the employment of the college (university) educated. It connects more than 5,200 college career services professionals at nearly 2,000 colleges and universities nationwide, and more than 3,000 HR/staffing professionals in employing organisations focused on college relations and recruiting. The UK equivalent would be AGCAS and AGR combined. Their comprehensive coverage of the graduate market and large membership from professionals in higher education and business gives NACE an authoritative voice. NACE publishes Principles for Professional Practice⁶¹ which set a strong regulatory framework for both careers advisers and employers in the USA.

The Principles for Professional Practice reveals a good deal about value systems and how the legislative framework is operationalised. Interestingly, the Principles provide frameworks of good practice not just for careers counsellors and HR professionals but also for third party organisations such as recruitment agencies operating on campus.

The Principles provide practitioners with three basic precepts for career planning, placement, and recruitment:

- Maintain an open and free selection of employment opportunities in an atmosphere conducive to objective thought, where job candidates can choose optimum long-

⁶⁰ <http://www.nzqa.govt.nz/nqfdocs/provider-reports/8630.pdf>

⁶¹ <http://www.naceweb.org/principles/>

term uses of their talents that are consistent with personal objectives and all relevant facts

- Maintain a recruitment process that is fair and equitable to candidates and employing organisations
- Support informed and responsible decision making by candidates

Altogether, this gives the impression of a framework for the work of careers and HR professionals, and for enabling graduates to function effectively in the job market, which is perhaps more high profile and robust than in the UK, even though our practices are rightly regarded as of a high standard.

It is widely accepted that academic staff involvement in employability development can have a significant effect, certainly if one places lifelong learning capability at the heart of what employability means. It is possibly still the case that many academics feel uncomfortable explicitly advocating the learning of employability skills whilst passionately promoting lifelong learning through higher education study.

3.6. Teaching employability

Western Michigan University in the US offers undergraduate and master's degrees in Career and Technical Education⁶². These are based on the premise that education for employability in the long term is in the realm of public education at the secondary, higher education and adult levels

The degrees are aimed at teacher training in what we call secondary schools but which have a beneficial impact on developing the employability of students as and when they subsequently go through higher education. It is predicated on seeing the development of employability and of career management as a continuum from school through higher education and into adult working life. The UK Institute of Career Guidance accredits postgraduate level diploma courses⁶³ in career guidance at 11 universities including those at Nottingham Trent and West of England Universities and interest in such professional development appears to be growing.

There are numerous examples worldwide of how employability skills are being taught either as part of the curriculum for another subject or as the sole focus of a student's education. An example of how institutions are incorporating employability into teaching can be found in the case study below from an institution in Australia.

⁶² <http://www.wmich.edu/consumer/cte/index.html>

⁶³ http://www.icg-uk.org/QCG_and_QCGD.html

CASE STUDY: Global Leadership Programme, Macquarie University⁶⁴, Australia

Macquarie University is ranked 9th in Australia in the Shanghai Jiao Tong rankings.

Its learning and teaching strategy centres on helping Macquarie graduates become lifelong learners with the skills and competencies to succeed in the dynamic and changing world of work and capable of engaging in local and global communities with energy and integrity. Macquarie students are expected to develop a comprehensive range of generic, analytical and critical skills as autonomous and independent learners.

What do they do and how?

It may be said that a graduate's employability emerges as a natural consequence of pursuing a broad and varied curriculum. All students undertake study in the '3Ps' of Planet, People and Participation. Social responsibility, discipline, competency, and the valuing of social justice and ethical practice are capabilities expected of Macquarie graduates. Every student of every degree undertakes a unit of study in science, in humanities, and in some form of learning or participation outside the university - in study abroad, internships, or community engagement.

What is innovative or interesting?

'Macquarie's Participation and Community Engagement' Initiative (PACE International) is a new component of the University's strategy and from 2012 will be an integral part of all degree programmes. It provides opportunities for students and staff to actively contribute to more just, inclusive and sustainable societies through activities with communities locally, in regional Australia and overseas. Through experiential learning activities students have opportunities to apply their classroom learning to real world situations while developing skills that employer's value. PACE International, jointly managed by Australian Volunteers International⁶⁵ and Macquarie, is specifically designed to provide these opportunities for students who want to travel overseas. The learning cycle starts with pre-departure sessions and wraps up with re-entry debriefing to encourage self-reflection and maximising learning potential so that returned participants can put their new knowledge into action in their careers.

Macquarie is a member of AUCEA⁶⁶, a forum of support for Australian universities involved with community engagement.

Macquarie's Global Leadership Program (GLP) is available to domestic and

⁶⁴ <http://www.international.mq.edu.au/glp>

⁶⁵ <http://www.australianvolunteers.com/>

⁶⁶ <http://www.aucea.net.au/>

CASE STUDY: Global Leadership Programme, Macquarie University⁶⁴, Australia

international onshore students at Macquarie. Against the background of globalisation, students are encouraged to develop skills in leadership, citizenship and cross cultural understanding all of which have become essential knowledge for professional practice in a globalised world. Some 2000 students are enrolled on GLP at any one time and participate without charge. The GLP is funded entirely by the VC's office.

The GLP which awards credit to academic and cultural experiences with an international component is available to students from any discipline of study –arts, humanities, business, technology, science or law.

Students must obtain a minimum of 200 points worth of experiential credit to fulfill the requirements of the GLP. Points are earned for 'extra-curricula' leadership and cultural activities. Examples include going on a student exchange, undertaking an internship, or participating in an international event.

In addition students must participate in 10 colloquia to fulfil GLP requirements. A colloquium comprises workshops, seminars, round tables and discussions. International issues are introduced and generic skills are provided for students to use in professional life.

Each colloquium typically lasts 2-3 hours. Three of them are compulsory and cover cross cultural understanding, leadership and the responsibilities of a global citizen. The 32 elective topics to pick from include business etiquette, public speaking, tools for self promotion, spirituality and social transformation, and an ethics toolbox.

Students are also required to attend two Distinguished Speaker events each year when a presentation is followed each time by networking with other GLP students, faculty members and members of the business community.

At postgraduate level, GLP students must attend 6 three hour Think Tank sessions, where they are required to make an informed argument about global issues from the perspective of a number of disciplines and allow collaboration with students from different academic and professional backgrounds. Topics may include the environment, democracy, terrorism, transnational crime and spirituality.

Overall, GLP is prized by Macquarie as it enables graduates to have a strong competitive edge in today's global marketplace. Employers look beyond academic transcripts for the additional skills developed including communication, creativity, leadership and initiative.

⁶⁷ <http://www.international.mq.edu.au/GLSS>

⁶⁸ <http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/about/community/volunteers/>

CASE STUDY: Global Leadership Programme, Macquarie University⁶⁴, Australia

In addition to the core program components the GLP offers a range of optional extras such as the Global Leadership Symposium Series⁶⁷ (GLSS). GLSS Australia takes place in Canberra and typically includes organisation visits, presentations, briefings by embassy officials, tours of cultural or historical landmarks and insight into Australian society, Australia's stance on international issues and Australia's place in the world. GLSS International is a 2 week event travelling to a region of the world to obtain insight into leadership and regional issues. The program typically includes company and NGO visits and presentations, briefings from embassies and other government officials, historical and cultural visits. Locations include Singapore, Thailand and Turkey.

Another option is GLSS Cultural Series, designed to expose students to the 'real multicultural' city of Sydney. Visits are designed with a mix of insights into the history, customs, religious practices and lifestyles of a particular area/suburb.

Incoming study abroad and exchange students are invited to an abridged version of the GLP, called the Global Leadership Certificate. To be completed over the course of 1-2 semesters, the certificate requires students to attend 10 colloquia of their choice.

Time, resources and supportive senior university executives have been factors in the success of the Macquarie GLP. Passionate staff are a terrific asset. As is the case in all large scale programmes, reliable administrative systems are essential.

What can the UK learn?

Macquarie may be considered in UK terms as a Russell Group university, centred on classic research and teaching, with the academic subject being studied at the heart but with the learning experience boundaries very broad and systematically open to influence from a range of quarters. Though the term employability does not feature noticeably, the result of this approach is that Macquarie students have the opportunity to be well prepared for work and to have a truly global mind-set.

Research has shown that employers are seeking graduates with international experience and cross cultural competencies. Students who participate in the GLP are distinguishing themselves as this calibre of graduate. GLP graduates are better equipped to work in multicultural environments both in Australia and abroad; to work towards and assume leadership positions in their career; and to understand diverse global issues affecting the world today. They will have demonstrated ambition and exemplary time management in completing the programme requirements.

A UK comparison, out of a number that may be made, is at **Warwick University** which runs Warwick Volunteers⁶⁸, a community engagement initiative and the optional Undergraduate Skills Programme for developing personal, academic and career management skills. Exploring practice amongst the universities similar to Macquarie and Warwick may prompt action to examine the merits of compulsory and credit bearing learning programmes.

3.7. Reflective learning

Reflective learning is found amongst a range of learning approaches adopted together, rather than being seen in isolation.

One interesting example is the Certificate in Education Bridging⁶⁹ at the Auckland University of Technology, New Zealand. The university has 24,000 students engaged in industry relevant education. The Certificate is optional and awarded on completion of 3 from 12 topics learned in each case through 8 to 10 hours contact time during the academic year. Topics include study skills, academic writing, critical thinking and planning for the future. Methods of learning include reflective writing, discussion and self and peer evaluation by students. Given the vocational nature of many of the degree programmes, such as sport, business, design and creative technologies and health sciences, the Certificate appears to be an effective approach to facilitating the blending of academic and practical learning and so preparing students for working life. Comparable practice can be found in the UK but it may prove useful to review how much is accredited and given a high profile.

As may be expected, it is a university's career centre which is typically the main source of employability skills advice, information and guidance. A career centre will offer services to all students at its university, though sometimes a service or part of a service is dedicated to students of particular subjects and this is a fundamental aspect of all careers support provisions in HE.

3.8. Experiential learning

Internships and cooperative education are a major part of the US and Canadian higher education scene. The NACE 2009 Internship and Co-op Survey⁷⁰ is based on responses from 235 employers representing 20 business sectors. Nearly all respondents (86.5 percent) have formal internships/co-op programs, the primary focus being to fill their full-time vacancies. Statistics show that companies typically hire a larger percentage of their former interns into graduate positions compared with graduates available on the open market. Co-ops spend the majority of their time engaged in core business functions. On average, less than 3 percent of their time is spent on nonessential functions. More than three-quarters of respondents assign their interns and co-ops to one unit, rather than rotating them through different areas.

What can the UK learn?

⁶⁹ <http://www.aut.ac.nz/study-at-aut/study-areas/education/learning-environment/free-papers-to-help-you-study-keys>

⁷⁰

<http://www.naceweb.org/Research.aspx?fid=64&menuID=120&ispub=False&nodetype=7&navurl=#&/wEXAQUFaW5kZXgFI2xiZnR+IX5+IX4xOTN+IX4xMjN+IX5GYWxzZX4hfj+IX4xfHG5XQ/SLXVNYLDJfRchMTgwcEA=>

Sandwich degrees are possibly the closest UK comparison with the co-operative education found both in the US and Canada. It seems strange that sandwich degrees are seen in some quarters of the UK as old fashioned and high cost, even though employers and students alike value the experiential learning that invariably takes place. Combining academic learning with work related learning experiences enables the learner to develop interactively competence in study, career preparation and life as an adult. By contrast, those involved in co-operative education in the US convey real conviction about its worth and the sheer scale of co-operative education demonstrates US institutions' commitment towards this style of education. At a time when consideration is being given to promoting two year degrees in the UK, by contrast is there a place for also promoting co-operative education in STEM and business related subjects for whom demand amongst employers remains strong?

CASE STUDY: Co-operative Education, Drexel University, USA

The case is derived from the **Drexel University** website⁷¹ and an in depth discussion with the Director of Drexel's Steinbright Career Development Centre and Vice Provost.

Drexel University is described as Philadelphia's technological university. It has had co-operative education as a key focus for over 90 years. Currently 10,000 students annually enroll in the co-op program and about 5,000 annually are placed in jobs in 29 states and 23 countries. At the last university entry, some 36,000 applicants chased 2,600 places. The university is private and the advertised cost of tuition, fees, housing and subsistence for a 4 year co-op programme totals \$53,385. 79% of students apply for federal financial aid.

What do they do and how?

Drexel Co-op is based on paid employment in practical, subject related positions consistent with a student's interests and abilities; only a small percentage of students accept nonpaid co-ops. Undergraduate students have up to 18 months of professional experience before graduation. Preparation before acceptance on a co-op programme, co-op experiences themselves and evaluation: all this is timetabled. Some 3,000 employers are linked into the university both for co-op programmes and for graduate jobs.

Key to success is that co-operative education has support from the top of the university and forms a distinguishing, major element in its marketing to prospective students and employers.

What is innovative or interesting?

The academic calendar is based on quarters so that students with an autumn/winter co-op cycle work full-time during the autumn and winter quarters, while a student with

⁷¹ <http://www.drexel.edu/default.aspx>

CASE STUDY: Co-operative Education, Drexel University, USA

a spring/summer co-op cycle will work full-time during the spring and summer quarters. From an employer point of view, this means co-op students are available year round.

Support for students begins before entry into university. Nine orientation sessions run each year for parents and prospective students and declare the commitment that once in Drexel, always in Drexel, including throughout working life. There is a Drexel Family Association as part of the university structure through which, subject to federal laws on data protection, parents have access to help and information and the opportunity to 'build community among current and prospective students, parents, faculty, staff and friends of the university'. The Steinbright Career Development Center (SCDC) provides the expected essentials of workshops, job fairs and career counselling. Workshop topics include speed interviewing, conquering the cover letter and answering tough interview questions.

Co-op Coordinators assist and guide students from pre registry of new students for co-op eligibility, through to helping with professional correspondence and assisting with job searches.

Co-op101 is a mandatory class where first year (freshmen) students learn business etiquette and independent job searching as well as CV writing and interview techniques. Five full time career staff run this class.

Average salaries on a co-op and on graduation are published and easily accessible. An average paid six-month co-op salary is over \$16,858, depending on the market and type of work. The average starting offer for jobs in engineering is \$58,584, for business \$47,186, and in media arts and design \$36,483. Career opportunities by job type and named employer are signposted on a subject's web pages. Such information enables students to make informed career decisions and helps provide a consistent supportive environment for career management.

What can the UK learn?

Drexel University provides an example of a carefully integrated approach throughout the student's higher education at Drexel, supporting student learning and preparation for professional life. It is the combination of academic and practical learning, with all the university's learning and support strategies in alignment, which makes this effective for students and employers alike.

Co-operative education maximises the resources available within the university and helps it be more certain that both employer and graduate make informed and mutually beneficial decisions about work opportunities.

Student engagement in academic learning and preparation for future work is strong and consistent from the start. A recent blind study with pre student focus groups at Drexel showed that, for 69% of participants, securing co-operative education was

CASE STUDY: Co-operative Education, Drexel University, USA

their main driving force.

Faculty staff and careers professionals have comparable status at Drexel and are institutionally geared up to help students positively and actively to develop their employability.

3.9. Other opportunities to develop employability

The desk research identified some initiatives which differ from much common practice, sometimes by involving government intervention.

The two examples of government intervention below suggest that regional public funding of employability initiatives (outside of core higher education funding) may be effective in meeting particular local needs.

At Memorial University, Canada, there is a Graduate Transition to Employment Program⁷² funded by the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador. The program is organised through the Department for Career Development and Experiential Learning at the university. It provides 60% of the starting salary of an approved position to a max of \$10,000 for 52 weeks. This is available to graduates who have successfully completed a post-secondary programme and are unemployed. Whilst such direct funding may fly in the face of current concerns to reduce public spending in the UK, it is an example of practical action to address graduate unemployment, albeit at a short term price.

The **University of South Australia**⁷³ is one of a number of universities that enable their students to take part in the Student Employability Skills and Community Service project, funded by the Australian Government Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations. The programme is a local application of the Students in Free Enterprise⁷⁴ (SIFE) model of engaged learning and community empowerment through student social entrepreneurship. The SIFE model involves the commitment of a university staff member to mentor students who initiate and undertake projects which benefit the wider community and in the process enhance their workplace readiness by developing planning, teamwork, leadership and communication skills. SIFE is a US headquarters international initiative, 45 UK universities take part at present, including **University of Oxford, University of Cambridge, University of Edinburgh and Swansea University** (see: <http://www.sife.org/OurNetwork/Pages/Universities.aspx> for full list).

⁷² http://www.mun.ca/cdel/career_students/GTEP.php

⁷³ <http://www.unisa.edu.au/pace/projects/studentemployabilityskills.asp>

⁷⁴ <http://www.sife.org/Pages/default.aspx>

CASE STUDY: Virtual Enterprise Programme, Turku University of Applied Sciences, Finland⁷⁵

The Turku University of Applied Sciences offers education focused on working life, entrepreneurship, research and development services and organisation development. It has 9000 students and 750 staff and is the second largest polytechnic in Finland. It offers its students a 'virtual enterprise' programme which enables them to learn all the social, professional and technological skills necessary to set up and run a business.

What do they do and how?

A practice business or enterprise is set up which simulates the work of real business. Other practice firms are also set up and they trade with each other, following commercial business procedures and taking account of the economic environment.

Students run the businesses, working in teams and learning from each other, using IT to solve everyday business problems, thinking creatively and putting into practice communication skills.

What is innovative or interesting?

The programme runs over 28 weeks. In the autumn, 2 weeks are spent on familiarisation, 7 weeks on setting up the business and 6 weeks creating a 'virtual context' or market. In the following spring, there are 8 weeks of trading including attending trade fairs, 4 weeks to review and expand the business and finally 3 weeks to complete trading and close the accounts.

Students learn practical skills in setting up and running a company. They learn to tolerate uncertainty and solve problems, to work in teams and be proactive, to exercise curiosity and critical thinking, to handle dissimilar behaviours, to be creative and self-manage, and to develop an entrepreneurial attitude.

Overall, the skills gained are collectively termed employability skills and cover social, professional and technical skills.

What can the UK learn?

The concept of students learning employability through running virtual businesses has a pedigree in the UK that originates with CRAC's⁷⁶ Insight Into Management events that began over forty years ago and which have been adopted and adapted by a number of UK universities including Durham and Loughborough. Those events

⁷⁵ The case is derived from the Strazdiene and Heikkiniemi OECD presentation by Sami Hiekkiniemi, a senior adviser at Tekes, the principal public funding body for Finnish research, development and innovation.

⁷⁶ <http://crac.org.uk/418/Higher-Education.html>

CASE STUDY: Virtual Enterprise Programme, Turku University of Applied Sciences, Finland⁷⁵

took place over a few days in total. The Turku programme, in running for 6 months and more, in addition to skills development, provides opportunity for reflection and sustainable personal growth.

Comparison of a different kind may also be made with Liverpool John Moores University's World of Work⁷⁷ which, with its Graduate Skills Certificate, aims to help all students develop professional and business ethics, entrepreneurship and negotiation skills. Given such disparate approaches to developing employability, it may be of value to explore further their impact on student development.

3.10. Employer engagement in the curriculum

A number of factors may lie behind the extent and nature of employer engagement in the curriculum. An example might be the wish of leading industrial companies in sectors such as the built environment to partner with universities so that the content of the subjects being taught mirror industry's evolving needs under the influence of market forces and technological developments. In some professions, the role of professional bodies may be significant in how the content of course programmes is designed and delivered. This report indicates an important area for more detailed examination as work integrated learning and work related learning in many subject areas is of growing and crucial importance.

At the **Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology**, Australia, the Advanced Diploma of Fashion and Textiles Merchandising⁷⁸ develops students' skills and knowledge to prepare them for work in the fast paced fashion and textiles industry. Learning is fostered through industry based projects and work placements. Students have exposure to industry guest speakers and feedback from industry on specific projects. They are able to volunteer at various fashion events and undertake structured work experience. The culminations of these experiences produces work ready graduates and they can obtain jobs in fashion buying, product development, event management, merchandise management, visual merchandising and store presentation.

An example of one industry based project is the Young Essentials Project (YEP)⁷⁹ which was originally developed by RMIT and Jockey Australia in 1998 to complement the two

⁷⁷ http://www.studygroup.com/isc/ljmu/world_of_work.aspx

⁷⁸

<http://www.rmit.edu.au/browse;ID=4e5ybu8l1cgh;STATUS=A?QRY=advanced%20diploma%20fashion%20merchandising&STYPE=ENTIRE>

⁷⁹

<http://www.rmit.edu.au/browse;ID=0oh2tfqzm3sy;STATUS=A?QRY=young%20essentials%20&STYPE=ENTIRE>

year Product Development and Merchandising Diploma. YEP is based on close integration and communication between industry and educational partners so that a focused and relevant education can be provided with substantial commercial and academic benefits. At the end of the project, students are given the opportunity to present and promote their final ranges to the General Managers of fashion stores.

What can the UK learn?

This example from Australia serves to underline the strength of this approach, examples of which can also be found working similarly well in the UK. The **University of Westminster** Fashion Merchandising Management⁸⁰ degree follows a similar pattern. Academic staff on this course have usually had recent success in business themselves and retail businesses provide current staff as lecturers as well as offer work placements and industry projects. This demonstrates that such integrated links with industry suit highly vocational courses. Students on these programmes tend to understand readily the value of work placements and work related learning both in complementing academic study and in making contacts with prospective future employers.

Across the board, many factors affect employer motivation to be involved with curriculum matters including anticipated skills shortages, regulatory frameworks and the influence of professional bodies (e.g. medicine, law, finance) and high and low entry barriers into different occupations. The nature of typical employment varies in particular sectors with more and more graduates finding themselves working freelance or in small companies: this also influences the kind of engagement employers may have with a curriculum.

3.11. Final thoughts

It is clear from the desk research that graduate employability is of major importance to many in higher education in a wide range of countries. In some instances graduate employment market conditions and government influence play their part. Many universities show a keen awareness of the need to position themselves as institutions that offer quality higher education which includes the development of graduates' employability.

If there were just a few aspects to focus on for consideration in the UK as a result of this desk research, the following may be worth further examination:

- The place of self-efficacy in how students prepare for work and future effectiveness: the longitudinal study in Finland on the impact of student self-esteem on future career success⁸¹ chimes with the widespread interest in UK education and employment circles in emotional intelligence and its impact on performance at work. Linking this with support for student self-management in developing their

⁸⁰ <http://www.westminster.ac.uk/schools/media/fashion/ba-fashion-merchandise-management>

⁸¹ Salmela-Aro, K. & Nurmi, J.-E; Self-esteem during university studies predict career 10 years later. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 70, 463-477; (2007)

employability may open up opportunities for BIS and universities to promote beneficial policies at possibly low cost.

- The impact of government policy and intervention on how universities respond to the employability agenda: examples from Canada, Australia, Estonia and elsewhere suggest that leadership from government coupled with highly targeted practical support makes a real difference.
- Work related learning: the example of work integrated learning through co-operative education at **Drexel University** in the USA (p.51) and the examples of work related learning at **Aalto University**, Finland (p.34) and **Macquarie University**, Australia (p.45), suggest that leading, innovative practice in this area is not confined to the UK and that in fact some urgent attention may need to be paid to ensure as many UK universities as possible are at least as innovative and effective.

4. Phase Two: Primary Research

Profile of Respondents

In total the online survey received 414 responses from a number of countries, through a range of networks as outlined in the methodology section. Figure 1 shows the survey response by country in which the responding institution was based.

Figure 1: In which country is your HE Institution located?⁸² (Base= 414)

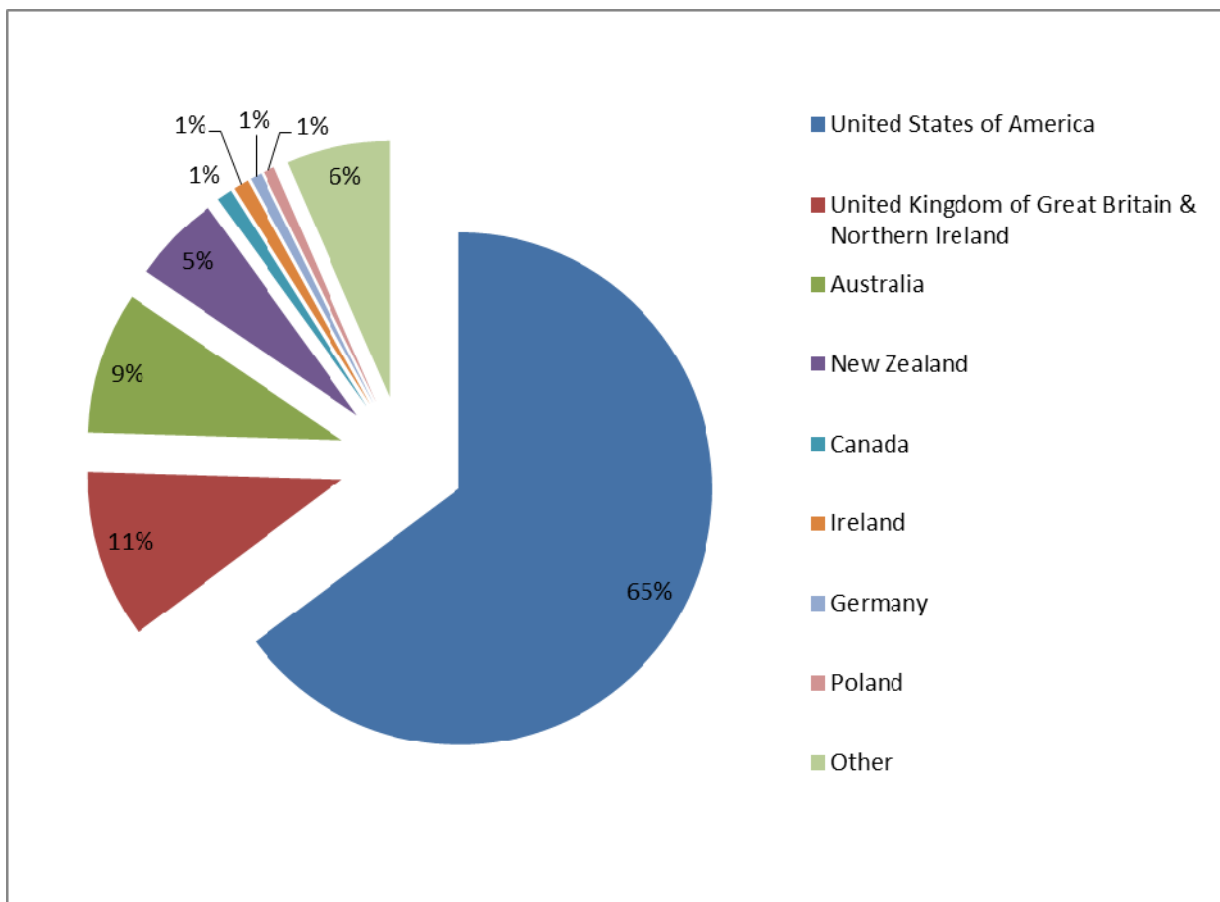


Table 1 (overleaf) shows estimated number of HEIs in each respondent country, compared to the total number of responses received from those countries.⁸³ This table only shows countries where more than 4 responses were received from that country; responses were received from another 11 countries.

⁸² Full list of respondents countries can be found in Appendix 3

⁸³ UNESCO; Global Education Digest 2009; UNESCO (2009)

Table 1: Estimation of the number of HEIs in top countries who responded to the survey

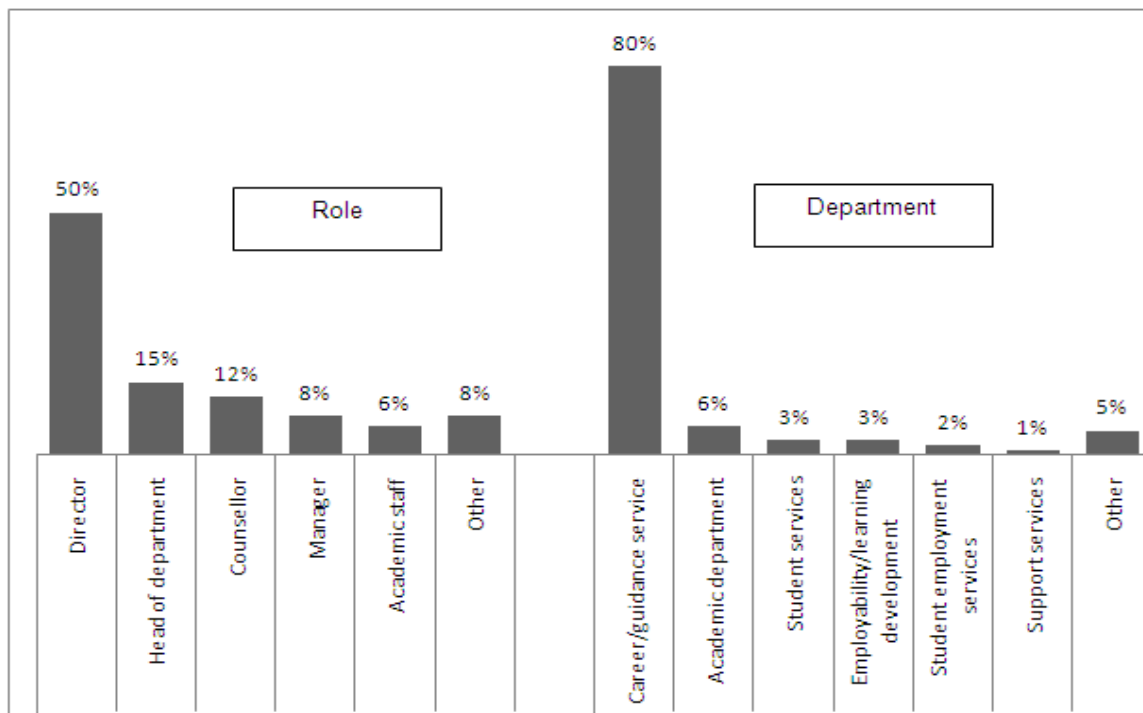
Country	Number of responses to online survey	Estimated number of institutions in country
USA	267	5,758
UK	44	165 ⁸⁴
Australia	37	39 Universities Over 1,000 vocational institutes
New Zealand	23	8 Universities 23 Institutes of Technology or Polytechnics
Canada	4	83 Universities
Ireland	4	38

4.1 Nature of HE staff involvement in employability support

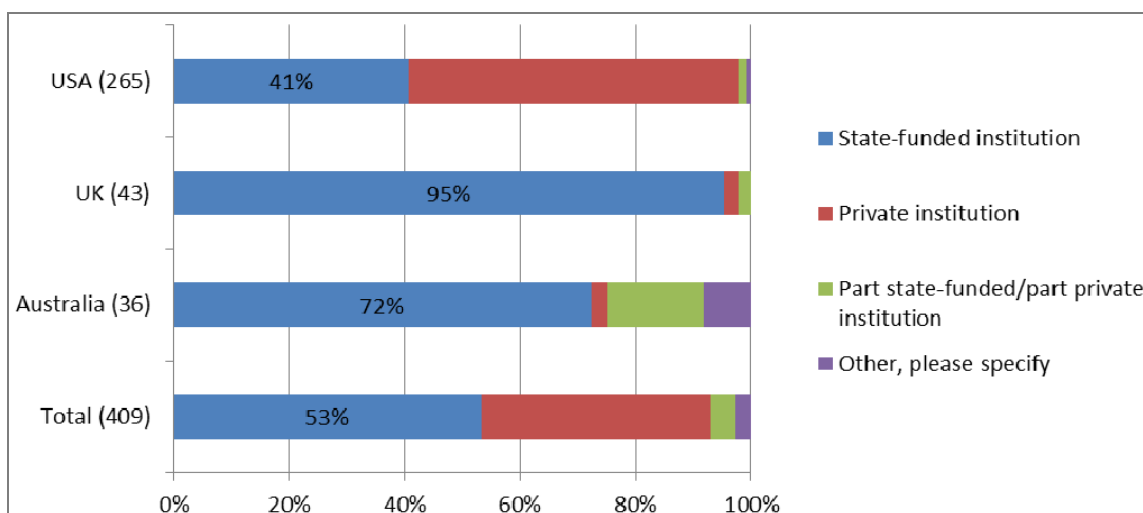
A key theme for the study was to investigate the involvement of HE staff in the provision of employability support for students (and graduates). The majority of respondents described themselves as working in managerial roles for careers/guidance service departments.

⁸⁴Number of HE institutions as at August 2010, from UUK:

<http://www.universitiesuk.ac.uk/UKHESector/FAQs/Pages/About-HE-Sector-and-Universities.aspx>. Using the definition of institutions with 'university' title, where federal institutions such as the University of Wales and the University of London are counted as one University, the total is 115.

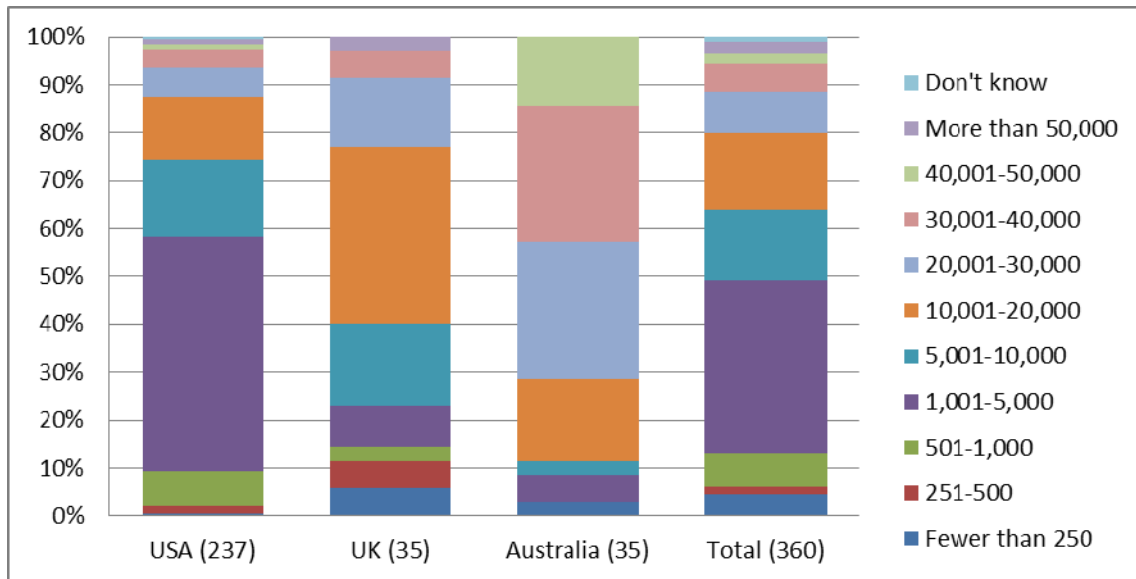
Figure 2: What is your job role and department you work within? (Base= 414)

The structure of higher education overseas varies considerably from that in the UK, which is reflected in the survey responses. For example, respondents in the USA were more likely to be from private institutions (Figure 3) and patterns of attendance, length of programme and entry qualifications, etc. vary substantially.

Figure 3: Definition of education institution (Base= 409)

Similarly, the size of the institution was judged by numbers of undergraduate enrolments. Figure 4 reveals that amongst USA respondents there appears to be a lot of relatively small institutions compared with those in the UK and Australia and the distribution of student numbers varies considerably across the world.

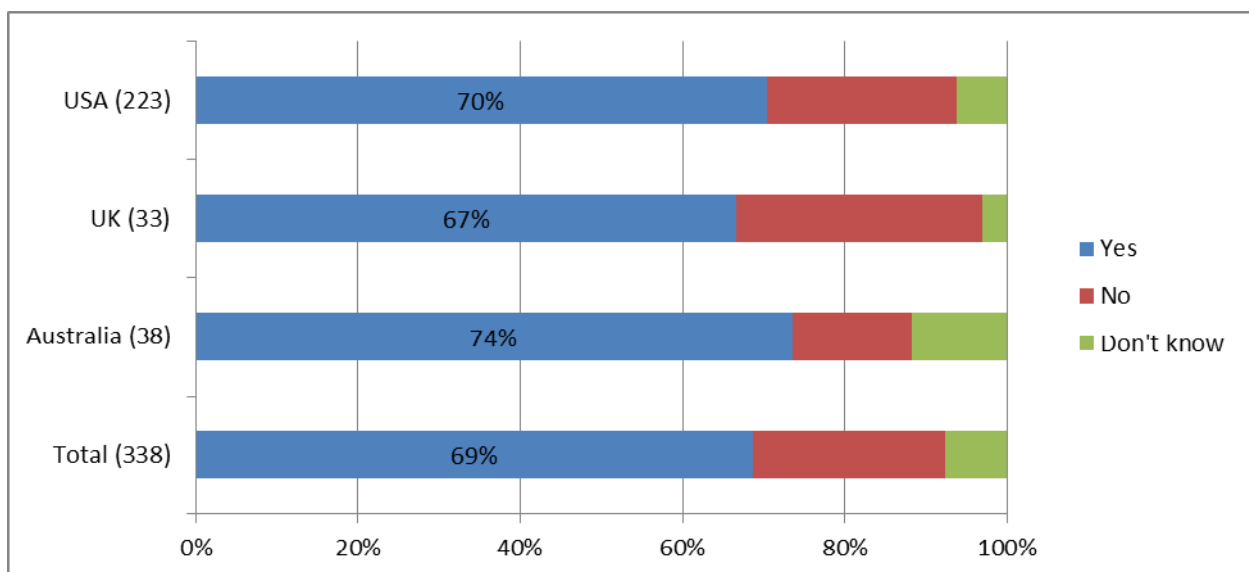
Figure 4: Approximately how many undergraduate students study at the institution? (Base= 360)



4.1.1. Employability strategy

HE staff participation in employability is often the subject of formal or informal strategic documentation; therefore whether institutions have an agreed or publicly known strategy for employability was a key question for the study. The online survey included a question to find out whether a strategy existed and questions to explore the nature of the strategy including the institutional ‘positioning’ of the strategy. Overall 69% of respondents confirmed a strategy was in place (Figure 5)

Figure 5: Does your education institution have a strategy in place for enhancing student/graduate employability? By country (Base= 338)

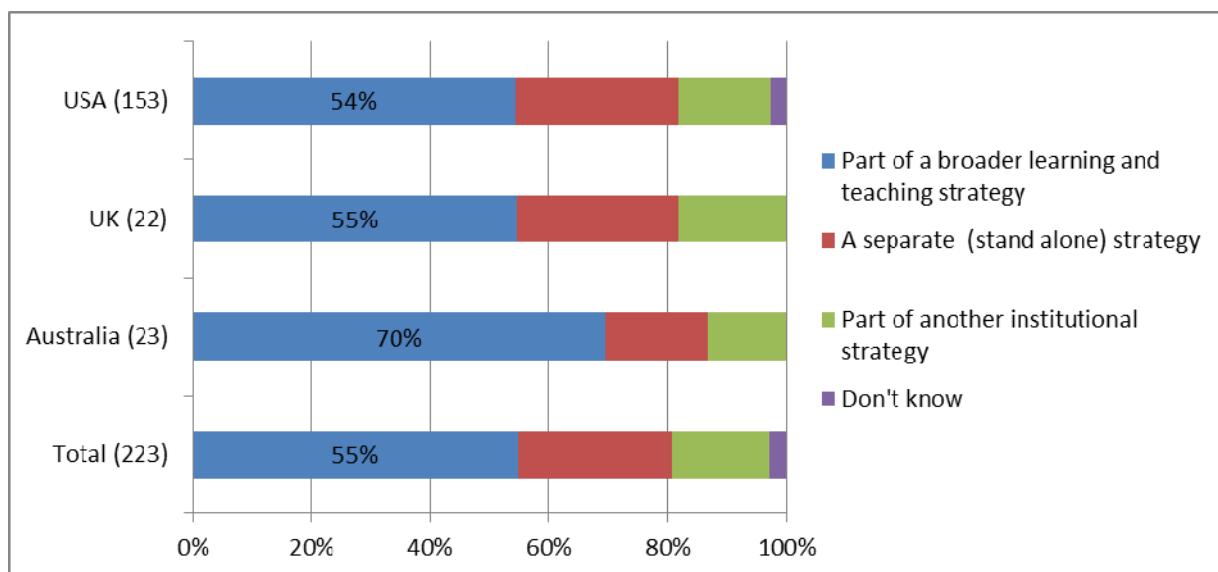


Employability strategies were generally in place across the key areas of the UK, USA and Australia, with only a small difference between the UK (67%), USA (70%) and Australia

(74%). The results demonstrate that, for the majority of institutions responding, there is a specific employability strategy in place and staff are aware of its existence. This is not surprising given that the majority of respondents are in careers advisory roles.

Approximately half of those institutions with a strategy (55%) indicated that it was part of a broader teaching and learning strategy, around one quarter (26%) indicated it was a separate 'stand-alone' strategy and 17% indicated that it was part of another institutional strategy (Figure 6).

Figure 6: Where does the employability skills strategy sit? By country (Base = 223)



Other responses indicated that employability may be a 'stand-alone' strategy. A 'stand-alone' strategy suggests the potential for higher visibility amongst institutional priorities; conversely this may imply that employability is for many a 'taken-for-granted' in higher education. The telephone interview stage also supported the point from the previous paragraphs - that where employability strategies exist, they are part of a broader strategy within the institution.

The desk research discussed HEIs approaches and stance on employability strategies. It is clear that for the USA, Australia and to some extent Canada an importance is placed upon the employability strategy. However there are a number of countries that do not have strategies in place (or indeed value them as an important part of developing employability). For countries such as France and Germany (section 3.4), the desk research discussed how there were some guidelines about what career advisory services should be doing, it was evident that there are few clearly set out and monitored strategies in place.

The employability strategy emerged as an important point for many respondents. Both survey and telephone interview respondents provided information about what their strategies involved, highlighting both the variety of approaches and a willingness to share existing practice.

Curtin University (Australia) discussed their approach which is included below. This demonstrates an interesting move by the institution to change where employability development is centred.

CASE STUDY: Australian Blueprint for Career Development, Curtin University⁸⁵, Australia

Note from a telephone interview

The University has adopted a strategy to integrate career development learning into the curriculum with a 'careers in the curriculum objective' to be achieved within the next 3-5 years. Currently the University delivers approximately 40% of the career development learning outcomes through the curriculum; the other 60% is delivered by the Careers Service and other extracurricular activities. The objective is to reverse this and move to 60% delivered within the curriculum and 40% delivered elsewhere. Delivery of the strategy is shared across the university with the Careers Service responsible for leadership of the strategy and offering of practical advice and support to faculties on how to integrate career development learning into the curriculum. The University has adopted the ABCD framework⁸⁶ (Australian Blueprint for Career Development)⁸⁷ as a mechanism for integrating career development learning into the curriculum (cradle to grave approach). The University is currently using its curriculum mapping tool to see where the 11 competences which are outlined in the ABCD are reflected. The Careers Service is then offering advice on how to practically integrate the full 11 into the curriculum.

The use of this particular framework was mentioned frequently by Australian respondents as the approach used to align strategies.

Apart from the ABCD approach, other universities within Australia have unique approaches to designing and implementing employability strategies. One such university has a set of statements within the main institutional strategy called 'The Blueprint'. This consists of four operational plans, of which one of the key statements refers to the outstanding learning environment and programmes which lead to excellent outcomes for graduates that will enable them to work and develop in the wider world.

The approach from the USA and Australia for placing employability strategies at the heart of teaching and learning strategies is further supported by research recently completed at

⁸⁵ <http://careers.curtin.edu.au/>

⁸⁶ <http://www.blueprint.edu.au/index.php>

⁸⁷ It should be noted that the ABCD approach referred to in the above example was according to staff at Australian HEIs designed for high school students and that there is some work to be done in order to make it fully suitable for HEIs.

Goteborg University in Sweden, as discussed in the desk research chapter (section 3.1).⁸⁸

What can the UK learn?

The data from the survey and associated information gathered from the desk research about Australia (section 3.4.) demonstrates that strategy and its focus is a fundamental part of Australian institutions' approach to developing employability within its graduates, in particular preparing their students for the 'global market'. This approach should be reviewed by UK HEIs in comparison to their own approach to employability and strategies. The USA also showed a strong focus upon the use of employability strategies (and their position) as part of the broader learning strategies of the institution.

Most institutions provide for student employability within a strategic plan. The UK should continue to place employability as an integral part of learning and teaching strategies.

Provision of employability support to students and graduates (and successful employment outcomes) is important in meeting the aims and objectives of the institution. There should be a minimum standard of employability support that all institutions sign up to.

4.1.2. Definition of employability

The definition of employability varied greatly across countries and in some cases within the institution. In order to obtain the best understanding of the meaning of employability to institutions, this was discussed further within the telephone interview stage.

Interestingly, for one respondent from New Zealand, employability includes a set of graduate attributes which is used as a guide and regularly checked to ensure they are still important to employers through a survey. Over time this survey has shown that there is little change in what employers deem as important attributes for employability, with communication, critical thinking and leadership being the key attributes by employers. This set of skills is echoed by the University of Melbourne who stated that there is some confusion about what employability 'is' with many focusing on the hard skills, while employers consider the so-called 'soft' skills to be of greater value.

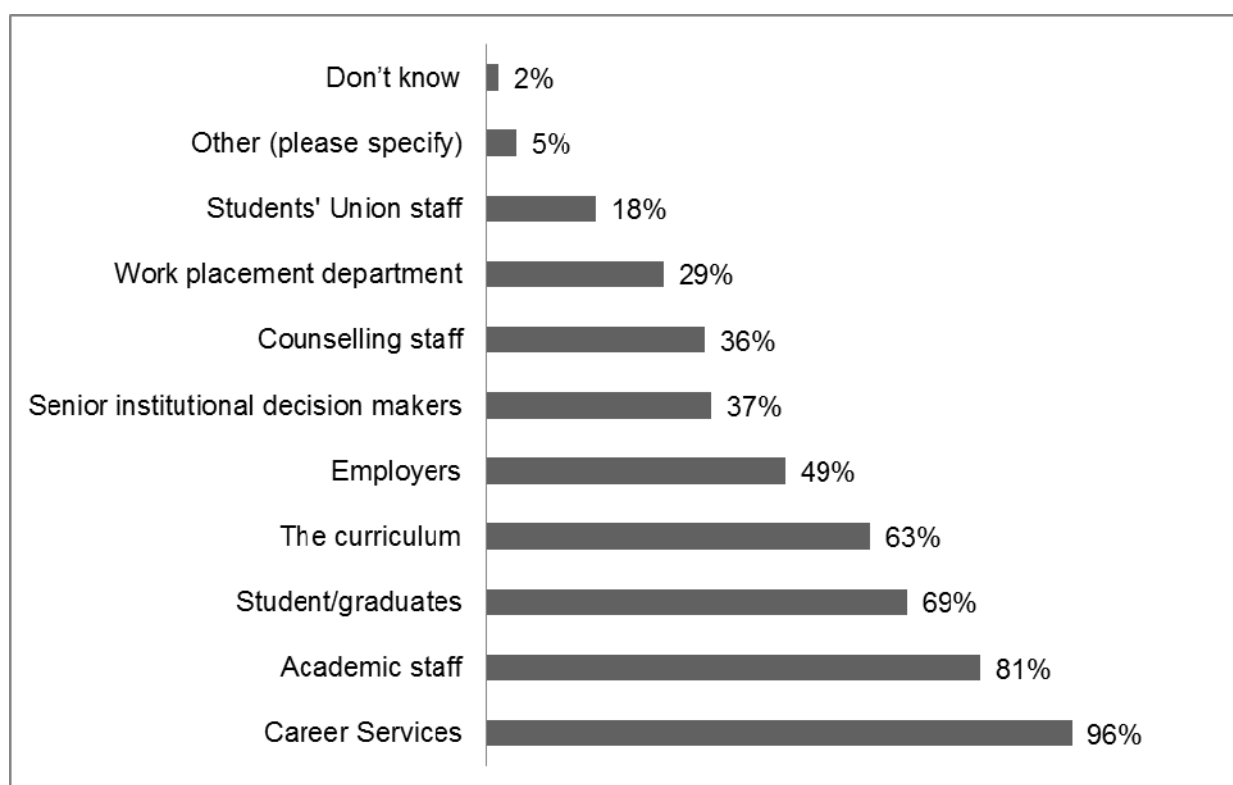
What was clear from this section of questions (which UK HEIs should be aware of), is that 'employability' has many different meanings and can vary over time, especially when the environment in which companies are operating in are vulnerable to rapid change. HEIs need to ensure that their understanding and application of employability remains relevant to the students and employers alike. In order to get a good understanding of what is required, it is the employers that need to help focus this definition.

⁸⁸ Rovio-Johansson, Airi & Tengblad, Stefan; Employability in working life: Graduates' expectations and position after graduation, Gothenburg Research Institute (2007)

4.1.3. Responsibility for employability

Respondents were asked to indicate where the responsibility lies for developing employability in students and graduates. There was a clear perception that responsibility for employability is shared amongst staff groups with career service staff assuming the greatest responsibility overall (96%) and academic staff closely sharing this perception (81%). Interestingly, less than 70% of respondents placed responsibility for developing employability with the students themselves. Around half indicated that it was the responsibility of employers (49%), as shown in Figure 7.

Figure 7: Who is responsible for developing the employability of your students/graduates? Main and Shared Responsibility. All respondents (Base= 322)⁸⁹



Careers advisory staff are in practice still those with the main responsibility for developing employability. Academic staff are considered secondary, some way behind careers services and well ahead of the students/graduates themselves. At 81% this is a substantial number of institutions saying that their academic staffs are responsible for developing employability. This may be a result of the growing strength of employability strategies, particularly when part of the institution learning and teaching strategy.

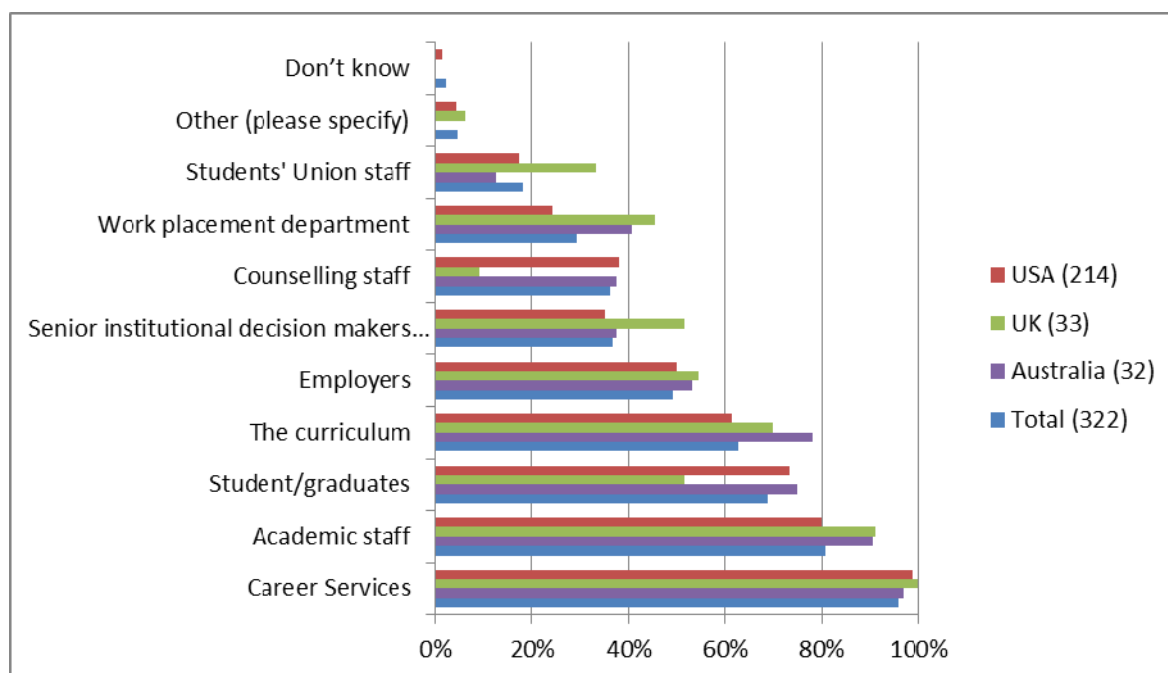
Although responsibility for employability is broadly similar across the globe (Figure 8), the region with the highest proportion of employers being reported as responsible for employability was the UK (55%) and UK respondents also ranked the involvement of senior institutional decision-makers highly. One of the most divergent spread of views

⁸⁹ Responses will not sum 100% as multiple answers could be given to this question

relates to the (self) responsibility of students; here we see in the USA (73%) and Australia (75%) that respondents feel that students/graduates are responsible for developing (their own) employability, and in the UK (52%).

In the context of static or reducing resources and increasing demands on career advisory staff, placing the students at the centre with primary responsibility for developing employability skills and communicating this shift to students, could have important consequences. career advisory staff will be able to perceive their role more in a supportive capacity and less as having a primary responsibility for endowing employability 'skills'. This will lessen the pressure on career advisory staff, enabling priority to be placed on the development of initiatives and relationships, rather than on the physical delivery of the skills. These differences could simply be indicative of different views of the place of students as autonomous learners in relation to employability, or could reflect deeper differences in relation to understandings of staff: student responsibilities.

Figure 8: Who is responsible for developing the employability of your students/graduates? By country (Base= 322)



UK respondents placed responsibility (either main or shared) overwhelmingly with careers advisory staff (100%) and academic staff (91%) as seen in Figure 8. This demonstrates how UK HEIs are already working in such a way that acknowledges this allocation of responsibility. Whilst this view and approach by the UK mirrors that of institutions across other parts of the world, it is useful for UK HEIs to consider examples of how other global institutions are working with academics and faculties to develop these skills.

When responses to the question of responsibility for employability are separated into 'main' and 'shared' responsibility it can be seen (Table 2) that, whilst the careers services most frequently bears the main responsibility, this is shared by academic staff and 'the curriculum' in a great many cases.

Table 2: Who is responsible for developing the employability of your students/graduates? All respondents (Base=322)

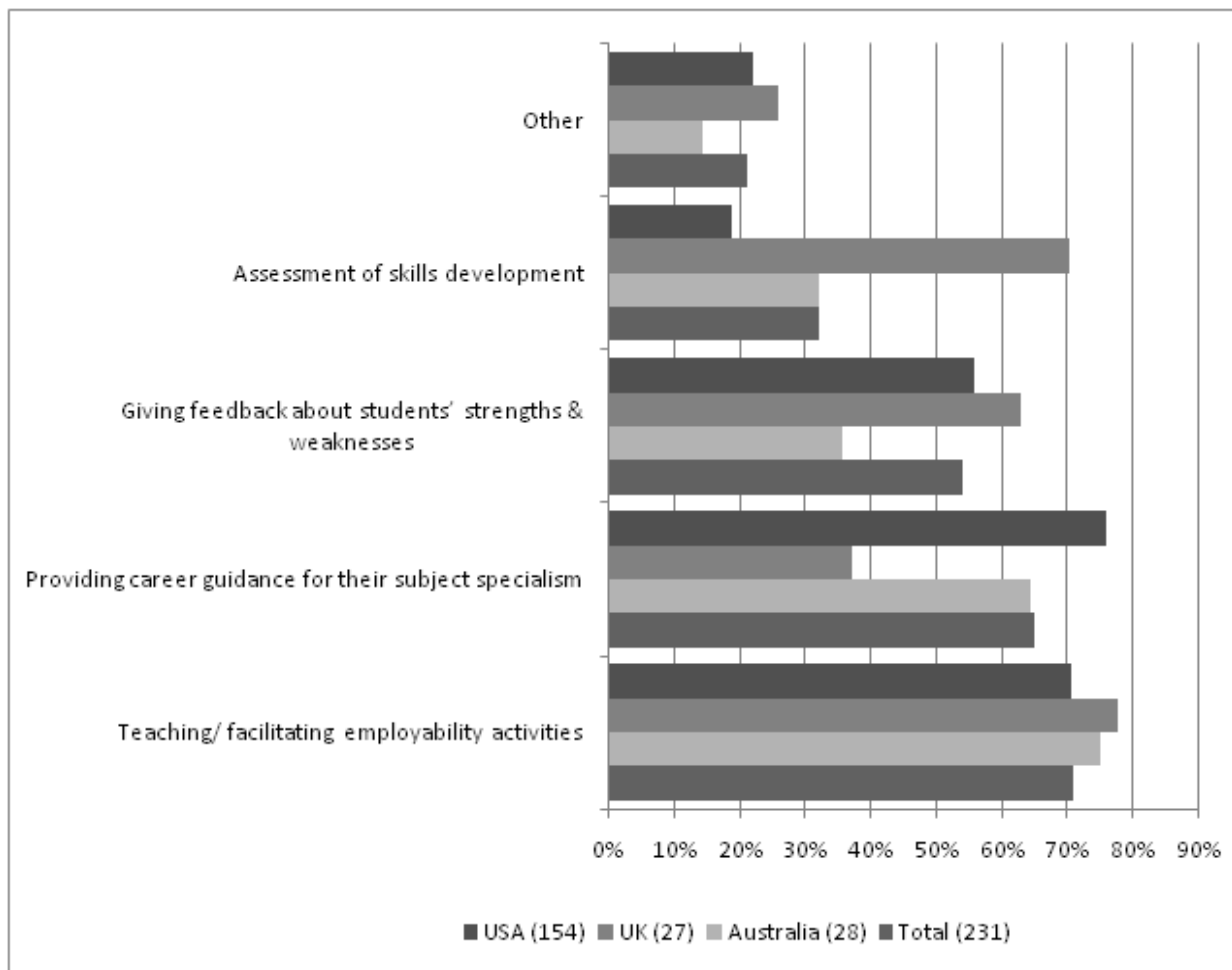
	Main responsibility	Shared responsibility	Total respondents
Career Services	52%	42%	96%
Academic staff	11%	69%	81%
Employers	4%	46%	49%
Students/graduates	26%	42%	69%
The curriculum	12%	50%	63%
Senior institutional decision-makers	6%	31%	37%
Counselling staff	4%	31%	36%
Work placement dept	8%	21%	29%
Student union staff	0%	18%	18%
Other	1%	4%	5%
Don't know	1%	1%	2%

Academic staff and the curriculum have been listed as separate areas of responsibility to acknowledge the wider scope of influence that academic staff may have on developing employability outside of the curriculum. This influence may include personal tuition and support to a student about career paths and employment.

81% of respondents overall indicated that academic staff are involved in the delivery of employability activities. The greatest involvement of academic staff appears to be in the UK and Australia, while the nature of academic staff involvement (Figure 9) reveals some interesting differences by country. It appears that academic staff in the UK are more likely to get involved in the assessment of skills development and in the USA on providing career guidance for their subject specialism. As might be expected, in all regions academic staff are reported to be involved in teaching/facilitating employability learning.

These findings appear to indicate that academic staff are increasingly accepting responsibility for employability in practical ways and these findings could, over time, impact upon perceptions of what comprises an academic (teaching) role within higher education.

Figure 9: How do academic staff get involved in the delivery of employability activities? By Country (Base= 231)



Respondents who participated in a telephone interview were asked to discuss further their thoughts about who is responsible for the development of employability, especially in their institution. Some interesting insights emerged into how a perception of who is responsible translates into practice.

The examples below from **Victoria University Wellington** (New Zealand) and **Deakin University** (Australia) demonstrate how this assigning of responsibility translates into reality.

Victoria University Wellington⁹⁰ when asked about responsibility for employability picked up on a common theme that emerged from this research. "...with no single person taking responsibility for delivery. However there is a growing recognition of the importance of enhancing employability and linking the graduate attributes to this area." The emergence of accreditation for skills gained through courses was mentioned as being a reason why

⁹⁰ <http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/>

more faculties are becoming more involved and engaged in developing employability. “There is also a move to ask faculties in their annual plans how they are developing and delivering graduate attributes which helps with the employability agenda”

Deakin University⁹¹ career advisory staff take the stance that they are there to support and advise academic staff on how to integrate career planning skills into the curriculum. The guide is based around the AGCAS Careers Education Benchmark Statement⁹². In order to support the academic staff, the careers services have 1.5 members of staff in the department to assist academic departments make changes in line with the guide. There are also a number of interactive tools which are available to help academic staff engage in employability within the curriculum. The careers staff have engaged with a number of academic champions through this process. These champions are being used as a way to help assist the implementation of career planning into the curriculum. These champions have then allowed the careers service to free up some resource to focus on other areas.

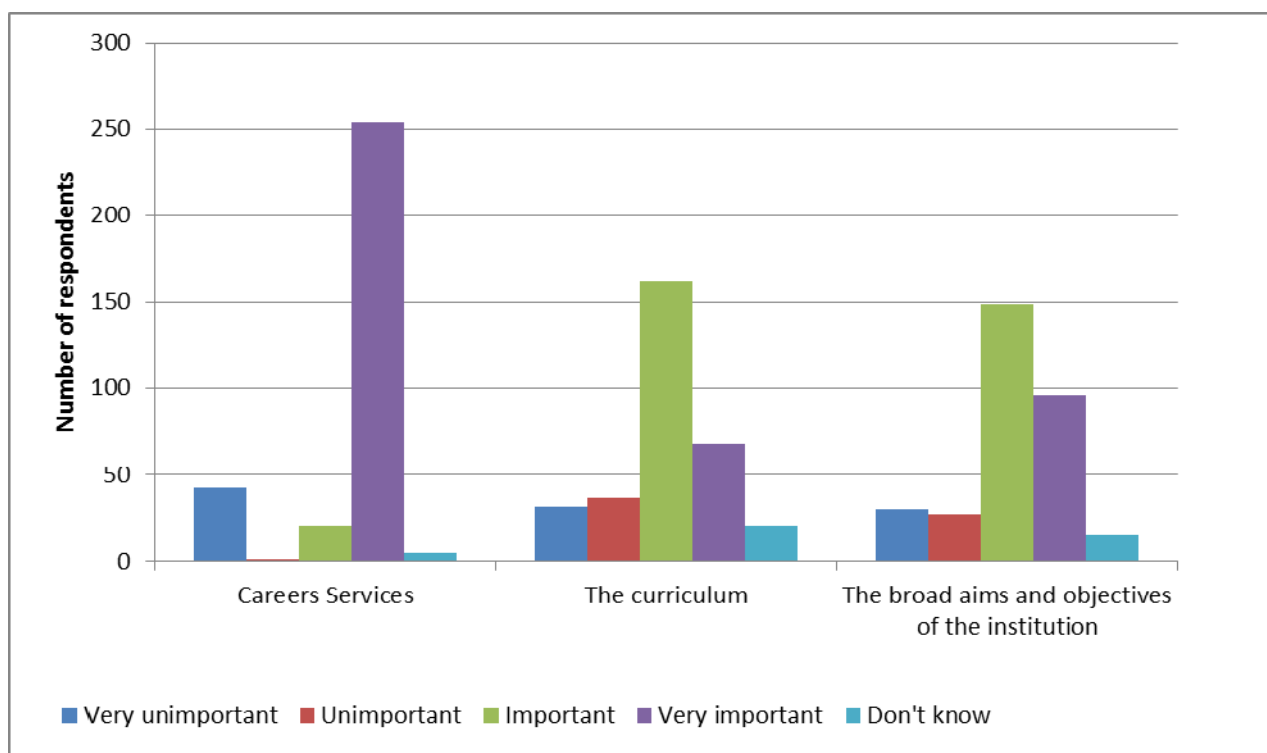
The concept of academic champions for developing employability is an interesting idea which many UK HEIs may also be doing without realising it/formalising the idea or could look to develop. Throughout the online survey and telephone interviews, career advisory staff discussed the positive and negative relationships that they have with the academic side of the institution; these relationships can vary greatly from institution to institution and within the institutions themselves. The use of academic champions could quite easily help to solve the problems that some career advisory staff have with engaging academics in employability development within the curriculum. Further work to understand how these academic champions could be utilised and the impact they have upon helping career advisory staff engage with academics to develop employability within the curriculum would provide some useful insight.

This sense of shared responsibility, together with the positioning of employability strategies in many institutions, suggests that the provision of employability support has assumed an enhanced importance within institutional life. Respondents were asked how important this work has become within the work of the careers services, within the curriculum and within the broad aims and objectives of the institution more widely, Figure 10 provides their responses.

⁹¹ <http://www.deakin.edu.au/>

⁹² http://www.agcas.org.uk/agcas_resources/33-Careers-Education-Benchmark-Statement

Figure 10: How important is the development of student/graduate employability within... All respondents (Base=317)



It is clear that employability work is very important to career services but also of central importance within the curriculum and the broader aims of the institution as a whole. Over 270 of respondents indicated the work is 'important' or 'very important' for careers services and around 230 of respondents indicated the work is 'important' or 'very important' for the curriculum. Findings thus confirm the conclusion that employability has moved from a 'marginal' concern of career services, into a more general 'mainstream' concern for institutions as a whole in many parts of the world.

Incorporating employability into the heart of the curriculum has been perceived by some as a difficult change to make; however, in Australia the **University of Melbourne** has in recent years undertaken an institution wide change to bring employability into the curriculum.

CASE STUDY: The Melbourne Model, University of Melbourne, Australia

Note from a telephone interview

The new 'Melbourne Model'⁹³ championed by the current Vice-Chancellor has been a catalyst for change at Melbourne since its introduction in 2008. It has changed the entire structure of the academic model allowing students to undertake a very broad 3 year general degree. The model is similar to both the Bologna and US liberal arts

⁹³ <http://www.futurestudents.unimelb.edu.au/about/melbournemodel.html>

CASE STUDY: The Melbourne Model, University of Melbourne, Australia

degree and consists of six new generation Bachelor degrees, which lead to one of three outcomes: direct entry into the workforce; a Graduate professional degree; or a Research Higher degree.

The model was introduced to:

- Provide flexibility at undergraduate level in order to allow for developing interests and enable more considered choices by students about further study or career options.
- Improve intellectual coherence, research relevance and peer interaction at undergraduate level
- Provide intensive training at graduate level to students with greater maturity and breadth of perspective in order to deliver better personal and professional outcomes
- Strengthen preparation for doctoral research and academic mobility
- Develop graduates with defined educational, aspirational and personal attributes

What do they do and how?

Through this model students can choose from a variety of professional or specialist graduate programmes offering intensive, focused graduate-level experience that promote deep professional learning.

It provides a range of diverse educational pathways for students and allows students to make more timely and informed decisions about career directions. Each student is assisted in their decisions about which pathway through the model they want to take to ensure it is tailored to develop their interests and goals. It aims to provide unprecedented opportunities to enrich studies including: research projects; internships, work experience and volunteering and studying overseas.

What is innovative or interesting?

This new strategy has raised the profile of employability which historically at Melbourne has not featured on the radar especially in terms of embedding work

⁹⁴ The term “capstone” is widely used to describe a course or experience that provides opportunities for a student to apply the knowledge gained throughout their undergraduate degree. This involves integrating graduate capabilities and employability skills, and occurs usually in the final year of an undergraduate degree.

CASE STUDY: The Melbourne Model, University of Melbourne, Australia

integrated learning within the curriculum. The introduction of this model has clearly caused a shift in focus and more people in the academic world are willing to engage and consider the merits of integrating 'capstones'⁹⁴ into their courses. These are designed to draw together the various strands of an undergraduate education and prepare students for life as graduates. This may involve work experience, a research project, input from an industry practitioner or a coursework subject outlining business best practice.

Through the curriculum development the University has recognised that the world their students enter is rapidly changing and graduates need to have applicable knowledge, flexible and adaptable skills.

What can the UK learn?

The Melbourne model ensures that employability is at the heart of the curriculum.

It also places academics at the centre of delivering and developing employability activities to student.

The **University of Melbourne** has approached this by ensuring that the model clearly develops employability skills as well as linking to and developing the pre-determined graduate attributes that the University have set.

This was an institution wide change in approach to degrees which has resulted in employability being placed at the centre of the curriculum. As a result of this institution wide approach, support for the change was not as much of an issue as had it been a change that was directed from the careers services department.

The UK can learn from this as an example of how placing employability within the curriculum and a whole institution approach can be done.

What can the UK learn?

The careers advisory services are the 'traditional' providers of employability support but increasingly academic staff in institutions are playing a pivotal role. The UK can further develop the existing provision of guidance for institutions to help the relationship between academic staff and careers staff (and indeed other departments) in delivering 'employability'.

4.2. Teaching Employability

4.2.1. Hard and soft skills

Respondents to the online survey were asked to affirm provision of a range of employability teaching topics/themes and also to explain how these were provided and to whom. There was a good deal of consensus about the sort of activities that were provided

to develop students' employability. Activities were aimed at developing both 'hard' and 'soft' skills and for the purposes of this report the former is described as:-

- Job searching techniques
- Providing help with job search
- CV writing
- Contacts with employers
- Help with finding and securing work placements/internships
- Careers events and fairs
- Computer skills
- Research skills
- Time management
- Literacy
- Provision of temporary and vacation work

And soft skills are included as:-

- Career identification and planning
- Interview practice
- Understanding of career and how it works
- Communication skills
- Decision-making skills
- Presentation skills
- Team working skills

The separation of hard and soft skills in this way is arbitrary but defensible in relation to the literature on employability which identifies that employers consistently seek⁹⁵ both types of

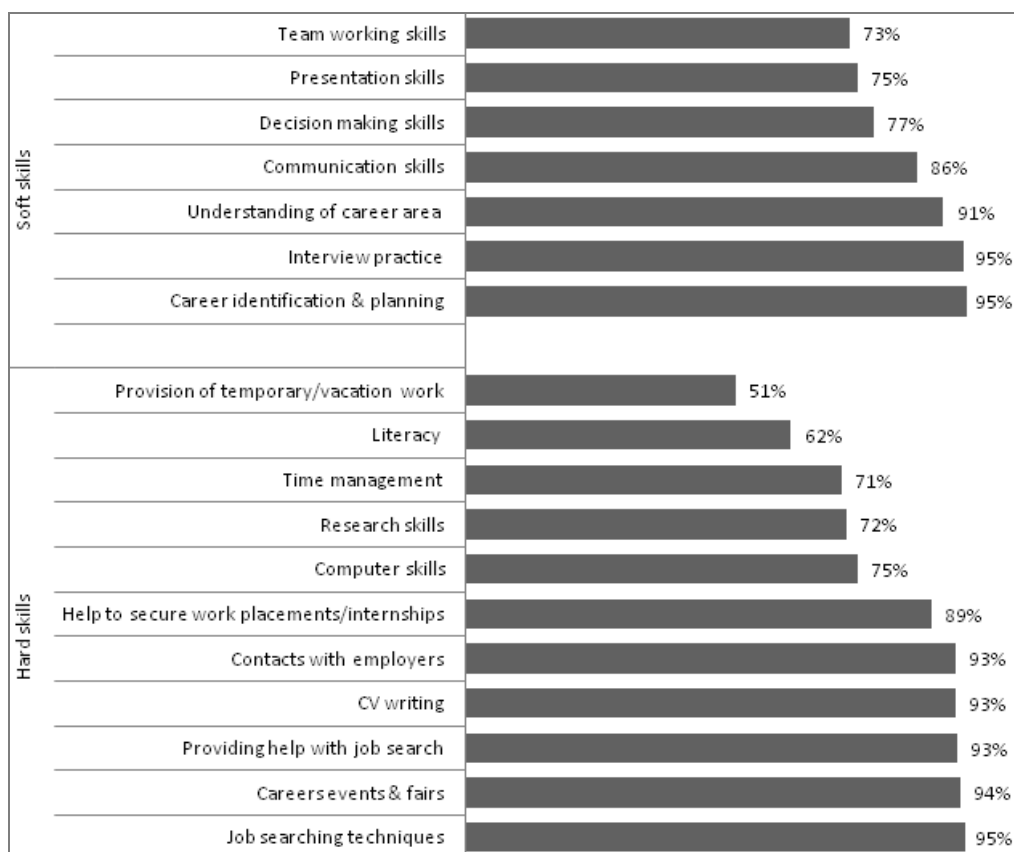
⁹⁵ http://highereducation.cbi.org.uk/media/latest_news/00165/ and [http://ww2.prospects.ac.uk/cms/ShowPage/Home_page/What do graduates do 2008/What do employers want_/p!ebfpppd](http://ww2.prospects.ac.uk/cms/ShowPage/Home_page/What_do_graduates_do_2008/What_do_employers_want_/p!ebfpppd)

skills in graduate employees. One way of separating hard and soft skills is to consider that hard skills are those primarily requiring mastery and practice of a body of knowledge, whereas soft skills require development of largely inter- (and intra-) personal skills. It is recognised that in practice skill areas overlap and the balance of skills required is highly context-dependent both within subject disciplines and occupations aimed for.

The ESECT's⁹⁶ work suggested that pedagogy for employability skills is the same as for other HE subject disciplines, and 'good teaching' for employability includes such themes as ensuring the learning is student-centred, providing constructive feedback and developing autonomous learning. Further that the skills required of an effective student in HE are similar to those required of a graduate employee (working independently, using evidence to inform judgment, communicating appropriately, etc).

4.2.2. Provision of employability activities

Figure 11: Which of these activities are available to students:⁹⁷ All respondents (Base= 314)



⁹⁶ http://www.heacademy.ac.uk/physsci/home/projects/jisc_del/employabilityproject

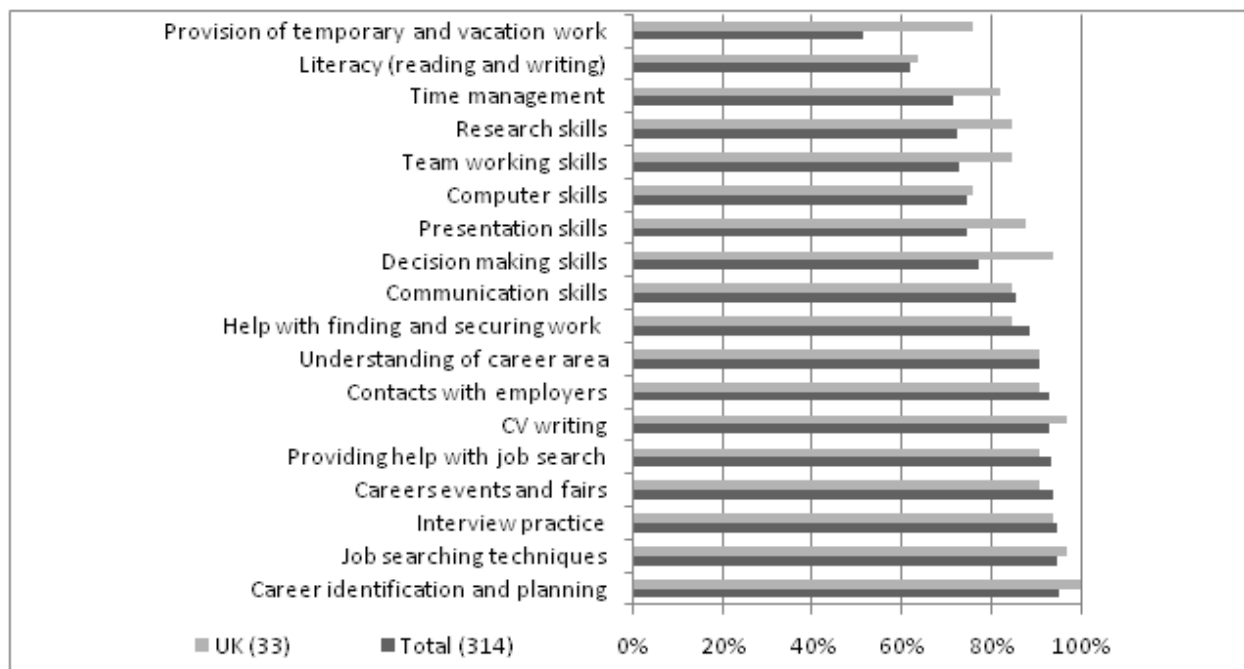
⁹⁷ Note, this question was a multi-choice question, responses will not total 100% as respondents were encouraged to mark as many answers as they wanted

A range of activities are available to students, with the main focus among the soft skills being on the following:

career identification and planning and on interview practice (95% respectively), closely followed by understanding of career area (91%) and communication skills (86%) – although all the soft skills measured are provided by almost three quarters of the respondents

while among the hard skills, the emphasis is on job searching and CV writing. The provision of temporary work and vacation work are the least frequently offered (51%) followed by literacy (62%).

Figure 12: Which of these activities are available to students: UK response against all respondents (Base= 314)



Looking at the results from UK respondents compared to the total, it is clear that there is a greater focus on the certain aspects in UK institutions – provision of temporary and vacation work, time management, research skills, team working skills, presentation skills and decision making skills – and on each of the other activities, UK respondents report the similar level of activity as the total sample.

Universities in the USA also appear to emphasise acquisition of social skills components aimed to prepare students for the social contexts that they (as future employees) might encounter, as the case study overleaf illustrates.

CASE STUDY: Professional Transitions, Bethany College, USA

Note from a telephone interview

What do they do and how?

The Professional Transitions⁹⁸ course was developed to provide students an opportunity to gain an education in lifestyle as well as employment. The College has the belief that for a graduate to be successful they need to be fully rounded to make themselves more attractive to an employer.

The course began as a credited course in the economics department; it is now listed as a course across many departments within the college. It demonstrates the value students place on what it provides as part of the college experience.

The course is comprised of 25 lectures which are delivered over the course of 3 hours a week. The subjects covered in these lectures include:

- Résumé (CV) preparation
- Interviewing
- Banking and finance
- Real estate
- Insurance
- Dinner etiquette
- Wine appreciation

These lectures are delivered by professionals in that subject area.

The course is assessed through the following methods:

- 2 tests= 40% of the total mark
- Assignments= 10% of total

⁹⁸ <http://www.bethanywv.edu/>

CASE STUDY: Professional Transitions, Bethany College, USA

- Classroom work= 25%
- Case study work= 25%
- Extra credit is given for other aspects such as being pro-active and using networks such as LinkedIn

What is innovative or interesting?

This approach to employability is interesting because across the information gathered in this study it is clearly a unique and innovative approach. There is a strong emphasis upon the idea of employability being more than a set of skills and attributes a graduate has, such as team-working and presentation skills. Employability at Bethany College is achieved through ensuring graduates leave the college as rounded individuals who can demonstrate a wide variety of skills and attributes that go further than hard/soft employability skills.

This course sits within most subject areas and is credited towards a student's degree, therefore giving students the ability to choose to add this course to their degree studies. Bethany College are through this course fulfilling (to some extent) their strategy towards developing graduate employability but are placing the responsibility of it being undertaken on the student.

What can the UK learn?

The Professional Transitions course is an example of how the meaning of employability can vary. In this context employability is more than being able to work in a team, presentation skills or IT skills. It's about being a rounded individual who understands the wider world and how various aspects of it operate.

What is interesting for the UK is not only the widening of the definition of what employability is but the use of a credited course to educate students on important aspects of living in the wider world as part of the curriculum. There is an understanding currently that a by-product of going to university in the UK is that a student also learns how to live independently and manage their own lives (including banking, finance, cars, accommodation). This example shows how those learnings can successfully be brought into the curriculum and placed alongside the development of employability skills.

It is also an interesting example of the variety of approaches to enhancing employability, and the different ways in which institutions define 'employability'.

4.2.3. Importance of hard and soft skills

A key question put to respondents was to assess how important these skills are for seeking and keeping employment. Table 3 indicates that the soft skills of career

identification & planning, communication skills and contact with employers are thought to be very important skills for seeking and keeping employment. However, when all skills rated as 'important' and 'very important' are combined it appears that a wider range of both hard and soft skills are considered important. What is different is simply the degree of importance attached to each skill area.

A striking finding here is that there is a great deal of consensus about the importance of 'employability' skills in general but within this broad consensus two skill areas (IT skills and research skills) appear to have attracted fewer ratings as 'very important' and two others (career identification & planning and communication skills) have attracted the greatest number of 'very important' ratings. This finding might be worthy of further discussion in the HE context as research and IT skills are (arguably) academic in nature, whilst the other two skill areas are more often learned interpersonally.

Table 3: How important is each of these skills for seeking or keeping employment?
All respondents (Base= 289)

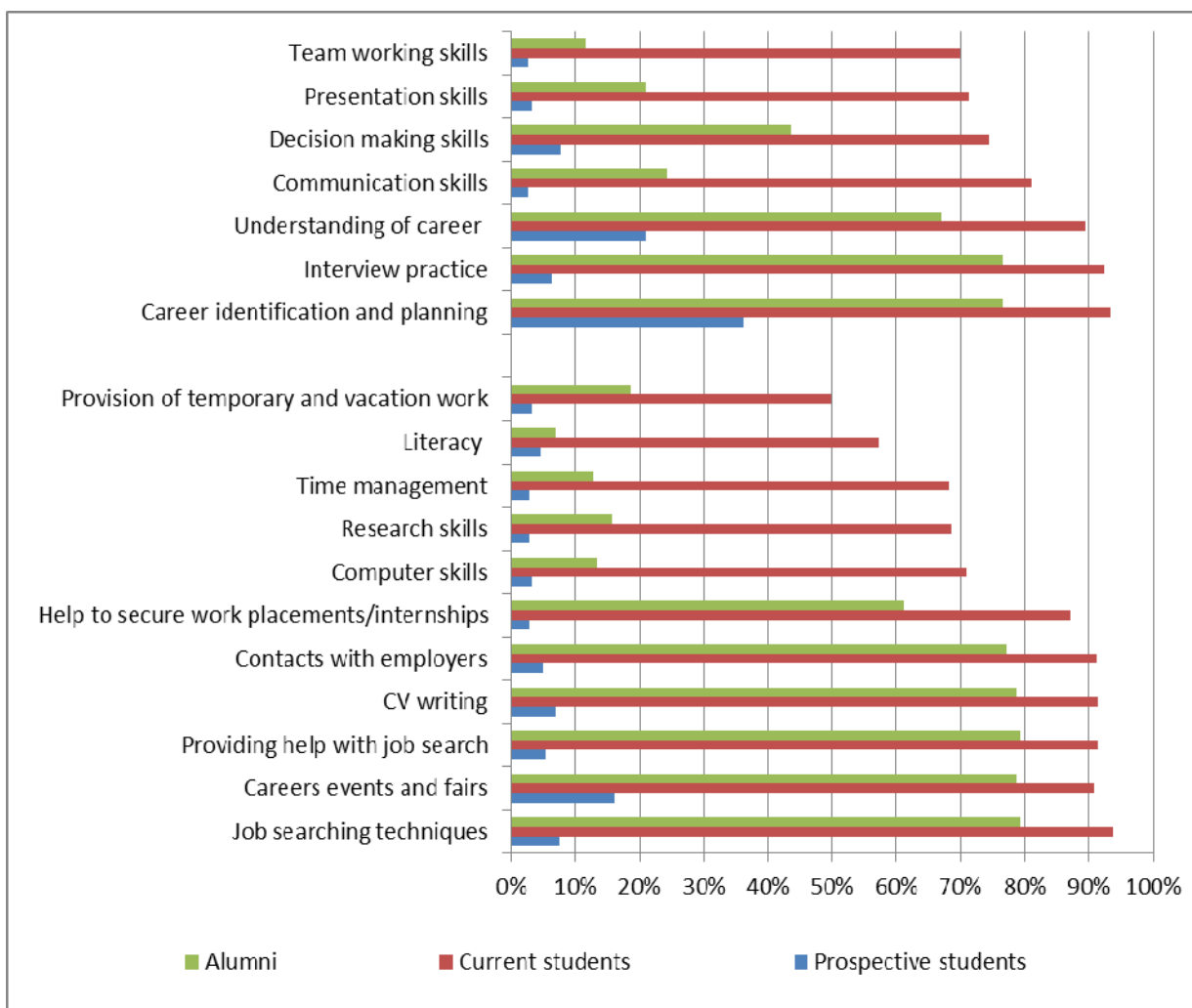
	A Very unimportant	B Unimportant	C Important	D Very important	C + D combined
CV writing	3%	2%	34%	60%	93%
Interview practice	4%	1%	29%	66%	95%
Career identification and planning	4%	0%	24%	71%	95%
Job searching techniques	4%	1%	30%	65%	95%
Contact with employers	5%	0%	27%	68%	95%
Team work	3%	3%	37%	56%	93%
Presentation skills	4%	2%	50%	44%	94%
Communication skills	5%	0%	11%	83%	94%
Literacy	4%	1%	28%	66%	95%
Time management	3%	2%	43%	51%	94%
IT skills	4%	2%	63%	30%	93%
Sector understanding	3%	6%	49%	41%	90%
Research Skills	3%	7%	58%	31%	90%

	A Very unimportant	B Unimportant	C Important	D Very important	C + D combined
Decision making skills	4%	2%	46%	47%	93%

4.2.4. Employability activities across the student journey

With increasing concerns about the funding of HE, both in the UK and elsewhere, the study aimed to find out whether employability activities were targeted at particular groups of students. Perhaps unsurprisingly, Figure 13 indicates that in most institutions the clear majority of activities are available to current students.

Figure 13: Which of the following activities are available to alumni, current or prospective students? All respondents (Base= 306)



Many alumni are supported in their search for employment, what might be less expected is the extent to which institutions are providing employability support to prospective students. Particularly in relation to activities likely to help students clarify career goals - career

identification and planning (mentioned by 36%) and understanding of career area (by 21%).

Prospective students are the group that institutions appear least likely to provide services and support for. This is true across the board with countries such as the US and Australia only showing any provision in the career identification and planning area (36% and 41% respectively). However for the UK (36% for career identification) prospective students seemed able to access a few other services including careers events and fairs (21%). Across all activities there were more UK institutions (compared to other countries) marking activities that were available for prospective students. This may increase further when the initiatives in place from the Government (through HEFCE)⁹⁹ to encourage institutions to make their employability statements more widely available to prospective students are implemented. This initiative does suggest that UK institutions and bodies are realising that employability may become an increasingly important factor in a student's decision about where to study.

There is clear indication that institutions are maintaining contact with alumni for considerable lengths of time. 77% of respondents agreed that graduates would be allowed to access employability activities for ten years or more following graduation. This open-ended commitment to graduates was more prevalent amongst institutions in the USA and in the rest of the world (outside the UK and Australia). It does not appear to be a common practice in the UK, where responses suggest that activities would be available for three years post-graduation.

The practice of maintaining strong alumni links is not only to provide them with career-related support; there is also an expectation that alumni provide access to employers and advice to current students. **Loyola University**, Chicago,¹⁰⁰ discussed their approach to contact with alumni, which is mainly done in order to help employers recruit from this institution. Alumni are contacted and asked if they are willing to volunteer to get involved in activities such as mock interviews, specialised talks, career fairs etc. The Careers Advisory Service have been working directly with the Alumni association and are trying to build up the number of up-to-date contacts they have to approach alumni with regards to how they can help. LinkedIn is used to offer mentoring of students by alumni or a forum for them to ask questions about careers. This is a recent initiative that is 'still finding its feet'.

What can the UK learn?

Employability support is not only provided to current students but also to prospective students during the application process. UK institutions should look more widely at the provision of employability services across the whole student journey, with particular focus on prospective students. Alumni are sometimes able to access career development services indefinitely; in the USA alumni networks make a significant contribution to employability activities at their former institution. Institutions should review their alumni

⁹⁹ <http://www.hefce.ac.uk/news/hefce/2010/qual.htm>

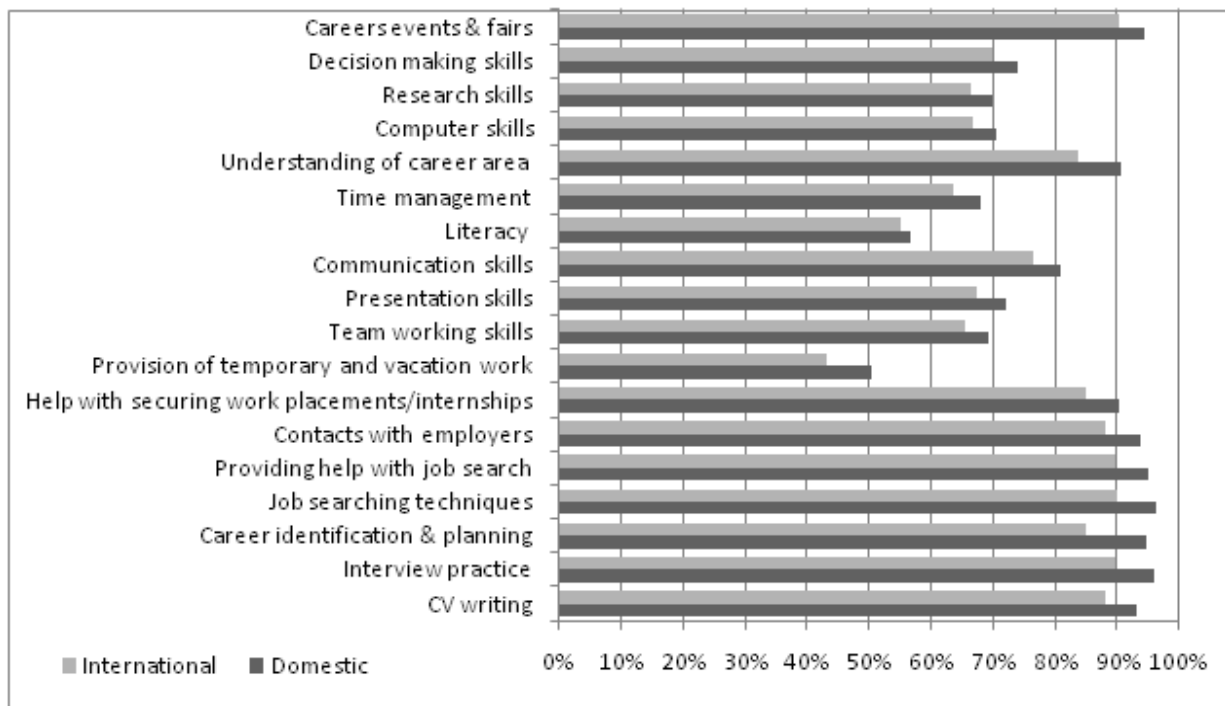
¹⁰⁰ <http://www.luc.edu/>

relations approaches to optimise their subsequent engagement with their HE, through the provision of work placements and possible mentors to current students.

4.2.5. Who uses employability activities?

The take up of employability activities appears to vary on the basis of home domicile. Survey respondents report that employability activities are not taken up by international students as often as they are by home domiciled (domestic) students (Figure 14). Although the differences are small in percentage terms it is consistent across all activities and may be indicative of a general trend. Some activities are more popular with students than others, although even the least used ('provision of temporary and vacation work') was mentioned by a substantial proportion with 51% of domestic students reported to use this aspect of the services available.

Figure 14: Which activities are used by domestic and international students? All respondents (Base= 289)



What is interesting about this chart is that in some respects the evidence here goes against the information that has come out from the desk research and telephone interviews. Careers services across many countries examined in the desk research indicated that international students were far more likely to need and use the careers resources on offer.

As a comparison, 29% of international students responding to the International Student Barometer worldwide said they had used the careers services at their institution, compared

to 24% of domestic students worldwide. In the UK, 33% of international students said they had used the careers service at their institution.¹⁰¹

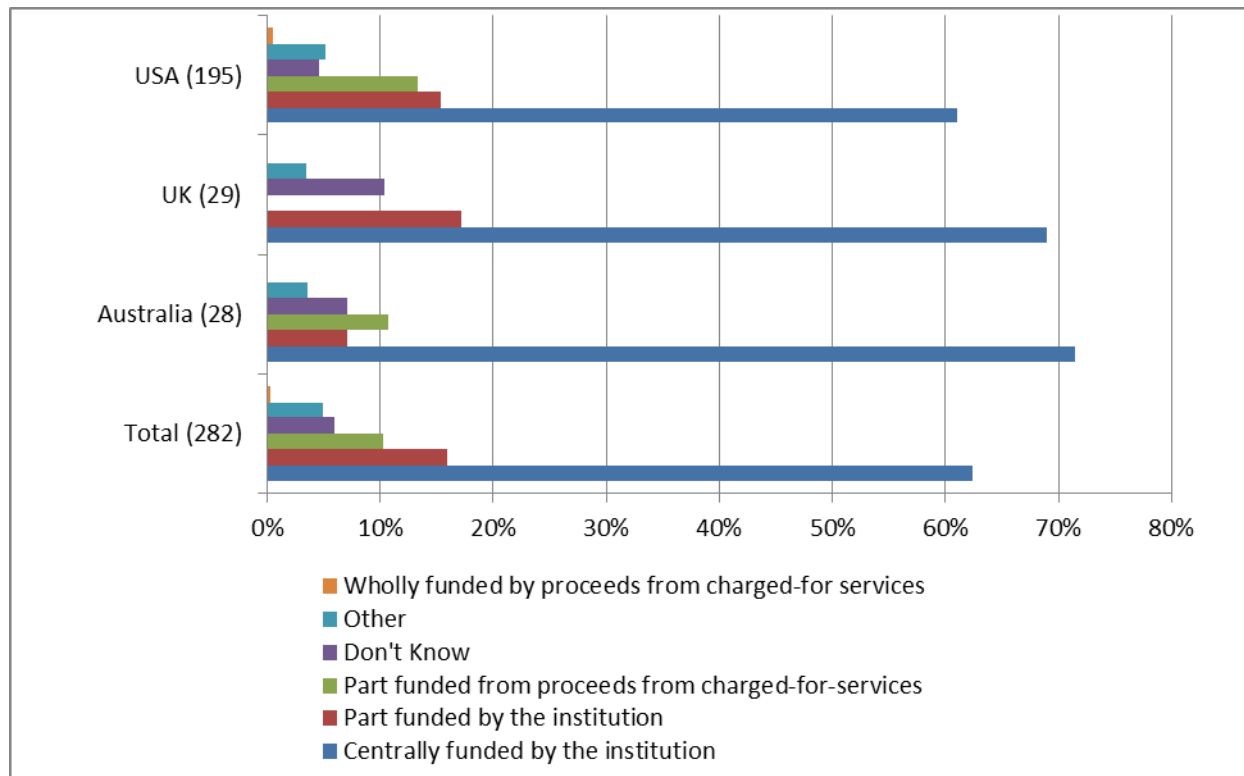
4.2.6. Funding employability activities

There is evidence that some activities (or services) are charged for in a small number of cases. Those that charge a fee may do so for 'career events and fairs' or for 'career identification and planning.' These mean figures mask real differences in the practice of charging fees, where in Australia 71% of those respondents who report that a fee is charged indicate that it is for career events and fairs. However the online survey did not seek explanation of who pays the fee and it is likely that in this case (career events and fairs) that it might be employers who are required to pay to pitch recruitment displays and materials. Indeed, in those activities more closely associated with the student experience of HE (i.e. hard and soft skills development), respondents were far less likely to indicate a charge (i.e. 11% for CV writing was the highest). Thus it can be concluded that the practice of charging fees is not widespread.

95% of survey responses overall indicated that employability activities are not contracted out to third parties; of the very small number that were contracted out, interview practice, communication skills, job searching techniques and help with finding and securing work placements/internships were the most common.

Over 60% of respondents indicated that employability activities are funded centrally by their institutions. A substantial minority of employability is described as part-funded by the institution with a proportion being derived from charged-for services. The only incidence of employability activities being wholly funded from charged-for services was reported in one institution in the USA (details of what this was for were not collected)

¹⁰¹ Data taken from the Summer 2010 wave of the International Student Barometer (ISB) study by i-Graduate. As part of this study, 65 UK and European HEI's took part in the Summer 2010 ISB, totalling 43,905 responses from International Students. 19 UK and European HEI's took part in the Summer 2010 Domestic Student Barometer (SB), totalling 25,512 responses from domestic students.

Figure 15: How are your employability activities funded? By Country (Base= 282)

However, for those that do make a charge, the sums involved can be considerable. One institution (in the USA) reported that the revenue from careers fairs was around 1 million dollars per annum and this comprises a very large proportion of the budget for the careers service at that institution.

There was a preconception partly from the desk research that more USA institutions charged students for CAS, however, the telephone interviews only found a couple of examples of this. Fort Lewis College does charge students a small (compulsory) fee which is passed to the CAS and provides the department's operating budget. Part of this operating budget is then used to fund employability activities.

They have recently begun to charge alumni for using the CAS although they are keen to keep access to these services open as it helps to forge potentially fruitful relationships such as internship opportunities for the current students.

Another US institution briefly mentioned that they charge students for tests such as the Myers Briggs tests (a psychometric test assessing personality types), for which the department has no budget. This respondent felt charging for these sorts of tests was acceptable as the student was likely to take them more seriously and benefit further as a result, compared to if they were free services.

4.2.7. Demand vs. Funding

Respondents were asked to indicate how likely it is that resources for employability support within their institution would increase in the future- more respondents felt it unlikely that resources would increase. This view is uncomfortably juxtaposed by the expectations

of nearly nine out of ten respondents' that student demand for employability services/activities is likely to increase over the next five years. The reasons for an expectation of increased demand varied between regions, although there was a great deal of consensus about the major issues faced by employability services. The majority of respondents indicated that the economic recession will result in more students/graduates seeking help; this is likely to require policy intervention at institutional level: As a USA respondent stated "The economy has created a highly competitive work environment and this will probably not get dramatically better in the next five years. Academic education in and of itself, will not be enough to secure internships and jobs."

For some respondents there was a feeling that the recession will not affect student behaviour as another US respondent stated "Based on the poor economy and predictions that many jobs will not be replaced, it would seem that our services/activities would increase in demand. However, sometimes the reverse happens in economic downturns with students because (1) they don't want to face the negative prospects and (2) hiring for entry-level positions, which are less costly, can actually increase more rapidly than other positions, making it easier for students and graduates to find employment."

There was also a group of respondents who felt that students were becoming more aware of the importance of employability within HE and it was becoming more embedded within the institution therefore leading to an increase in demand. This was a view held by a respondent from New Zealand "Career literacy and transition skills are becoming more and more important, and more emphasised by central government, which is our main funding source at present."

4.2.8. Availability of academic credit

The availability of academic credit for participation in employability activities can act as a powerful motivator to participation. Academic credit can be achieved via in-course assessment and/or it can be achieved for participation in work placements. The clear majority of respondents indicated that students can gain credit 'sometimes'. Few respondents indicated that employability is a compulsory part of the curriculum. The region indicating the greatest incidence of employability being compulsory was the UK (10%) followed by the USA (8%); thus the majority experience of employability activities was that they are undertaken on a voluntary (or elective) basis.

Table 4: Can students/graduates gain academic credit for their participation in employability activities? (Base= 289)¹⁰²

Can students/graduates gain academic credit for their participation in activities that help to develop their employability?	
Yes always	10%

¹⁰² Note: The 3 options will not add up to 100% as 'don't know' was also an answer option for this set of questions.

Yes sometimes	70%
No	18%
Are work placements/internships awarded credit towards the students' degree/qualification?	
Yes always	12%
Yes sometimes	76%
No	10%
Are employability activities a compulsory part of a student/graduate's higher education experience?	
Yes always	9%
Yes sometimes	53%
No	36%

Some interesting examples came out of the telephone interviews, in particular about how institutions are using accreditation when it comes to employability activities. **Queensland University of Technology** has developed an innovative approach to utilising accreditation.

CASE STUDY: Queensland University of Technology, Australia

Note from a telephone interview

What do they do and how?

The Careers and Employment Service (CES)¹⁰³ have developed a series of online electives which staff can access and use as an add-on to their courses. Not only does this place employability within the curriculum it also provides academics the support they may be seeking in teaching these skills and activities.

The electives follow 3 broad themes with each containing 5x 50 minute modules, the topics covered are:

¹⁰³ <http://www.careers.qut.edu.au/>

CASE STUDY: Queensland University of Technology, Australia

- Transition into university
- Work integrated learning
- Transition out of university

Academics can tailor the electives to a specific subject or course which can either be integrated into a course or used as a stand-alone learning concept.

They can be used as an additional module to gain credit or as a hurdle that a student must complete before being awarded a credit.

To date 12,000-15,000 students have undertaken at least one module with work integrated learning being the most popular

What is innovative or interesting?

By making these electives available online and designed for academics to take away and apply in their own courses/teachings the CES is freeing up some of their resource whilst also potentially having a wider reach on students than if they waited for these students to come in to their office. It also provides information and guidance at a much earlier stage in the student lifecycle.

These electives demonstrate the ability of the careers department to work with academics to deliver a series of courses which teach employability but academics can take on and make their own/integrate into their teaching as they see fit.

What can the UK learn?

The number of students who have completed at least one module demonstrates that there is an appetite for these sorts of courses from students. The accreditation towards the student's degree is clearly an appealing factor.

The key to these modules is their flexibility and the partnership between the careers department and academics. Accredited courses should be designed to provide students with the skills they need and ability to demonstrate them whilst allowing academics to teach these courses within their modules/courses.

This is also a positive example of how a career department can free up some of its resources whilst potentially also accessing more students through the academics.

What can the UK learn?

More widespread accreditation of employability activities could lead to a greater uptake by students. Accreditation provides a tangible way for students to demonstrate to employers

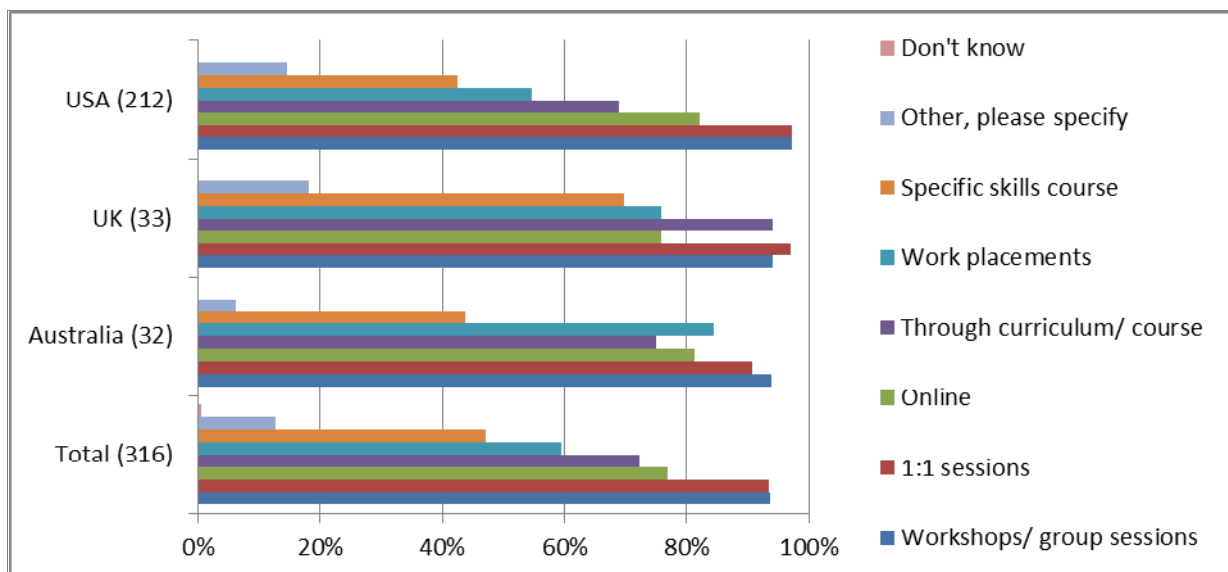
and the wider world the skills that they have acquired. Through making employability activities attractive by accreditation, the careers service are also ensuring that they reach as many students as they can, due to the appeal to students of this approach to employability.

The availability of academic credit for work-related learning varies substantially between countries and institutions within countries. UK institutions should look at accreditation for work-related learning and how it can be developed and promoted across institutions.

4.2.9. Delivery of activities

The predominant delivery methods used were workshops/group sessions and one-to-one individual work with students and graduates. Other methods used extensively included on-line and in-curricula facilities, with work placements and specific skills courses being also prevalent in the UK and Europe. Figure 16 shows the distributions by region and there appears to be a widespread mix of methods suggesting that institutions do not rely on single methods.

Figure 16: Which of the following methods do you use to deliver your employability activities? By Country (Base= 316)



The chart above surprisingly shows that the USA is not likely to use work placements any more than other methods. This may be due to the fact that work placements are often described as being necessary/compulsory or part of the curriculum therefore careers staff may not see it in the same way as they do other methods.

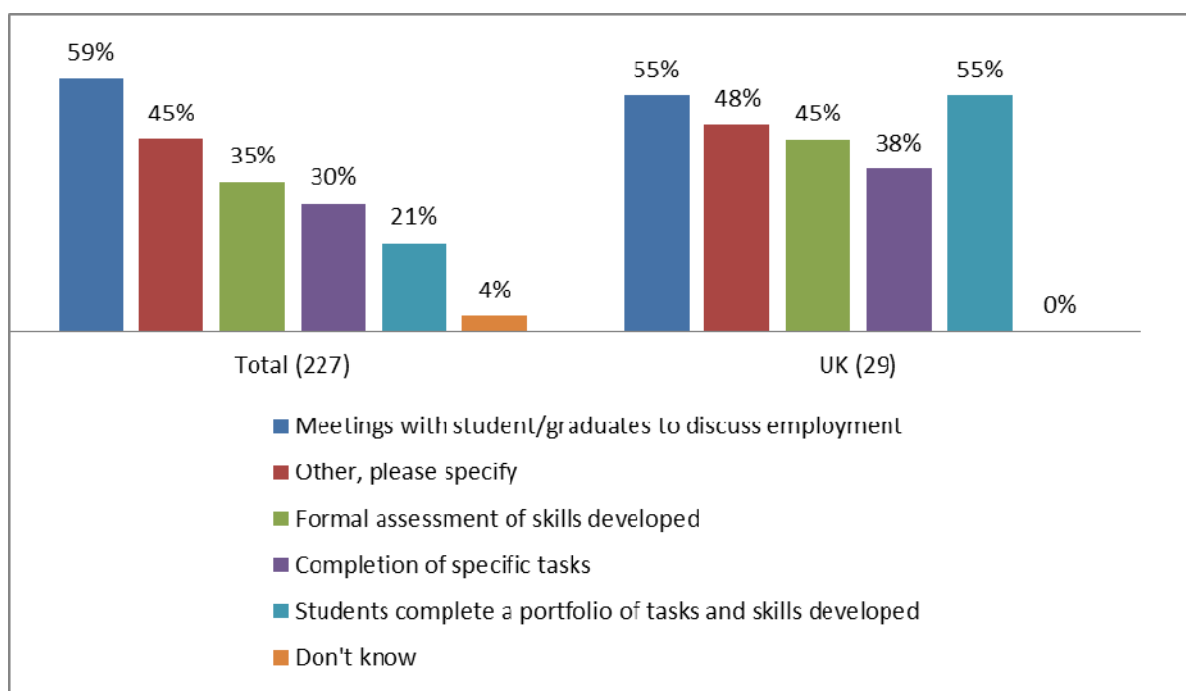
What can the UK learn?

The range of methods and approaches used to promote employability in students and graduates suggests that there will always be opportunities to learn from the experiences of others, both in the UK and elsewhere. The UK needs to ensure it disseminates, promotes and learns from the practices available supporting employability.

4.2.10. Monitoring employability services

Overall, 80% of respondents indicated that students' use of employability activities is monitored; the predominant means by which this takes place is via 'meetings with students/graduates to discuss employment'.

Figure 17: How does your institution monitor students' use of these services and activities? By country (Base= 227)



Around one third (35%) of institutions use 'formal assessment of skills' and the 'completion of specific tasks' (30%) to monitor the students use. More than one in five students are required to complete a portfolio of tasks and skills developed. There is some evidence that the use of formal assessment and portfolios as a way of monitoring activities are used more often in the UK (Figure 17).

What was clear from the online survey was that institutions do not use just the one method to monitor a student's use of their services. Although in the USA the use of case notes and NACELink¹⁰⁴ were the most common methods of monitoring, institutions did indicate a use of some of the other methods as well.

Other approaches mentioned by respondents included conducting regular surveys to evaluate student satisfaction with the services (Australia) and annual reporting bringing together various sources of data (USA).

¹⁰⁴ http://www.nacelink.com/nl_central_school.php [accessed in August 2010]

What can the UK learn?

The most common method of monitoring and evaluating students' engagement in employability is via methods that involve direct contact with students. Should UK national surveys (e.g. NSS) be enhanced in respect of employability support?

4.3. Reflective practice and the place of information, advice and guidance

As noted earlier, the overwhelming majority (80%) of respondents to the online survey were working in career guidance services. When asked in what ways 'others in your own department are involved in developing employability in the curriculum' nearly all (91%) indicated that others are involved in 'providing individual careers advice and guidance'. However, (careers) staff are also reported as being involved in 'teaching/facilitating learning' (82%) and 'advising on employability activity content' (72%), which suggests a key role in the curriculum is being played by staff typically associated with career guidance services. The country where the careers advisory services are most likely to be involved in teaching/facilitating employability activities is Australia; the country most likely to be involved in advising on employability activity content, is the UK.

The survey and desk research both highlighted some examples of where employability activities have been designed and implemented to get the student to reflect upon what they have learnt.

CASE STUDY: Employability handbooks, Fort Lewis College, USA

Note from telephone interview

Fort Lewis College¹⁰⁵ is a public funded liberal arts college which focuses solely upon undergraduates.

The students acquire employability skills through their courses, but are not necessarily aware of the skills they have acquired and the Careers Service see it as their aim to make the students aware of what they have developed, in addition to helping them to develop further skills.

For example, in some schools of study such as Teacher Education or Certified Public Accountancy, employability skills are directly taught as part of the course content and students have a clear understanding of the skills they have acquired. In others such as History, Philosophy, Modern Languages, it is not immediately obvious.

In recognition of this, the College is developing a new initiative to address this

¹⁰⁵ <http://explore.fortlewis.edu/>

CASE STUDY: Employability handbooks, Fort Lewis College, USA

imbalance, via a series of employability focused faculty specific handbooks.

What do they do and how?

The Careers Service at Fort Lewis is piloting a new scheme with 6 of the academic faculties to develop careers focused handbooks with each faculty.

The aim of the handbooks is to link employability skills to the curriculum and demonstrate to students the skills that they have acquired to help them work towards “becoming professional”.

The handbooks contain exercises for the students to work through, starting with the basics of ‘who am I? What am I? Where do I want to go? My passions? Ambitions? What career choices might my course lead to? What else could I do?’. Which will help the student, faculty and careers service understand the level of support/guidance the student may require.

Exercises are built into the curriculum to help students identify where their course choices could lead them. These exercises will also involve career planning made specific to a faculty or discipline, resulting in an internship at the end of the process to help students fully understand the career decisions and identify which skills they may need to work further on.

A small number of faculties including Psychology, Education, Modern Languages, Art & Theatre are taking part in the pilot scheme to test out the working and to further develop the handbooks.

What is innovative and interesting?

These guides are an example of how Career advisory staff are working directly with the academics to make employability a fundamental part of the curriculum. What’s particularly interesting to note about this example is that there is already an understanding of some employability being taught through the curriculum but the concern is that students and potentially the academics, are not aware.

By linking these guides to the curriculum of the student it will potentially make them more likely to be completed and used by students. It provides students a chance to reflect upon what they have learnt and how it relates to their plans for careers and employment.

This approach also sees the placement of responsibility upon the student rather than the academic or careers service.

What can the UK learn?

Some HEIs in the UK may already be doing similar activities, in which case they may be able to pick up some ideas from these guides about how to enhance them or

CASE STUDY: Employability handbooks, Fort Lewis College, USA

change them to ensure their suitability.

As a whole for the UK, these handbooks are a good example of how careers services are building employability into the curriculum. They benefit the student as they are more likely to complete the tasks as it's not made to feel like an extra burden on top of their studies.

Students need to be made more aware of their own responsibility when it comes to employability; this practice helps to shift the responsibility onto the student whilst linking it to their learning. This is something that UK HEIs and associated bodies could learn from and apply in some aspects to current practice.

What can the UK learn?

Individual advice and guidance comprises a central role in career development for individuals. Institutions need to ensure there is a balance in how resources are allocated to the different activities such as individual guidance and group based activities.

Within the UK, the involvement of careers advisory service staff in curricular development and planning is ad hoc. As employability becomes more central in institutions strategic aims, career advisory staff should ensure they have a more strategic role in the development of these strategies.

Reflective practice is central in many professional and vocational programmes of learning. By adopting the proactive method of reflective learning across all curriculums, employability will become an aspect of all curriculums ensuring all students are exposed to it.

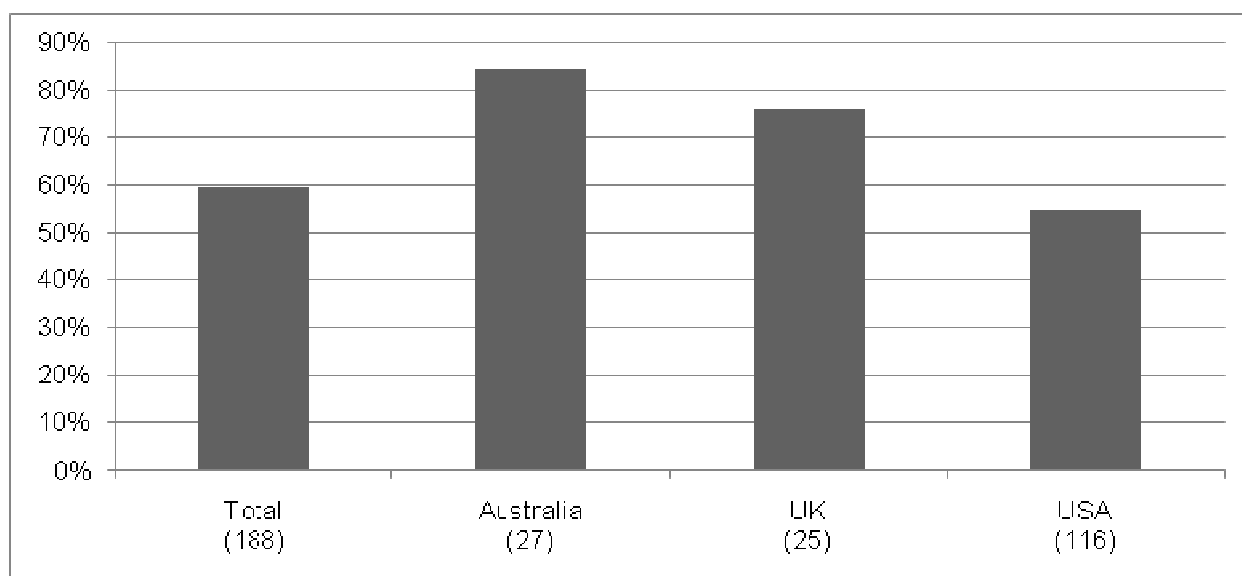
4.4. Experiential and work-based learning

4.4.1. Work placements and internships

A finding that was particularly interesting was the frequency with which respondents in the USA mentioned the use of periods of work experience to develop employability in students. As evidenced in the desk research review, there is a growing focus on internships as a means of gaining employability skills, which is well established in both the UK and USA.

Amongst most survey respondents from the USA, there was an emphasis on the role of internship and many commentators described participation in internships as being a necessary requirement in preparing for future employment. Some suggested that students who want to enhance their employability are likely to take up more than one internship opportunity during their HE study, which in some cases was described as credit bearing.

Figure 18: Which of the following methods do you use to deliver your employability activities? - Those who stated 'work placements' (Base= 188)



There is some evidence that students of some subject disciplines may more readily engage with internship and work placements during undergraduate programmes than others. These are often related to subjects which have clearly defined career prospects such as Engineering, Law and Medicine. Further discussion of this can be found in the following section 4.4.2.

What can the UK learn?

The prevalence of work experience (and internship) as a key part of employability skills development is embedded into the curriculum in some countries, irrespective of the current economic climate. More could be done to assess the benefit of compulsory work experience for students in UK institutions across all courses, leading to implementation of compulsory work experience.

Further investigation of co-operative education (as discussed in section 3.8) may help UK institutions identify and implement the most suitable approach to work-based learning.

4.4.2. Employability and subjects

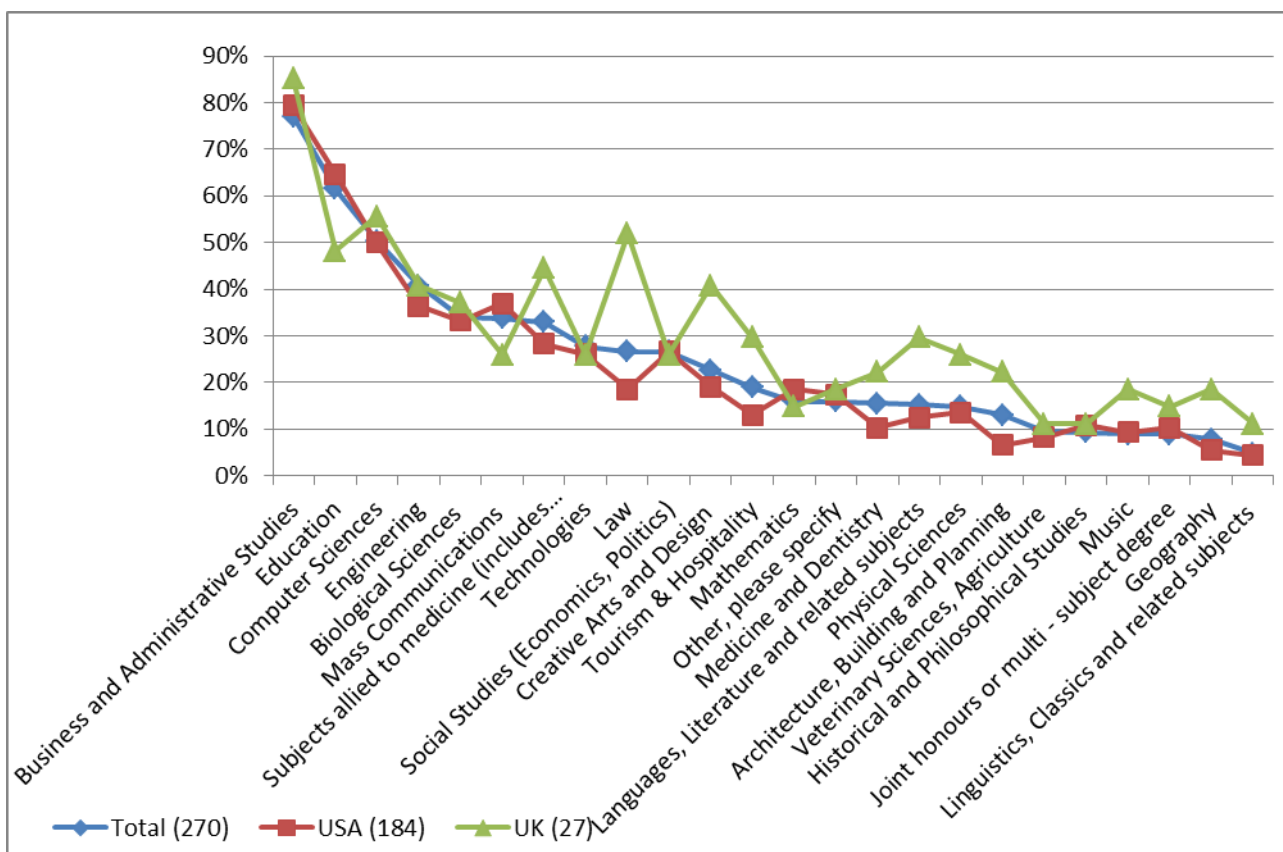
Figure 19 reveals that in general Business and Administrative studies are thought to head the list of those most “successful and/or proactive”¹⁰⁶ in enhancing the employability skills of graduates. In the UK it appears that the more vocational subjects of Law and subjects allied to Medicine may be more engaged than the average, along with the more traditionally problematic (in relation to securing subject-related employment) disciplines of Creative Arts and Design and Languages. Conversely, Education, which is highly

¹⁰⁶ The question aimed to find out from institutions which subject areas were acting in a positive manner towards enhancing employability. Therefore the use of successful and proactive in the question phrasing was used despite these being two different things.

occupationally-specific is reported as being less successful/proactive in the UK than the USA. However it is still successful in the UK compared to some other subjects.

There is insufficient data here to draw firm conclusions, but it might be speculated that the reasons for the 'spikes' in engagement by subject in the UK and the USA (and elsewhere) reflect staff perception of the labour market facing students of these subject groups; such differences are likely to vary across the world.

Figure 19: Which courses/subject areas are more successful/proactive in enhancing employability skills? UK and US compared to All responses (Base= 270)



Note: smaller base sizes may cause a skew in results.

Further research could be undertaken to establish whether there is a relationship between the relative engagement of subject disciplines with employability activities and what triggers greater/lesser engagement. There has already been a substantial amount of work done to address the difference in engagement between subject and employability for some areas. The Higher Education Academy has been working on centres for specific subjects to help foster and build employability in that subject¹⁰⁷. This was discussed in the desk research (section 3.3) along with the reference to the Academy's student employability

¹⁰⁷ <http://www.heacademy.ac.uk/subjectcentres>

profiles which describe the skills that can be developed through the study of particular subjects.¹⁰⁸

Respondents provided a range of different reasons for why they believed there was differential engagement of subjects with employability. The most common reason for those subjects that are highly engaged was because they are designed specifically to include access to the workplace. One Australian respondent provided their reason as to why some subjects are more engaged: “the University has a commitment to providing students with an exposure to professional practice through a variety of practice-oriented education experiences. Many of our courses have a work placement requirement and the University has over the past 3-4 years supported the Work Ready Project, the aim of which has been to develop students' employability skills.” This does suggest perhaps in some respects access is limited by course, which is something that institutions worldwide may need to address.

The integrated nature of employability within the whole curriculum was another reason provided by some respondents such as this one from the UK: “This institution has emphasised the high levels of employability amongst its students for a number of years and staff have been encouraged through teaching fellowships and the inclusion of evidence of employability development on all module descriptors to embed it in the curriculum. This is supported by our department and is very successful.”

Respondents also highlighted the lack of exposure to the demands of the workplace alongside their academic study. As discussed earlier, one method of potentially addressing this concern is through the introduction of ‘The Melbourne Model’¹⁰⁹ (see section 4.1.3). This model promises to include opportunities for a range of experiences outside the curriculum, including internships. Previously at University of Melbourne, only professionally oriented programmes such as Teaching and Medicine included compulsory work experience requirements linked to the course.

What can the UK learn?

Employability support does vary depending upon subject within the UK. Work is already being done to help understand how employability can be developed and enhanced within all subjects. Continuation of this work is important for UK institutions to ensure that they give all students the opportunity and support to develop skills for employability.

4.5. Other opportunities for developing employability

A significant proportion of respondents indicated that there are a wide range of other activities that academic staff are involved in which support employability in students and graduates. The list below illustrates some of the contributions:

¹⁰⁸ http://ww2.prospects.ac.uk/cms/ShowPage/Home_page/Student_employability/p!efbLLca

¹⁰⁹ <http://www.futurestudents.unimelb.edu.au/about/melbournemodel.html>

- Overseeing practicum (Australia)
- Acting as Placement Tutors (UK)
- Networking with employers (USA)
- Employment is part of the academic advising role (USA)
- Teaching on Personal Skills Award modules (UK)
- Using Professional Development Profiles (PDP) to support employability (UK)
- Integration of career presentations by career staff in their courses (USA)
- Working with CAS professionals on taught elective modules. (UK)
- Through their teaching of problem solving, communication and analytical skill development (USA)
- Partnership delivery of career management programmes with careers, and placement support. (UK)
- Tutor-led employability development (Bahrain)
- Administering internships in their academic departments (USA)
- Faculty organised mandatory seminars on CV preparation and interviewing (USA)
- Offering career seminars within their academic discipline (USA)
- Encouraging students to attend events, referrals to careers department for assistance, collaboration on some activities (USA)
- Alumni tracking (USA)

The breadth of the list shows that institutions are already approaching employability through a wider range of methods than the more traditional approaches.

4.5.1. Extra-curricular activities and voluntary work

The development of employability skills is arguably as likely to occur as a result of experiences outside of the teaching and learning domain as within it. Particularly, students' extra-curricular activities and voluntary work provide opportunities for developing employability skills. The extent to which institutions facilitate or provide such opportunities can impact upon students' employability learning.

98% of respondents indicated that their institution offered students opportunities to participate in and lead clubs and societies, work within the institution (paid or unpaid) and

do voluntary work in the wider community. Opportunities to gain accreditation for such activities were reported to be less prevalent.

Table 5 suggests that working within the institution is an important means by which to enhance employability skills, but working in a voluntary capacity in the wider community and participating in leading clubs and societies is yet more highly valued by survey respondents. It may be that the latter forms of participation are more highly valued because they are taken up on a voluntary, elected or unpaid basis and consequently perceived as evidence of active citizenship. However, it might be unwise to make such an inference, as survey respondents were not asked to comment about student motivation for engagement in particular kinds of employability activities. Motivations underlying the take up of activities are likely to be complex and vary between regions, countries and between individual students. For example, the capacity to undertake unpaid work and extracurricular activities in the UK has been associated with socio-economic group and institutional type.

Table 5: How important are these additional activities as a way of enhancing students/graduates employability? All respondents (Base= 286)

	A Very unimportant	B Unimportant	C Important	D Very important	C + D
Voluntary work in the wider community	3%	1%	49%	47%	95%
Working within the education institution (Students' Union, student community focused)	3%	9%	63%	23%	86%
Working within the education institution (paid work in shops/bar/offices)	5%	15%	59%	20%	79%
Participating in and leading clubs/societies	4%	0%	44%	51%	95%

Despite the high level of importance that is placed upon using extra-curricular activities as a method for developing employability, it seems fewer institutions are managing the need to formalise the skills acquired and communicate the benefit of such activities to students. However, **Victoria University of Wellington**, New Zealand was one of a handful of institutions who provided information about what they are doing in this area. Their

approach is innovative and is along the same lines as awards available at **The University of Leicester** in the UK.¹¹⁰

CASE STUDY: The Victoria Plus Award, Victoria University of Wellington, New Zealand

Note from a telephone interview

Victoria University of Wellington (VUW) offer the core careers services alongside which they offer other activities which they feel add value to the employability of their graduates. In particular, they offer the 'Victoria Plus Award' and 'Victoria International Leadership Programme'¹¹¹. Both of these programmes are open to all students and although they are not credit bearing they do appear on the student's transcript to highlight to employers what additional activities students have undertaken.

The benefits of the award include:

- Raise your awareness and understanding of social responsibility, leadership and employability
- Develop skills to help you in future life and work
- Gain recognition from the University for your contribution

What do they do and how?

The Victoria Plus Award is of particular interest as it is an opportunity for students to develop personally but also gain employability skills which will then be acknowledged on their university transcript.

The award provides students with the chance to get involved in volunteering, service and extracurricular activities alongside their studies. By combining these opportunities with academic study students develop themselves according to the Victoria Graduate attributes¹¹² which include communication, critical and creative thinking and leadership.

Students can apply for the award in their final year once they have met all the requirements.

¹¹⁰ <http://www2.le.ac.uk/offices/ssds/sd/la>

¹¹¹ http://www.victoria.ac.nz/st_services/careers/career_development/victoriaPlus/victoria_plus.aspx

¹¹² These are defined and used by the VUW as a guide for student learning outcomes and as part of the employability skills they feel their graduate need.

CASE STUDY: The Victoria Plus Award, Victoria University of Wellington, New Zealand

There are 3 components to the award:

- **Activities**

Students must participate in and provide evidence for a range of approved volunteer or student support roles across the approved activities which include mentoring, department leadership and university student support. The activities must be voluntary and contribute to the university or wider Wellington community.

- **Professional & Personal development**

Attend and verify 6 workshops or presentations from across areas such as leadership and social responsibility, skills development and career development.

- **Reflection**

Students must complete a CareerHub e-Portfolio which includes 3 pieces of experience reflection and mapping. As well as reflecting on the VUW graduate attributes and employability skills.

What is innovative or interesting?

The respondent from VUW who talked about this award and the International Leadership Programme felt that these were both innovative ways of developing the employability of graduates.

VUW careers service are clearly very aware of the fact students are facing an increasingly competitive employment market and employers are looking for more rounded employees. The careers service is trying to find ways to help students develop skills and explain to employers how they were developed, to make them stand out.

Through the award, the University is also encouraging students to become more actively involved in University life, which is a benefit for them.

The award brings together employability skills being developed through a manner of different methods from the curriculum, reflection by the student on what they have learnt and through extra-curricular activities such as volunteering.

What can the UK learn?

The concept behind this award may not be a completely new concept within UK HEIs, however it is an example of where a careers service is looking to enhance their offering and make it suitable for students and employers.

Whilst there has been a lot of focus and importance placed on employability within the

CASE STUDY: The Victoria Plus Award, Victoria University of Wellington, New Zealand

curriculum, the extra-curricular aspect of a student's experience may sometimes be overlooked. Many students already involve themselves in a number of activities at their university which are enabling them to develop a range of important skills for the future. By having in place an award like the one at VUW at HEIs in the UK and worldwide, these additional skills and personal development become a tangible measure of a student's ability. This can potentially help that student stand out from the competition in the job market, as well as reflect well upon the University's approach to graduate employment.

What can the UK learn?

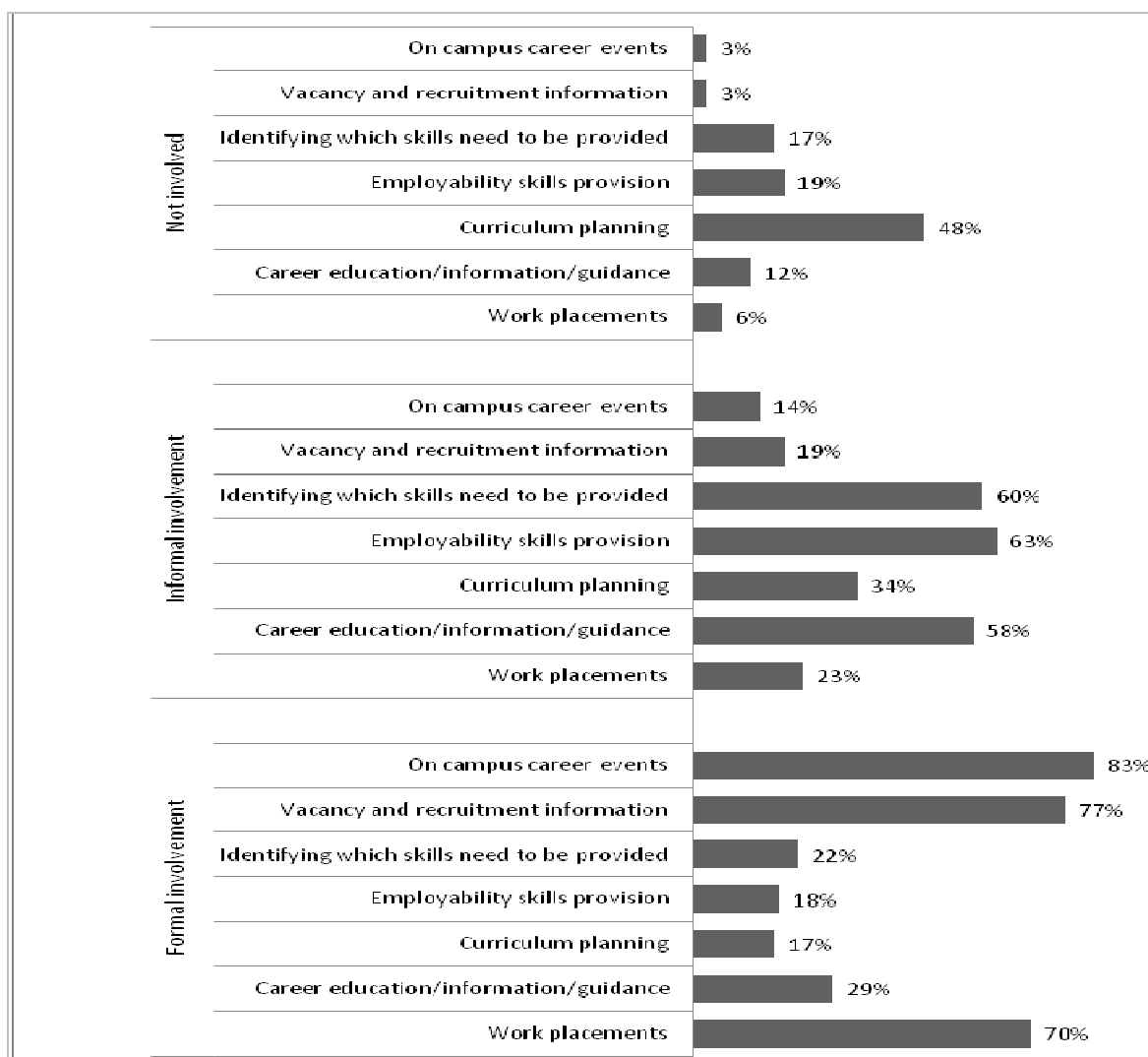
Employability activities aimed at supporting the development of students' business acumen through learning activities such as the learning derived from extracurricular activities (e.g. voluntary work and membership of clubs/societies). These activities do provide students with opportunities to develop employability and more could be done to make students aware of these opportunities, which could be through the accreditation of such activities for employability development.

4.6. Employer engagement in the curriculum

4.6.1. How are employers involved?

The involvement of employers in the HE curriculum is in many countries, both a policy imperative and an inevitable consequence of supporting students making the transition between HE and employment. However, the nature of employer involvement varies, as can be seen in the responses to the measure asking respondents to identify whether the involvement of employers was 'formal', 'informal' or 'not at all', the results of which are shown in Figure 20 overleaf.

Figure 20: How are employers involved at your institution? All respondents (Base= 273)



Regional differences reported suggest that employers are more involved (formally) in work placements in Australia (78%), but in curriculum planning (56%), employability skills provision (36%) and identifying which skills need to be provided (36%) there is more reporting of formal involvement in the UK.

As can be seen from Figure 20, there is generally more informal involvement of employers reported across all activities. The activity that appears least likely to involve employers is curriculum planning, but the varying levels reported by countries (UK 16%, Australia 28% and USA 56% of respondents) suggests that even where there appears to be a likelihood of non-involvement, there are 'pockets' of activity. It is therefore not unreasonable to assume that the nature of employer engagement may be localised and context-specific (i.e. institution or course specific).

Interestingly, in those institutions which showed a high level of employer engagement, one of the reasons for this was due to the resourcing they allocated to employer relations. Some telephone interview respondents stated that they had at least one member of staff dedicated to working on employer relations. This focus of resource upon employer

engagements seems to result in these institutions having established clear programmes of engagement with employers that goes beyond the typical careers fairs, as outlined below.

CASE STUDY: Industrial Advisory Board, Arizona State University, USA

Note from a telephone interview

Arizona State University has an interesting use of employers within the curriculum. Alongside the standard use of employer relations to provide work-experience and future recruitment they also have an industrial advisory board¹¹³ for each programme. These boards are designed to provide advice to the subject department on critical issues of placement, curriculum, training and pragmatic research needs. This helps to ensure that what students are learning will be relevant to the career they may enter.

The board provides a base financial support to the careers department and aids the fundraising efforts of the department to fund the programme, faculty and student development. Board members are also asked to be guest speakers in classes.

The careers service believes that constructive engagement with members of the business community who serve on the board will further the mission of the department in training students to become productive contributors to the economy.

What can the UK learn?

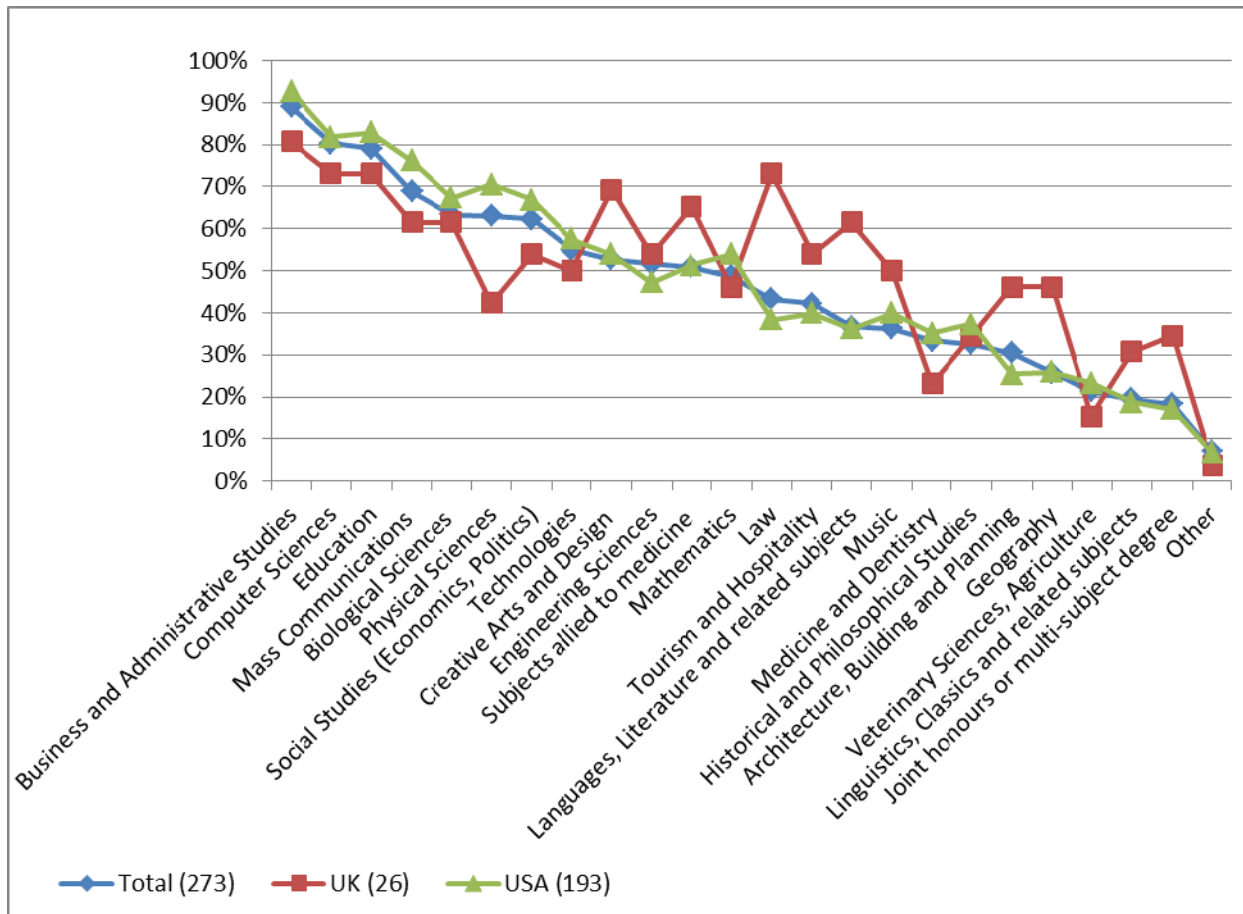
Careers services are continually building and enhancing the relationships they have with employers. These links are important to the institution and student in relation to developing employability. UK institutions could look at their own employer relations and review against the need to develop employability. Work can also be done to utilise these employer relations in a more meaningful way for institutions and employers.

4.6.2. Employer relations by sector

Looking at the profile of employers by area we can see that the broad category of Business and Administrative studies again leads the list in terms of the most frequently worked with area. We also see that in the UK the pattern of links with employers is more uneven than appears to be the case elsewhere and some areas (for example that described as Law) are reported to have considerably greater levels of linkage than others. This may be a reflection of the graduate labour market in the UK (with for example, a predominance of financial – mathematical opportunities).

¹¹³ <http://engineering.asu.edu/emte/advisory>

Figure 21: In which sector do the employers you have links with operate? UK and US compared to all respondents (Base= 273)



What can the UK learn?

Following on from the suggestion about ensuring employability is understood and developed across all subject areas the way in which employers engage with HEIs should be explored further. For example, employers could become more active in engaging with institutions given their views on the employability skills of graduates.

5. Conclusions and Recommendations

Graduate employability has become an increasingly important element of curriculum development processes. This trend may have been partially influenced by current economic conditions, but is also due to an increasing realisation that graduates should be equipped with skills needed for the workplace.

Whilst focusing largely on international examples, this study has demonstrated that there are many case studies of good practice within the UK. Indeed, the UK approach has been used as a model within an international context, both in developing countries and in countries whose educational systems have been re-modelled in recent years.

Nevertheless, there are lessons the UK can learn from countries such as the USA, Australia and others in Europe. This study has highlighted a variety of innovative practices that might legitimately be employed in the UK. The following points provide a series of recommendations for further improving employability skills provision.

5.1 Nature of HE staff involvement in employability support

5.1.1 Employability strategies should be an integral part of learning and teaching

The employability strategy must be placed at the heart of teaching and learning to ensure that students have the opportunity to take the full range of employability skills on board.

Most institutions provide for graduate employability within a strategic plan. However, within the institutional strategy there should be a minimum standard of employability support to which institutions commit. Likewise, Careers Advisory Services should have a more active involvement in institutional strategies.

The US organisation NACE publishes a range of codes and guidance including Principles for Professional Practice, which sets out a framework for career advisors and employers. This provides career advisory staff a means of measuring how they enhance graduate employability. The code of practice therefore helps ensure that students from different institutions are assured the same broad levels of support.

5.1.2 Re-visit and review codes of practice for Career Advisory Staff

In order to ensure that graduates from all institutions are able to access a common level of employability skills, it is recommended that the codes of practice for career advisory staff should be re-visited and reviewed. If these are no longer suitable or out-dated then there should be a set of professional standards in place to highlight and promote best institutional practice.

Examples from Canada, Australia and Estonia of government policy and intervention on the employability agenda suggest that leadership from government can make a real

difference. Government should continue to lead on this agenda and look at coupling policy with practical support.

5.1.3 Institutions vary in their approach to ‘employability’ but must work towards a common definition with a universal goal

All career advisory staff participating in the primary research identified the increasing importance of ‘employability’ skills. Whilst the term ‘employability’ may not always be used, there is an underlying consensus as to what employability comprises - a range of specific, employment-related skills or attributes (hard and soft skills) relevant to acquiring and succeeding in employment. In many institutions, ‘employability’ has been embedded in specific strategies or plans for enhancing student/graduate employability skills.

Institutions may well have different approaches, but it is critical that the way institutions define and approach ‘employability’ is clear and understood by students, employers and staff alike. While institutions may take various approaches to employability, a common set of principles across institutions would prove hugely beneficial.

A universal understanding of employability is also required across institutions. In a rapidly changing job market, the meaning of employability is subject to change; therefore it is important that HEIs ensure their approach is aligned with that of the global marketplace. Employers should therefore have a direct input here.

5.1.4 Students and graduates should be encouraged to take greater responsibility for their employment outcomes

In the context of static or reducing resources and increasing demands on careers services, students should have primary responsibility for developing their own employability skills. However, this responsibility must be clearly communicated in order to lessen the pressure on career advisory staff in particular and to enable priority to be placed on the development of initiatives and relationships, rather than on the physical delivery of the skills. The examples and case studies within the study suggest that institutional initiatives to encourage students to take more responsibility such as accreditation have been successful.

5.1.5 The use of academic champions should be explored further

Whilst careers advisory staff are seen as the traditional providers of employability support, the role of the academic staff is increasing.

The distinction between employability ‘skills’ gleaned from careers services and those developed through the curriculum and interactions with academic staff are becoming increasingly blurred. The use of academic champions could help to solve the problems that some career advisory staff have with engaging teaching staff in employability development within the curriculum.

5.1.6 Employability is increasingly important in student choice of institution

Interestingly, in Canada (and to some extent the USA) there is an emphasis on the significant role that secondary schools can play in preparing students for the world of work. Addressing employability within secondary schools has provided students with a basic

level of awareness before progressing to higher education. Likewise, it has increasingly defined how students choose institutions.

In the UK, HEFCE have been encouraging institutions to publish employability statements, especially for prospective students¹¹⁴. Research has also shown that employability is an increasingly important factor in the institution selection process for students. Therefore institutions may need to look further at the types of services they provide and how they communicate this information to prospective students.

In the UK, HEFCE have been encouraging institutions to clarify their strategies for employability, especially for prospective students. Research has also shown that employability is an increasingly important factor in the institution selection process for students. Therefore institutions may need to look further at the types of services they provide and how they communicate this information to prospective students.

5.1.7 Alumni can and should be viewed as a resource for the institution

Involving previous students is an effective means of supporting the career development of recent graduates. The survey in this study showed CV writing, job searching techniques and access to careers events and fairs (all 79%) were the services most widely available to alumni. Some institutions in the USA were also reported to have an open-ended commitment to the provision of career guidance support to alumni.

Alumni have long been a valuable resource for HEIs and the study highlights examples where Careers Advisory Services are using their alumni as an additional resource or opportunity for developing employability. Some of the examples include the use of alumni as mentors, conducting mock interview practice, and where possible providing students with work placements. The use of alumni to help deliver some employability activities could also help institutions overcome current resource constraints. HEIs in the UK should therefore review their alumni relations with reference to best practice internationally.

5.1.8 Different models of funding employability activities should be explored further

Globally, there was a belief that resources for employability activities would be unlikely to increase but that (student/graduate) demand for services would continue to rise. 87% of global respondents thought that demand would increase - reasons for continuing demand were thought to be partly in response to the current economic climate and also a consequence of the increasing importance attached to employment outcomes at both personal and institutional level. 58% of respondents thought it was unlikely or very unlikely that resources would increase in line with this demand.

The anticipation of increasing levels of demand for employability services within a static (at best) resource base suggests that finding ways to achieve more with the same level of resources will be difficult. Within the research, a number of institutional approaches were identified. For instance, charging students and graduates small fees for selected services

¹¹⁴ <http://www.hefce.ac.uk/news/hefce/2010/statements.htm>

may be appropriate. This may also have the additional benefit that recipients place more value on the service they receive - and therefore be committed to ensuring their employability outcomes.

Institutions may also choose to explore other funding approaches - such as increased fees for employer services, increasing the use of alumni in the provision of Careers Advisory Services to current or prospective students, or the transition to greater online employability services.

Advice and guidance for individuals also plays a central role in career development. Institutions need to ensure there is a balance between resources allocated to individual guidance practices and group or curricular-based activities. It may also be beneficial to provide a forum where discussion on best practice/institutional experiences can help guide the division of resources for career guidance.

5.1.9 Accreditation should be used as a tangible way of demonstrating student employability skills

Voluntary working and contributing to leadership of clubs and societies within HE provides an important and highly valued means of extending employability skills and attributes in students and graduates. Some UK institutions already offer a range of opportunities of this nature and allow students to gain accreditation through such experiences.

Accreditation can take the form of accredited courses/modules that are part of the curriculum and from participation through volunteering and extra-curricular activities. The study highlights that accreditation for employability studies is frequently available for work placements (76% of all respondents stating at least 'yes sometimes'). Likewise, 44% of respondents replied that accreditation is possible for volunteering activities. Those institutions that are offering some form of accreditation found they are popular because they represent a tangible way of linking student learning to employability skills. UK institutions should investigate accreditation of work-related learning and how the initiative can be developed and promoted across institutions.

5.1.10 Monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of employability services, from which UK HEIs can learn

The most common method of monitoring and evaluating student engagement in employability is through direct contact with students themselves. Further work could be undertaken to look at how UK national surveys (e.g. NSS/SB) can be extended to include a robust account of employability support.

5.2 Reflective practice and the place of information, advice and guidance

5.2.1 Reflective learning could be adopted as a learning approach across all curricula

Within the UK, the involvement of Careers Advisory Service staff in curriculum development and planning is ad hoc. In many countries, employability is central to strategic institutional aims and it would therefore make sense for UK careers advisory staff to be more involved in the development of such strategies.

Likewise, reflective practice is fundamental to many professional and vocational programmes of learning and could be adopted as a learning approach across all types of programme. Students need to be made more aware of their own responsibility with regard to employability; this practice helps to shift the responsibility onto the student, whilst linking it to their learning.

5.3 Experiential and workplace learning

5.3.1 There is a need to assess the benefit of compulsory work experience for students

All of the surveyed countries emphasise the importance of work placements and internships as a means of developing employability skills. Institutions in the USA in particular show a strong belief in the benefit of internships with some institutions requiring students to complete a minimum of one internship during their studies to pass their course. They are not only popular with students but also provide employers with the opportunity to identify potential new talent. UK HEIs on the whole do not have the same approach to work placements/internships as the US or Australia. The UK could potentially address this approach by focusing on the revival of sandwich courses and compulsory internships before graduation.

Further investigation of co-operative education (sandwich courses) in other countries may help UK institutions identify and implement the most suitable approach to work-based learning.

5.3.2 Addressing 'employability' for students across all subject disciplines is required to ensure fair and equal access to employability skills for all

The study has further confirmed the idea that students in some subject disciplines are more likely to engage with employability activities than others; similarly, employer engagement was also felt to vary by subject. Whilst this is evident across all the countries who responded, the UK could take a lead here and enhance the work already being conducted by the Higher Education Academy to ensure all subjects foster and develop a more consistent level of employability skills.

5.4 Other opportunities for developing employability

5.4.1 The extra-curricular aspect of a student experience may sometimes be overlooked, but the learning derived from such activities provides students with opportunities to develop employability

Whilst there has been a lot of focus and importance placed on employability within the curriculum, the extra-curricular aspect of a student experience may sometimes be overlooked. Many students already involve themselves in activities at their university, enabling them to develop a range of important skills for the future. By developing awards such as the one at the Victoria University of Wellington, these additional skills and achievements are recognised as tangible measures of student ability. This helps students to stand out from the competition in the job market, as well as reflecting well on the approach of the University to graduate employment and employability.

Supporting the development of students' business acumen through the learning derived from extracurricular activities could be further exploited as a method for developing employability skills.

5.4.2 A dedicated 'employer engagement' resource is recommended

In many countries the involvement of employers in HE curriculum development is both a policy imperative and an inevitable consequence of supporting students making the transition between HE and employment.

Employer engagement varies greatly by subject discipline and also from one institution to the next. Institutions in the USA and Australia (to some extent) that have staff dedicated to managing employer relations had a higher level of employer engagement. Through such dedicated relationships, the careers service can do more to engage employers with the institution. Enhancing employer engagement could provide careers services with a number of benefits, including providing employers with the opportunity to outline the skills they require from graduates and likewise a greater sharing of responsibility. Employers can, for instance, take on activities such as interview practice and careers guidance.

5.5 Final thoughts

This study has demonstrated that, in many respects, the US provides case studies of good practice from which to learn. In particular, US institutions appear to be strong in areas such as the provision of guidelines and frameworks for the monitoring and delivery of services by Career Advisory Staff. Similarly, the established mind-set is that students must complete a minimum of one internship during their period of studying. However, this study did show that there is also still work to do in US HEIs to further enhance employability. From the telephone interviews in particular, there was a large variance in the relationship and practice between Career Advisory Services and academics.

Australia also emerged from this research as a clear leader in employability activities. From both phases of the research, it is clear that the Australian government and other public sector bodies have placed an importance upon the development of employability in graduates. This is especially evident in the range of strategies and guidance documents that are in place at a national and institutional level. Over 70% of Australian respondents indicated that they had employability strategies or frameworks in place.

There is a strong history of sharing best practice in higher education within the UK and between institutions in other countries, especially Australia, the USA, Canada and across Europe. The enthusiastic response to the survey and telephone interviews has shown that many careers professionals are keen to share their experience. It is hoped that this report will provide a platform for the sharing of new approaches and practices in employability across institutions and countries.

Above we have recommended that the students themselves should be placed at the centre of the process, taking responsibility for the development of their own employability skills. In order to understand how this may be achieved most effectively and to understand

the student perspective on employability skills, we recommend that student opinion on this vital theme is tracked and investigated.

Appendix 1: Glossary

CAS

Careers advisory staff (in some places staff may be replaced by services)

Capstone

The term “capstone” is widely used to describe a course or experience that provides opportunities for a student to apply the knowledge gained throughout their undergraduate degree. This involves integrating graduate capabilities and employability skills, and occurs usually in the final year of an undergraduate degree.

CETL

The Centre for Excellence in Teaching and Learning is a HEFCE funded initiative. The centres aim to regard excellent teaching practices and further invest in that practice to deliver benefits to students, teachers and institutions.

CIHE

The Council for Industry and Higher Education is a unique partnership between leaders from businesses, universities and colleges.

CIS

The Council of International Schools (CIS) is a non-profit association of international schools and post-secondary institutions which aims to improve international education. It provides services such as accreditation, teacher and leadership recruitment services, and links to higher education, governance assistance and help with founding new schools.

Cooperative education

Cooperative education has been defined as “a structured educational strategy integrating classroom studies with learning, through productive work experiences in a field related to a student’s academic or career goals” (New Zealand National Commission for Cooperative Education, 2006). At university level, other terminology is used for similar educational strategies: for example, practicum, internship, field experience and work integrated learning.

ELM

Expertise in Labour Mobility are a knowledge provider on international work issues.

Employability

“A set of achievements-skills, understandings and personal attributes that make graduates likely to gain employment and be more successful in their chosen occupations, which benefit themselves, the workforce, the community and the economy” (Yorke 2006).

Please note: this is one definition amongst many, but aligns with the main definition used throughout the report.

ESECT

Enhancing Student Employability Coordination Team

Experiential learning

The creation of meaning from direct experience.

FEDORA

A European forum for student guidance, the FEODRA Employment Group is made up of individuals working in student guidance, including university careers advisors and employers from across the European Union and associate countries.

HECSU

The Higher Education Careers Services Unit is a registered charity that supports the work of higher education careers services in the UK and funds major research projects that benefit the higher education careers sector.

HEI

Higher Education Institution

IAEVG

The International Association for Educational and Vocational Guidance is an international organisation providing education and vocational guidance, with a membership base of CAS staff all over the world.

MNC

Multi National Corporation

NACE

The National Association of Colleges and Employers is a provider of information on graduate employment. The association connects more than 5,200 college career services professionals at nearly 2,000 colleges and universities across the USA.

NAGCAS

The National Association of Graduate Careers Advisory Services provide information and support for individuals who work in careers advice and counselling, careers education and planning, graduate employment assistance and recruitment.

OECD

Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development

PDP

Personal Development Planning

Reflective learning

The responsibility of the student to think about how they can apply what they have learnt to professional development. Allow consideration of the skills required, obtained and how best that person learns. (CIPD)

Appendix 2: References and Bibliography

Australia

Australian Blueprint for Career Development: <http://www.blueprint.edu.au/index.php>

Australia Higher Education Workplace Skills Olympiad (HEWSO):
<http://www.uow.edu.au/careers/discover/HEWSO.html>

Australian Universities Community Engagement Alliance: <http://www.aucea.net.au/>

Australian Universities Quality Agency (AUQA) Graduate Qualities and Graduate Attributes:

<http://www.auqa.edu.au/tools/search/results.php?cx=010615766736814412993%3Ahzdhbz-d0vq&cof=FORID%3A11&ie=UTF-8&q=graduate+qualities#1097>

Australian Volunteers International: <http://www.australianvolunteers.com/>

Barrie, S.; Academics' Understandings of Generic Graduate Attributes: A Framework for Assuring Quality; AUQA Occasional Publication (2004)

Challis, D., Holt, D. & Rice, M. Staff perceptions of the role of technology in experiential learning: A case study from an Australian university; Australasian Journal of Educational Technology, 21(1), 19-39 (2005)

Curtin University: www.curtin.edu.au/

Deakin University: <http://www.deakin.edu.au/>

Franz, J. A pedagogical model of higher education/industry engagement for enhancing employability and professional practice (2008) WACE ACEN Conference proceedings.: http://surreyprofessionaltraining.pbworks.com/f/WACE_ACEN_Asia_Pacific_Conference_2008_E-Proceedings-1.pdf#page=164

Graduate Careers Australia: <http://www.graduatecareers.com.au/>

Macquarie University Global Futures Program participation and community engagement: <http://www.international.mq.edu.au/volunteer/abroad>

Macquarie University Global Leadership Programme: <http://www.international.mq.edu.au/glp>

Macquarie University Global Leadership Symposium Series: <http://www.international.mq.edu.au/GLSS>

Melbourne University: www.unimelb.edu.au/

Melbourne University Melbourne Model:

<http://www.futurestudents.unimelb.edu.au/about/melbournemodel.html>

Monash University language and learning online:

<http://www.monash.edu.au/lls/llonline/writing/medicine/reflective/3.xml>

Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology: Industry Engagement in Fashion and Merchandise: <http://rmit.com.au/browse;ID=eylv7c63sdpx>

Muldoon, R; Recognizing the enhancement of graduate attributes and employability through part-time work while at university. *Active Learning in Higher Education* 10; 237 (2009)

Murdoch University Graduate Attributes at other universities:

<http://www.tlc.murdoch.edu.au/gradatt/gaothers.html>

National Association of Graduate Careers Advisory Services: <http://www.nagcas.org.au>

RMIT Industry engagement in Fashion and Textile Merchandising:

<http://rmit.com.au/browse;ID=eylv7c63sdpx>

Students in Free Enterprise: <http://www.sife.org/Pages/default.aspx>

University of South Australia Graduate Qualities: www.unisa.edu.au/gradquals

University of South Australia Student Employability Skills and Community Service project:

<http://www.unisa.edu.au/pace/projects/studentemployabilityskills.asp>

The Third International Symposium on Career Development and Public Policy (2006) Sydney: <http://www.encyclopedia.com/doc/1G1-167030965.html>

The University of Queensland, Australia: www.uq.edu.au/

UNESCO (2009) Experiential learning:

http://www.unesco.org/education/tlsf/TLSF/pdf/theme_d_pdf/mod18.pdf

University of South Australia (2010) Northern Adelaide Region Improvement Plan 2010 - 2012: http://www.decs.sa.gov.au/northernadelaide/files/links/NAR_One_Page_Plan.pdf

University & Beyond Snapshot 2008: plans and expectations of students after graduation: www.universityandbeyond.com.au/U&B_Snapshot_Report.pdf

Belgium

European Alliance on Skills for Employability: <http://www.employabilityalliance.eu/>

European Working Conditions Observatory EWCO Career guidance as a tool to enhance employability: <http://www.eurofound.europa.eu/ewco/2009/02/BE0902029I.htm>

Canada

Bell, D and O'Reilly E; Making Bridges Visible: An inventory of Innovative, Effective or Promising Canadian School-to-work Transition Practices Canadian Council on Learning

Blueprint for Life/Work Designs: <http://206.51.163/blueprint/home.cfm>

Canadian Association for Co-operative Education: <http://www.cafce.ca>

Canadian Association of Career Educators and Employers: <http://www.cacee.com>

Canadian Development Foundation: <http://www.ccdf.ca/ccdf2>

Evers, Rush and Berdrow; The bases of competence; Skills for lifelong learning and employability, (1998)

Kwok, M; Towards an Understanding of Employability Skills Development among University Graduates for Workplace Entry, (2003)

Kwok, M; Disciplinary Difference in the Development and Use of Employability Skills of Recent University Graduates; (2004)

Memorial University: http://www.mun.ca/cdel/career_students/GTEP.php

OECD Review of Career Guidance Policies Canada; 2002:
<http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/9/41/1963039.pdf>

China

University World News: China: Making Graduates Employable:
www.universityworldnews.com/article.php?story=20090626123202617

Graduate Jobs in China: www.gradconnection.com.au/blog/accounting-graduate-recruitment-blog/graduate-jobs-in-china.html

University of York: Tackling graduate unemployment: enhancing employability amongst students of Chinese universities: a UK perspective:
www.york.ac.uk/services/careers/nyjcee/res/emplychinaukperspective.pdf

Estonia

EU Euroguidance: <http://www.euroguidance.net/GuidanceSystems/Estonia/Intro.htm>

National Resources Centre for Guidance: <http://www.innove.ee/career-services/national-resource-centre-for-guidance>

Tallinn University: <http://www.tlu.ee/?LangID=2>

Europe

Education & Culture DG, Lifelong Learning Programme:

<http://www.scribd.com/doc/33445618/Key-Competences-for-Lifelong-Learning-%E2%80%93-A-European-Framework>

European Lifelong Guidance Policy Network: <http://ktl.jyu.fi/ktl/elgpn>

Rott, Gerhard; C3.8-3 Development of Career Management Competence and the Contribution of Student Services; EUA Bologna Handbook

Finland

Aalto University: <http://www.aalto.fi/en/school/technology/>

Aalto University, Bootcamp: <http://aaltovg.com/sos/>

Lehtonen, Tuula and Karjalainen, Sinikka; University graduates' workplace language needs as perceived by employers; System, Volume 36, Issue 3 (2008) pp 492-503.

Otala, Leenamajja; Industry-University Partnership: Implementing Lifelong Learning, Journal of European Industrial Training, Vol. 18 No. 8, (1994) pp. 13-18

Salmela-Aro, K. & Nurmi, J.-E. (2007). Self-esteem during university studies predict career 10 years later. Journal of Vocational Behavior, 70, 463-477.

Saukkonen:

https://oa.doria.fi/bitstream/handle/10024/50243/jamk_1237898121_0.pdf?sequence=2

Strazdiene and Heikkiniemi OECD presentation:

<http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/41/15/35217013.pdf>

Turku University: www.utu.fi/en/

France

Chelon, T., Choissard, M.F., Georget, M., Hedoin, J.P. ; L'information des étudiants sur les débouchés des formations et leur accompagnement vers l'insertion professionnelle , Inspection générale de l'administration de l'Éducation nationale et de la recherche, Rapport no. 2007-054, (June 2007).

EDHEC: <http://www.edhec.edu/>

Taillefer, G.F.; The professional language needs of Economics graduates: Assessment and perspectives in the French context, English for Specific Purposes, Elsevier, (2006), doi:10.1016/j.esp.2006.06.003.

Germany

Centre for Higher Education Development in Germany:

<http://www.che.de/cms/?getObject=302&getLang=en>

Employability as a new educational goal? Science Blogs: www.scienceblogs.de/frischer-wind/2008/09/employability-als-neues-bildungsziel.php

Employability: acceptance of the Bachelor degree in business Deutsche Bildungserver:

www.bildungserver.de/zeigen.html?seite=5701

The German Education Server: <http://www.bildungserver.de/>

India

Infosys: <http://www.infosys.com/pages/index.aspx>

Bodhih Training Solutions: <http://www.bodhih.com/>

Italy

AlmaLaurea: <http://www.almalaurea.it/>

Sondermeijer, I.; National Research Report on the Guidance System in Italy, ECGC-European Career Guidance Certificate

Netherlands

University of Amsterdam Careers Centre:

http://www.studeren.uva.nl/student_life_english/object.cfm/9548584C-BBEC-4850-81B852DE254E184B/5E7CAA52-AFA4-443E-A1F1CD6E72D7564D

New Zealand

A research programme on education employment linkages: www.eel.org.nz

AERU Research Unit, Lincoln University. Research Programme on Education employment Linkages. (2007) New Zealand Council for Educational Research:

<http://www.eel.org.nz/about.html>

AERU Publications list: <http://www.eel.org.nz/publications.html>

Auckland University of Technology: <http://www.aut.ac.nz/study-at-aut/study-areas/education/learning-environment/free-papers-to-help-you-study-keys>

Denny, G. & Reid, S.; A Guide to Placing Learners on Work Experience New Zealand Centre for Workplace Literacy Development; (2005)

Henderson, K., Napan K. & Monteiro, S. (2004) Encouraging reflective learning: An online challenge: <http://www.ascilite.org.au/conferences/perth04/procs/pdf/henderson.pdf>

New Zealand University Career Hub:
<http://www.nzunicareerhub.ac.nz/Default.aspx?ReturnUrl=%2f>

Silyn-Roberts, H.; Experiential learning: EPICS at the University of Auckland - aims and achievements of the first two years. Presentation to the 17th Annual Conference of the Australasian Association for Engineering Education, Auckland, New Zealand. (2006)

Stefani, L.; Designing the Curriculum for Student Engagement. AISHE-J Volume 1, Number 1 (Autumn 2009) Page 11.1

The Third International Symposium on Career Development and Public Policy (2006) Sydney: <http://www.encyclopedia.com/doc/1G1-167030965.html>

The University of Auckland (2009) Guidelines for Effective Teaching:
<http://www.auckland.ac.nz/webdav/site/central/shared/about/teaching-and-learning/policies-guidelines-procedures/documents/2009-04-guidelines-effective-teaching-v7.pdf>

The University of Canterbury (2009) UC Careers & Employment:
<http://www.canterbury.ac.nz/careers/>

The University of Waikato (2009) Career Guidance and Industry Information:
<http://www.waikato.ac.nz/sasd/careers/index-guidance.shtml>

UNESCO (2009) Experiential learning:
www.unesco.org/education/tlsf/TLSF/pdf/theme_d_pdf/mod18.pdf

Van Esbroeck, R. & Athanasou, James A.; An International Handbook of Career Guidance. Amsterdam: Springer (2008)

Vaughan, K., & Gardiner, B.; Careers education in New Zealand schools. Wellington: New Zealand Council for Educational research, Ministry of Education. (2007)

Victoria University of Wellington: www.victoria.ac.nz/home/

Zepke, N & Leach, L; Contextualised Meaning Making: one way of rethinking experiential learning and self-directed learning? Studies in Continuing Education, Vol. 24, No. 2, Massey University. (2002)

New Zealand Qualifications Authority: <http://www.nzqa.govt.nz/ngfdocs/provider-reports/8630.pdf>

Poland

A survey on employability in Poland:
http://www.ond.vlaanderen.be/hogeronderwijs/bologna/actionlines/documents/Employability_Poland.pdf

Nicolaus Copernicus University: <http://www.umk.pl/en/>

EU Leonardo and Phare Initiatives: <http://www.umk.pl/en/units/careers/>

Sweden

Rovio-Johansson, Airi & Tengblad, Stefan: Employability in working life: Graduates' expectations and position after graduation, Gothenburg Research Institute (2007)

UK

AGCAS: <http://www.agcas.org.uk/pages/24>

AGCAS Careers Education Benchmark Statement:
http://www.agcas.org.uk/agcas_resources/33-Careers-Education-Benchmark-Statement

Anderson, Julie Dr. and Purcell, Kate Dr.; Beyond the Subject Curriculum; (October 2006)

Department for Business, Innovation and Skills; Higher Ambitions: The future of universities in a knowledge economy; (November 2009)

Department for Business, Innovation and Skills:
<http://www.bis.gov.uk/assets/biscore/corporate/docs/s/10-1208-securing-sustainable-higher-education-browne-report.pdf>

CBI; Time well spent: embedding employability in work experience; (2007)

CBI: http://highereducation.cbi.org.uk/media/latest_news/00165/

CIHE and i-graduate; Graduate Employability; what do employers think and want? (2008)

CIHE; Developing Key Skills through Work Placements; (1998)

CIHE; Global Horizons and the role of Employers (2008)

CIPD; Internships that work; (2009): <http://www.cipd.co.uk/publicpolicy/internships-that-work.htm>

The Career Development Organisation: <http://crac.org.uk/418/Higher-Education.html>

Deloitte: http://www.deloitte.com/view/en_GB/uk/about/community-investment/skills-and-education/employability-skills/index.htm

Graduate Prospects:
http://ww2.prospects.ac.uk/cms/ShowPage/Home_page/Student_employability/p!efbLLca

Graduate Talent Pool:
http://graduatetalentpool.direct.gov.uk/cms/ShowPage/Home_page/p!ecaaefg

Harris Report: http://www.agcas.org.uk/agcas_resources/55-Harris-Report

Higher Education Academy:

www.heacademy.ac.uk/ourwork/teachingandlearning/employability

Higher Education Academy, UK Physical Science Centre, employability project:

http://www.heacademy.ac.uk/physsci/home/projects/jisc_del/employabilityproject

Higher Education Career Services Unit (HECSU): <http://www.hecsu.ac.uk/>

Higher Education Statistics Agency: <http://www.hesa.ac.uk/>

Kumar, A., SOARing to Success: Personal, Academic and Career Development in Higher Education; (2008)

Learning and Skills Council; National Employers Skills Survey 2007; (May 2008)

Liverpool John Moores University: http://www.studygroup.com/isc/ljmu/world_of_work.aspx

UK Commission for Employment and Skills: <http://www.ukces.org.uk/>

UK Institute of Career Guidance: http://www.icg-uk.org/QCG_and_QCGD.html

Unistats: <http://unistats.direct.gov.uk/>

University of Dundee: <http://www.dundee.ac.uk/careers/skillsaward/info.php>

University of Leicester: <http://www2.le.ac.uk/offices/ssds/sd/la>

University of Reading: <http://www.reading.ac.uk/ccms/>

University of Warwick: <http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/about/community/volunteers/>

University of Westminster: <http://www.westminster.ac.uk/schools/media/fashion/ba-fashion-merchandise-management>

Universities UK & CBI; FutureFit: Preparing graduates for the world of work' (2009):

<http://www.cbi.org.uk/pdf/20090326-CBI-FutureFit-Preparing-graduates-for-the-world-of-work.pdf>

UUK; Enhancing Employability, recognising diversity (2002)

UUK: Employer and University Engagement in the Use and Development of Graduate level skills (2007)

NESTA, CIHE and NCGE; Developing Entrepreneurial Graduates; (2008)

Purcell, Kate, Elias, Peter, Ellison, Ritva, Atfield, Gaby, Adam, Duncan and Livanos, Lias; FutureTrack: Applying for Higher Education-the diversity of career choices, plans and expectations; (March 2008)

USA

Arizona State University: www.asu.edu/

Bethany University: <http://www.bethanywv.edu/>

Comparison of US employment outlook: www.oecd.org/dataoecd/44/2/40907194.pdf

Chickering A.W & Gamson Z.E; Seven Principles for Good Practice in Undergraduate Education AAHE Bulletin (1987)

Drexel University: www.drexel.edu/

Employment outlook for 2009: www.oecd.org/dataoecd/62/37/43707050.pdf

Education at a Glance 2007: www.oecd.org/dataoecd/22/51/39317423.pdf

Fort Lewis College: www.fortlewis.edu/

Learning for Life Resource Centre, US National Career Development Guidelines: http://www.learning4liferesources.com/Nationalcareerdevelopmentguidelines/Aftergraduation_000.pdf

Loyola University: <http://www.luc.edu/>

National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE): http://www.naceweb.org/spotlight/2008/june/2008_Graduating_Student_Survey/

NACE Internship and Co-op survey: <http://www.naceweb.org/Research.aspx?fid=64&menuID=120&ispub=False&nodetype=7&navurl=#&&/wEXAQUFaW5kZXgFI2xlZnR+IX5+IX4xOTN+IX4xMjN+IX5GYWxzZX4hfjJ+IX4xfHG5XQ/SLXVNYLDJfRchMTqwcEA=>

NACE: Professional Standard for Colleges/University Career Services: https://www.naceweb.org/Knowledge/Career_Services/Assessment/Professional_Standards_for_College_University_Career_Services.aspx

Students in Free Enterprise: <http://www.sife.org/Pages/default.aspx>

Western Michigan University: <http://www.wmich.edu/consumer/cte/index.html>

Appendix 3: Data Tables

Below are the tables for each question from the online survey for all respondents (in Total Column) and the UK.

Q1.Which of the following best describes your role at the institution?	Total		UK	
Director	50%	207	14%	6
Head of Department	15%	64	43%	19
Counsellor	12%	50	2%	1
Manager	8%	35	18%	8
Other, please specify	8%	32	16%	7
Academic staff: lecturer/ professor/ tutor	6%	24	7%	3
Officer	0%	1	0%	
Principal	0%	1	0%	
BASE		414		44

Q2.Please tell us which department you work within:	Total		UK	
Careers/ guidance service	80%	331	80%	35
Academic department	6%	25	5%	2
Other, please specify	5%	20	7%	3
Student services	3%	14	0%	
Employability/ learning development	3%	11	7%	3
Student/ employment services	2%	7	2%	1
Support services	1%	6	0%	
BASE		414		44

Q4.In which country is your HE Institution located?	Total		UK	
United States of America	65%	267		
United Kingdom of Great Britain & Northern Ireland	11%	44	100%	44
Australia	9%	37		
New Zealand	6%	23		
Canada	1%	4		
Ireland	1%	4		
Germany	1%	3		
Poland	1%	3		
Switzerland	1%	3		
Venezuela	1%	3		
Bahrain	1%	3		
Puerto Rico	0%	2		

Finland	0%	2	
Sweden	0%	2	
Portugal	0%	2	
Brazil	0%	1	
Jordan	0%	1	
Estonia	0%	1	
Qatar	0%	1	
Bermuda	0%	1	
Serbia	0%	1	
Uzbekistan	0%	1	
Greece	0%	1	
Hong Kong	0%	1	
Tajikistan	0%	1	
BASE		412	44

Q5.Is your education institution a:	Total		UK	
State-funded institution	53%	218	95%	41
Private institution	40%	162	2%	1
Part state-funded/part private institution	4%	18	2%	1
Other, please specify	3%	11	0%	
BASE		409		43

Q6.Approximately how many undergraduate students study at your institution?	Total		UK	
Fewer than 250	4%	16	6%	2
251-500	2%	6	6%	2
501-1,000	7%	25	3%	1
1,001-5,000	36%	130	9%	3
5,001-10,000	15%	53	17%	6
10,001-20,000	16%	58	37%	13
20,001-30,000	9%	31	14%	5
30,001-40,000	6%	21	6%	2
40,001-50,000	2%	8	0%	
More than 50,000	2%	8	3%	1
Don't know	1%	4	0%	
BASE		360		35

Q7.Approximately what percentage of your students are classed as international and domestic?	Total		UK	
Domestic	88%		77%	
International	10%		15%	

European Union	2%		8%	
BASE		298		22

Q8.Does your role within student-graduate employability require you to have a specific qualification?	Total		UK	
	Yes	70%	240	59%
No	28%	98	41%	14
Don't know	2%	7	0%	
BASE		345		34

Q9.Does your education institution have a strategy (or other forward plan) in place for enhancing student-graduate employability skills?	Total		UK	
	Yes	69%	232	67%
No	24%	80	30%	10
Don't know	8%	26	3%	1
BASE		338		33

Q10.Is the employability skills strategy:	Total		UK	
	Part of a broader learning and teaching strategy	55%	122	55%
A separate (stand alone) strategy	26%	58	27%	6
Part of another institutional strategy	17%	37	18%	4
Don't know	3%	6	0%	
BASE		223		22

Q11.Who is responsible for developing the employability of your students/graduates?	Total		UK	
	Career Services	96%	308	100%
Academic staff	81%	260	91%	30
Student/graduates	69%	221	52%	17
The curriculum	63%	202	70%	23
Employers	49%	159	55%	18
Senior institutional decision makers (e.g. Principal, Vice Chancellor, Management board)	37%	118	52%	17
Counselling staff	36%	116	9%	3
Work placement department	29%	94	45%	15
Students' Union staff	18%	59	33%	11
Other (please specify)	5%	15	6%	2
Don't know	2%	7	0%	
BASE		322		33

Q12.How important is the development of student/graduate employability within (Mean score)	Total		UK	
Careers Services	3.53	317	3.47	32
The broad aims and objectives of the institution	3.03	302	3.09	33
The curriculum	2.9	297	3.00	31
BASE		317		33

Q13.How important is the development of student/graduate employability within (Percentage of those who said important or very important)	Total		UK	
Careers Services	86%	317	84%	32
The broad aims and objectives of the institution	81%	302	82%	33
The curriculum	77%	297	77%	31
BASE		317		33

Q14.Which of the following employability activities does your institution offer to students/graduates?	Total		UK	
Career identification and planning	95%	299	100%	33
Job searching techniques	95%	298	97%	32
Interview practice	95%	297	94%	31
Careers events and fairs	94%	295	91%	30
Providing help with job search	93%	293	91%	30
CV writing	93%	292	97%	32
Contacts with employers	93%	292	91%	30
Understanding of career area and how it works	91%	285	91%	30
Help with finding and securing work placements/internships	89%	278	85%	28
Communication skills	86%	269	85%	28
Decision making skills	77%	243	94%	31
Presentation skills	75%	234	88%	29
Computer skills	75%	234	76%	25
Team working skills	73%	229	85%	28
Research skills	72%	227	85%	28
Time management	71%	224	82%	27
Literacy (reading and writing)	62%	194	64%	21
Provision of temporary and vacation work	51%	161	76%	25
BASE		314		33

Q.15Which of the following methods do you use to deliver your employability activities?	Total		UK	
Workshops/ group sessions	94%	296	94%	31
1:1 sessions	93%	295	97%	32

Online	77%	243	76%	25
Through curriculum/ course	72%	228	94%	31
Work placements	59%	188	76%	25
Specific skills course	47%	149	70%	23
Other, please specify	13%	40	18%	6
Don't know	1%	2	0%	
BASE		316		33

Q16.Which of the following are available to:	Total		UK	
Prospective students				
CV writing	7%	21	18%	6
Interview practice	6%	19	12%	4
Career identification and planning	36%	111	36%	12
Job searching techniques	8%	23	15%	5
Providing help with job search	5%	16	6%	2
Contacts with employers	5%	15	9%	3
Help with finding and securing work placements/internships	3%	9	6%	2
Provision of temporary and vacation work	3%	10	3%	1
Team working skills	3%	8	6%	2
Presentation skills	3%	10	15%	5
Communication skills	3%	8	3%	1
Literacy (reading and writing)	5%	14	6%	2
Time management	3%	9	3%	1
Understanding of career area and how it works	21%	64	24%	8
Computer skills	3%	10	3%	1
Research skills	3%	9	9%	3
Decision making skills	8%	24	18%	6
Careers events and fairs	16%	49	21%	7
Current students				
CV writing	92%	280	97%	32
Interview practice	92%	283	91%	30
Career identification and planning	93%	286	94%	31
Job searching techniques	94%	287	94%	31
Providing help with job search	92%	280	91%	30
Contacts with employers	91%	279	91%	30
Help with finding and securing work placements/internships	87%	267	85%	28
Provision of temporary and vacation work	50%	153	76%	25
Team working skills	70%	214	82%	27
Presentation skills	71%	218	88%	29
Communication skills	81%	248	85%	28

Literacy (reading and writing)	57%	175	61%	20
Time management	68%	209	76%	25
Understanding of career area and how it works	90%	274	88%	29
Computer skills	71%	217	70%	23
Research skills	69%	210	79%	26
Decision making skills	75%	228	91%	30
Careers events and fairs	91%	278	79%	26
Alumni				
CV writing	79%	241	82%	27
Interview practice	76%	234	82%	27
Career identification and planning	76%	234	88%	29
Job searching techniques	79%	243	79%	26
Providing help with job search	79%	243	79%	26
Contacts with employers	77%	236	73%	24
Help with finding and securing work placements/internships	61%	187	55%	18
Provision of temporary and vacation work	19%	57	39%	13
Team working skills	12%	36	18%	6
Presentation skills	21%	64	39%	13
Communication skills	24%	74	15%	5
Literacy (reading and writing)	7%	21	6%	2
Time management	13%	39	12%	4
Understanding of career area and how it works	67%	205	85%	28
Computer skills	13%	41	6%	2
Research skills	16%	48	9%	3
Decision making skills	43%	133	52%	17
Careers events and fairs	79%	241	76%	25
BASE		306	33	

Q17.How long after graduation are alumni able to access your activities for developing employability?	Total		UK	
	1 year	15%	2	
3 years	8%	1		
10 years+	77%	10		
BASE		13		

Q18.Do you charge a fee for any of the following activities	Total		UK	
	Careers events and fairs	64%	36	100%
Career identification and planning	36%	20	0%	
CV writing	11%	6	0%	
Interview practice	11%	6	0%	
Decision making skills	7%	4	0%	

Job searching techniques	5%	3	0%
Providing help with job search	5%	3	0%
Communication skills	5%	3	0%
Computer skills	5%	3	0%
Contacts with employers	4%	2	0%
Help with finding and securing work placements/internships	4%	2	0%
Presentation skills	4%	2	0%
Literacy (reading and writing)	4%	2	0%
Research skills	4%	2	0%
Provision of temporary and vacation work	2%	1	0%
Team working skills	2%	1	0%
Time management	2%	1	0%
Understanding of career area and how it works	2%	1	0%
BASE		56	2

Q19.Do you sub-contract out services to a private provider?	Total		UK	
Yes	4%	12	6%	2
No	95%	290	91%	30
Don't know	1%	3	3%	1
BASE		305		33

Q19a.Which services do you sub-contract out?	Total		UK	
Interview practice	38%	3	50%	1
Communication skills	38%	3	50%	1
Job searching techniques	25%	2	50%	1
Help with finding and securing work placements/internships	25%	2	50%	1
CV writing	13%	1	0%	
Career identification and planning	13%	1	0%	
Contacts with employers	13%	1	0%	
Team working skills	13%	1	50%	1
Presentation skills	13%	1	50%	1
Understanding of career area and how it works	13%	1	0%	
Research skills	13%	1	0%	
Decision making skills	13%	1	0%	
Careers events and fairs	13%	1	0%	
Providing help with job search	0%		0%	
Provision of temporary and vacation work	0%		0%	
Literacy (reading and writing)	0%		0%	
Time management	0%		0%	
Computer skills	0%		0%	

Don't know	0%		0%	
BASE		8		2

Q20.Does your institution monitor students' use of these services and activities?	Total		UK	
	Yes	80%	241	88%
No	17%	53	9%	3
Don't know	3%	9	3%	1
BASE		303		33

Q21.How does your institution monitor students' use of these services and activities?	Total		UK	
	Meetings with student/graduates to discuss employment	59%	134	55%
Other, please specify	45%	102	48%	14
Formal assessment of skills developed	35%	79	45%	13
Completion of specific tasks	30%	68	38%	11
Students complete a portfolio of tasks and skills developed	21%	47	55%	16
Don't know	4%	8	0%	
BASE		227		29

Q22.Of the activities available at your institution, which are used by domestic and international students?	Total		UK	
	Domestic			
CV writing	93%	269	97%	29
Interview practice	96%	277	97%	29
Career identification and planning	95%	274	100%	30
Job searching techniques	96%	278	97%	29
Providing help with job search	95%	275	97%	29
Contacts with employers	94%	271	93%	28
Help with finding and securing work placements/internships	90%	261	90%	27
Provision of temporary and vacation work	51%	146	80%	24
Team working skills	69%	200	87%	26
Presentation skills	72%	208	93%	28
Communication skills	81%	234	90%	27
Literacy (reading and writing)	57%	164	60%	18
Time management	68%	197	80%	24
Understanding of career area and how it works	91%	262	93%	28
Computer skills	71%	204	73%	22
Research skills	70%	202	83%	25
Decision making skills	74%	214	90%	27

Careers events and fairs	94%	273	87%	26
International				
CV writing	88%	255	93%	28
Interview practice	90%	259	93%	28
Career identification and planning	85%	246	97%	29
Job searching techniques	90%	260	90%	27
Providing help with job search	90%	259	90%	27
Contacts with employers	88%	255	90%	27
Help with finding and securing work placements/internships	85%	246	83%	25
Provision of temporary and vacation work	43%	125	80%	24
Team working skills	65%	189	80%	24
Presentation skills	67%	195	83%	25
Communication skills	76%	221	80%	24
Literacy (reading and writing)	55%	159	67%	20
Time management	64%	184	73%	22
Understanding of career area and how it works	84%	242	90%	27
Computer skills	67%	193	70%	21
Research skills	66%	192	80%	24
Decision making skills	70%	202	87%	26
Careers events and fairs	90%	261	83%	25
BASE		289		30

Q23.How important is each of the following skills for seeking or keeping employment? (mean scores)	Total		UK	
	Mean Score	Count	Mean Score	Count
Communication skills	3.73	288	3.61	28
Career identification and planning	3.63	287	3.55	29
Literacy	3.59	287	3.57	28
Interview practice	3.58	288	3.55	29
Contacts with employers	3.58	289	3.48	29
Job searching techniques	3.55	289	3.59	29
CV Writing	3.52	285	3.48	29
Team work	3.45	288	3.59	29
Time management	3.43	286	3.54	28
Decision making skills	3.38	287	3.48	29
Presentation skills	3.34	288	3.41	29
Sector understanding	3.29	285	3.48	29
IT Skills	3.21	285	3.36	28
Research skills	3.19	288	3.24	29
BASE		289		29

Q24.How important is each of the following skills for seeking or keeping employment? (Percentage of those who said important or very important)	Total		UK	
Career identification and planning	96%	287	93%	29
Interview practice	95%	288	93%	29
Literacy	95%	287	93%	28
Contacts with employers	95%	289	93%	29
Job searching techniques	95%	289	93%	29
Communication skills	95%	288	93%	28
Time management	95%	286	93%	28
CV Writing	95%	285	90%	29
Presentation skills	94%	288	93%	29
Decision making skills	94%	287	93%	29
IT Skills	94%	285	93%	28
Team work	93%	288	93%	29
Sector understanding	91%	285	93%	29
Research skills	90%	288	86%	29
BASE		289		29

Q25.Do academic staff get involved in the delivery of employability activities?	Total		UK	
Yes	80%	233	90%	27
No	15%	44	7%	2
Don't know	5%	16	3%	1
BASE		293		30

Q26.How do academic staff get involved in the delivery of employability activities?	Total		UK	
Teaching/ facilitating employability activities	71%	164	78%	21
Providing career guidance for their subject specialism	65%	150	37%	10
Giving feedback about students' strengths & weaknesses	54%	125	63%	17
Assessment of skills development	32%	74	70%	19
Other, please specify	21%	49	26%	7
BASE		231		27

Q27.How are you or others in your department involved in developing employability in the curriculum?	Total		UK	
Providing individual careers advice and guidance	91%	257	100%	30
Teaching/ facilitating employability activities	82%	230	80%	24
Advising on employability activity content	72%	202	93%	28
Assessment of skills development	50%	140	50%	15
Other, please specify	10%	27	13%	4

BASE	282	30
-------------	------------	-----------

Q28.Which courses/subject areas are more successful/proactive in enhancing employability skills?	Total		UK	
Business and Administrative Studies	77%	208	85%	23
Education	61%	166	48%	13
Computer Sciences	50%	136	56%	15
Engineering	41%	110	41%	11
Biological Sciences (including Psychology, Sports Science)	34%	92	37%	10
Mass Communications (Media Studies, Journalism)	34%	91	26%	7
Subjects allied to medicine (includes Pharmacy, Nursing, Optometry)	33%	89	44%	12
Technologies	28%	75	26%	7
Law	27%	72	52%	14
Social Studies (Economics, Politics)	27%	72	26%	7
Creative Arts and Design (including Performing Arts)	23%	61	41%	11
Tourism & Hospitality	19%	51	30%	8
Mathematics	16%	43	15%	4
Other, please specify	16%	43	19%	5
Medicine and Dentistry	16%	42	22%	6
Languages, Literature and related subjects	15%	41	30%	8
Physical Sciences	15%	40	26%	7
Architecture, Building and Planning	13%	35	22%	6
Veterinary Sciences, Agriculture and related subjects	10%	26	11%	3
Historical and Philosophical Studies (Archaeology, Theology)	9%	25	11%	3
Music	9%	24	19%	5
Joint honours or multi - subject degree	9%	24	15%	4
Geography	8%	21	19%	5
Linguistics, Classics and related subjects (Latin Studies, Classical Greek Studies)	5%	13	11%	3
BASE	270	27		

Q29.Can students-graduates gain academic credit for their participation in activities that help to develop their employability?	Total		UK	
Yes always	10%	30	10%	3
Yes sometimes	70%	201	60%	18
No	18%	53	30%	9
Don't know	1%	4	0%	
BASE	288	30		

Q29a.Are employability development activities a compulsory part of a student-graduates higher education experience?	Total		UK	
Yes always	9%	25	10%	3
Yes sometimes	53%	154	53%	16
No	36%	105	30%	9
Don't know	1%	4	7%	2
BASE		288		30

Q29b.Are work-placements-internships awarded credits towards the students' degree-qualification?	Total		UK	
Yes always	12%	35	3%	1
Yes sometimes	76%	221	67%	20
No	10%	29	20%	6
Don't know	1%	4	10%	3
BASE		289		30

Q30.Does your institution offer students the opportunities to:	Total		UK	
Participate in and lead clubs/societies	98%	286	100%	29
Work within the education institution (Student's Union, student community focused)	95%	284	97%	29
Do voluntary work in the wider community	94%	285	100%	29
Work within the education institution (paid work in shops/ bar/ offices)	91%	282	86%	28
BASE		286		29

Q30a.Can students use these opportunities to gain accreditation?	Total		UK	
Voluntary work in the wider community	44%	264	42%	26
Working within the education institution (paid work in shops/bar/offices)	25%	259	27%	26
Working within the education institution (Students' Union, student community focused)	24%	260	27%	26
Participating in and leading clubs/societies	22%	258	32%	25
BASE		264		26

Q31.How important are these additional activities as a way of enhancing students/graduates employability? (Mean scores)	Total		UK	
Participating in and leading clubs/societies	3.44	285	3.38	29
Voluntary work in the wider community	3.38	286	3.41	29
Working within the education institution (Students' Union, student community focused)	3.07	282	3.21	28
Working within the education institution (paid work in shops/bar/offices)	2.96	283	3.21	28
BASE		286		29

Q32.How important are these additional activities as a way of enhancing students/graduates employability? (Percentage of those who said important and very important)	Total		UK	
Participating in and leading clubs/societies	96%	285	93%	29
Voluntary work in the wider community	95%	286	93%	29
Working within the education institution (Students' Union, student community focused)	87%	282	89%	28
Working within the education institution (paid work in shops/bar/offices)	80%	283	89%	28
BASE		286		29

Q33.How are your employability activities funded?	Total		UK	
Centrally funded by the institution	62%	176	69%	20
Part funded by the institution	16%	45	17%	5
Part funded from proceeds from charged-for-services	10%	29	0%	
Don't Know	6%	17	10%	3
Other	5%	14	3%	1
Wholly funded by proceeds from charged-for services	0%	1	0%	
BASE		282		29

Q34.How likely is it that your resources to support student-graduate employability will increase in the future?	Total		UK	
Very likely	7%	19	3%	1
Likely	25%	72	21%	6
Unlikely	38%	108	45%	13
Very unlikely	20%	56	14%	4
Don't Know	10%	29	17%	5
BASE		284		29

Q35.Do you think demand from students-graduates for your employability services-activities will increase over the next 5 years?	Total		UK	
Yes	87%	248	90%	26
No	3%	9	0%	
Don't Know	10%	28	10%	3
BASE		285		29

Q36.How are employers involved at your institution?	Total		UK	
Work placements				
Formal involvement	70%	188	77%	20

Informal involvement	23%	62	19%	5
Not involved	6%	17	4%	1
BASE		267		26
Career education/ information/ guidance		Total		UK
Formal involvement	29%	80	42%	11
Informal involvement	58%	159	46%	12
Not involved	12%	34	12%	3
BASE		273		26
Curriculum planning		Total		UK
Formal involvement	17%	46	56%	14
Informal involvement	34%	92	28%	7
Not involved	48%	129	16%	4
BASE		267		25
Employability skills provision		Total		UK
Formal involvement	18%	48	36%	9
Informal involvement	63%	167	52%	13
Not involved	19%	52	12%	3
BASE		267		25
Identifying which skills need to be provided		Total		UK
Formal involvement	22%	61	36%	9
Informal involvement	60%	164	52%	13
Not involved	17%	47	12%	3
BASE		272		25
Vacancy and recruitment information		Total		UK
Formal involvement	77%	210	73%	19
Informal involvement	19%	53	23%	6
Not involved	3%	9	4%	1
BASE		272		26
On campus careers events		Total		UK
Formal involvement	83%	227	76%	19
Informal involvement	14%	38	20%	5
Not involved	3%	8	4%	1
BASE		273		25

Q37.In which sector/industry do the employers you have links with operate?		Total		UK
Business and Administrative Studies	89%	243	81%	21
Computer Sciences	80%	219	73%	19
Education	79%	216	73%	19
Mass Communications (Media Studies, Journalism)	69%	188	62%	16
Biological Sciences (Psychology, Sports Science)	63%	173	62%	16

Physical Sciences (Biology, Chemistry, Geology, Physics)	63%	172	42%	11
Social Studies (Economics, Politics)	62%	170	54%	14
Technologies	55%	150	50%	13
Creative Arts and Design (including Performing Arts)	53%	144	69%	18
Engineering Sciences	52%	141	54%	14
Subjects allied to medicine (includes pharmacy, Nursing, Optometry)	51%	139	65%	17
Mathematics	49%	133	46%	12
Law	43%	118	73%	19
Tourism and Hospitality	42%	115	54%	14
Languages, Literature and related subjects	37%	100	62%	16
Music	36%	99	50%	13
Medicine and Dentistry	33%	91	23%	6
Historical and Philosophical Studies (Archaeology, Theology)	33%	89	35%	9
Architecture, Building and Planning	30%	83	46%	12
Geography	26%	70	46%	12
Veterinary Sciences, Agriculture and related subjects	21%	58	15%	4
Linguistics, Classics and related subjects (Latin studies, Classical Greek studies)	19%	53	31%	8
Joint honours or multi-subject degree	18%	50	35%	9
Other, please specify	7%	19	4%	1
BASE		273	26	

© Crown copyright 2011

You may re-use this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. Visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is also available on our website at www.bis.gov.uk

Any enquiries regarding this publication should be sent to:

Department for Business, Innovation and Skills
1 Victoria Street
London SW1H 0ET
Tel: 020 7215 5000

If you require this publication in an alternative format, email enquiries@bis.gsi.gov.uk, or call 020 7215 5000.

URN 11/913