



University
of Glasgow



Planning for the Profession

Dr Dickon Copsey
Gail Angus



Planning for the profession

A 4-week careers/employability programme for year 2 delivered by Careers and the College Employability Officer. The aim of the programme is to help students to develop self-awareness, start to understand the opportunities that are available to them and how to research these, how to make career decisions and how to promote themselves and network effectively.

Context

Adam Smith Business School,

College of Social Sciences

Level: Year 2

Subject: Accounting and Finance (Bacc)

Contributors: Dr Dickon Copsey (College Employability Officer) and Gail Angus (Careers Manager)

Email address: Dickon.Copsey@Glasgow.ac.uk

Key features



A medium sized group (25-100).

Focus on raising general awareness.

A seminar-type event involving a mix of in-class and out-of-class sessions; 2 hours per week for 4 weeks.

Paper materials, slides and projector are needed to carry out the activity.

Nominal integration in the curriculum and little impact on subject staff's workload as fully delivered by the Careers services.

No technology used but the activity could be partially moved on to Moodle.





Activity description

Rationale

The programme was designed to increase students' awareness of their strengths, skills and attributes at a key stage of their employability and to articulate them to prospective employers.

Implementation

The aim of the programme is to help students to develop self-awareness, start to understand the opportunities that are available to them and how to research these, how to make career decisions and how to promote themselves and network effectively.

The following sessions were delivered:

Week 1: Self Awareness and Strengths

Week 2: LinkedIn

Week 3: Alumni Networking

Week 4: What Next and Action Planning

After each session, a follow up e-mail was sent to students with additional resources relating to the session, additional tasks they could undertake and a reminder of what we would cover the following week.

In the final session, we asked students to write 'a postcard to the future' encouraging them to write a message to themselves of how they will tackle 3rd year, this will be sent to them at the end of summer.

Full details of the programme are available on the post-programme evaluation.



Reactions

The students responded extremely positively to the content and have remained in contact since. Each sessions was evaluated in addition to the course as a whole. Pre- and post confidence and knowledge questionnaires were also used.

The majority of students (52.38%) rated the content of the sessions as excellent, with the rest being rated good (47.62%). The majority of students (57.14%) also rated the relevance to their interests/needs as excellent with the remainder (42.86%) rating this as good. The overall rating was good (52.38%), with the remained of students rating it as excellent.

Student reactions:

"It was really useful. Meeting people that work in the same sector that you want to work in gives you a hint of what could be your next steps towards your career. As people experienced in the job market they were also able to give me tips about what to do or not do as a student looking towards the final year of my degree; and also use those tips to build up skills and things that will make me out-stand"

"I found this session to be very useful as LinkedIN is something I was aware existed but knew little about in terms of how to use it and get the best out of it. I think that the knowledge I have gained from this session will help build an effective profile for the stage I am at in my career at University. It was also quite interesting to know not only what to include in a good profile but also how to put it across so that it has a greater impact on those reading it. Overall I would say that this was an excellent session and would highly recommend it to others"

Analysis & evaluation

Overall, the 4 week programme works well. The model has been refined over the past 4 years. In relatively short space of time (8 hours) students move to a place where they are much better at analysing and identifying their own strengths and skill sets, where they can articulate these skills in a format suitable for prospective employers, and have started to expand their professional networks and future career plans through direct contact with alumni.

Key successes were the mix of interactive and teacher-led activities, the combination of group and individual learning, the complementary learning that was required in between classroom time and the general positive students responses to the level and format of the content delivered.



Recommendations

Areas for future consideration could include:

- How to retain students across all 4 sessions;
- How to ensure learning continues beyond the 4-week block;
- A more robust evaluation of the impact of the classes on confidence and knowledge acquisition;
- How to role out materials and classroom sessions designed for 40 students to the whole L2 AccFin cohort.



This resource is part of the 'Graduate Attributes – Roadmap for Staff' resource:

<https://www.gla.ac.uk/myglasgow/leads/goodpractice/graduateattributes>

© University of Glasgow (2018)