



University  
of Glasgow



# Alumni Speed- Networking

**Sarah Armour**



## Alumni speed networking

Psychology alumni and students meet at a speed networking event in order to hear what waits beyond graduation and reflect on their professional future.

### Context

School of Psychology and Neuroscience

Level: All

Subject: Psychology

**Contributor: Sarah Armour (Alumni  
Volunteers Manager)**

Email address: [Sarah.Armour@Glasgow.ac.uk](mailto:Sarah.Armour@Glasgow.ac.uk)

Other contributors: Dr Archie Roy (Careers Manager)



## Key features

Medium group size (25-100).

Focus on raising general awareness.

A standalone out-of-class activity of 2 hours in students' own time.

Nominal impact on syllabus redesign as long as the schedule is adjusted to include the activity.

Considerable impact on staff workload: sourcing alumni to participate takes approx. 1 hour per participant (6 participants were involved in the session).

Involves GTAs, Career Services, Student Ambassadors, and external stakeholders.





# Activity description

## Rationale

Our graduates represent a wealth of experience and play a vital role in encouraging the alumni of the future by giving them confidence in what they can achieve after graduation.

- Raise student aspirations about where a degree from Glasgow will take them;
- Give our students an insight into different careers and industries;
- Help students think about what they will need to do now to get ahead;
- Reinforce the transferable skills gained during their degree;
- Help overcome student apathy and lack of confidence in networking and mentoring. Useful tools in helping students understand graduate attributes;
- Compliment and reinforce graduate attributes activities being delivered within the School curriculum.



# Activity description



## Implementation

### Format

5 psychology alumni from a range of career destinations were seated at different tables with groups of students.

Each alumnus introduced themselves and talked about their career since graduating (approx. 2 mins). The students will then have an opportunity to ask questions. After 15 mins a bell sounded and that graduate moved tables to be seated with different students.

At the end there will be some time for informal networking. We know this format works well and creates a lively atmosphere. It also helps our less confident students to benefit.

### Preparation

Sourcing and approaching alumni takes time and alumni need enough advance notice to be able to commit. The alumni members are fully briefed at least 1 week before event. Furthermore, a suitable room has to be found, one that can accommodate tables of approximately 10 people. If budget is available, catering can be arranged too.

### Feedback

Feedback was designed by the School of Psychology and completed by students after the session. This was designed to assess what impact the session had on graduate attribute awareness and confidence.





## Reactions

100% of alumni asked said they would participate in similar initiatives in the future.

Example of feedback written by students immediately following the session:

- Please tell us what you most enjoyed about the event:

*“The variety of career paths, getting personal insight/ asking individual questions, the range of jobs available to psychologists, getting lots of ideas and more orientation.”*

- Is there anything we should adapt or change?

*“A lot of the graduates were working within the same field (mostly clinical psychology), more time for questions maybe, I really enjoyed it and this should definitely be a yearly opportunity/event!”*

- Why are graduate attributes important to you?

*“Useful soft skills in every area of life, to increase employability, to develop a great career based on the experience/skills gained during my studies, to get a positive outlook on the future and get an idea of how people develop.”*

- Is there anything else you would like to add?

*“Definitely worth attending! Should be run in the future, thanks for doing this: it is really helpful to talk to alumnus; Thank you very much for organising the event; I enjoyed it and I feel very lucky having the chance to participate.”*



## Analysis & evaluation

The students and alumni really liked the format which was lively and engaging. Every student had the chance to hear from each graduate which would have been challenging in a more traditional networking scenario and difficult for less confidence students.

In terms of improvements, students requested a greater variety in career destinations represented and more time at each table. More time with each graduate would be difficult to offer as the session was already 2 hours.

As for the impact of this activity on the students' learning, they gained a great understanding of their graduate attributes and how this transferred to the workplace by real life graduate testimony. This session works well to support graduate activities being delivered by the School within the curriculum.



# Recommendations

This activity could easily be extended and adapted to other groups of students. The Alumni Volunteering Team who delivered this have worked with other Schools and student groups to deliver similar sessions.

If you are interested in finding out more, get in touch with the Alumni Volunteering Team who would be happy to help!

[Alumni-student-network@glasgow.ac.uk](mailto:Alumni-student-network@glasgow.ac.uk)



*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)