

Enhancing employability: strategy to delivery

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- **Context for LJMU's Student Employability & Graduate Outcomes Plan: 2020 & 2024**
- **Strategic objectives – rationale; guidelines; considerations:**
 - **Employability skills & mindset**
 - **Work-Based & Placement Learning**
 - **A compelling onward plan**
 - **Job creation & business creation in the Liverpool City Region**
- **Examples of good practice**

Why is employability important to LJMU?

- Career readiness data revealed the proportion of new undergraduates stating *'my studies are not related to my career ambitions'* was 0.1% (7 out of 5,732 students)
- Postgraduate Taught Experience Surveys (PTES) revealed career progression to be the primary motivation for students taking up a course at LJMU. *'To progress in my current career path'* (60%) and *'To improve my employment prospects'* (57%) scored above sector average



National Student Survey (NSS) comments

The teaching staff [...] show **a real desire to help students get the most out of their degree and give them the best start going forward into their career**

I have had some really inspiring lecturers that have definitely had **a positive hand in shaping my future career choices and helping me discover areas I'm passionate about**

Our lecturers always do their best to make sure that **we engage with the outside world and get as much experience as we can**. This is such a vital component of the course

Despite coming to uni in hopes to be pointed in some sort of direction, **we have had very little opportunity to explore potential careers**, with [...] very few careers events/classes/talks being offered. **It would have been nice after 4 years to have some idea of what I would like to do with my degree**

I think most people in my course have [been] **put off some fields just because the lecturer made it seem uninteresting**

Telling students who are trying their best, who are under pressure with deadlines from numerous modules, that you know nothing and none of you will get a job is unacceptable

Student debt rising to more than £50,000, says IFS

By Sean Coughlan
Education correspondent

© 5 July 2017



Almost 1.8m people owe £50,000 or more in student debt

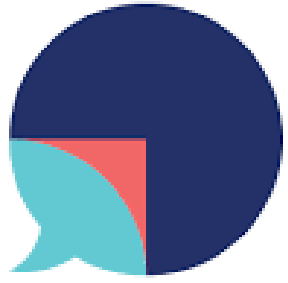


The highest debt known to the Student Loan Company now stands at more than £250,000

Harrison Jones

BBC News

2 July 2024 · 3627 Comments



GRADUATE OUTCOMES

Office for
Students

ofs

The Guardian University Guide



Only with the Guardian
this Saturday



The
Guardian

Aim: ‘every student, whatever their background, has a fulfilling experience of higher education that enriches their lives and careers’

Core goal: ‘students are well prepared for life after graduation, gaining qualifications which offer rewarding opportunities for postgraduate study or employment, aligned with the needs of employers’



It is particularly important to help pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds understand their choices because their family and social networks are less likely to include people from the backgrounds they aspire to...

Interventions should focus on keeping pupils' aspirations on track rather than just 'inspiring' them.

Strategies might include:

- High-quality careers advice, work experience and work-related learning
- Skilled, learning-focused mentoring

'Educational Aspirations' Joseph Rowntree Foundation, 2013

social capital



NOUN

The networks of relationships among people who live and work in a particular society, enabling that society to function effectively.

<http://www.lse.ac.uk/lse-player?id=4597>

The Class Ceiling

Why it Pays to be Privileged

Sam Friedman & Daniel Laurison





You are ??? times more likely to become a lawyer if you have a parent who is or was a lawyer



You are 16 times more likely to become a lawyer if you have a parent who is or was a lawyer

You are ??? times more likely to become a doctor if you have a parent who is or was a doctor



You are 16 times more likely to become a lawyer if you have a parent who is or was a lawyer

You are 24 times more likely to become a doctor if you have a parent who is or was a doctor



**??? % of undergraduate students
have received no careers guidance
prior to joining LJMU**



**67.1% of undergraduate students
have received no careers guidance
prior to joining LJMU**

Aim: All students – regardless of background, degree discipline & personal aspiration – experience a transformative change in their skills & mindset, self-awareness, agency & career trajectory as a result of studying at LJMU



Objective: Employability skills & mindset foregrounded, developed & celebrated throughout the lifetime of courses... and beyond

Objective: All undergraduates successfully undertake a work-based learning experience as a core feature of their course

Objective: No student leaves without a compelling onward plan. Graduates are supported to thrive within their early careers

Objective: New graduate roles & graduate-owned businesses created through our intervention in the LCR graduate labour market

Four curricular elements, locally translated

- **Employability skills & mindset foregrounded, developed & affirmed throughout the lifetime of every course**
- **Level 4 ‘Future Focus’ e-learning task & in-curriculum workshop**
(Included within Academic Framework. Provided by Student Futures, in liaison with Programme / Module Leaders)
- **An assessed work-based learning experience as a core feature of every undergraduate Programme**
- **Activity in the final year of study to ensure no student leaves without a compelling onward plan**

A set of achievements - skills, understandings & personal attributes - that make individuals more likely to gain employment and be successful in their chosen occupations, which benefits themselves, the workforce, the community and the economy

Knight & Yorke, 2003



What skills & attributes will enable our students & graduates to thrive in 2025?



Employability skills & mindset

Knowledge		
Specialist knowledge	Organisational awareness	Career agility & mastery

Skills			
Specialist skills	Employability skills		
	Analysis, problem solving & decision making	Creativity & enterprise	Intercultural & boundary spanning skills
	Professional written & spoken communication	Numeracy & financial literacy	Leadership & mobilising others
	Planning & organisation	Team working & collaboration	ICT & technology: Digital capability

Mindset			
Self-aware, self-confident & independent	Positive & passionate	Resourceful, adaptable, lifelong learner	Tenacious, resilient, growth mindset
Proactive, takes calculated risks	Trustworthy & responsible	Respectful of others	Values-led & ethical

What would a meaningful approach look like?

- An appropriate place within the Programme has been identified for a learning outcome associated with each of the nine key skills. There are linked assessments
- Skills are embedded throughout the duration of the programme
- Skills are level-appropriate and build over the course of the programme
- Skills self-assessment and action planning via Skills Checker



What would a meaningful approach look like?

It is vital that students recognise what they have been learning. There is quite a lot of evidence that they are often not prepared to translate their experience of 'doing a degree' into the language of achievements valued by employers. **When employability-enhancing elements are only tacitly present, students' claims to employability are seriously compromised. If your project fosters achievements valued by employers, does it also ensure that learners know this?**

Knight et al, 2003



- **Explore your talents, passions & purpose early and start developing the proactivity & adaptability you need to thrive in the future**
- 91% say they would recommend it to their friends
- Satisfaction rate with the linked workshop is 98%
- *‘Created a clear vision of what I want to pursue’*
- *‘The talent section opened my eyes to talents I didn’t realise I had’*
- *‘I liked the part where it showed how some of the most successful people struggled to begin with but carried on. I found that motivating’*
- **Increasingly, we are profiling strengths as well as skills**



Authentic structured opportunities for learning which are achieved in a workplace setting or designed to meet an identified workplace [or community] need.

This type of learning typically has a dual function of being designed to meet the learning needs of [students], developing their knowledge, skills & professional behaviours, and also meeting the development needs of the organisation [or community]

‘UK Quality Code for Higher Education – Advice & Guidance: Work-Based Learning’, QAA

Work-based & placement learning: a diverse field

All undergraduates will complete at least one assessed work placement or alternative work-based learning experience as part of a core module, with scope to select 'best fit' from a range of models

Placements

- Short duration
- Credit-bearing year in industry
- Integrated, practice-based (*e.g. Nursing; Initial Teacher Education*)

Projects

- Group projects for an external client
- Research activity
- Design briefs & curriculum challenges
- Start-up & enterprise development

Portfolios

- Set number of hours of externally acquired professional experience
- Volunteering; internships; part-time jobs; networking; Unitemps assignments; placements & projects

What would a meaningful approach look like?

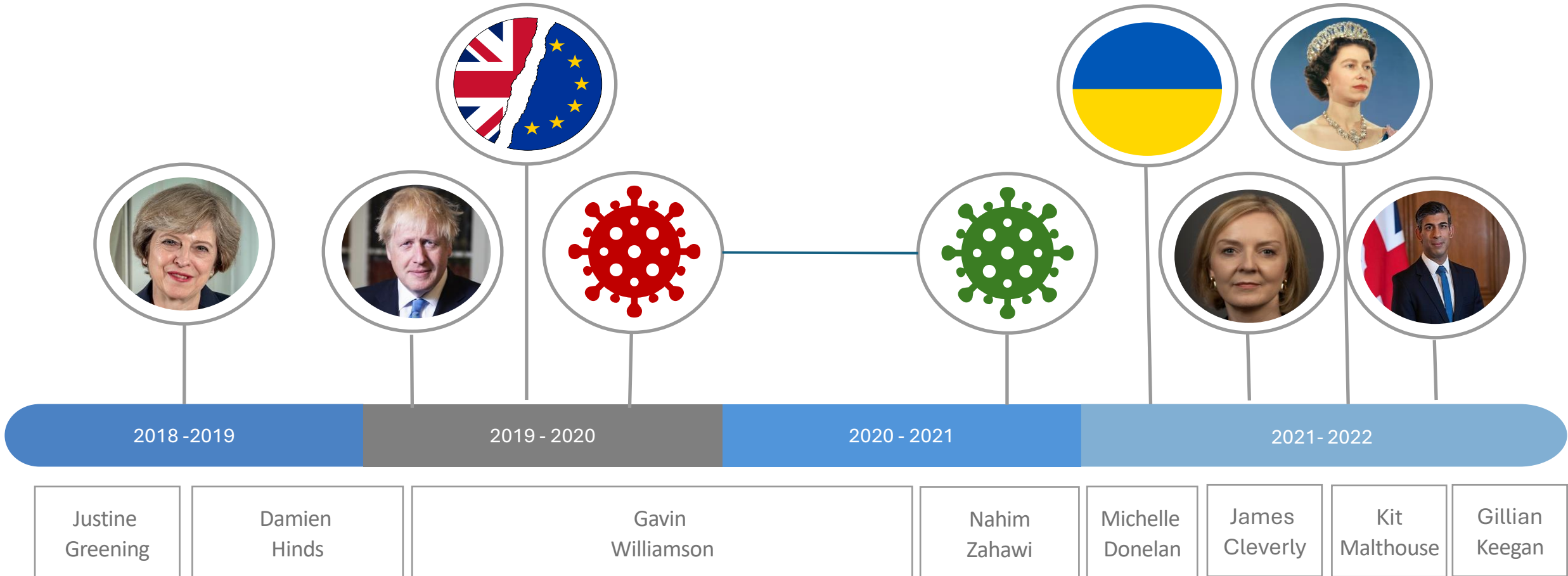
- **The work-based learning approach fits the QAA definition**
- **The experience is either the focus of, or a substantive element within, a core module**
- **Students wellbeing & learning is assured –** due diligence; risk profiling; facilitating access for students from diverse backgrounds; workplace supervision & mentoring (co-educators); scaffolding reflection & enterprise



- **At least one transition-focused activity in the final year of study, located within core learning to maximise student participation** e.g. ‘what can I do with my degree?’ lectures; assessment centres; employer panels & networking opportunities; workplace visits
- **Other co-curricular mechanisms utilised** e.g. via Personal Tutors & Research Supervisors as coaches and points of referral; mentoring




The World of the 2021-2022 Leavers



- **Six of seven universities in the North West's city regions experienced a greater decline in High Skilled Employment than across the UK**
- Students originating from the North West are more likely to stay in the region to study and to work
- **4.5% more LJMU graduates (45.7%) stayed in the LCR to work this year. They were -4.8% less likely to be in High Skilled Employment**
- 77.5% of LJMU graduates who originated from the LCR stayed in the region to work



- **45% of LJMU's undergraduate students join us from IMD Q1&2 backgrounds**
 - While the gap between this group and LJMU graduates overall is improving, **students from these backgrounds remain -3.1% less likely to be in High Skilled Employment than UK average**
 - Strengthening social capital & enabling access to opportunities remains key
- 
- **Students with a declared mental health condition are -14.5% less likely to be in High Skilled Employment than UK average**
 - Activities within LJMU's Access & Participation Plan that Student Futures will be leading on include mentoring, themes events, targeted internships and bursaries