Academic Services Directorate

Title	**Report of the Thematic Review of work-related and placement learning**
Date	24 May 2010
Author	Dr Martha-Marie Kleinhans, Chair, Thematic Review of work-related and placement learning

Key Points

The Thematic Review of work-related and placement learning was established by the University Board for Teaching and Learning at its meeting on 23 April 2009.

The final report makes nine recommendations, which are summarised below.

1. The Review recommends that:

    a) UBTL undertake further work to explore work-related and placement learning (WRPL) provision for taught postgraduate students;

    b) The Committee on Postgraduate Research Studies undertake further work to explore WRPL provision for postgraduate research students.

    It recommends that any further work build on this report and the findings of the *Reading Postgraduate Employability Survey 2009,* and suggests that UBTL and CPGRS consider including the Chair and/or other members of the Review.

2. The Review recommends the *Employer Engagement Toolkit* developed by CCMS for use by Schools and Departments as a regular part of their reflection on teaching and learning, and by CDoTL as an element of the Pathfinder process.

3. The Review recommends the continuation and wider promotion of the current policy of charging 20% of the standard tuition fee to students on integrated placement years while allocating a whole FTE to Schools for each placement student as a means to incentivise this valuable activity for Schools. It recommends that any review of this policy consider the negative impact on the prioritisation of placement learning at Reading.

4. The Review recommends that by 2011/12, all undergraduate programmes must have a placement opportunity (PO) available to students registered on the programme. POs can take one of three forms:

    *   Micro – embedded within a module;

    *   Mini – constituting an entire module;

    *   Maxi – comprising a year.

    *Placement Opportunity (PO) shall mean a work or academic placement.

5. The Review recommends that RISIS adopt codes corresponding to the three types of PO – Micro, Mini and Maxi – to enable the University to track students undertaking work and academic placements.

6. The Review recommends that:

    a) When revising module descriptions for 2011/12, Schools/Departments (in conjunction with FDTLs) review module titles to ensure transparency of the existence of a PO within them;

    b) When revising programme specifications for 2011/12, Schools/Departments (in conjunction with FDTLs) specifically revise the "Opportunities for placements/study abroad" section to ensure that the content is clear, accurate and in line with Recommendation 4.

7. The Review recommends that a central Placement Hub be established to work in conjunction with CDoTL, the Quality Support Office, the Study/Work Abroad Office and others to serve

staff, students, prospective students, employers, parents and other stakeholders. It recommends that the remit of the Placement Hub include:

(i) development and maintenance of a central record of the curricular, co-curricular and extra-curricular WRPL opportunities currently available across the University;

(ii) maintenance, revision and augmentation of the *Employer Engagement Toolkit* in conjunction with CDoTL;

(iii) provision of advice and guidance to staff on developing WRPL opportunities and particularly POs;

(iv) management of curriculum-based POs, including responsibility for quality assurance, where numbers or expertise preclude co-ordination at School level;

(v) monitoring the management of POs and ensuring appropriate arrangements are in place with regard to quality management and enhancement, health and safety, insurance, risk assessment and legal issues;

(vi) management of existing extra-curricular schemes; for example, UROP and SEED;

(vii) provision of advice and guidance to students and prospective students regarding the variety of WRPL opportunities available across the University;

(viii) promotion of POs and other WRL opportunities to all relevant stakeholders in conjunction with other responsible parties;

(ix) acting as a 'front door', both virtual and physical, for all relevant stakeholders;

(x) co-ordination of, and liaison with, relevant communities of practice within the University to include Placement tutors in Schools, building on the existing Placement Tutors Forum;

(xi) liaison with relevant teaching and learning stakeholders across the University, including CDoTL, the Quality Support Office and Study/Work Abroad Office, to ensure engagement with the wider teaching and learning agenda.

The above list is not exhaustive and it is accepted that the responsibilities of the Placement Hub will be extensive and require further articulation through a review of resourcing for the Hub. The issues raised in section 5.4.2 are considered crucial to the Placement Hub's activities.

8. The Review recommends that the Employment Project Group review how it might best present information relating to employability and WRPL opportunities to prospective and current students, employers and other stakeholders in line with the points made in the report.

9. If UBTL approves the recommendations set out within this Report, the Review would recommend that the Employment Project Group be asked to convene an Implementation Group, to report to both the EPG (or the appropriate subsequent body) and UBTL, to oversee the implementation of the recommended changes to take effect from the 2011/12 academic year.

Action Required

UBTL is asked to **approve** the final report of the Thematic Review and the recommendations contained therein, and to **consider** whether the report should also be circulated to other committees.

Thematic Review of work-related and placement learning 2009-10

(For submission to the University Board for Teaching and Learning on 3 June 2010)

Executive Summary

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Report

1. Background

1.1 Previous Thematic Reviews

1.1.1 At its meeting held on 6 October 2004, the University Board for Teaching and Learning approved the establishment of a programme of 'Thematic Reviews' of teaching and learning-related issues. These 'Thematic Reviews' were intended to complement the existing programme of Periodic Reviews of programmes and to enhance the University's teaching and learning provision by:

a) providing an opportunity to review certain aspects of that provision and to assess its strengths and weaknesses, particularly where this involved relatively new initiatives;

b) allowing the University to take an institutional overview of the area under review;

c) identifying good practice in the areas under review and to allow such good practice to be disseminated.

1.1.2 Since this time, the University has conducted Thematic Reviews in the following areas: Student Progression at Part 1; the Personal Tutor System; Transferable Skills; Quality Enhancement Procedures and Undergraduate Modularisation. Each of these Reviews has resulted in a number of significant developments.

1.1.3 The Institutional Audit (March 2008) made reference to the system of Thematic Reviews as follows:

> *Since the 2004 audit, the University has been conducting annual thematic reviews. These are designed to produce institutional overviews in particular areas and to identify good practice. These reviews have produced strong reports and a series of recommendations that have been taken up by the University.*

1.2 Work-related and Placement Learning

1.2.1 At its meeting held on 23 April 2009, the University Board for Teaching and Learning (UBTL) agreed that a Thematic Review of work-based learning and employability take place during the course of the 2009-10 academic year. The title of the review was amended at the 19 November 2009 meeting of UBTL to that of "work-related and placement learning" to provide a tighter focus for the Review (09/106) and a timescale of January-June 2010 was agreed.

National context

1.2.2 The focus on work-related and placement learning (WRPL) is both pertinent and timely in view of the current national context.

1.2.3 A number of recent Government reports have highlighted the need for increased employer engagement in Higher Education. The *Leitch Review of Skills: Prosperity for All in the Global Economy – world class skills* (December 2006) made a number of recommendations relating to employer engagement and investment in skills and strengthening the interaction between employers and universities. More recently, *Higher Ambitions: The Future of universities in a knowledge economy* (Department for

Business, Innovation and Skills, November 2009) set out the Government's strategy for the future success of Higher Education in the UK. Key recommendations included increased engagement of business in the funding and design of programmes, sponsorship of students and work placements, and the creation of more work-based and foundation degrees.

1.2.4   A number of other recent reports published by national bodies reflect an increasing focus on employer engagement in HE and specifically on the development, and perceived benefits, of work-related learning. These include a series of work-based learning studies published by the HEA in July 2008 (*Impact Study; Costing Study; Workforce development: Connections, frameworks and processes)* and *Transitions from higher education to work* (Lee Harvey, February 2003). *Employer-responsive provision survey - a reflective report,* published in February 2010 by the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA), indicated that higher education institutions in England, Wales and Northern Ireland were successfully responding to the needs of employers and, by becoming more flexible on where and how they offer their courses, were prepared to meet anticipated challenges in the future.

1.2.5   Finally, a report from the University's Careers Advisory Service (CAS) in 2009 noted that a CBI/Edexcel survey of 735 firms had shown that 86% of employers put the need to demonstrate a positive attitude and employability skills at the top of their demands. Relevant work experience was seen as next most important (62%), followed by degree subject (56%) (*Taking stock: CBI education and skills survey 2008*). More recently, CAS has noted that the majority of AGR employers (AGR, the Association of Graduate Recruiters, represents over 800 of the UKs largest employers) are offering placements in 2009-10 and that many are recruiting graduates from this cohort.

University context

1.2.6   The selection of WRPL as the focus of the Thematic Review is also consistent with current University strategy and a number of recent internal initiatives.

1.2.7   The University's Corporate Plan 2008-13 includes the following target: "*Be in the top 20 universities for graduate employability by 2013*". This highlights the importance currently accorded to employability.

1.2.8   The University has prioritised 18 areas for enhancement from its *Learning and Teaching Strategy* (2008-2013) to focus on in 2009-2011. One of the enhancement priorities is to "*Offer students opportunities for work-based "real world" learning experiences within the curricula and outside their formal learning.*" The specific actions identified under this priority are as follows:

> *11 (39). Further develop opportunities and support (incl quality monitoring) for placements within programmes where appropriate*
>
> *12 (40). Encourage and support students to seek relevant work experience including internships and increase the internship opportunities available*
>
> *13 (41). Further develop and support work-based/ work-related projects in the curriculum where appropriate*
>
> *14 (36). Develop mechanisms for employer involvement in L&T at University and discipline levels*

1.2.9   A report written by the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Teaching and Learning) in August 2009, *Improving the Employability of Reading Graduates*, highlighted Reading's consistently poor performance in the statistics for graduate level employability, the resulting impact on its league table position and likely negative impact on student recruitment. The

report made a number of specific references to WRPL and to the proliferation of, benefits to be derived from, and potential barriers to further development of, placement opportunities. For example:

> *Reading provides many opportunities for students to gain work experience but we need to undertake an audit to fully understand what opportunities are available, the demand and take up. If demand outstrips supply Reading will need to consider how it can increase such opportunities.*
>
> *...*
>
> *Gaining experience of work and using it for self development and promotion is widely recognised as a key to student success in the job market. Students gain work experience either within the curriculum or through extra-curricular activities.*
>
> *...*
>
> *Quite a few of the degree programmes at Reading offer work placements of various lengths as degree options or integrated parts of the degree. These are referred to in a number of ways including: sandwich years, industrial years, intercalated years, years abroad, short-term work placements etc. … It is recognised that students benefit in many ways from work experience and often return to their academic studies with renewed focus and ambition.*
>
> *As a University in general, it appears that, unlike some other institutions, we do not promote Reading as a place where work-related and placement learning opportunities are frequently available and considered important. The different terminology that we use to describe these may not help and there may be room for standardising what we call them if only to better promote what the University offers. The importance of placements has been well understood by some Schools which have had 'Placement Officers' for some time: other Schools have appointed such counterparts recently.*
>
> *However, there are some subject areas which offer no such opportunities, possibly because there is no clear professional or vocational link and thus it may be more difficult to find placement opportunities or students interested to do them.*

The report also made reference to the potential benefits of extra-curricular work experience including internships, vacation studentships, volunteering and paid work.

1.2.10 In line with the recommendations made in Professor Robson's report, the Employment Project Group was established by the Senior Management Board in July 2009, with a remit to consider how the University could improve its graduate employment statistics as evidenced by the DLHE returns and to report to the Senior Management Board in Autumn 2010. The Thematic Review is identified as a contributor to the project with regard to one area of investigation in particular, *1.1 Provision of in-course placements, long and short*, under *Theme 1 – Work experience and placements*. The Senior Academic Project Manager was included in the membership of the Thematic Review to facilitate cross-over between the two projects.

1.2.11 The University was awarded funding from 2005-2010 for the Centre for Excellence in Teaching and Learning for Applied Undergraduate Research Skills (CETL-AURS) and the Centre for Career Management Skills (CCMS). Both centres have provided funding for projects with a WRPL focus, thereby promoting the development of effective practice in this area and highlighting relevant issues.

1.2.12 Another recent University initiative with relevance for WRPL is the work of the Evolution of MASIV Working Group. The Group was set up by UBTL in June 2009 to explore how the current MASIV scheme could be evolved in order to enhance the

employability of Reading students. At its meeting in January 2010, UBTL approved the Working Group's proposed new framework for volunteering and related activities: the Reading Experience and Development Award (RED Award) (see 5.6.2 for further detail).

1.2.13 The Working Group on the Quality Assurance of Work Placements, which reported to UBTL in June 2009, was another key internal driver for the instigation of the Thematic Review. The final report made a number of recommendations relating to work placements; most notably that, "*The next thematic review should focus on work related learning as a mechanism for increasing student and staff engagement in this area*".

1.2.14 Finally, a Placement Tutors Forum was launched in January 2010 by CAS, which took the form of several pages of the CAS website for staff (http://www.reading.ac.uk/careers/staff-only/placements/index.asp) which includes some guidance on placement learning. (CAS plan to develop a student-focused model.) Regular meetings are planned for tutors to explore how to further develop existing resources.

2. Membership

The Thematic Review Group comprised:

Dr. Martha-Marie Kleinhans, Faculty Director of Teaching and Learning (Social Sciences) (*Chair*)

Jennifer L. Chetcuti, Academic Services *(Secretary)*

Prof. Jennifer Ghandhi, Director of Student Services

 Keith H.S. Swanson, Director of Academic Quality Support

Dr. Rachel Stewart, Senior Academic Project Manager

Emma Sowden, Placements Manager, Careers Advisory Service

Marcus Dowse, Erasmus and Study Abroad Manager, Reading International Office

Sarah Morey, Centre for the Development of Teaching and Learning

David Stanbury, Centre for Career Management Skills (CCMS)

Academic representatives:

Julie Rees (FoS)

Dr Lucinda Becker (FAH)

Prof. Michael H. Gordon (FoLS)

Dr Maria Gee (HBS)

Student representatives:

Tom Gilchrist, Vice-President (Education), Reading University Students' Union

Anna Barnes, Vice-President (Student Activities), Reading University Students' Union

Co-opted:

Tricia O'Neill, Deputy Director, Development and Alumni Relations

Dr Susan Matos, Head of Knowledge Transfer Programmes, Knowledge Transfer Centre

Dr Simon Burke, School of Economics

3. Terms of Reference

The Terms of Reference for the Thematic Review were as follows:

a) To consider the role of work-related and placement learning in the curriculum at Reading, with particular reference to:

(i) the variety of work-related and placement learning opportunities available;

(ii) accreditation of work-related and placement learning (within the curriculum);

(iii) centralisation and concentration vs. local-led provision;

(iv) the opportunities that all Reading students have to undertake work-related and placement learning;

(v) potential mechanisms for assessment of work-related learning;

(vi) the variety of curriculum structures necessary to provide these opportunities; and,

(vii) the nature and quality of academic and transferable skills gained by students.

b) To review work-related and placement learning provision with reference to external examples of good practice.

c) To report to the University Board for Teaching and Learning by the end of the 2009-10 academic year.

4. Methodology

4.1 The Review held five meetings during the Spring and Summer Terms 2010 which focussed on the following areas:

12 January 2010 – definition of the scope of the Thematic Review and what was meant by WRPL in this context, identification of key issues to be explored;

16 February 2010 – discussion of current and planned WRPL opportunities at Reading;

23 March 2010 – provision of placement learning opportunities at other institutions and the appropriateness of different approaches for Reading;

22 April 2010 - provision of work-related learning opportunities other than placements at Reading and across the sector, and discussion of possible future developments at Reading; and,

18 May 2010 – review of the draft final report and recommendations.

4.2 The report was finalised via correspondence.

4.3 Examples of current and planned WRPL initiatives at the University (including relevant projects funded by the CETL-AURS) were elicited from academic representatives, student representatives and from Review members representing central services, including CAS, CCMS, Reading International Office, the Development and Alumni Relations team, Centre for the Development of Teaching and Learning (CDoTL) and the Knowledge Transfer Centre.

4.4 The Review also received extracts from Faculty Annual Quality Assurance Reports relating to the 2008-09 academic year which provided further examples of WRPL activities across the University.

4.5   A list of WRPL opportunities was drawn up in the form of a wiki on Blackboard (please see Appendix 1). The information was organised in a standard format under a number of headings relating to the Review's Terms of Reference. Members were asked to review and supplement the content and to suggest other colleagues who would be well-placed to contribute further. Faculty Directors of Teaching and Learning (FDTLs) were also informed of the existence of the wiki and asked to disseminate the information to School Directors of Teaching and Learning (SDTLs) who might be able to identify other colleagues who could contribute. This ensured that relevant staff from across the University were consulted and given the opportunity to contribute to the Review.

4.6   A representative from the School of Real Estate and Planning was invited to give a presentation to the Review on a new module which had been developed with a work-related learning focus.

4.7   The Senior Academic Project Manager gave a presentation to the Review on the Employment Project Group and potential overlap with the Thematic Review.

4.8   Examples of, and approaches to, placement learning opportunities at other institutions were gathered via consultation with the Academic Project Management Office and subsequent investigation of other HEI websites. The Review focussed on a selection of 94 Group universities which were considered to be direct competitors, including Surrey due to its reputation for excellence in the area of placements and Exeter due to its strong employability focus. The Learning Support Manager, CDoTL gave a presentation to the Review on placement learning opportunities at other institutions.

4.9   Examples of work-related learning opportunities other than placements at other institutions were gathered via consultation with the Academic Project Management Office and investigation of websites. The Review focused in particular on the wide variety of examples of Enquiry-Based Learning (EBL) which had been developed across a range of disciplines under the Centre for Inquiry-based Learning in the Arts and Social Sciences (CILASS) at Sheffield and the Centre for Excellence in Enquiry-based Learning (CEEBL) at Manchester.

4.10   The Chair consulted the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Enterprise) regarding the Review's draft recommendations, to ensure consistency with the University's Enterprise Strategy and to explore the possibility of convening a group to oversee employer engagement and WRPL.

4.11   The Chair also consulted the Employment Project Group and the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Teaching and Learning) regarding the Review's final report and recommendations.

4.12   The Review received and considered a wide range of internal and external documentation and resources, listed in Appendix 2.

4.13   This final report draws together the key findings of the Review's investigations and makes recommendations concerning the further development and enhancement of WRPL opportunities at Reading in the light of other University developments.

5   Main Findings and Recommendations

5.1 Definitions and scope of the Review

5.1.1   The Review adopted a relatively broad definition of "work-related and placement learning", including curricular and co-curricular work-related learning and placements.

5.1.2 The Review discussed the difference between work placements and academic placements, including study abroad placements; members considered that different issues often presented themselves in relation to the latter. The Review also recognised many similarities between the two types of placement, including the learning opportunities provided to students. The recommendations made by the Review therefore encompass both work and academic placements and the terminology of "placement opportunities" (PO) was adopted.

5.1.3 The Review initially agreed to consider WRPL provision for all students, including undergraduate, postgraduate taught and postgraduate research students.

5.1.4 With regard to postgraduate students, the Review noted the findings of a 2009 employability survey conducted by CAS which investigated the attitudes, expectations and needs of postgraduate students and made a number of recommendations relating to WRPL including:

> *various steps should be taken to increase student employability (e.g. work placement schemes, workshops), especially with regards to postgraduate students*
>
> *…*
>
> *closer links be made and maintained between the university and local employers to create more work placement schemes, and also to educate employers about the legalities of hiring international students, and about the benefits of employing postgraduate students*

The Review noted that CAS had been allocated funding to develop commercial secondments for postgraduate research students during 2010-11. It considered that a very different range of issues was associated with WRPL opportunities for postgraduate research students and that these issues would be best addressed by the Committee on Postgraduate Research Studies (CPGRS) and in the context of the new Graduate School and in the light of some of the work of this Review, generally.

The Review recognised the wide diversity of taught postgraduate programme structures and considered that WRPL provision for taught postgraduate students could not be properly addressed within the timescale set for this Review. It agreed that further work would be required in this area.

The Review considered that further work done on PGR and PGT WRPL should probably include the Chair and/or other members of the Review to ensure a more "joined-up"/consistent approach across the University community as well as to avoid duplicate effort/work in terms of some of the issues addressed by the Review.

Recommendation 1

The Review **recommends** that:

a) UBTL undertake further work to explore WRPL provision for taught postgraduate students;

b) CPGRS undertake further work to explore WRPL provision for postgraduate research students.

It **recommends** that any further work undertaken in respect of a) and b) build on this report and the findings of the *Reading Postgraduate Employability Survey 2009* and that UBTL and CPGRS consider the Review's suggestion that the Chair and/or other members of the Review be included in any further work.

5.1.5   The Review noted some inconsistency in the use of terminology both within the University and sector-wide. It considered that 'work experience' and 'work-based/work-related learning' could be distinguished on the basis of the existence of a formal link to academic learning and structures (present only in the latter). However, the two terms are often confused in practice.

5.1.6   The Review agreed that its primary remit should be to focus on the teaching and learning aspects of WRPL, as set out in its Terms of Reference.

5.2 Rationale behind the Review and importance of WRPL

Employability and WRPL

5.2.1   The Review noted that the University had scored relatively low in measures of graduate employability in recent years, contrary to the University's Corporate Plan goal to be in the top 20 universities for graduate employability by 2013. It was argued that this had an impact on recruitment since measures of employability were used in compiling league tables, which in turn played an important role in influencing students' (and parents') choice of University.

5.2.2   Whilst it was accepted that lower numbers are caused by some Reading graduates actively choosing to take time out to consider their options after graduation rather than attempting to enter the graduate job market immediately, this fact is not particular to Reading but one which pervades the sector.

5.2.3   The Review noted several sources of employability-related longitudinal data which had been gathered. A survey conducted by CAS in 2003 (*Graduate Destinations – 1997 to 2003*) indicated that poor short-term graduate employment prospects were often linked to poor longer-term prospects:

> *those who take a less challenging job, take time out or are unemployed are less likely to be settled over the next few years with a consequently greater level of dissatisfaction with their choice, and take longer to bridge the gap in earnings*". These findings were consistent with those of the 1999 report, *Moving On: short report: Graduate careers three years after graduation* (CSU, IER, AGCAS): "*Graduates unemployed six months after graduation typically spent more than one year unemployed over the three and a half years covered by the survey and this early experience of unemployment is associated with a greater probability of employment in a non-graduate occupation in the future and lower average earnings.*

5.2.4   The Review received summary reports of the most recent Decliners' Surveys conducted by the Student Recruitment and Outreach Office (Postgraduate Decliners' Survey 2009 and Undergraduate Decliners' Survey 2007) and noted that poor employability prospects were cited as one of the key reasons for declining a place at Reading by both undergraduates and postgraduates:

> *The main motivating factor given for undertaking PGT study was career progression.*
>
> *...*
>
> *Respondents were predominantly concerned with graduate employment figures at University level. However, employment prospects in each subject area are also starting to play a part in students' decisions to decline...*
>
> *...*
>
> *Job prospects and career possibilities continue to be important to choice.*

The % of respondents citing the University-level graduate employment figures as a factor in their decision to decline our offer for 2007 has doubled since the 2006 survey. For over one in five of these offer holders, our graduate employment figures are having a negative effect on choice. This compares with one in ten for 2006 decliners.

5.2.5   The Review received HESA data commissioned by CAS which comprised an analysis of additional DLHE data from 2007/08 and included comparison data for Exeter, Sussex and York universities. The Review noted that 9.9% of Reading graduates who responded to the DLHE survey stated that they were currently employed by someone they had worked for during their programme of study, compared with 14% of Exeter graduates, 10.3% of Sussex graduates and 12.5% of York graduates. Of those Reading graduates who had previously worked for their current employer, 8.1% had done so as part of a training/sandwich placement, 8.9% on another kind of placement or project work and the remainder had done so either as a holiday job, as a full or part-time job all year round/during term-time or in another capacity. The equivalent percentages for other institutions were 11.8% and 9.3% respectively for Exeter graduates, 6% and 6% for Sussex graduates and 10.9% and 10.2% for York graduates. It was noted that a further update for 2008/09 DLHE responses would be supplied by HESA once available.

5.2.6   The Review noted that there would be substantial crossover between the aims of the Employment Project Group, to which the Review's work would contribute, and the drive to increase provision to improve students' employability in a wider (longer-term) sense. The Review welcomed the strategic, holistic approach adopted by the Employment Project Group, and noted the need to take urgent action since Reading lagged behind many of its competitors in this respect.

5.2.7   Given the current prominence of the employability agenda both within the University and across the sector more widely, it was agreed that the present Review would also feed into work in this area.

Internationalisation

5.2.8   The Review noted strong links between the internationalisation and employability agendas. Employability is a key driver for international recruitment as international students tend to accord an even higher priority to employment prospects. Internationalisation also presents a good opportunity to enhance the employability of home students by increasing their understanding of cultural diversity and engagement with issues on a more global scale/level.

5.2.9   The Review noted relevant findings from the most recent International Student Barometer survey (Autumn 2009) in relation to international students' expectations regarding employment/careers support from the University. The Review noted that 45% of respondents expected the University to find 'work experience opportunities' for them and that a similarly high proportion expected the University to provide opportunities to network with alumni/employers. These findings were important in terms of considering how to manage student expectations in this area.

5.3 Potential benefits of WRPL

5.3.1   The Review noted that many Schools responsible for less vocational subject areas considered that placements were of limited value. However, it was suggested that academic and work placements fostered the development of generic, transferable skills including team-working and communication skills in addition to

subject-specific knowledge and therefore contribute to students' academic success and personal growth as well as to their employability.

5.3.2   Many of the other work-related learning opportunities currently offered by the University were perceived by the staff involved to be beneficial in the context of improving students' academic skills and subject-specific knowledge in addition to their employability. It would be important to emphasise this range of potential benefits when attempting to encourage student and staff engagement with WRPL opportunities.

5.3.3   The Review noted potential links between the consideration of the academic and transferable skills to be gained by students from WRPL opportunities and the work currently under way by the Personal Development Planning (PDP) Review Group and in the context of the development of the RED Award.

5.3.4   The Review noted a substantial growth in the number of students seeking placement opportunities within particular Schools in recent years. It was noted that in many cases, students' marks improved following the successful completion of a placement.

5.3.5   The Review noted two summary reports, *Degree Outcomes for University of Reading Students* and *Labour Market Outcomes for University of Reading Students*, derived from a PhD conducted by Sarah Jewell (2008). Research based on the full cohorts of students graduating from Reading in 2006 and 2007 indicated that students who had undertaken a placement as part of their course performed, on average, better on their degrees (after controlling for various personal characteristics, entry qualifications and subject) and that those who had undertaken work experience as part of their programme were more likely to get a graduate level job six months after graduation. More recent work conducted by Sarah Jewell using national 2005 and 2006 HESA/DLHE data found that those students who undertook placements were more likely to get a graduate level job and earn higher salaries six months after graduation, although this could partly be a reflection of underlying motivation.

5.3.6   The Review noted a report by HEFCE, *Attainment in higher education: Erasmus and placement students* (November 2009), which looked at the attributes and attainment of students who entered full-time first degree courses in 2002-03 and who participated in the Erasmus programme, other periods of study abroad, or a work placement, and compared them to other groups of students. The findings indicated that these groups of students attained better degree results than the average for the cohort. Placement students were also more likely to be employed six months after graduating and to have higher salaries than the average and Erasmus students were more likely to be engaged in further study while those in employment were substantially more likely to be employed abroad and had above-average salaries.

5.3.7   The Review noted the findings of a further report, *Employability Skills Initiatives in Higher Education: What Effects Do They Have On Graduate Labour Market Outcomes?* (Mason, G., Williams, G. and Cranmer, S.) (2006) which found that 'structured work experience' had clear positive effects on the ability of graduates, firstly, to find employment within six months of graduation and, secondly, to secure employment in 'graduate-level' jobs. The latter job quality measure was also found to be positively associated with employer involvement in degree course design and delivery. The report noted that the findings relating to the impact of work placements on labour market performance were consistent with many other research findings.

5.3.8   The Review noted a conference organised by the QAA (Scotland) held in May 2010 which explored the importance of productive and meaningful relationships between higher education institutions and employers and specifically how Scottish higher

education institutions were actively engaging with employers through work-based learning.

5.3.9   In addition to the anticipated benefits for the University's employability and internationalisation agendas (see also Section 5.2), the Review noted that enhanced provision and promotion of WRPL opportunities could prove to be a useful marketing tool for the University. The Review considered that it could improve the quality of applicants and encourage existing students to remain at Reading to pursue postgraduate study. This would be particularly important in the context of the anticipated lifting of the cap on tuition fees.

5.3.10   The Review noted that the development of WRPL opportunities could also be beneficial to the University and to individual staff members in terms of fostering the development of research links to external companies.

5.4 Key issues

5.4.1   UBTL had noted (10/25i) *"concerns about the low participation of Reading students in the Erasmus scheme"* and had referred this matter to the Review for further consideration.

5.4.2   During the course of the Review, members identified a number of other key issues relating to WRPL including:

Academic considerations and access to placements

(i)   How to include WRPL in the curriculum;

(ii)   The need to consider the implications for students who failed or did not complete placements;

(iii)   The lack of consistency across the University in terms of progression requirements: there is currently no standard minimum threshold of achievement for accessing work placements/study abroad opportunities;

(iv)   Should access to a placement be viewed as a right or a privilege of students? Who should be responsible for finding and securing placements – the University or individual students, and what happens when a suitable placement cannot be found? It was noted that it could be difficult and resource-intensive to place less academically able and less motivated students;

Logistical arrangements, health and safety and legal issues

(v)   How to manage students situated off-site, including health and safety issues;

(vi)   The need to conduct risk assessments for some/all placements;

(vii)   Legal issues, including Intellectual Property, Data Protection and whistle-blowing;

Centralisation vs. local-led provision

(viii)   The need for a more co-ordinated, strategic approach and clear structures for WRPL across the University. However, the Review considered that an overly prescriptive model should be avoided and that a mixed model, combining centralisation and local-led provision/structures, would be more appropriate;

Communication

(ix) The need for clear and consistent communication of information to students, staff and employers, including establishing clear points of contact for employers;

Staff roles, support and guidance

(x) The lack of staff experience in some Schools of managing programmes with a WRPL element and the current lack of clarity regarding the allocation of staff roles;

(xi) The need to disseminate good practice and provide adequate support for staff;

(xii) The University Code of Practice on Placement Learning was not well-known by staff and further guidance was required on a practical level;

International students

(xiii) While international students are permitted to undertake paid work in the UK as a part of their academic programme, they may experience additional difficulties with the recruitment process. Since many companies use work placements as part of their wider recruitment strategy, international students could face longer-term issues relating to work permits;

Disabilities

(xiv) Reading has a relatively high proportion of students with disabilities in comparison to other 94 Group universities, particularly within certain Schools. Of the 2,000 currently registered students with declared disabilities, approximately half have dyslexia and other specific learning difficulties while the remainder include blind and partially sighted students, deaf students, students with declared mental health difficulties, those with unseen disabilities, epilepsy and mobility problems. Certain groups of students, such as those with Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD), who tend to be concentrated in the Science subjects, could experience particular difficulties in seeking and making the transition into work placements and into employment in the longer term, and might require additional support in this respect. The Review noted that many employers had appropriate support structures in place and displayed a good understanding and appreciation of the particular skills sets of students/employees with ASD. Anecdotal evidence indicated that Reading was renowned for its support for blind students and students with ASD.

5.5 Current and future provision of WRPL at Reading

5.5.1   The Review discussed a wide range of examples of current and planned WRPL opportunities at the University, including:

Work/academic placement opportunities

(i)   work placements of varying nature, timing, location and duration;

(ii)   study abroad placements;

(iii)   research placements;

Other forms of work-related learning

(iv)   Graduate Teaching Assistantships;

(v) modules which included the development of work-related skills including report-writing, role-play exercises and EBL projects;

(vi) the development of 'live' professional assignments in conjunction with employers;

(vii) lectures/presentations by external speakers;

(viii) workshops run by alumni and/or employers;

(ix) careers fairs;

(x) the creation of programme advisory boards involving employers;

(xi) employer-sponsored prizes;

(xii) mentoring schemes; and,

(xiii) a variety of (predominantly) extra-curricular work schemes run by the University and RUSU, as listed in the *Experience Works* leaflet produced by CAS.

5.5.2 A report submitted to the Employment Project Group, *The face of employability: the Reading website*, noted key findings of a recent review of the Reading website from an employability perspective. The report noted a number of issues with the way in which information relating to WRPL was currently presented to prospective and current students and recent graduates:

> *Despite the high priority that Reading is affording to employability, there is no easily accessible central source of information on our website (or "front door") on the vast range of employability, personal development and work experience opportunities available, both within and around our curricula…*

> *There is not evident consistency in the information that schools, departments and other services display on their web pages relating to career prospects, employability, work-related learning opportunities and links to other relevant areas such as CAS. Both quality and quantity of information are variable, and in some cases information is less consistent than offered in the hard copy prospectus…*

> *Information can be cumbersome to unearth, involving numerous clicks and following a series of links that make it unwieldy to return to a sensible starting point.*

> *The exercise identified information on relevant web pages that was out of date, and links through to other areas of the Reading website that were broken.*

5.5.3 The Review agreed that information relating to WRPL opportunities should be captured and made available in a single place.

5.5.4 In an attempt to begin to address this issue, the Review compiled a list of current and planned WRPL opportunities at Reading using the wiki tool on Blackboard, to which members and other colleagues from across the University contributed with the aim of building a more complete picture of current provision at Reading (please see Appendix 1).

5.5.5 The Review received the *Employer Engagement Toolkit* which had been developed by CCMS in collaboration with CAS and other parties and agreed that it should be integrated with the outputs from the Thematic Review (please see Appendix 3). The Toolkit identified an eight-fold categorisation for examples of employer engagement within the curriculum and was intended to facilitate reflection by Schools/programme teams on ways in which to enhance current provision and increase employer engagement. A 'beta version' had recently been made available both externally and internally for trialling. The Joint Director, CCMS would be

running a workshop based around the Toolkit during Enhancement Week with a small number of Schools.

5.5.6 The Review considered that the Toolkit provided an effective way to highlight best practice and provide case studies relating to different approaches that Schools may wish to consider with regard to WRPL. It noted that arrangements for printing the final version of the Toolkit were under way.

5.5.7 The Review agreed that the Toolkit was appropriate for use in the context of Pathfinder/Periodic Review and as a tool that various teaching and learning stakeholders could use in conjunction with Schools/Departments to enhance their provision of WRPL opportunities.

Recommendation 2

The Review **recommends** the *Employer Engagement Toolkit* developed by CCMS for use by Schools and Departments as a regular part of their reflection on teaching and learning, and by CDoTL as an element of the Pathfinder process (see also Recommendation 7).

5.5.8 The Review noted that Erasmus funding was available for work placements in addition to academic placements and for staff mobility in addition to student mobility. It noted that the University did not currently utilise all the funding made available under the Erasmus scheme for academic and work placements.

5.5.9 The Review considered that funding for staff mobility could present significant benefits both in terms of staff development opportunities and increased understanding and promotion of the study and work abroad opportunities available to students.

5.5.10 Another area identified for further investigation was the possibility of offering nationally-recognised professional qualifications to students in addition to their intended awards. For example, students on the TAEDS programme were able to gain British Sign Language qualifications while studying.

5.5.11 For the purposes of the Review and resulting recommendations, a distinction was made between work/academic placement opportunities (hereafter referred to as POs) and other work-related learning (WRL) opportunities.

5.6 WRL opportunities other than placements

5.6.1 The Review discussed examples of WRL other than placements currently offered at Reading including: enquiry-based learning (EBL), employer input in the curriculum in the form of advisory boards, contributions from external speakers and employers assessing student work; study visits; work-related case studies and mentoring (see also 5.5.1).

5.6.2 The Review received the Report of the Evolution of MASIV Working Group and accompanying extract from the minutes of the January 2010 UBTL meeting. The Review commended the new Reading Experience and Development Award (RED Award) scheme which would be piloted in 2010/11. The scheme was intended to recognise and reward extra-curricular activities that students engaged with that provided them with 'real-world' work experience, including volunteering, and to enable them to reflect on and articulate the skills and knowledge they had developed through the experience.

Enquiry-Based Learning (EBL)

5.6.3   The Review received a presentation on a new Part 1, 40-credit project-based module in the School of Real Estate and Planning (REP), *Projects in Real Estate & Planning (1)*, which had a strong work-related learning focus. The module was designed to encourage students to apply and develop the knowledge gained from the other Part 1 modules, to develop both academic and work-related/transferable skills and to promote active and collaborative learning. It was intended to engage and challenge students, and feedback indicated that it had succeeded in this respect and that students had found it enjoyable. The Review discussed the impact of the new module on student expectations for Part 2 and Part 3 of their programme and in respect of modules provided by other Schools.

5.6.4   The Review noted a number of factors which had contributed to the success of the module and which may not be present in all cases. Programmes in REP had a strong professional focus and students tended to be very career-focussed. The School already had well-developed links with industry which facilitated practitioners' contributions to the module. And finally, the module had strong support from staff across the School which meant that it was well integrated with the other Part 1 modules.

5.6.5   The Review discussed EBL modules which had been developed at Part 1 and Part 3 in the School of Law. The Part 1 module involved students playing the role of employees of a law firm and undertaking real-world tasks based on campus. Students worked independently and were required to produce two pieces of written work intended for different audiences, thereby developing both academic and work-related skills.

5.6.6   The Review noted that some recently developed EBL modules had received very mixed feedback from students. The Review felt that some of the poor feedback might be attributed to using standard module evaluation forms for 'non-standard' modules and it was suggested that the wording of some questions, in particular those relating to the role played by staff members, should be reviewed.

5.6.7   The Review noted a wide variety of examples of EBL across a range of disciplines which had been developed as part of the CETL-AURS at Reading and under the Centre for Inquiry-based Learning in the Arts and Social Sciences (CILASS) at Sheffield and the Centre for Excellence in Enquiry-based Learning (CEEBL) at Manchester.

5.6.8   The Review commended the variety of projects funded and managed by the CETL-AURS, which had proved to be an important resource in terms of promoting effective practice in the field of WRL. Of particular relevance, the CETL-AURS had funded a *Learning Through Enquiry Alliance* conference which was hosted at the University in July 2009 and focussed on core themes of Academic Literacy, Enquiry-Based Learning Case Studies, Technology-Enhanced Learning and Enquiry-Based Learning and Policy.

Future provision of WRL at Reading

5.6.9   The Review agreed that it would be important to highlight examples of effective practice and different approaches to incorporating WRL in the curriculum, particularly since the University did not currently publicise the varied nature of ongoing activities in this area.

5.6.10 The Review noted that the *Employer Engagement Toolkit* (attached as Appendix 3) would be a useful source of information for Schools and Departments in this respect, although it recognised that not all examples of employer engagement included

therein could be categorised as WRL (see also paragraphs 5.5.5 - 5.5.7 and Recommendation 2).

5.7 Work/academic placement opportunities (POs)

5.7.1 The Review focussed its discussions primarily on POs. It reviewed provision of POs outside of the University and discussed current provision of POs and potential future developments at the University.

5.7.2 Provision at other universities

5.7.2.1 The Review noted a number of features relating to placement learning opportunities at Sussex, Surrey, Bath, Exeter and Lancaster universities as follows:

- The majority of placements were organised at School/Department-level, with differing amounts of central support, although in many cases there were centrally-managed web pages relating to placement opportunities;

- In some cases, students were responsible for organising their own placements while in others the university found placements for its students;

- Business Schools tended to accord a higher profile to placement learning than many other academic disciplines and often had dedicated placement teams;

- There was inconsistent use of terminology relating to placements both across the sector and also within individual institutions which could prove confusing to staff, students and employers;

- Information on WRPL opportunities was often difficult to access from student, staff and employer perspectives and was sometimes out-of-date;

- There was often inconsistency within institutional websites as to the amount and structure of information provided regarding placements in different departments;

- Opportunities for placements were available to undergraduate students in all disciplines at the University of Bath;

- The University of Exeter had a student-focused webpage dedicated to employability; however, there were relatively few curriculum-based WRPL opportunities currently on offer;

- Examples of good practice the Review wished to highlight included:
  - o the use of student testimonials;
  - o links to online databases which could be used to search for work experience/placement opportunities (although these tended to focus on extra-curricular opportunities);
  - o a list of all programmes across an institution with placement years including links to further information where available;
  - o the use of templates for describing programmes which included a specific section for placement learning; and,
  - o lists of placement tutors and their contact details, and the use of a typology and associated definitions for WRPL provision within the curriculum.

5.7.2.2 The Review noted that the range of disciplines offered at a particular institution was likely to have an impact on its provision of placement opportunities; for example, universities with a strong science or business focus were more likely to offer placements. It was also noted that many post-92 universities were very active in their provision of placement opportunities in relation to some of the more established institutions.

5.7.2.3 The Review noted that a recent PhD thesis, based on a survey of 678 Reading students who graduated in 2006 and 2007, had found that 3.4% of Reading undergraduate students had undertaken a placement year, 10.9% had undertaken other 'degree work experience' and 26% had undertaken work experience outside of their programme. According to information published online, this compared to 80% of undergraduates at Surrey and 60% at Bath undertaking placements. However, anecdotal evidence indicated that uptake of placement years at Surrey had fallen dramatically below this figure in recent years.

5.7.3   Provision at Reading

Description/classification of POs

5.7.3.1 The Review agreed that it would be useful to formulate a typology for classifying placements based on various criteria, including:

(i)   length and structure (*e.g.* 2-week block vs. 1 day/week for 9 months);

(ii)   timing (vacation vs. term-time);

(iii)   paid/unpaid;

(iv)   method of assessment;

(v)   curricular/co-curricular;

(vi)   compulsory/optional;

(vii)   accreditation (number of credits and level in the FHEQ);

(viii) ownership and management of the scheme (local vs. central), including contact details for the staff member responsible;

(ix)   responsibility for finding placements (students or the University);

(x)   the amount of University resource required to support the scheme (within the School and/or centrally);

(xi)   number of students involved each year and capacity of the scheme (number of students who could be accommodated); and,

(xii)   how long the scheme had been running.

5.7.3.2 The typology could be used as the basis of a user-friendly source of placement information that would be searchable by category and could be used by staff, students and employers/alumni for various purposes. The typology would also help to identify the costs of different types of placement scheme and to establish a measure of value-for-money.

The need for flexibility

5.7.3.3 The Review considered that evaluating the strengths and weaknesses of different approaches to placements and recommending (a) particular approach(es) for Schools to adopt was outside of its remit.

5.7.3.4 The Review noted the perception among academic staff that some students wished to focus purely on the academic aspects of their programme and were reluctant to undertake placements. This perception is consistent with recent research funded by CCMS (O'Regan, 2009) which explored Reading undergraduate students' transition into higher education and subsequent orientation towards their career and prospective future employment. The summary report noted that

> *while some undergraduate students took an instrumental approach to conceptualising and pursuing their education and career, not all were ready or interested in thinking about their career, graduate employment or their employability.*

The report suggested that adopting a blanket employability agenda and approach to career management skills (and therefore to placement provision) might not be appropriate and that, instead,

> *We need to consider innovative ways to ensure that undergraduate students develop personally in order that they have the insight, resilience and career understanding … to cope within this competitive knowledge driven economy.*

However, the Review considered that POs often presented students with an opportunity to develop a greater understanding of their academic discipline and an increased awareness of the external world, and that they could foster personal development and emotional maturity in addition to increasing their employability. Providing students with a (non-compulsory) opportunity to undertake a work or academic placement is therefore consistent with the conclusions of the study.

5.7.3.5 It was noted that the geographical location of placements could play an important role in their attractiveness to students: some students preferred to remain in the local area during their placement year as this minimised logistical issues such as arranging accommodation. This point was raised in the particular context of potential placement providers of specific disciplines being limited in our geographical region. The Review noted this concern but reiterated its finding that students did not need to undertake a placement in a company directly related to their academic discipline in order to benefit from the experience.

5.7.3.6 The Review also noted that students were sometimes reluctant to undertake placements as they would then be separated from their cohort. In this respect, shorter, locally-based placements were sometimes a more attractive option.

5.7.3.7 The Review noted the important contribution to be made by students who had undertaken POs with regard to promoting such opportunities to fellow students. For example, one requirement of some existing year-long POs was to design a poster that portrayed the student's experience of undertaking a placement year from the application stage onwards.

5.7.3.8 The Review explored the financial implications of placement years. Students on integrated placement years paid 20% of the standard tuition fee (whether home or overseas) to cover administration and management costs, which might make placement years a less attractive option for some students. The Review noted that Schools were allocated a whole FTE for each placement student in the resource allocation process.

> **Recommendation 3**
>
> The Review **recommends** the continuation and wider promotion of the current policy of charging 20% of the standard tuition fee (whether home or overseas) to students on integrated placement years while allocating a whole FTE to Schools for each placement student as a means to incentivise this valuable activity for Schools. It **recommends** that any review of this policy consider the negative impact on the prioritisation of placement learning at Reading.

5.7.3.9 The Review was concerned to note that students who decided to take year-long placements outside of their degree programme had to suspend their studies for a year which had various implications, for example in respect of council tax. It was agreed that this practice should no longer be tolerated: students undertaking a placement should have this captured as part of their programme so that they remain students throughout the placement.

5.7.3.10 The Review considered that it would be important to retain a high degree of flexibility in the provision of POs and general approach to WRPL at Reading in order to cater for individual students' needs and circumstances and their styles of learning. A strong focus on one-year placements would not be attractive to, or feasible for, all prospective students.

Future provision of POs at Reading

5.7.3.11 The Review concluded that all students should have an opportunity to undertake some form of curricular PO during their time at Reading and formulated a broad typology for describing these POs.

> **Recommendation 4**
>
> The Review **recommends** that by 2011/12, all undergraduate programmes must have a placement opportunity (PO)* available to students registered on the programme. POs can take one of three forms:
>
> (i)   **Micro** – embedded within a module;
>
> (ii)   **Mini** – constituting an entire module;
>
> (iii)   **Maxi** – comprising a year.
>
> *Placement Opportunity (PO) shall mean a work or academic placement.

5.7.3.12 The Review distinguished between flexibility at an institutional level and at the level of individual students, since not all discipline areas would offer a wide range of POs. However, there would also be additional opportunities for cross-curricular and extra-curricular WRPL for which central support would be provided.

Recording and describing POs

5.7.3.13 The Review agreed that RISIS should be used to capture and categorise POs within the curriculum. This would permit the University to monitor effectively the number of students who were engaging with placements.

> **Recommendation 5**
>
> The Review **recommends** that RISIS adopt codes corresponding to the three types of PO – Micro, Mini and Maxi – to enable the University to track students undertaking work and academic placements.

5.7.3.14 The Review agreed that the titles of modules encompassing Micro, Mini and Maxi POs should reflect the work/academic placement content such that it would be transparent to external stakeholders where it appeared on the current Diploma Supplement or pending Higher Education Achievement Record (HEAR).

5.7.3.15 The Review noted that a section for outlining placement/study abroad opportunities was already included within programme specifications but that it was not used consistently across the University. Furthermore, a number of inaccuracies had been identified in the content of this section across a wide variety of programme specifications by Reading International Office.

5.7.3.16 The Review noted examples of 2009/10 programme specifications for programmes with year-long placements (Maxi POs) (please refer to Appendix 4).

5.7.3.17 The Review agreed that further guidance should be provided to Schools/Departments on the use of the "Opportunities for placements/study abroad" section of programme specifications in the *University guidelines on undergraduate/taught postgraduate programme specifications and module descriptions*. The Review agreed that Schools/Departments should pay specific attention to this section and to other content relating to POs when making annual updates to programme specifications for 2011/12.

5.7.3.18 The Review noted examples of 2010/11 module description forms corresponding to the three types of PO (Micro, Mini and Maxi) (please see Appendix 5).

> **Recommendation 6**
>
> The Review **recommends** that:
>
> a) When revising module descriptions for 2011/12, Schools/Departments (in conjunction with Faculty Directors of Teaching and Learning) review module titles to ensure transparency of the existence of a PO within them;
>
> b) When revising programme specifications for 2011/12, Schools/Departments (in conjunction with Faculty Directors of Teaching and Learning) specifically revise the "Opportunities for placements/study abroad" section to ensure that the content is clear, accurate and in line with Recommendation 4.

5.8 Communication, management and engagement with stakeholders

Communication and engagement with stakeholders

5.8.1 The Review explored the wider issue of engagement with external stakeholders and the need for a structure to facilitate effective communication.

5.8.2 The Review noted that the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Enterprise) was currently responsible for overseeing employer engagement. Developments in this area had recently been supported by three projects – Biopharma Skills, STEM UEN and the Regional CBI/HR Directors Group - in addition to generic work with industry and business which often involved discussion around WRPL. Following the changes to Pro-Vice-Chancellors' roles to take effect from August 2010, it was noted that the strand in the Enterprise

Strategy for 'Enriching the student experience' would fall under the remit of the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Teaching and Learning).

5.8.3 The Review noted current uncertainty on the part of both employers and Schools/Departments as to who to approach regarding potential developments involving employer engagement, including WRPL opportunities.

5.8.4 The Review discussed the need for central support to engage employers and provide a link with Schools/Departments. It agreed that a single comprehensive and up-to-date database of industry contacts would be the ideal. It was suggested that CAS, the Resource and Enterprise Centre and Development and Alumni Relations team should be asked to engage in a discussion about how to address this concern in a concrete fashion so as to provide a workable solution across the variety of stakeholders.

5.8.5 The Review noted potential concerns about existing relationships being negatively affected by employers receiving many different approaches from across the University, but it was suggested that appropriate warnings could be added to the database where deemed necessary.

5.8.6 The Review noted the benefits that it had gained from involving staff members from all Faculties and a wide range of central services in its discussions regarding WRPL. It highlighted the importance of adopting a 'joined-up' approach to employer engagement and suggested that this might take the form of:

(i) A cross-University employers' forum for engagement with external employers and other relevant organisations including the CBI, one component of which would focus on careers and teaching and learning (to include WRPL); and,

(ii) An internal forum to facilitate discussion across the University with regard to employer engagement and to support the development and maintenance of positive external relationships.

Central support for, and management of, WRPL

5.8.7 The Review agreed that, in order to achieve the objective of increasing WRPL opportunities, a central Placement Hub must be established. This Placement Hub would work in conjunction with CDoTL, the Quality Support Office, the Study/Work Abroad Office and others. It was assumed that the Placement Hub would sit within Student Services but further conversation about how it would be configured (*e.g.* within/alongside CAS) was considered to be beyond the remit of this Review. It was noted, however, that the implementation of a Placement Hub would require a review of resources that will need to be re-allocated for this purpose.

5.8.8 While the Review agreed that programme-based POs should be managed by Schools/Departments where possible, it considered that economies of scale could be gained from central management of WRPL opportunities where insufficient resources or expertise rendered local management unviable.

Recommendation 7

The Review **recommends** that a central Placement Hub be established to work in conjunction with CDoTL, the Quality Support Office, the Study/Work Abroad Office and others to serve staff, students, prospective students, employers, parents and other stakeholders. It **recommends** that the remit of the Placement Hub include:

(i) development and maintenance of a central record of the curricular, co-curricular and extra-curricular WRPL opportunities currently available across the University,

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drawing on existing sources of information to include the wiki contents (Appendix 1), *Employer Engagement Toolkit* (Appendix 3) and *Experience Works* leaflet produced by CAS;

(ii)   maintenance, revision and augmentation of the *Employer Engagement Toolkit* in conjunction with CDoTL;

(iii)   provision of advice and guidance to staff on developing WRPL opportunities and particularly POs, including discussion of existing POs and advice relating to assessment methods, ensuring quality of provision and health and safety considerations;

(iv)   management of curriculum-based POs, including responsibility for quality assurance, where numbers or expertise preclude co-ordination at School level;

(v)   monitoring the management of POs and ensuring appropriate arrangements are in place with regard to quality management and enhancement, health and safety, insurance, risk assessment and legal issues;

(vi)   management of existing extra-curricular schemes; for example, UROP and SEED;

(vii)   provision of advice and guidance to students and prospective students regarding the variety of WRPL opportunities available across the University;

(viii)   promotion of POs and other WRL opportunities to all relevant stakeholders (including prospective students, current students – both home and international, staff and alumni) in conjunction with other responsible parties;

(ix)   acting as a 'front door', both virtual and physical, for all relevant stakeholders;

(x)   co-ordination of, and liaison with, relevant communities of practice within the University to include Placement tutors in Schools, building on the existing Placement Tutors Forum;

(xi)   liaison with relevant teaching and learning stakeholders across the University, including CDoTL, the Quality Support Office and Study/Work Abroad Office, to ensure engagement with the wider teaching and learning agenda.

The above list is not exhaustive and it is accepted that the responsibilities of the Placement Hub will be extensive and require further articulation through a review of resourcing for the Hub. The issues raised in section 5.4.2 above are considered crucial to the Placement Hub's activities.

University website

5.8.9   The Review endorsed the recommendations made by the Employment Project Group in *The face of employability: the Reading website* as follows:

"Recommended actions are:

- *Undertake a detailed review of all Schools and Departments web pages relating to career opportunities, employability, work-related learning and placement opportunities to determine a proforma of what critical information and links should be present, and co-ordinate re-drafting where necessary and publish revised pages by end September 2010. Ensure as part of this work that a mechanism is established for keeping web-based information up-to-date and prompting regular review at department level.*

- *Assess content requirements for and produce a series of central web pages/resources aimed at prospective and current students that pull together key information about the University's approach to employability, placement and work-based learning and the*

different extra-curricular work experience and personal development schemes by end September 2010… Pages should also be re-drafted as appropriate for inclusion on the Staff pages and Personal Tutor areas."

5.8.10 The Review also agreed that a central area of the University website should be developed to provide information and contact details to interested employers.

Recommendation 8

The Review **recommends** that the Employment Project Group review how it might best present information relating to employability and WRPL opportunities to prospective and current students, employers and other stakeholders in line with the above points.

5.9 Further action

Recommendation 9

If UBTL approves the recommendations set out within this Report, the Review would **recommend** that the Employment Project Group be asked to convene an Implementation Group, to report to both the EPG (or the appropriate subsequent body) and UBTL, to oversee the implementation of the recommended changes to take effect from the 2011/12 academic year.

Appendix 1 - Thematic Review wiki contents

Centrally-owned/managed WRPL opportunities

Title: UROP (Undergraduate Research Opportunity Programme)

Brief description: Research placements within the University for UG students in their penultimate year of study. Placements last 6 weeks, working full-time over the Summer holiday or part-time into the Autumn term. Students are given the opportunity to work with academic staff in their department on research projects.

Owning School/Department: CETL-AURS

Curricular/co-curricular/extra-curricular: extra-curricular

Accreditation:

Assessment:

Skills gained (academic and transferable): Placements make a significant contribution to transferable skills, employability and understanding of research environments. Placements boost research skills and subject knowledge, which could be invaluable prior to dissertation writing in the final year.

Title: Erasmus and study abroad placements

Brief description: The University has exchange agreements with numerous universities throughout Europe (via the Erasmus programme) and partnerships with some of the most prestigious universities in Australia, Canada and the USA. Undergraduate students study abroad in either the second or third year of their degree programme (if provision is made for this in the relevant programme specification). Taught postgraduates and doctoral students are also eligible to spend part of their degree studying or undertaking research at one of our partner Universities.

Owning School/Department: University-wide

Curricular/co-curricular/extra-curricular:

Accreditation:

Assessment:

Skills gained (academic and transferable):

Title: Washington Internship Experience (WIE)

Brief description: Through the University of Reading's student exchange partnership with the University of Mississippi there are potential opportunities for students to undertake an internship in Washington D.C. in the USA. Students will work [unpaid] or approximately 32 hours per week over a 6 week period and will live with other programme participants in accommodation organised by the University of Mississippi. Placements can be potentially found in a variety of areas including Arts & Humanities , Business, HR, Government and Politics, Media & Communications, Non-Profit Organisations, Social Justice and Issue Advocacy.

NB - the number of places are limited and placements not guaranteed.

Owning School/Department: RIO

Curricular/co-curricular/extra-curricular:

Accreditation:

Assessment:

Skills gained (academic and transferable):

Title: Graduate Teaching Assistantships

Brief description: Postgraduate research students are given teaching experience and relevant training (parts of PGCAP programme)

Owning School/Department: School of Law and elsewhere?

Curricular/co-curricular/extra-curricular:

Accreditation: ?

Assessment: ?

Skills gained (academic and transferable):

Title: Company-sponsored prizes

Brief description:

Owning School/Department: various Schools e.g. Systems Engineering, Law

Curricular/co-curricular/extra-curricular:

Accreditation:

Assessment:

Skills gained (academic and transferable):

Title: Reading Inspire Scheme

Brief description: International mentoring scheme, whereby students work with international alumni who have remained in the local area. Students are in regular contact with their mentor for a minimum of 10 weeks and benefit in terms of social networking and observation in the workplace.

Owning School/Department: CAS/Alumni

Curricular/co-curricular/extra-curricular: extra-curricular

Accreditation:

Assessment:

Skills gained (academic and transferable):

Title: Summer Enterprise Experience & Discovery (SEED)

Brief description: Project-based internship scheme for University of Reading students and local / regional business and enterprises. Open to first and second-year undergraduates, plus any RETURNING 3rd year undergraduates or postgraduate students (for the forthcoming academic

year). Internships are typically eight weeks over the summer, with students working on a specific project that is typically related to their course.

Owning School/Department: Careers Advisory Service

Curricular/co-curricular/extra-curricular: extra-curricular

Accreditation:

Assessment:

Skills gained (academic and transferable): Application of skills learnt through studies; range of transferable skills including project management, commercial awareness, communication skills, presentation skills etc.

Title: IASTE - International Work Experience for Technical Students

Brief description: IASTE aims to (in part) provide science, engineering and applied arts undergraduates with training experience abroad relevant to their studies and to to offer **employers** well qualified and motivated foreign trainees. It arranges paid course-related vacation training abroad on a reciprocal exchange basis so that in every participating country IAESTE trainees are both entering and leaving for placements.

Owning School/Department: Not centrally coordinated, but individual departments have participated. Details to be updated...

Curricular/co-curricular/extra-curricular: Extra-curricular

Accreditation:

Assessment:

Skills gained (academic and transferable):

Title: The Windsor Debates

Brief description: Paid summer internship for all returning students from any degree discipline but with an interest in business and commerce, based with the Thames Valley Chambers of Commerce. Placement is run through the SEED scheme year on year and application deatils can be obtained via the SEED Website. The Windsor Debates Internship is piloted this summer vacaction (2010) focusing on International student applications. This placement is suitable for both undergraduate and PG students and involves both research and commercial development.

Owning School/ Careers Advisory Service

Curricular/co-curricular/extra-curricular: extra-curricular

Accreditation: N/A

Assessment: Short business report and presentation to panel.

Skills gained (academic and transferable): Transferable / Commercial / Research

Faculty of Arts and Humanities

School of Arts, English and Communication Design

Title: Communications at Work (English)

Brief description: Module includes 2-week fieldwork placement (normally scheduled for Easter vacation of Year 2). Placement opportunities are in arts and media, retail companies, charity and conservation administration, government offices, information technology, publishing, research institutions, and museums.

Owning School/Department: English

Curricular/co-curricular/extra-curricular: curricular

Accreditation: 20 credits at Level 5

Assessment: Students write one essay of approx. 2000 words for formal assessment (carrying 33% of the final mark), a Fieldwork Report (carrying 50% of the final mark) and a formal presentation (carrying 17% of the final mark).

Skills gained (academic and transferable): The practical work encourages interpersonal skills, including the ability to take the initiative and to accept real-life risks and benefits, and students will also develop their IT competence through the word processing of assessed work and the use of relevant web sources and databases

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School of Humanities

Title: Historical Themes in Practice, Pathway B

Brief description: The Department of History proposes a 10 credit 'pathway' within our existing Historical Themes in Practice (HTP) module, which runs alongside Themes and Issues in History (T & I, 20 credits). This module is not taken by joint students, only single subject, but it could be made available to all. Students taking pathway B would undertake a two-week academic placement during the Easter vacation (location to be agreed with the module convenor by week five of the spring term). Students will be expected to organize their academic placement themselves, with the support of the module convenor. Students will research the representation of public history within their organization and return copy of the portfolio to them for future use. Placements might include working in television or radio, newspapers, political parties, galleries, museums, archives or schools.

Owning School/Department: History

Curricular/co-curricular/extra-curricular: curricular

Accreditation: 10 credits at Level 5

Assessment: Assessed by a portfolio on the representation of public history within the organization chosen for an academic placement. To be submitted at the end of the first week of the summer term. No more than 2,500 words should be of text, but this can be accompanied by appropriate illustrative and supporting materials.

Reassessment arrangements: Resubmission by 1 September, subject to university rules on resits and progression.

Skills gained (academic and transferable): This module aims to provide students with an opportunity to apply their subject-based skills to a practical project choosing either Pathway A or Pathway B. Both involve independent analysis and group co-operation, as well as developing expertise in project-design and time-management. The module also fosters employability and interpersonal skills through

interactions with people and organizations beyond the university. The emphasis is on both critical thinking and transferable skills.

Title: Text typology in theory and practice

Brief description: Module comprising taught components and EBL – student-driven components. The student needs to find an academic placement (pre-requisite for joining the module) and frame a research question that is relevant to the placement, but by the same time will help to learn something about the ancient world. Needs to be a placement that will allow student to do relevant empirical research and to pursue question that is relevant to the sponsor as well. Ideally a two-week placement in EV (paid/unpaid).

Owning School/Department: Classics

Curricular/co-curricular/extra-curricular: curricular

Accreditation: 20 credit module (optional, stand-alone)

Assessment: Three pieces of assessment are required: Presentation (10 minutes) of devised project – **10%**; Portfolio of no less than 20 pages (in reasonable font size/spacing), comprising an introduction to the enquiry, an analysis, and a conclusion as well as the evidence – **75%**; Mini-essay, applying conclusions to ancient evidence, transferring the findings into an Academic context – **15%**

Skills gained (academic and transferable):

School of Languages and European Studies

Title: IT309-Italian for Managers

Brief description: The module will focus on introducing students to the language of the Italian business world. Following the 10-hour seminar/lecture series (in the Autumn Term), students can undertake a one/two-week placement within industry or the arts. These are usually unpaid placements, although this is not a prerequisite of the scheme. Students who choose this option will need to find placements on their own but will attend 1or 2 seminar(s) which will introduce them to the scheme and will guide their efforts. Students will be asked to make use of the training received for their compulsory CMS module. Types of placements: observation placements; shadowing placements; active placements in a business setting or a discrete project. It is vital to the success of this scheme that students are very clear about the fact that these are not a work experience placements. What students do on placement is only of interest in as much as it feeds into their Fieldwork Report, which will focus on an issue which is of relevance to the module and their own classroom learning (in this case, elements of business Italian).

Owning School/Department: Italian

Curricular/co-curricular/extra-curricular: curricular

Accreditation: 20 credits and Level 6

Assessment:

For students who are unable to go on a work-placement:

Students will be assessed on the basis of a dossier of work completed during the two terms, to include some class tests (20%). There will be one oral exam, worth 20% of the final mark, and one three-hour examination, worth 60% of the final mark.

For students who go on a work placement:

2,000 word Fieldwork Report (60%) - The Fieldwork Report is not intended to report simply on the activities of the placement, but is required to be an analytical report on the issues being explored during the placement.

Coursework (20%) - Students will be assessed on the basis of a dossier of work completed during the two terms, to include some class tests

One oral exam (20%).

Skills gained (academic and transferable): By the end of the module it is expected that students will be able to: demonstrate an understanding of Italian relating specifically to the area of business; express themselves clearly, fluently and accurately about business matters in Italian; show a knowledge of the norms of business correspondence in Italian; demonstrate a familiarity with the contemporary Italian business world. The module also aims to encourage students to: express themselves clearly in writing in both English and Italian; develop their IT skills by using the internet as a source for material relating to the
Italian business world; make good use of appropriate reference materials (dictionaries, grammars, etc.); increase their business awareness, particularly as regards the Italian situation; have acquired an awareness and some experience of business working practices and environments where Italian is used.

Henley Business School

ICMA Centre

Title: ICMA Centre Internships

Brief description: Students are expected to undertake an eight to ten week working internship during the summer vacation between the second and third year. The ICMA Centre helps students prepare for these internships with CV preparation and interview techniques. Current students have gained internships at [Goldman Sachs](#), [Deutsche Bank](#) and [Standard Chartered Bank](#) amongst others.

Students can also apply to the University to suspend their studies after Part 2 to complete a sandwich placement.

Owning School/Department: ICMA Centre – Henley Business School

Curricular/co-curricular/extra-curricular: extra-curricular

Accreditation: N/A

Assessment: N/A

Skills gained (academic and transferable): Securing summer work experience is the main route towards securing a graduate position with Bulge Brackets Banks. They also provide students with excellent experience and skills to carry forward until after graduation, as well as the networking opportunities that are vital for working within Boutique institutions.

Title: ICMA Centre Professional Development Workshops

Brief description: Weekly series of workshops covering many aspects of career management, from Types of Role in Finance, through generic skills such as Presentation & Negotiation, to career-specific topics including Networking and Interview skills. These workshops are voluntary and open to all BSc & MSc students.

Owning School/Department: ICMA Centre – Henley Business School

Curricular/co-curricular/extra-curricular: extra-curricular

Accreditation: N/A

Assessment: N/A

Skills gained (academic and transferable): Dependant on the workshops attended.

School of Management

Title: Centre for Entrepreneurship Modules

Brief Description:

• Student Enterprise (MM1F10) – a first year module offering students from across the University the chance to create and run their own venture, including guest speakers & surgery sessions.

• Practice of Entrepreneurship (MM270/MMM038) - a module designed to help students spot real world opportunities for business start-up and plan and budget a theoretical start-up based on £10,000 start-up capital. Open to Part 2, 3 and Masters students.

• Social Enterprise (MM379/MMM053) – a module for final year and masters students which includes consultancy visits with existing local social enterprises to learn about the sector first hand.

- Entrepreneurial Management for Food Scientists (MMM052) – a subject-specific module using a live case study and exploring entrepreneurial thinking in an existing organisation.

Student enterprise, Practice of Entrepreneurship and Social Enterprise are open to students across the whole University. It is now also possible for students to create a 'minor' in entrepreneurship by choosing one module each year. All of our modules involve contact with guest speakers and/or live case studies.

Owning School/Department: Centre for Entrepreneurship, School of Management, Henley Business School

Curricular/co-curricular/extra-curricular: Curricular

Accreditation: 20 credits (except Entrepreneurial Management for Food Scientists currently under review)

Assessment: Various, including: Presentations, Business Plans, Business Reports, Literature review, Placement/Consultancy report, reflective reports.

Social Enterprise is the first module in which assessment has involved work-based learning. Students are assessed on a report and presentation which is prepared as a result of a short consultancy placement within a local social enterprise which are organised by the Centre. The report must contain problem-solving ideas and recommendations on improving a particular issue within the organisation. Students are given guidelines for the report and then must discuss with the organisation how best to uncover the information needed during their half-day visit to the organisation.

Skills gained (academic and transferable): Team-working, presenting, market-research, finance, networking, business planning, consultancy.

Title: Enterprise Experience

Enterprise Experience is a scheme which matches talented students with entrepreneurial companies and SMEs for short work experience placements on specific projects.

In 2010-11 the scheme will undergo a major redevelopment which will involve students receiving more training prior to their placement and will also benefit from a business mentors to guide them through the placement. Placements will take place simultaneously and on the same topic. This year 10 students will take on social media consultancy placements.

Students will spend a minimum of 4 hours per week for a full 10-week term in their placement. Students will need to have had some exposure to entrepreneurship prior to acceptance onto the scheme; however, it is open to students from all disciplines.

Owning School/Department: Centre for Entrepreneurship, School of Management, Henley Business School

Curricular/co-curricular/extra-curricular: Extra-Curricular

Accreditation: N/A

Assessment: N/A

Skills Gained (academic and transferable): Communications, research, analysis, business development and report writing skills in a business environment.

Title: Management placement opportunities

Brief description: The School of Management permits students to voluntarily suspend their studies at the end of Part 2 in order to complete a work placement for one session. Authorisation required from the Director of Studies. The placement is not assessed as part of the finals classification.

Students more frequently decide to take up a shorter work placement during the summer vacation at the end of the second year of study (see below). In either of the above cases it is for the student to seek out an appropriate placement. Help may be provided by the Job Shop, located in the Student Advisory Service. The Employer requests are also put up on the departmental noticeboard.

From 2011, we anticipate that the Placement Manager will help students seeking internships; these students will be mainly accounting students on three year degrees.

Owning School/Department: Management

Curricular/co-curricular/extra-curricular: Extra-curricular except that students may use their work experience to complete a final year assessable project (20 credits).

Accreditation: N/A

Assessment: N/A

Skills gained (academic and transferable): The placement is seen as an opportunity for students to gain valuable work experience as part of their personal development. This may be especially useful for those who have not had any previous part-time or full-time jobs

Title: Management internships

Brief description: Many students undertaking both management and accounting degrees undertake 6-12 week internships, usually during the summer vacation.

Owning School/Department: Management

Curricular/co-curricular/extra-curricular: Extra-curricular except that students may use their work experience to complete a final year assessable project (20 credits).

Accreditation: N/A

Assessment: N/A

Skills gained (academic and transferable): These provide students with excellent experience and skills to carry forward until after graduation, as well as the networking opportunities available.

Title: Lecture series (external speakers) for undergraduate and/or postgraduate students – School of Management

Brief description: Many modules use external speakers to supplement lectures by academic staff. A flavour of modules is given below:

Marketing Management (MM255): Dr Chris Phillips of the Henley Business School has worked in partnership with O2 to create and deliver this Level 5 Marketing module. Delivery of lectures is split between Chris and O2, with lecture examples being so current that students are required to sign a confidentiality agreement. Students are set two pieces of work, one to write a detailed report outlining their recommendations; the second to give a presentation. The best groups in terms of presentation and marketing also present to O2. Individual students are put forward for internships assessed for the internship on the basis of their CV, tutor reference, and a reference from employers; O2 make the final selections so students with the best match for needs of the O2 managers they are working for are offered internhips. More than 50 students have so far benefited from these internships.

Management Skills (MM256): This is a compulsory module for Part 2 students, and is part of their CMS. The module uses a case study to simulate the recruitment process from the employer's perspective. Students play the role of junior recruitment comsultants and must respond to a client brief to prepare an advertisement, sift CVs, and prepare interview questions. External speakers provide insights into the recruitment process from the perspective of the employer. Students are assessed in teams on their report to their client and on a presentation to the client. They must also reflect on their experiences during the module, particularly group dynamics. Assessment is 50% coursework.

Contemporary Management Practice (PG MMM030): This is a compulsory but non assessed module. The module is preparation for the PG project/dissertation. Speakers have been invited to cover topics such as mergers and acquistions, strategy, management buy-outs, outsourcing and so on.

Entrepreneurship and Small Business Management (PG MMM042): This is an optional module. Timetabled seminars cover preparation of a business and financial plan, and entrepreneurs are invited to give their perspective on setting up and running small businesses. Students, working in groups, are required to prepare a business and financial plan for a feasible small business. Examples this year have included a 'Fusion Karaoke Lounge', a hotel in Thailand, a dentist's surgery, and an ice cream bar. The business plan comprises 10% of the module marks.

There are many other modules involving outside speakers but not all have been listed here.

Owning School/Department: Management

Curricular/co-curricular/extra-curricular: Mixed, see above. Mainly curricular and co-curricular.

Accreditation: N/A

Assessment: Mixed, see above.

Skills gained (academic and transferable): Students are prepared to complete assignments such as projects, business plans, presentations, and reports to management. Group work provides students with excellent experience and skills to put onto their CVs, and to take part in assessment centres. Students are also introduced to business peopl, which provides many networking opportunities.

Title: BA Business and Management (new 4-year programme from 2010-11)

Brief description: 1-year (minimum 9 months) work placement which comprises the third year of the programme

Owning School/Department: Management

Curricular/co-curricular/extra-curricular: curricular

Accreditation: N/A

Assessment: Reflective learning log, Employer reference, Poster presentation. For students who have completed two years of study and for whom a work placement is unsuitable, progression directly into the third (final) year of study is possible, converting this into a 3-year degree programme.

Skills gained (academic and transferable): an outstanding opportunity to develop and apply the knowledge and skills already gained during the student's degree, invaluable real world experience to give students a distinctive edge when entering the graduate job market

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Title: BA International Management and Business Administration with French/German/Italian

Brief description: Third year of 4-year programme. Students complete a business project (MM353P), oral or oral/written component (FR302/GM3YO40/IT3Y31 and IT3Y32) and:

in French: either a University study abroad placement (FR2Y31) or Work placement abroad (FR2Y33)

in German: GM2YS40 German *Scheine* (full year) or GM2YWPL Placement report

in Italian: IT231 and IT232 (credits from Italian university course) or placement report

Owning School/Department: Management

Curricular/co-curricular/extra-curricular: curricular

Accreditation: Business project – 40 credits at Level 6; oral/written – 40 credits at Level 6, placement - 40 credits at Level 5 (GM2YWPL includes 20 credits for work experience that do not contribute to the final assessment)

Assessment: modules taken during the Year Abroad contribute 33.3% to overall degree classification

German work placement - Assessment is based on a work placement report (about 4,000 words), a report by the employer, and an oral examination conducted jointly by the Management and German departments.

Italian - The Credits from Italian University courses will derive from marks obtained in oral examinations set by the Italian university. The Oral in Italian and the Written and Oral Presentation will be examined at the beginning of Part 3.

Skills gained (academic and transferable): an outstanding opportunity to develop and apply the knowledge and skills already gained during the student's degree, invaluable real world experience to give students a distinctive edge when entering the graduate job market.

School of Real Estate and Planning

Title: Reading Real Estate Foundation (RREF) Mentoring Programme

Brief description: The RREF Mentoring Programme offers Real Estate & Planning students an excellent opportunity to gain a unique insight into the industry they are preparing to enter. Interested students are paired with a property professional linked as closely as possible to individual areas of specialism and interest. It is proposed that mentors should mentor a student throughout their Reading studies in order to allow the mentee to gain the maximum from the relationship and to ensure the advice and guidance given is consistent as their needs change during their study period.

Aims of the Mentoring Programme:

1. Help students learn about the industry whilst at University
2. Encourage students to find work experience prior to their final year
3. Help students understand which area they may want to specialise in and therefore what type of company may suit them
4. Help to make students more employable
5. Offer better graduates to industry

If you would like to learn more of the programme please see the following links:

RREF Guide for Mentees 2009.doc

RREF Mentee Application Form 2009.doc

RREF Guide for Mentors.doc

RREF Mentor Application Form 2009.doc

Property Week mentoring article 8.01.2010.pdf

For more information please contact Rebecca Robson: r.robson@rref.reading.ac.uk or 0118 378 4191 (ext. 4191)

Owning School/Department: Real Estate & Planning

Curricular/co-curricular/extra-curricular: Co-Curricular

Reading Real Estate Foundation also holds a number of co-curricular student activities throughout the year. For a full list of events please see the following link: RREF student events calendar 09_10.pdf

Faculty of Life Sciences

School of Agriculture, Policy and Development

Title: BSc Agricultural Business Management with Industrial Training / BSc Agriculture with Industrial Training / BSc Animal Science with Industrial Training / BSc Consumer Behaviour and Marketing with Industrial Training / BSc Food Marketing and Business Economics with Industrial Training (module AP2ST1)

Brief description: 1-year placement in industry

Owning School/Department: Agriculture, Policy and Development

Curricular/co-curricular/extra-curricular: curricular

Accreditation: 120 credits at Level 5

Assessment: The placement year module is assessed by coursework: including a presentation, reflective report and employer report; and does not contribute to the final degree mark, although recognition of the completion of an industrial placement will appear on the degree transcript. If a student is unable to find a suitable placement, or if they progress from Part 2 to the placement year but fail to successfully complete the placement year module, they will be permitted to transfer to Part 3 of the 3-year programme/award. Students are required to produce a short podcast to be submitted by the 4th week of the autumn term following completion of the placement (40%). A 15-minute presentation will be given in the autumn term, detailing the placement organisation and the student's contribution (30%). The employer will rate the student's performance (30%). Students must complete their placement and achieve a minimum pass rate of 40% in each of the coursework components. Reassessment arrangements: submission of a 3,000 word report together with an oral exam with the Course Director and academic supervisor to critically evaluate the skills developed during the placement.

Skills gained (academic and transferable): knowledge and awareness of their placement organisation and their contribution; problem-solving skills; the successful use of IT; effective team working skills; efficient communication skills (written and oral); application of knowledge and skills acquired during Part 1 and Part 2.

Title: Module AP2A47 Animal Science in Practice 2 (including Career Management Skills)

Brief description: 50% of the module comprises a 10-day work experience placement (which can be in one block or spread over the course of 2 terms completing 0.5 days per week) in a field of the student's choice which may help in application for employment or further study. The other 50% is the CMS component comprising lectures and self-directed study.

Owning School/Department: Agriculture, Policy and Development

Curricular/co-curricular/extra-curricular: curricular

Accreditation: 10 credits at Level 5

Assessment: The work placement is assessed via a reflective portfolio of skills and experiences gained – consider what has been learnt during the time in the workplace and gather testimonies from people they have worked with. Requirements for a pass - attainment of 40% mark overall.

Skills gained (academic and transferable): By the end of the module it is expected that the student will be able to demonstrate: knowledge and awareness of their placement organization and their contribution whilst working there; effective written and oral communication skills and effective application of knowledge gained in Parts 1 and 2.
The module aims to encourage the development of the following skills: working with other people; an understanding of the requirements of the workplace

Title: BSc Environmental and Countryside Management with Industrial Training

Brief description: Students on the course can take a year out (between Parts 2 and 3) obtaining work experience in the UK or elsewhere.

Owning School/Department: Agriculture, Policy and Development

Curricular/co-curricular/extra-curricular: ?

Accreditation: ?

Assessment: ?

Skills gained (academic and transferable): ?

School of Biological Sciences

Title: BSc Biological Sciences with Industrial Experience (module BI2IND)

Brief description: one year placement in an industrial, or institute, research or similar environment

Owning School/Department: Biological Sciences

Curricular/co-curricular/extra-curricular: curricular

Accreditation: 40 credits at Level 6 (but module description says 120 credits at Level 5)?

Assessment: Students are required to produce a 3,000 word report to be submitted by the beginning of the 4th week of the Autumn term following the placement year, describing their placement organisation and their position within the company, detailing project work that was undertaken and highlighting the use of transferable skills. (70%) The employer will rate the student's performance. (30%). The industrial placement is assessed on a Pass/Fail basis. A mark of 40% is required to achieve a Pass. To proceed from the industrial placement to Part 3, it is necessary to obtain a satisfactory report of attendance and performance from the industrial supervisor, to have submitted a satisfactory report to the School and to have presented a satisfactory seminar on the work carried out during the placement; a satisfactory mark will not be lower than 40%. Students who at any stage fail to meet the progression requirements for this 4-year programme but who meet the progression requirements for the 3-year programme for BSc (Honours) in Biological Sciences will automatically be offered the opportunity to change to the 3-year programme.

Skills gained (academic and transferable): knowledge and awareness of their placement organisation and their contribution; problem-solving skills; the successful use of IT; effective team working skills; efficient communication skills (written and oral); application of knowledge and skills acquired during Part 1 and Part 2

School of Chemistry, Food and Pharmacy

Title: BSc Chemistry with a Year in Industry (module CH3PIN)

Brief description: 1-year placement in industry

Owning School/Department: Chemistry

Curricular/co-curricular/extra-curricular: curricular

Accreditation: 120 credits at Level 6

Assessment: This module is assessed on a pass/ fail basis. It is not possible to retake this module as it involves a year in industry which cannot be repeated.

Skills gained (academic and transferable): Students will develop an understanding of the workings of the chemical industry, and will become competent in key professional skills such as team working, problem solving, and oral and written communication. Students will also learn the fundamentals of the financial aspects of business.

Title: MChem Chemistry with year in Europe (module CH3EU)

Brief description: Part 3 of the programme takes place in a university in Europe and will include a research-type project. A distance-learning programme will also be provided for the core modules.

Owning School/Department: Chemistry

Curricular/co-curricular/extra-curricular: curricular

Accreditation: 120 credits at Level 6

Assessment: Relative percentage of coursework 75% / Distance learning coursework assignments 25% / Project work at host institution 50%. It is not possible to retake this module as it includes a European placement which cannot be repeated. Part 3 contributes 30% towards the Final Degree classification.

Skills gained (academic and transferable):

Title: MChem Chemistry with Year in Industry (module CH3IN)

Brief description: Part 3 of the programme takes place in a placement in the Chemical Industry. A distance-learning programme will also be provided for the core modules.

Owning School/Department: Chemistry

Curricular/co-curricular/extra-curricular: curricular

Accreditation: 120 credits at Level 6

Assessment: Part 3 contributes 30% towards Final Degree classification. Relative percentage of coursework : 75% / Distance learning coursework assignments: 25% / Supervisor's assessment of project: 10% / Project report: 30% / Oral presentation of results of project: 10% / Relative percentage of examinations: 25%
Requirements for a pass in this module: A mark of 40% overall
It is not possible to retake this module as it involves an industrial placement which cannot be repeated.

Skills gained (academic and transferable): Students will develop an understanding of the workings of the chemical industry, and will become competent in key professional skills such as team working, problem solving, and oral and written communication.

Title: BSc Food Science with Industrial Training / BSc Food Science with Business with Industrial Training / BSc Food Technology with Industrial Training / BSc Nutrition and Food Science with Professional Training (module FB2PY)

Brief description: 1-year industrial placement between Parts 2 and 3. The placement takes 44 weeks and may be split into two 22 week periods at two different establishments. Practical work required to perform a technical function within a food company. Writing written reports in line with company requirements.

Owning School/Department: Food and Nutritional Sciences

Curricular/co-curricular/extra-curricular: curricular

Accreditation: 120 credits at Level 5

Assessment: To pass the Industrial Training Year students must achieve a mark of 40%. Students who fail the Industrial Training Year will be required to transfer to the 3 year Programme. Year in industry contributes 10% to degree classification. The industrial training is assessed by using formal reports from the employer and the student's tutor and the assessment of a report submitted by the student (Learning Log). Reassessment arrangements: An oral examination with the Director of Teaching and Learning and Industrial Training Manager to critically evaluate the skills acquired during the industrial placement(s).

Skills gained (academic and transferable): Students will develop an understanding of the workings of the Food Industry; practical skills or skills in economic analysis or marketing; Communication, problem solving, team working, numeracy, use of IT, business awareness.

Title: MPharm Pharmacy (modules PM1PP1 and PM4PP4)

Brief description: Placements in Part 1 will be of brief (0.5 or 1-day) duration and will be supervised by academic staff from the School or by Registered Pharmacists. During Part 3, longer placements (1 week) take place in either community, industrial or hospital environments.

Owning School/Department: Pharmacy

Curricular/co-curricular/extra-curricular: curricular

Accreditation: The degree is accredited by the Royal Pharmaceutical Society of Great Britain

Assessment: A reflective diary and workbook contribute 15% to module mark for PM1PP1

Skills gained (academic and transferable): These placements extend the experience of students in regard to the vocational skills and opportunities of pre-registration and registered pharmacists.

Title: Pharmacy – role-play tasks (PM1PP1)

Brief description: role-play activities whereby students assume the role of customer/pharmacist

Owning School/Department: Pharmacy

Curricular/co-curricular/extra-curricular: curricular

Accreditation: The degree is accredited by the Royal Pharmaceutical Society of Great Britain

Assessment: Formative assessment

Skills gained (academic and transferable):How to advise patients about medicines and their use. The questioning skills that are needed when speaking to patients and barriers to communication. Verbal communication skills.

School of Psychology and Clinical Language Sciences

Faculty of Science

School of Construction Management and Engineering

School of Human and Environmental Sciences

Title: BSc Environmental Science with Professional Experience (module ES2PE)

Brief description: Part 3 is designed to provide professional, practical experience in a company or organisation, giving the student an opportunity to gain relevant skills and experience whilst working alongside practising environmental scientists.

Owning School/Department: Human and Environmental Sciences

Curricular/co-curricular/extra-curricular: curricular

Accreditation: 120 credits at Level 5

Assessment: Written report 80% (word limit 6000 words), oral presentation 20% during Autumn Term of Year 4. Formal feedback from the employing company/agency will also be used to inform assessment. Requirements for a pass: A mark of 40 per cent. Reassessment arrangements: Resubmission of Professional Experience Report or transfer to BSc Environmental Science.

Skills gained (academic and transferable): Students will gain hands on experience of full time employment in the real work place, which is directly relevant to their skills and knowledge in the field/s of geology and/or environmental science. Their confidence and self-reliance, maturity and sense of responsibility, team working and communication skills will be enhanced. The overall experience will be potentially invaluable in terms of their future career development and employability.

School of Mathematics, Meteorology and Physics

School of Systems Engineering

Title: FDSc Information Communication Technology/Computer Engineering

Brief description: Three-year Foundation Degree programmes, validated by the University of Reading and delivered by the College of North West London on a part-time basis. The content is based around two inter-related strands: technical skills and professional engineering. The programmes contain a substantial work-based learning element, and it is expected that students will be in an appropriate work environment when not attending College. Students should be supported in their work-based learning by a mentor at their place of employment and also by the College which should arrange for regular contact by an appropriate member of staff, including visits. Students will be required to complete a work-based project, which will be agreed with their employer with due regard being paid to issues of confidentiality.

Owning School/Department: Systems Engineering

Curricular/co-curricular/extra-curricular: curricular

Accreditation: 240 credits, Level 5 qualification, modules are a mixture of Level F, Level 4 and Level 5

Assessment: Assessed by a mixture of examinations and coursework (see module descriptions for further detail).

Skills gained (academic and transferable): The aim of the Foundation Degrees is to develop the knowledge, skills and attributes of those already working in the Information Communication Technology and Computer Engineering industries to enable them to develop into professional technicians able to play a disciplined and innovative role in development and maintenance in the field.

Title: Systems Engineering Industrial Placement Scheme (BSc Applied Artificial Intelligence and Cybernetics / BSc Applied Computer Engineering / BSc Applied Computer Science / BSc Applied Computer Science and Cybernetics / MEng Applied Computer Science and Cybernetics / BSc Applied Information Technology (module SE2W9))

Brief description: After completing two years (or three years for MEng) of academic study at the University, students can elect to take a one year placement in a Research Institution or Industry. During the placement the students receive a minimum of two visits from their academic tutor and on completion of their placement submit: a written report, skills portfolio, designs a poster of their placement experience and give a presentation.

Owning School/Department: Systems Engineering

Curricular/co-curricular/extra-curricular: curricular

Accreditation: 120 credits at Level 5, IET & BCS

Assessment: (1) 2,000-3,000 word written report assessed by the students placement tutor, submitted in the first week of the autumn term of their final year
(2) 15 minute presentation assessed by placement manager and placement tutor
(3) Completed Knowledge and Skills Portfolio assessed by placement tutor
(4) Poster in agreed template style assessed by placement tutor

Requirements for a Pass: Satisfactory submission of the Knowledge & Skills Portfolio and Poster
A pass mark (40%) in the report and presentation. Successful completion of a placement does not contribute to the student's final degree classification but earns them an 'Applied' degree in their subject area. Otherwise students will be eligible for the non-Applied degree.

Skills gained (academic and transferable): Applied Knowledge & understanding of their degree discipline, career management skills, work as part of a team(s), problem solving, communication and organisational skills. We have also found that the student's general level of confidence grows significantly.

Title: Reading University & Cisco Systems project collaboration for part 3 Networking module

Brief description: In the autumn term students receive lectures from both Reading University lecturers and Senior Engineers at Cisco Systems. In the spring term students are required to complete a team case study assignment jointly prepared by Cisco/Reading, with Cisco acting as the customer. The teams are required to attend meetings with Cisco (as the customer) submit a written proposal and give a presentation to a panel made up of both Cisco management and Reading University academics.

Owning School/Department: Systems Engineering

Curricular/co-curricular/extra-curricular: Curricular

Accreditation: IET & BCS

Assessment: 20 credit module

Skills gained: Knowledge & understanding of Networking and its application, *career management skills, work as part of a team, problem solving, written communication & presentation skills.

This is a curricular opportunity which also provides the students with the opportunity to apply for a graduate job with Cisco and also if they are identified as one of the top teams receiving different prizes (this year the top four teams were given Flip video cameras).

* Cisco invite all of the students to their offices in Reading, where they spend time working on the case study, but also receive presentations by Human Resources on applications and selection methods and from current graduates on what they do on Cisco's various graduate schemes etc.

Title: Reading University & CSC project collaboration for part 2 Software Engineering module

Brief description: In the spring term students are divided into teams to work on a case study assignment that has been jointly prepared by CSC and Reading with CSC acting as the customer.
  The teams are required to attend three meetings with 'the customer' two of which are face to face meetings, the third is a teleconference meeting specifically designed to educate students in this different, but widely used medium of communication. The students then have to submit a written proposal and give a presentation to a panel made up of both CSC management and Reading University academics.

Owning School/Department: Systems Engineering

Curricular/co-curricular/extra-curricular: Curricular

Accreditation: BCS

Assessment: 10 credit module

Skills gained: Knowledge & understanding of Software Engineering and its application, work as part of a team, problem solving, written communication & presentation skills.

Faculty of Social Sciences

School of Economics

Institute of Education

Title: FDEd Early Years Development and Learning/Supporting Children's Development and Learning

Brief description: Two-year full-time Foundation Degrees validated by the University of Reading and delivered by three local partner colleges. The programmes contain a substantial work-based learning element, and it is expected that students will be in an appropriate work environment when not attending College. This will normally be paid employment, but regular voluntary work in an appropriate role would also be acceptable. Students should be employed or volunteering for the equivalent of 0.5 FTE and have 2 years prior experience in a relevant role. Students should be supported in their work-based learning by a mentor at their place of employment and also by the College, which should arrange for regular contact by an appropriate member of staff. Students will be required to complete a work-based project, which will be agreed with their employer with due regard being paid to issues of confidentiality.

Owning School/Department: Institute of Education

Curricular/co-curricular/extra-curricular: curricular

Accreditation: 240 credits, Level 5 qualification, modules are a mixture of Level 4 and Level 5

Assessment: Students are assessed using a variety of methods (see programme specification and module descriptions for further detail.

Skills gained (academic and transferable): The aim of the Foundation Degrees is to develop the knowledge, skills and attributes of practitioners working in childcare, early years or school settings to enable them to develop into professional teaching assistants, learning support assistants or day care workers. The Foundation Degrees will also provide a base for further study that may allow practitioners to progress to an Honours degree, or training in professional routes such as towards the Early Years Professional Status (EYPS) or the Registered Teacher Programme (RTP). The Foundation Degree may also allow learners to progress to parallel awards such as Higher Level Teaching Assistant status and/or Qualified Teacher Status.

School of Law

Title: Law Employability Week

Brief description: This takes place each summer so that students can meet with recruiters from diverse sectors to find out exactly what employers are seeking. Local firms host workshops on networking and interviewing and invite students for a day-in-the life look at work after university.

Owning School/Department: Law

Curricular/co-curricular/extra-curricular:

Accreditation: N/A

Assessment: N/A

Skills gained (academic and transferable):

Title: LLB Law with Legal Studies in Europe

Brief description: Between Part 2 and Part 3, a year is spent abroad at an approved university within the European Union appropriate to the linguistic skills of the student (University of Maastricht/ University of Uppsala/ University of Paris X/ University of Bilbao/ University of Trier). Students must study and pass modules equivalent to 120 credits offered by the host university. It may be possible to arrange links with other countries. The host university may offer a local qualification depending on the modules studies at passed at that institution.

Owning School/Department: Law

Curricular/co-curricular/extra-curricular: curricular

Accreditation: 120 credits at Level 6(?)

Assessment: Examinations during the year abroad will be conducted in accordance with the rules and practices of that institution and are likely to include oral examinations. In order to proceed to Part 3 of the LLB (Law with LSE) degree a student must satisfactorily complete the year abroad. A student who has successfully completed Part 2 of the degree but who fails satisfactorily to complete the year abroad may, with the approval of the University of Reading, transfer to the LLB (Law) degree programme.

Skills gained (academic and transferable): skills in oral communication and independent learning, foreign language skills

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Title: Enquiry-Based Learning tasks in Law (module codes? LW1RWS?)

Brief description: Two EBL projects funded by the CETL-AURS. Part 1 compulsory module where students are tasked with looking at building plans and identifying tort and contract issues, use of problem-based approach over a number of weeks. Part 3 optional module where students presented with state problems, policy options and a budget and must write a report on how to address the issues (engaging with criminology theories). There is a later shift in the parameters which they must take into account.

Owning School/Department: Law

Curricular/co-curricular/extra-curricular: curricular

Accreditation: ?

Assessment: ?

Skills gained (academic and transferable):

School of Politics and International Relations

Title: Politics – negotiation simulation (module?)

Brief description: Students take part in a simulated UN negotiation session as part of a module.

Owning School/Department: Politics and International Relations

Curricular/co-curricular/extra-curricular: curricular

Accreditation:

Assessment:

Skills gained (academic and transferable):

Appendix 2 - List of documentation/resources considered by the Review

1. *2010 Graduate Prospects from Times Higher Good University Guide: Relative Subject Positions*, Professor Rob Robson, October 2009

2. *Attainment in higher education: Erasmus and placement students*, HEFCE November 2009/44 (http://www.hefce.ac.uk/pubs/hefce/2009/09_44/09_44.pdf)

3. *Career pursuit: towards an understanding of undergraduate students' orientation to career,* O'Regan, M. (2009), unpublished PhD thesis, University of Reading

   (http://www.reading.ac.uk/ccms/research/ccms-phds.aspx)

4. *CAS thoughts on the employability paper from the PVC T&L*, Careers Advisory Service, 2009

5. CEEBL: Centre for Excellence in Enquiry-based Learning (http://www.campus.manchester.ac.uk/ceebl/)

6. CILASS: Centre for Inquiry-based Learning in the Arts and Social Sciences (http://www.sheffield.ac.uk/cilass/)

7. *Degree Outcomes for University of Reading Students* and *Labour Market Outcomes for University of Reading Students* - Summary reports derived from *Human Capital Acquisition and Labour Market Outcomes in UK Higher Education*, Jewell, Sarah, University of Reading PhD Thesis (2008) (http://www.reading.ac.uk/ccms/research/ccms-phds.aspx)

8. *Destinations of Leavers from Higher Education survey: Frequently Asked Questions*, Careers Advisory Service, 2009

9. *Employability Skills Initiatives in Higher Education: What Effects Do They Have On Graduate Labour* Market Outcomes?   Mason, G., Williams, G. and Cranmer, S. (http://www.niesr.ac.uk/pubs/dps/dp280.pdf)

10. *Employer-responsive provision survey: A reflective report*, QAA, February 2010 (http://www.qaa.ac.uk/employers/EffectiveProvision.pdf)

11. *Experience Works – a student's guide to co-curricular work experience*, Careers Advisory Service

12. *The Face of Employability: the Reading web site*, Employment Project Group, April 2010

13. *Faculty Annual Quality Reports 2008-09 –* extracts relating to WRPL

14. *Final report of the Evolution of MASIV Working Group*, January 2010

15. *Final report of the Working Group on Quality Assurance for Work-based and Placement Learning*, June 2009

16. *Graduate Destinations 1997-2003*, CAS

17. *HEA Work-based learning: Costing Study*, July 2008 (http://www.heacademy.ac.uk/assets/York/documents/costing_work_based_learning.pdf)

18. *HEA Work-based learning: Impact Study*, July 2008 (http://www.heacademy.ac.uk/assets/York/documents/impact_work_based_learning.pdf)

19. *HEA Work-based learning: Workforce development: Connections, frameworks and processes*, July 2008 (http://www.heacademy.ac.uk/assets/York/documents/workforce_development.pdf)

20. *Health and Safety Guidance for the placement of Higher Education students*, Universities and Colleges Employers Association, August 2009

21. *HESA Destination of Leavers from Higher Education Institutions Survey 2007/08* – additional information supplied by HEFCE relating to Question 16: thinking still about your employer on 14 April 2008/12 January 2009: "Did you work for this employer before or during the programme of study you recently completed?" and Question 17: "In which of the ways listed below did you work for this employer?" by specified institution 2007/08

22. *Higher Ambitions: The Future of universities in a knowledge economy*, Department for Business, Innovation and Skills, November 2009 (http://www.bis.gov.uk/policies/higher-education/shape-and-structure/higher-ambitions)

23. *Improving the Employability of Reading Graduates*, Professor Rob Robson, August 2009

24. *Institutional Audit Report – University of Reading*, QAA, March 2008 (http://www.qaa.ac.uk/reviews/reports/institutional/Reading08/RG388Reading.pdf)

25. *Interim Evaluation Report July 2007* – CETL in Applied Undergraduate Research Skills (see also http://www.reading.ac.uk/cetl-aurs/)

26. *International Student Barometer* - Executive Summary (March 2010) and data analysis specifically relating to employment/careers support

27. *Leitch Review of Skills: Prosperity for All in the Global Economy – world class skills*, December 2006 (http://www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/leitch_review_index.htm)

28. *Looking at the University of Reading's employability profile through its web presence*, report by Vicky Clarke for the Employment Project, March 2010

29. *Moving On: short report: Graduate careers three years after graduation*, Manchester: CSU (January 1999) http://www.hecsu.ac.uk/hecsu.rd/research_reports.htm

30. *Postgraduate Decliners' Survey 2009: Executive Summary*, Student Recruitment and Schools Liaison Office, 2009

31. *QAA strengthens its guidance on student employability*: Press release from the QAA, February 2010 (www.qaa.ac.uk/news/media/pressReleases/230210B.asp)

32. *Reading Postgraduate Employability Survey 2009*, Lena Azbel-Jackson & Hannah Rutherford, CAS

33. *Taking stock: CBI education and skills survey 2008*, CBI (sponsored by Edexcel), 2008 (http://www.cbi.org.uk/pdf/eduskills0408.pdf)

34. *Transitions from Higher Education to Work*, Lee Harvey, February 2003 (http://www.heacademy.ac.uk/assets/York/documents/resources/database/id246_Transitions_from_Higher_Education_to_Work.rtf)

35. *Undergraduate Decliners' Survey – The Second Year*, Student Recruitment and Schools Liaison Office

36. *University code of practice on placement learning*, Section 6(d)(i) of the Guide to policies and procedures for teaching and learning (http://www.reading.ac.uk/internal/qualitysupport/guide/qual-guidehome.aspx)

37. *Work-based Access to Higher Education: A Course Development Checklist*, Foundation Degree Forward, September 2008 (http://www.fdf.ac.uk/downloads/110/20090812141338fdfwork-based_access1.pdf)

38. *Working Out? Graduates' early experiences of the labour market*, Purcell, K., Pitcher, J., and Simm, C., Manchester: CSU (January 1999)
http://www.hecsu.ac.uk/hecsu.rd/research_reports.htm

Engaging employers to enhance teaching and learning

Ideas and approaches for work-related and placement learning

Contents

Engaging employers in the curriculum at Reading

Welcome to this Toolkit developed by the University's Centre for Career Management Skills (CCMS). It has been well evidenced that work-related learning and employer contact brings a range of benefits to students. These benefits include enhanced subject engagement[1], personal development[2] and improved graduate employment outcomes[3]. The challenge is how to provide opportunities for work-related learning and employer contact in ways which integrate and complement the curriculum, engage and develop the students and benefit the employer involved. Help is now at hand in the form of this Toolkit!

The beauty of this Toolkit is that it recognises that Schools will each be approaching employer engagement from different positions, both in terms of pedagogic aims and also previous experience of working with employers in this context; there is, therefore, no right or wrong answer and no 'one size fits all' solution. It can be used by those with limited employer engagement at present to explore the possibilities, and by those with a long history of involving employers, to reflect on their activities and investigate new approaches.

The Toolkit makes a great supporting resource for School-based review activities, not least because each approach in the Toolkit is exemplified by case studies of existing practice here at Reading. These examples contain contextual information as well as highlighting the positive impact employer engagement can have on teaching and learning. They provide an excellent starting point for discussion and consideration of practice in your own area.

Dr Julia Phelps

Director, Centre for the Development of Teaching and Learning, University of Reading

1   Little, B, and Harvey, L. (2006) Learning Through Work Placements and Beyond, Centre for Higher Education Research and Information, Milton Keynes: Open University, p60

2   Silver, A., and Brennan, J. (1988) A Liberal Vocationalism, London: Methuen. pp.136 and 240

3   Cranmer, S (2006) 'Enhancing graduate employability: best intentions and mixed outcomes', Studies in Higher Education, 31:2, 169–184

Introduction

'Engaging Employers to Enhance Teaching and Learning' has grown out of a research project at Reading undertaken by Julie Rees and funded by the Centre for Career Management Skills (CCMS).

The aim of the project was to identify the teaching and learning impact of different forms of employer engagement on the curriculum. The research revealed many examples of successful employer engagement that benefit the subject curriculum as well as employability, and identified eight distinct modes of engagement with employers (see figure 1).

The examples included in this Toolkit are indicative but not exhaustive of the rich diversity of practice at Reading. Many of the examples by their nature will be transferable to other courses and institutions. The examples span the vocational – academic spectrum and are relevant, even to programmes from which graduates seek a wide range of employment opportunities.

Implicit within the word 'Toolkit' is the notion of choosing 'tools' that are fit for purpose. Each school's situation is different; there is no one size that fits all. This Toolkit describes in detail eight possible ways of engaging employers in the curriculum, not all of which might be appropriate for every school.

The Toolkit also provides further resources to assist schools which wish to reflect on how they are engaging with employers at present; to explore different approaches to engaging employers within their curriculum; and to identify and explore possible new activities and teaching methods that will enhance their students' learning.

The Toolkit embodies values-driven educational change and programme level curriculum enhancement. It is designed to be used as a resource for facilitated workshops to support school-based discussion and, where appropriate, Periodic Review meetings. It aims to stimulate debate and create a non-directive space for academics to reflect on their subject in the context of employer engagement, and to seek situated and subject sensitive solutions.
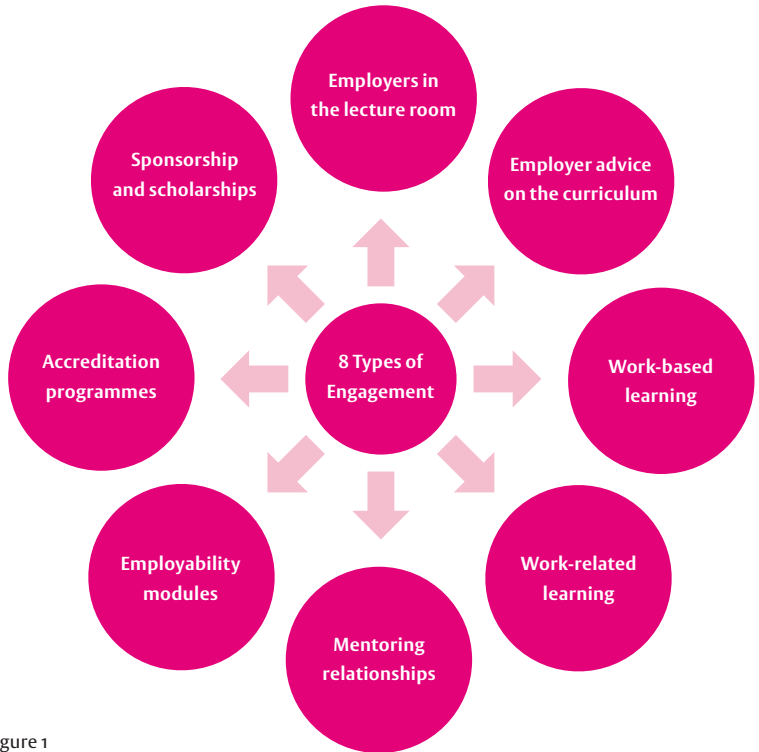
Employers in the lecture room

Sponsorship and scholarships

Employer advice on the curriculum

Accreditation programmes

8 Types of Engagement

Work-based learning

Employability modules

Work-related learning

Mentoring relationships

Figure 1

Summary of research findings

What do we mean by employer engagement?

For the purposes of this research project, we use the term 'employer engagement' to embrace the multitude of ways that the University interacts with employers, including not for profit organisations. While it can refer to activities beyond the curriculum such as research collaboration, this research focuses upon employer engagement that directly impacts upon teaching and learning. Employer engagement encompasses work-related and placement learning, and activities designed to enable students to understand the real world relevance of their academic learning. Employer engagement has the potential to enhance the employability of students, to promote subject learning and to bring wider advantages for the University.

Methodology

The research was conducted during 2008 by undertaking in-depth interviews with 34 academics drawn from all Faculties, 12 employers, staff from the Centre for Applied Undergraduate Research Skills and Reading Students Union. A purposive sampling approach was used to discover examples of good practice. Respondents were identified through networking and by contacting all sub-Deans and Faculty Directors of Teaching and Learning.

A round table discussion group was used as a sounding board for the project and comprised representatives from the Business School, the Careers Advisory Service, the Centre for Career Management Skills, the Centre for the Development of Teaching and Learning, Research Enterprise Services and Student Recruitment and Schools Liaison. Findings were reported to the Faculty Directors of Teaching and Learning, PVC Enterprise and PVC Teaching and Learning. Feedback from all these sources was used to shape the presentation of research outputs.

Key findings

The research has identified clear benefits from engaging employers within the curriculum for the University, for our students and for employers. It has also revealed that there is further potential as yet unexploited to develop this aspect of learning and teaching at Reading, which could contribute significantly to the employability of our students.

Benefits for the University

- Improves teaching and learning of non-vocational as well as vocational programmes

- Improves number and quality of applications from prospective students, given the high priority placed on their future employability

- Provides opportunities for sponsorship, work placement opportunities, content for enquiry and problem-based learning activities, as well as networking and research contacts for staff and postgraduates

Benefits for students

- Provides a work-relevant and challenging curriculum and the opportunity to develop soft skills and business acumen

- Enhances graduate employability, particularly where prior relationships between employer and student have been built, for example through placements

Benefits for employers

- Provides opportunities to promote work-relevant curriculum content

- Raises profile and helps secure a source of employable graduates

Opportunities for the University of Reading

- Proximity to major employers in the heart of the UK's 'silicon valley' is a unique benefit which could be more fully exploited

- The extent to which schools are engaging with employers varies considerably, hence there is scope for good practices to be shared widely across the University

Other findings

- Developing employer engagement is initially time-consuming but the ongoing effort is more modest and respondents feel the investment is more than justified by the long term gains

- Building durable employer-university relationships requires finding ways of working that bring clear benefits to both parties

- Schools that accrue the greatest benefits are those that value employer engagement as a whole school responsibility and have strategies for rewarding and recognising those staff playing a leading role

- How a school engages with employers should be related to the school's approach to employability, which in turn should be related to how it aims to help students form a firm foundation for their life after graduation. Both will need to be congruent with the nature of the disciplines taught within the school. Employers are an important source of information about the rapidly changing challenges that graduates will face in the future workplace. Dialogue with employers can also help a school consider how employability might be built into a programme in appropriate ways.

Employer engagement is a relational activity; employers, universities and students all have responsibility for making the relationship work and each has potentially much to gain. By building links with employers and addressing employability, schools can help enhance graduate outcomes and signal to prospective students the schools' commitment to employability. In the long-term, engaging with employers has the power to create a virtuous circle that benefits the schools' recruitment and curriculum offer (figure 2).

Figure 2

- Increase employer engagement
- Increase graduate employability
- Increase interest from students
- Improved calibre and fit
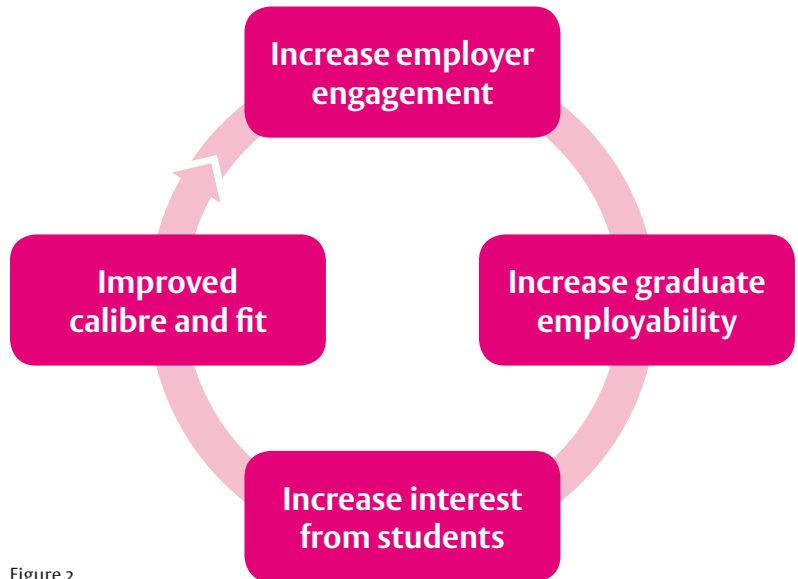
8 types of employer engagement in the curriculum at Reading

1 Employers in the lecture room

Outside speakers working with academics to deliver lectures or assess activities.

Benefits for students

- Understanding of how skills and knowledge are used in the work place
- Information from the 'coal-face' about opportunities within a sector
- Insider's view of competitive business environment
- Current knowledge of developments in a sector

Benefits for school

- Theory augmented by relevant experience
- Industry standards to assess student work
- External expertise in skills training
- Teaching variety

Points to consider

It is a common misconception that inviting someone outside of the university to deliver a lecture on a specific area means less preparation and work for the lecturer concerned. This is not generally the case and initially using an external speaker will take the same if not more work than preparing the lecture yourself. While students might value an appropriate level of employer input, they may perceive a dilution of academic rigour if a module has too much employer contact.

Example **Theatre practice modules – BA Film & Theatre**

Dr Teresa Murjas (Film, Theatre & Television) has worked in partnership with a number of professional theatre and art practitioners in delivering theatre practice modules at parts 1 & 2.

Practitioners are invited to devise 3–4 hour workshops – sometimes a workshop series – in order to assist students in developing a portfolio of skills which they can then apply to their own end-of-module projects. Practitioner-led workshops have covered a diverse set of topics including: the principles of the Laban school, set design and approaches to devising poetry-inspired performances. In one instance, a workshop on site specific theatre that ran over two weeks entailed students generating performances in various spaces around the Bulmershe Campus, using the properties of the space to create interactive installations. These workshops provide a valuable opportunity for students to undertake realistic projects with professional artists.

The skills and insights that the students gain enrich their wider academic learning. Furthermore, the breadth of experience enhances their employability and provides evidence for their CVs. Some of the professional artists provide their time freely (perhaps where they have previous involvement with the department – some are Alumni) while others are remunerated.

There are also other forms of motivation for the professionals involved: theatre companies see running workshops like these as an important way of developing and disseminating their ideas as well as generating future audience groups. The department benefits from being able to offer diverse and realistic experience of work in-house, which would be hard to source through external work placements. Throughout, the course tutor plays a key role in managing the input of externals, ensuring practitioners exemplifying a diverse range of modes are selected and that the workshops fit within the parameters of a module. The tutor is always present during the workshops to ensure continuity and coherence.

Example   Henley Business School and O2

Dr Chris Phillips of the Henley Business School has worked in partnership with O2 in creating and delivering the part 2 Marketing module. Delivery of lectures is split between Chris and O2, with lecture examples being so current that students are required to sign a confidentiality agreement. Students are set two pieces of work, one to write a detailed report outlining their recommendations; the second to give a presentation. On completion of the module successful students/teams can be offered either summer placements or 12 month placements with O2.

Useful references

London School of Economics

www2.lse.ac.uk/careersService/informationForEmployers/CareerEvents/
SkillsSessions/skillssessions.aspx

Examples of different types of skills sessions that employers might run and guidelines for employers (see Code of Good Practice)

Nottingham University Business School

www.nottingham.ac.uk/business/ug/EmployerProgramme.html

Shows range of ways used by the school to engage students with employers

2 Employer advice on the curriculum

For in-depth dialogue between schools and selected employers. At Reading at least four schools have well established Industrial Advisory Boards with middle and senior management representatives from several relevant organisations. Although currently existing Advisory Boards are in vocational areas, the model could be adapted to non-vocational subjects. For example, an active alumni network could be used to gather feedback on medium term curriculum developments.

Benefits for students

- Curriculum informed by a culture of relevance
- Increased access to placements, prizes etc.

Benefits for school

- Sounding-board for new ideas
- Confidential employer and industry insights
- Feedback on module content and delivery
- Discussion of research opportunities
- Set curriculum discussions within a wider context
- Provides a structure for maintaining durable relationships at a senior level
- Possible financial contributions

Points to consider

It is important to get the right level of employer input. Too senior and they may not know what is happening at the grass roots. Too junior and they may not be aware of the bigger picture within the industry. One of the most important factors, however, is selecting someone who is committed to giving their time and who has their employer's backing.

Example   Industrial Advisory Board
– The School of Construction Management

'In Construction Management the role of the advisory board is not limited to commenting on the curriculum, as teaching is the minority of our work, but we are looking for the advisory board to work with us in three key areas: the industry, the economy and society as a whole. I guess the key thing is that the reason we have such strong employer engagement is that we do not think of them as mere employers of our graduates, but as partners in the whole of our mission to develop new and robust knowledge about interesting things in the management and economics of the construction sector'.

Professor Will Hughes

Useful references

Liverpool University

www.csc.liv.ac.uk/~michael/industrial.html

Shows range of ways that the Dept of Comp Science at the University of Liverpool links with employers including the composition of the Industrial Liaison committee.

Sheffield University

www.shef.ac.uk/acse/industry/index.html

Sets out role, remit and membership of the Industrial Liaison Committee for the Department of Automatic Control and Systems Engineering at Sheffield University

3 Work-based learning

A range of activities that take place within a work setting, including: placements, work experience and some forms of volunteering, providing scope for application of subject understanding and exercise of graduate level skills.

Benefits for students

- Improved motivation to study

- Practical application of their subject area

- Experience of dealing with ill-structured problems

- Helps them decide what they do/don't want to do when they graduate

- Greater confidence

- Development of interpersonal skills and enhanced employability

- Accumulating experience which may be desirable/essential for work or postgraduate study

Benefits for the school

- Placements enable schools to offer learning experiences not available 'in-house'

- More attractive offer to some potential applicants (and their parents!)

- Increasing applications from prospective students looking for degrees that include work-based learning.

- Improved employability and employment of their graduates

Points to consider

Introducing a placement programme takes time. A department needs to consider whether they have the resource to support such a programme. Successful establishment of a placement programme requires robust ownership from a 'lead' person. However, advice is available within the university from existing placement officers and CAS to help with set up tasks. Some schools have given up an academic research position to enable them to have one person dedicated to developing relationships and working with employers. Up front investment is needed to find employers that can provide appropriate placements. Time is also needed to visit the employer so that they understand the placement requirements.

Example **English Language Assistantships Abroad – Department of Modern Foreign Languages**

As part of their year abroad in third year, modern language students are offered the option of working for seven to nine months as an English language assistant in schools abroad through the British Council assistantship programme. The scheme is open to all students who have studied a modern language module as part of their degree, and final year students and recent graduates may also apply.

Assistants provide support for English teaching in schools (they can choose which age group they want to work with, from primary up to university level). They have to plan activities and games using a variety of teaching materials, to make classes more fun and inter-active. Their work focuses on improving students' confidence in communicating in English. On their return, students can also apply to become 'student ambassadors' for the British Council, whose role it is to actively promote the programme within their university.

An assistantship is worth 40 credits, and will count towards the student's final grade. This is assessed at finals by a 5,000 word report (in the modern language that they are studying) that covers the following aspects of the teaching experience:

- The school, its facilities, staffing and pupils
- The welcome and initiation received and the nature of the ongoing support
- The range of classes taught, their size, type, aims and objectives
- Problems encountered in school and their resolution
- Successes achieved

The report therefore encourages students to record their experiences whilst abroad, and to reflect on what experience and knowledge they have gained. This report is submitted to the department at the beginning of Autumn term in the final year.

The central aim of the programme is to provide students with the opportunity to improve their language skills through the practical application of living and working abroad. It also provides invaluable professional experience for students who are thinking of pursuing a career in teaching. Feedback on the programme has shown that working as an assistant provides an excellent environment for the development of personal skills essential for any career: self-confidence and self-reliance, independence, problem-solving abilities, teamwork;

creativity, cultural awareness, and communication skills. Through the scheme, students gain a wide range of broad employability skills and develop personally and socially. Living abroad helps students improve their language ability and gain wider cultural awareness that enriches their academic study. The employers gain through having additional classroom support (from native English speakers) and the department benefits by being able to offer a popular and challenging learning experience.

The Law School offers opportunities for pro bono work with a wide range of organisations which are promoted through an annual Pro bono autumn Fair. The key objectives of the project are to provide opportunities for students to develop legal and life skills which will both enhance their study of academic law and support them in their future careers. The specific skills gained by volunteers vary from project to project but in every case include development of research skills, social responsibility, community awareness and development of their own legal knowledge. These support the core learning of the law degree programmes offered by the School of Law and help prepare students for their future careers, both legal and non legal.

In addition to supporting a wide range of opportunities the Law School also runs three specific pro bono schemes:

- Citizens Advice Bureau Training – which lasts over six months and includes weekly seminars and a four day certificate course. Qualified students then go on to work as advisors at the Reading or Wokingham or other local Citizens Advice Bureaux

- Street Law - which involves students going to local schools to bring aspects of law and the legal system into the community through group sessions, presentations and debating competitions.

- Mediation Training - First year students are given the opportunity to complete an accredited mediation course offered by professional trainers based at the organisation Resolve.

Final year students involved in Pro bono work are able to count their experience towards a full 20 credit Pro Bono Module. Students taking the module volunteer with an approved organisation for a period of six to nine months and complete an online portfolio reflecting on various aspects of their experience and the organisation concerned.

Example   **Part Two 'Communications at Work' module
– The Department of English and American Literature (DEAL)**

In this module, English students consider aspects of language and other communication tools during the seminar phase of the module. These include: TV media broadcasting; the history of print media; the art of the press release; semiotics; marketing and publishing; technology and communication.

In all of these areas, the focus is principally upon the use of language, thus picking up on the close reading skills which students have already gained, and the application of what they have learnt to new situations and material.

A key aspect of the module is that of placements: students undertake a two week communications placement which

allows students to work directly with employers and puts their seminar-based learning into the work place. Students work with placement providers to develop a project based on communication issues within the placement organisation. The students then produce a fieldwork report which has a word limit of 2,000 words and comprises analysis of one or more aspects of communication in the workplace as encountered by the student.

This allows students to analyse communication in a workplace setting; it deepens their understanding of language and wider communication within this setting and enhances their skills base as they apply their skills within a professional organisation. The links between the university and the wider world are also strengthened by this module.

Example: Prospect Park Hospital – School of Psychology

At the start of their second year, Psychology students have the option of volunteering to work a number of hours at Prospect Park Hospital. Prospect Park runs a 'drop in' centre for patients with mental illnesses. Patients select from a range of therapeutic courses, e.g. art, gardening, cooking. Student volunteers help staff at the hospital deliver these courses. Students gain invaluable first hand experience with real patient cases, which helps improve their understanding of psychology. Staff from Prospect Park come to the university to provide six 2 hour training sessions for volunteers; the university process students' CRB paperwork to allow them to participate in this programme. This scheme, initiated by a student and subsequently adopted by the Students Union, is now in its third year. Over 25 students take part each year.

Useful references

ASET

www.asetonline.org/advice.htm

ASET describes itself as the professional body for placement and employability staff. Its website provides practical guides covering most aspects of setting up and running work experience schemes, including providing for students with disabilities.

Centre for Excellence in Work-based Learning (CEWBL) CETL

www.mdx.ac.uk/aboutus/Schools/iwbl/cewbl/index.aspx

Based at Middlesex University; works with business to support students in work to gain UG and PG qualifications (including doctorates) based on their employment experience.

Centre for Professional Learning from the Workplace CETL

www.wmin.ac.uk/page-5818

Based at Westminster University; undertakes wide range of employability related projects.

Higher Education Academy

www.heacademy.ac.uk/ourwork/learning/employability/workbasedlearning

Links to examples of and reports on campus-based learners gaining experience in the workplace, or simulations and context cases that give students experience mirroring real work situations.

Keynote Project

www.leeds.ac.uk/textiles/keynote/Keynote_WPG/index.htm

Comprehensive set of free web-based guides for students, staff and employers that cover the time before, during and after work placements.

Useful references

NCWE

www.work-experience.org/ncwe.rd/products_36.jsp

Priced products including a Tutor Resource Pack to help prepare students for work experience.

PlaceNet – forum for HE placement professionals

www.placenet.org.uk

Charity for HE Placement Officers and Tutors, employers and others concerned with student placements. Runs a mail base to enable staff to share and communicate, and works with employers to improve placement practices.

Practice Based Professional Learning CETL

www.open.ac.uk/pbpl

Based at the Open University this CETL addresses learning which arises out of, or is focused on, working practice in a chosen job, voluntary work, career, or profession. This includes courses and learning activities linked to formal work placements, those which require the application of course ideas in a work setting and those which build on experience gained in a work setting.

QAA Code of practice on work-based and placement learning

www.qaa.ac.uk/academicinfrastructure/codeofpractice

Guidance on quality standards for work-based and placement learning

Rate My Placement

www.ratemyplacement.co.uk

Students can read reviews of placements written by other students and search for opportunities

Step Enterprise

www.step.org.uk

Offers variety of work placement opportunities including Government schemes.
Works with business and universities to make work experience more accessible for students.

4 Work-related learning

Learning at university based as closely as possible on real work situations and encompassing teaching methods such as case studies, projects, study visits and simulated work environments.

Benefits for students

- Application of discipline theory and knowledge to practical problems
- Development of problem solving and decision making skills
- More challenging and energising curriculum
- Wider range of relevant experiences to draw on for job interviews and easier transition into the workplace

Benefits for the school

- Creates the conditions for students to encounter challenging situations in a controlled manner.
- Teaching environment can be structured to enhance the learning, improve reflection or focus on particular learning outcomes and assessment tasks in ways not possible within the workplace
- Provides realistic experiences that could not logistically be made available in sufficient numbers in actual work places

Points to consider

Work-related learning depends upon authenticity for effectiveness. Finding appropriate employer contacts to help co-develop authentic material, however, is not always easy. Alternatively, university staff with relevant employment experience may create realistic material. Either approach requires considerable time. Due to the complexity of creating and delivering work-related learning, schools may wish to consider at a programme level how such methods are used most effectively. Annual evaluation can help ensure that the school and employer continue to find the collaboration beneficial.

Fine Art

Alun Rowlands and Christine Ellison, Fine Art, have worked with Capitol Bracknell (a subdivision of Deutsche Bank) to develop a professional practice element for all Part 2 and 3 students as part of their studio modules. Teaching components are delivered by FA staff in the department and resourced in kind by Capitol. Fine Art organises an art exhibition and competition financed by Capitol for which students are asked to develop and enter a proposal.

Fine Art Academics and the Capitol's commissioning team select a shortlist of 25 entries, and curate a public exhibition together at Capitol Bracknell. Selected students negotiate and discuss the exhibition of their individual works with the organisers. A final winner is selected by Capitol and receives a purchase prize as part of an award ceremony with local dignitaries and press.

Capitol and Deutsche Bank which has an internationally renowned art collection gain a new item for their art collection. This event also serves Capitol to promote and attract new audiences to their building development. Fine Art students gain valuable real-life experiences. The department, which already has links with the company through students who work as interns at the Frieze Art Fair each year, are able to strengthen relationships by working closely with key employees.

Example   Reading Borough Council – School of Real Estate & Planning

Dr Alina Congeve and Reading Borough Council have devised a group assignment for students to work on 'real life' planning situations. Students work in mixed teams and have access to council information to help them work through the case study. The proposals are then submitted to Dr Congreve and presented to representatives of Reading Borough Council. The group case study is a win-win situation for the council, students and the university. The council has work undertaken at a fraction of the cost that they would have had to pay a consultant; students do 'real work' which benefits their learning and understanding of their degree subject and gives them a valuable example to use in interview; the university forges relationships with employers, something that prospective students (and their parents) are anxious to see; and the collaboration also benefits the wider Reading community.

Example   Part 2 management skills module – Henley Business School

Maria Gee has created a case study approach to career learning that delivers the learning outcomes for the Part 2 Career Management Skills module. Students work in teams simulating the role of recruitment consultants. The team's task is to hire a new member of staff to a client company. Students must develop an advertisement, job description and person specification for the post. They are then provided with realistic fictional CVs (designed by the Careers Advisory Service) and have to create and apply a selection process to determine the most suitable candidate. Students are put in the employers' shoes, experience different work roles, and learn about the fundamental principles of job seeking and personnel selection through a realistic scenario.

For this 10 credit module students are assessed via a team written report, a team oral presentation and an individual reflective essay. In designing the module Maria drew on her personal knowledge of business and on expertise from the Careers Advisory Service. Student feedback has been very positive and indicates that the approach has led to significant learning gains.

Useful references

Case based learning in Politics

www.hud.ac.uk/cbl

8 examples of ways of including work-related learning in the curriculum from this FDTL funded project at the University of Huddersfield.

Context learning materials from Pauline Neal

www.geog.leeds.ac.uk/courses/other/casestudies/

Context has been established with the aim of promoting the use of case materials in higher education and employment. Case materials are designed to meet the needs of students for group working, decision-making and experience of work. They are based as closely as possible on real work situations and issues (in business, government and the voluntary sector). Context cases aim to give students work experience without going to the workplace.

Higher Education Academy

www.heacademy.ac.uk/ourwork/learning/employability/workbasedlearning

Examples of and reports about campus-based learners gaining experience in the workplace, or simulations and context cases that give students experience mirroring real work situations.

TIBER – The Integrated Business Education Resource

teaching.shu.ac.uk/om/thebusiness/website/new_project

TIBER is an FDTL5 project which offers a package of materials that can be used to integrate the first year Business Studies curriculum. The resource is based on a replica company - a department store chain which has a website and a staff intranet (which holds additional information). The project has also produced a replica logistics company (Logistics plc) and produced a catalogue of learning activities that make use of both of these resources.

5 Mentoring relationships

A long term relationship between a more experienced person (in employment) and a student, to help the latter develop in their understanding of the world of work.

Benefits for students

- Individual personal attention
- In-depth insight into a particular organisation, its culture and area of work
- Role model and encouragement
- Networking opportunity that may assist with finding a job
- Helps students understand what employers are looking for
- Advice on knowledge and skills employers require and how to demonstrate them

Benefits for school

- Powerful means of building links with alumni and involving them in the life of the school
- Offers alumni a non-financial way of contributing to the school
- Mentoring can run alongside normal timetable commitments
- A flexible and time efficient way of linking students to the work-place that does not require days or weeks of off-campus attendance

Points to consider

A mentoring relationship is a supportive and confidential one. Mentoring can be offered to a whole student group, or through a selective process to allow for targeting at perhaps 'high-flyers' or at vulnerable groups. The level of commitment expected from the mentor can vary widely, for example the number of times they will meet the mentee, the duration and the scope of the relationship.

A school's alumni are an excellent source of volunteers who are likely to understand the challenges facing current students and have a natural affinity to their old institution and school. Establishing systems to maintain active links with alumni can be highly advantageous. Many larger companies also encourage employees to have 'educational liaison roles' as part of their staff development, so regionally based employers can also be a useful source of mentors. Both mentors and mentees will require careful briefing on their respective roles and their expectations from such a relationship. Consideration

should also be given to the extent to which matching the background of the mentor to the aspirations and interests of the mentee can result in productive outcomes.

> **Example** **Reading Real Estate Foundation**
> **– School of Real Estate and Planning**

Last year the School of Real Estate and Planning introduced a student mentoring scheme where 125 students have been matched with an industry mentor. This initiative has been set up with the help and support of RREF (Reading Real Estate Foundation). The Foundation is funded solely by Real Estate and Planning alumni and provides help and support to the school in a number of ways: providing regular speakers from industry, organising dedicated career fairs, sometimes providing work experience opportunities, funding research and academic chairs.

Useful references

Aberdeen Business School

www.enhancementthemes.ac.uk/documents/employability/230305_RGUmentor_paperPDF.pdf

Describes use of HR professionals at the Robert Gordon University to mentor postgraduate students to help ease transition into employment

Department for Education and Skills

www.standards.dfes.gov.uk/sie/documents/LMGoodPractGuide.pdf

Good practice guidelines, written for schools but some aspects are transferable to university context.

Miller, A., (2002), *Mentoring Students and Young People: A Handbook of Effective Practice*, **London: Kogan Page.**

Includes a chapter on business mentoring in HE

The Mentoring and Befriending Foundation (MBF)

www.mandbf.org.uk/resources

The MBF is the national strategic body for England. Its website includes resources for mentoring schemes (mainly aimed at pre-HE sector).

6 Employability modules

Modules specifically addressing employability issues that could include student identity, the nature of the graduate labour market, career choice, self efficacy, self-awareness, skills development, job seeking, enterprise and entrepreneurship and critical exploration of the concept of 'career'.

Employability modules can be combined with content on Personal Development Planning, lifelong learning, study skills, work placement preparation or reflection and professional development.

Benefits for students

- Opportunity to focus exclusively on inter-relationship between degree, self and future plans
- Time is set aside within the curriculum for employability issues
- Future plans can be explored in dialogue with school and the Careers Advisory Service (CAS)
- Opportunity to reflect on own ideas as part of a structured process

Benefits for school

- Natural opportunity for employer/alumni presentations
- Intellectual space for employability-relevant aspects of degree to be drawn together
- Team teaching with CAS and/or other departments and services within the University

Points to consider

How does the timing of the module relate to key decisions that students face? How does the module sit in relation to the rest of the programme? How far is the module content congruent with the rest of the degree's curricula? Schools will want to consider how employability might be addressed progressively throughout the degree, strategically using dedicated employability modules to complement more embedded content.

Example   **Career Management Skills (CMS) – School of Humanities**

This module in the School of Humanities aims to provide students from Philosophy, Classics, History, and History of Art with the opportunity to develop self-awareness in the context of career decision-making, knowledge of the career opportunities that are available to them, and the skills to make effective applications.

The first part of the module component focuses upon individual and organisational values. Personality questionnaires are used to encourage students to reflect on what they might like from a career and, from their responses, identify recurrent themes. These themes can provide important criteria for reviewing their career options in the second part of the CMS module.

The second part of CMS offers students a menu of workshops that are tailored towards their needs. Sessions often include recent alumni talking about their experiences or speakers addressing development opportunities within Reading, for example the Student Ambassador Scheme and enterprise modules. For CMS students choosing two workshops, typical options include:

- Careers using your History Degree.
- Careers using your Philosophy Degree.
- Careers using your History of Art Degree.
- Careers using your Classics degree.
- Mature Students – What next?
- Finding work experience.
- Working in the media.
- Working in charities and the government.

The third part of CMS concentrates upon CVs, and applying for work. The Careers Advisory Service uses a 'before-and-after' self-evaluation tool so that students can identify the amount of learning they have achieved as a result of CMS.

Example   **Career Management Skills (CMS) – Department of Mathematics**

Mathematics Professor Peter Grindrod has recognised the importance of not just teaching the skills related to studying mathematics, but also making students aware of how these skills are relevant to a whole range of different careers. 'A Maths degree doesn't have an obvious career path, so it is important that the students recognise the skills they learn from the degree so they know the types of jobs that value these skills when they graduate. Through the Career Management Skills (CMS) module we encourage students to consider different career paths by using our alumni to give presentations on their careers to our students. We then ask the students to investigate one specific job in a company that interests them'.

Example **Practice of Entrepreneurship**
– a cross-faculty accredited entrepreneurship module

The Centre for Entrepreneurship provides students from across the University of Reading with a chance to experience entrepreneurship. The 20 credit Practice of Entrepreneurship module attracts up to 150 students from Part 2 to Masters level and across all subjects. During the module students form teams, formulate business ideas and construct a business plan. Throughout the module, industry professionals, successful University of Reading alumni and experienced entrepreneurs deliver guest speaker sessions to give a taste of entrepreneurship in practice. The module also allows students to engage in surgery sessions and facilitated business planning games; expert surgery sessions have included IP lawyers and commercial bank managers. Toward the end of the module, guest speakers return to assist in judging the entrepreneurship exhibition, where students pitch their ideas in a high intensity trade-show environment.

Whilst only a small number of students start up a business on completion of the module or immediately on graduation, all students benefit from gaining an insight into a variety of business functions such as finance, marketing and management, and learning business skills including building a successful team, budgeting and conducting market research. Students develop their employability and career planning skills by learning how to evaluate their skills and motivations, understanding the entrepreneurial mindset, developing commercial awareness and demonstrating the application of key communications skills including teamwork, networking and pitching. By linking in with employers and entrepreneurs, the University can provide students with up to the minute insights into a variety of careers and entrepreneurial trends. Having supportive guest speakers and facilitators enables innovative teaching, learning and assessment including the Entrepreneurship Exhibition.

This event also attracts media attention and corporate sponsorship, helping to raise the profile of Entrepreneurship at the University and secure further support.

The entrepreneurs involved gain a great deal of satisfaction by sharing their learning from their own successes and failures with the next generation of entrepreneurs. Through their involvement they also benefit from networking with other entrepreneurs, professionals and academics, and gaining access to wider University networks. Employers get a chance to interact with the most enterprising students at the University of Reading and locate potential bright sparks. Involvement in teaching programmes also leads to the development of collaborative projects and placements for large and small employers.

Useful references

Careers Education Benchmark Statement

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

Guidelines on including career learning within the curriculum and brief examples of employability modules

Careers education case studies

www.agcas.org.uk/agcas_resources/66-Careers-Education-Case-Studies-Series

Further more recent in-depth examples of careers/employability modules

Developing Entrepreneurial Graduates:
Putting entrepreneurship at the centre of higher education

cihe-uk.com/category/themes/key/enterprise

The report aims to provide practical guidance to stakeholders charged with the development of the entrepreneurial abilities of students and graduates.

Integrating Employability, PDP and Work-based Learning within the Curriculum

www.enhancementthemes.ac.uk/documents/employability/191004CaseStudy3.pdf

Shows how the School of Media, Language and Music at the University of Paisley integrated Employability, PDP and Work-based Learning within the Curriculum.

Napier University - Elective employability/PDP modules

www.enhancementthemes.ac.uk/documents/employability/JudyGoldfinch_revised.pdf

Describes 30 credit elective modules

National Council for Graduate Entrepreneurship (NCGE)

www.ncge.com/communities/education/

Has dedicated area for staff involved in promoting entrepreneurship through the curriculum

Realistic Work Experiences

www.uclan.ac.uk/ahss/ceth/realistic_environment/rwes.php

Realistic Work Experiences – approaches to embedding employability learning experiences within non-vocational disciplines devised by the Centre for Employability Through the Humanities CETL at the University of Central Lancashire.

7 Accreditation programmes

Degree programmes or parts of programmes that are accredited by professional, regulatory or statutory bodies.

Accreditation usually requires that the programme covers specific content. Sometimes students are required to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of their degree discipline by spending a specified number of hours working practically in that field or by completing a work-related assignment in a company. A variation on professional accreditation is where a company recognises a particular degree and provides support and work experience opportunities for students studying for the degree. Examples of accredited programmes at Reading include many courses offered by the ICMA Centre, the (MPharm) Pharmacy degree programme and the BSc Quantity Surveying degree programme.

Benefits for students

- Gaining an 'industry' standard qualification
- Laying a foundation for future professional progress
- Curriculum activities grounded in real world practice
- Developing links with an employer which might lead to an offer of employment

Benefits for schools

- Offering a course that can attract those seeking a clear employability dividend
- Curriculum content informed by close collaboration with profession
- Potential research work with external bodies
- Spin off benefits for other cognate programmes
- Kudos for school

Points to consider

Accreditation programmes require an ongoing commitment of time and financial resources from a school to meet the necessary standards. These external requirements impose some restrictions upon curriculum content, and can have implications for staff recruitment. In so far as the accreditation entails work placements, then schools must also service this requirement. More broadly accreditation poses questions about how schools enable staff to develop employer facing roles. Some schools might prefer staff to adopt specialist roles (academic or employer facing) while others may see advantages in combined roles.

Example **MEng degree – School of Systems Engineering**

The MEng. Program in Electronic Engineering starts to differ from the BEng. at the end of the second year. The emphasis on practical and laboratory work is even greater in the MEng. Programme. There is a major project in the third year and a six month industrial placement in the forth year (for which students are paid by the employer). This course fully meets the educational requirements set out by ECUK for Chartered Engineer status.

The School recognises the importance of industrial experience to employers and hence has a dedicated Placement Officer whose role is to assist students in finding placements. The Placement officer also helps the students with writing CVs, interview skills and recruitment tests. Whilst on placement students are visited by faculty staff several times to ensure that they are offered challenging work and opportunities to learn.

Useful references

Alliance of Sector Skills Councils
www.sscalliance.org
Portal website linking to all 25 Sector Skills Councils

Higher Level Learning (UUK, 2006)
www.universitiesuk.ac.uk/Publications/Pages/Publication-251.aspx
Publication containing many case studies of accredited and badged degrees at Foundation, Undergraduate and Masters level throughout the UK at research as well as business facing HEIs. Examples are themed around economic sectors.

8 Sponsorship and scholarships

The provision of financial support for students towards study costs, often including opportunities for paid work placements as part of the degree or during vacations. The provision of financial support to the university for academic prizes and awards, equipment, facilities or events.

Scholarships are often used by companies to attract more students to a specific degree discipline in order to secure a supply of suitably qualified future applicants.

Benefits for students

• Additional funds and work placements/vacation opportunities

• Opportunity to demonstrate academic achievement through competing for prizes

Benefits for school

• Kudos from endorsement of the courses by external bodies

• Improved ability to attract high calibre applicants

• Funds for added value extra-curricular events

• Companies involved with sponsorship and scholarships also tend to lend their support to the schools by attending open days and generally supporting the school in other ways

Points to consider

Schools will usually publish details of these schemes in promotional material and on the schools' website. However, the administration and management of these schemes are usually run by the companies themselves. Employers are increasingly selective about which universities to work with. They will monitor the impact of their collaborations to see if and how it generates successful future employees. It is important that schools invest time and effort to ensure that collaborations are effective in order to retain existing employers' sponsorship and to attract new ones.

Department of Food and Nutritional Sciences

As one of the leading universities in Food Bioscience in the UK, under-graduates of the department can apply for company sponsorship and scholarship opportunities with major food companies. For example Northern Foods offers 10 annual student sponsorships of £1,000 each year of full time study (excluding placement year). GlaxoSmithKline provide scholarships of £1100 per year (for each of the three teaching years the student spends at Reading) for the best two students entering the department to study a BSc course. Students are selected by the department based on the best overall performance in science A Levels. Sainsbury's, Dairygold Food Ingredients and Kerry foods provide a similar level of sponsorship for final year students who have successfully completed an industrial placement with them.

Dairygold Food Ingredients also offer £200 prizes to students taking BSc Nutrition and Food Science for the best exam results and a £200 prize for the best MSc Nutrition and Food Science research project. Dairy Crest and NFU provide scholarships to children of farmers from Cornwall, Devon, Dorset and Somerset.

Useful references

Best Practice Building Network

www.cebe.heacademy.ac.uk/BPBN/casestudy/kingston_ssg1.htm

A detailed description of an FDTL 3 funded project to embed company sponsorship within a degree programme.

Higher Level Learning (UUK, 2006)

www.universitiesuk.ac.uk/Publications/Pages/Publication-251.aspx

Publication containing many case studies of accredited and badged degrees at Foundation, Undergraduate and Masters level throughout the UK at research as well as business facing HEIs. Examples are themed around economic sectors.

Making use of the research

Using employers effectively to enhance teaching and learning

Like any educational intervention, employer engagement should be driven pedagogically. The starting point should be:

- Why do we want to involve employers?

- How can this add value?

- What is the best way to use employers?

- How can we access suitable employers?

- Why might employers want to get involved in our curriculum?

Involving employers in the curriculum is not straightforward. Time has to be allowed to make contact, identify suitable staff to work with and organise arrangements. For many employers, operating in Higher Education will be an unfamiliar experience. Careful briefing to ensure that activities are undertaken in an appropriate way is important and employer interactions might be evaluated more effectively by a course team, to ensure that quality is maintained.

Some schools already have very well established links with employers. For those that would like to explore avenues for engaging employers within their curriculum and wider activities, possible starting points might include:

- Research and Enterprise Services (RES)

- Centre for Entrepreneurship (CfE)

- Careers Advisory Service (CAS)

- Employers of your recent graduates, as per the DHLE survey data ailable from CAS

- Alumni of the school

- Regional Development Agency, e.g. South East England Development agency (SEEDA)

- Sector Skills Councils and professional bodies

- Employer groups, e.g. Council for Industry in Higher Education (CIHE), Association of Graduate Recruiters (AGR)

Durable relationships hinge on mutual respect and interest. Schools need to provide a convincing rationale to persuade an employer to invest their time and efforts in helping our students. To ensure a productive two-way relationship schools must be able to articulate what the employer should expect to get out of the arrangement, as well as the university and its students.

Examples of win-win scenarios for employers and the university

Activity	Benefits for the university	Benefits for the employer
Employers provide real problems for students to work on	Students are motivated by challenging realistic tasks	Range of new ideas
Employers provide staff for delivering skills training/ mentoring	Curriculum enriched, students get access to individual support/role models.	Staff development opportunities
Employers provide work placements	Students gain valuable experience and pay	'Tries-out' potential employees and attracts future applicants
Employers provide presentations, sponsorship of events or prizes	Funds for added-value activities, kudos helps to attract UCAS applicants	Raises profile and has direct contact with suitable applicants
Employers take part in university fora e.g. an industrial liaison board	Stakeholder feedback on curriculum and information about developments in wider political and commercial context	Senior level contacts, potentially useful research opportunities, plus affects long term supply of suitable graduates

Developing a programme specific stance toward employer engagement: Reflecting on current practice

Employer engagement cannot happen overnight; ideally practice and policy emerges out of wide ranging discussions that enable a school to arrive at a clear understanding of what employer engagement means for the programme and its students. Developing a programme-specific strategy is helped by:

- Examining the employability context of your students by using DHLE returns (and for staff at Reading using entry standard data from Planning Support **www.reading.ac.uk/closed/planning/plan-DepartmentalDataMenu.asp**)

- Establishing the current level of practice within the programme

- Examining ways used by cognate disciplines (by, for instance, using this booklet, talking to colleagues and seeking advice from HEA Subject Centres)

- Drawing on expertise within the University (e.g. CAS, CDoTL, Centre for Entrepreneurship)

- Allowing time and space for staff to discuss the practical and theoretical issues raised by employer engagement

- Linking with other enhancement cycles (e.g. Periodic Review and the Pathfinder Process) when possible

- Taking a programme level overview of activities

- Involving alumni as a resource - can give post-graduation feedback, and are an important point of employer contact

- Identifying priorities and allocating roles based upon a shared school-wide responsibility

Where are we now?

The following reflective questions and the associated "prioritisation grid" are intended as tools to assist schools to reflect at a programme level on the effectiveness of current employer engagement activity within their curricula and to prompt discussion about how activity might be developed further. This tool is designed to be used with each of the eight types of engagement identified through the CCMS research and recognises that the relevance of these eight types will necessarily vary between programmes.

For each aspect of employer engagement, there are six reflective questions to consider. The two reflective questions with numerically coded responses (questions 1 and 3) provide a way of quantifying how important any particular way of engaging with employers is for a school (or a programme within a school) and conversely how well the school is doing in this area. By transferring scores onto the grid below you can compare the relative importance and performance of current activity. In this way the grid allows the situation in relation to each of the different forms of employer engagement to be contrasted and can help to identify those aspects that your school or programme might choose to prioritise for further development.

Reflective questions

1   How important is this type of employer engagement
    (e.g. work-based learning) for the school/programme?

Not important									Very important
1	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

2   In what way is this important for the school/programme?
    (Describe the nature of the importance)

3   How do you rate the performance of the school/programme
    with regard to this aspect?

Very low									Very high
1	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

4   What evidence is there for this assessment?

5   Which stakeholders have a particular interest in this aspect
    of employer engagement?

6   How would your key stakeholders rate your performance and why?

Plot the answers from questions 1 and 3 onto the grid below.

High performance but low importance	High performance and high importance
Low performance and low importance	Low performance but high importance

Performance (y-axis, 0 to 10)

Importance (x-axis, 0 to 10)
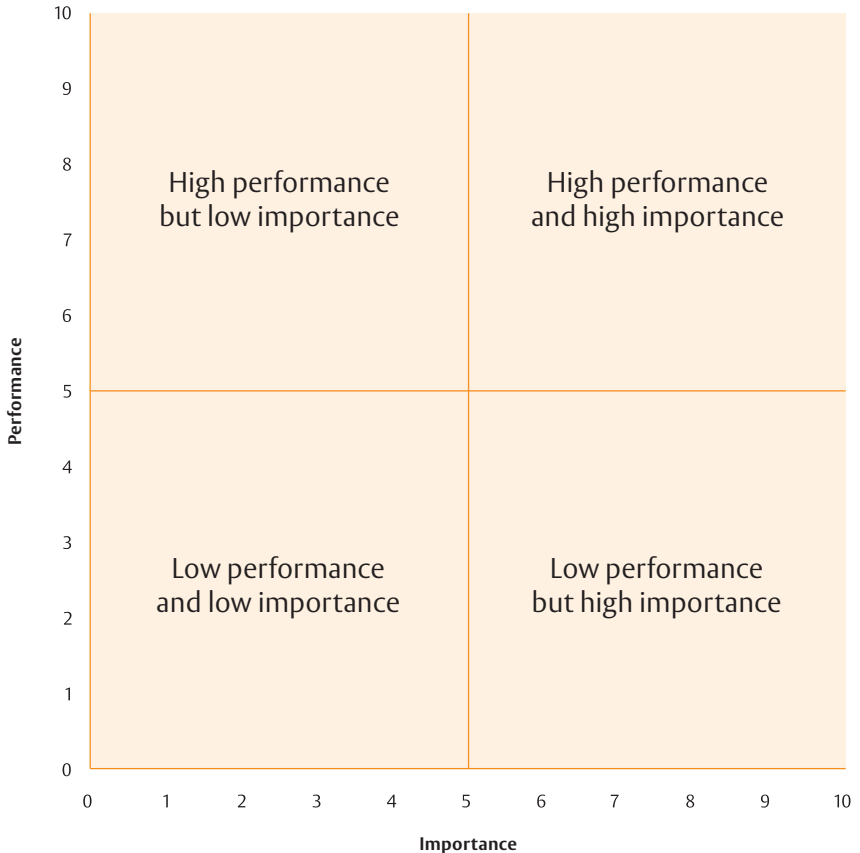
Notes on using the prioritisation grid

The design of the grid does not imply that an ideal score is, for example, in the middle of the chart. Nor does it imply that only the scores that are in the upper right quadrant are 'good'. Rather, underpinning the grid is the conviction that different patterns of scores have different strengths and weaknesses.

The function of the grid is not to arrive at answers but to pose questions about the extent of the match or mismatch between performance and importance. Questions prompted by this may lead off into wider discussions about the relative importance of the various forms of employer engagement.

Developing employer engagement further in the curriculum

The Toolkit shows that there are many possible ways of engaging with employers and correspondingly many potential benefits. Schools have many options and the prioritisation process can give some pointers on how to further develop curriculum-based employer engagement strategies.

A natural place to start is by comparing the scores on the Prioritisation Grid for different aspects of employer engagement. It is important to reiterate that there is not one ideal score or position on the grid. However, it might be instructive to plot each of the eight ways of engaging with employers onto the grid – perhaps by using a different letter to represent each of the eight ways.

Possible questions to stimulate further discussion around developing employer engagement in the curriculum include:

- How do we feel about the position of X aspect of employer engagement on the grid?
- Does this come as a surprise?
- What are the causes of this situation?
- How does this rating fit with the values of the school/programme?
- How does this rating fit with the stated aims of the school/programme?
- How does this rating fit with the values and stated aims of relevant University policies?
- How would our stakeholders view this rating?
- If we have placed the aspect in the top right hand quadrant, do we feel that the effort is justified?
- If we have placed the aspect in the bottom right hand quadrant, do we feel that more effort is justified, and what sort of actions might be appropriate?
- How are the scores distributed?
- Are there any hot spots, and if so why?
- How do we feel about the overall profile?
- How strong does the profile look?
- Have we properly acknowledged the efforts of the staff that are responsible for the strengths of the school/programme?
- What factors underpin our success, and how can we build on them?

- Do we need to rebalance our effort and activity?

- Which degrees will this particularly affect?

- How will any development in employer engagement be patterned across the programme?

- How will developments and new initiatives work out in content, and assessment?

- How will they interact with other employability-related aspects of the curriculum?

- How does any proposed development express the values and aims of the school/programme?

- What do we expect students to get out of any new initiatives?

- How might other stakeholders benefit?

- How will the school benefit?

- What's in it for the employer?

- What are the resource implications for the school/programme?

- What other costs will we face?

- What timescale do we want to adopt?

- Do we really want to do this?

- What can we do to help us sustain our commitment to new initiatives and changes in approach?

Which ways of engaging with employers might be relevant to our aims and objectives?

The eight types of engagement identified through this research provide an ideas bank showing the diverse possible ways that schools and programme teams can engage with employers. These are presented as a menu of options, to encourage staff to consider which might assist them in achieving their learning and teaching outcomes. The examples provided show the scope for adapting each of the types to suit the local context.

The table can be used to help find which of the eight types of employer engagement are most likely to be relevant to your aims and objectives. The shaded cells identify which of the eight types of employer engagement are likely to be especially relevant to the objectives listed in the left hand column. Most of the types of employer engagement have some potential to contribute towards achieving most of the objectives. This table aims to emphasis where the potential for contribution is strongest. The linkages made by this table are contingent upon the way that a type of employer engagement is put into operation, and are indicative and not exhaustive.

	Employers in the lecture room	Employers advice on the curriculum	Work-based learning	Work-related learning	Mentoring	Employability modules	Accreditation	Sponsorship
Stakeholder support								
Gaining external endorsement/input	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Finding funds for 'added value' activities		✓					✓	✓
Offering a professional qualification		✓					✓	
Building alumni links	✓				✓	✓		
Student opportunities								
Supporting individual students					✓			✓
Obtaining sponsorship for students		✓	✓				✓	✓
Fostering job offers for students			✓		✓		✓	✓
Providing work placements			✓				✓	✓
Developing students' confidence/social skills	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓		
Curriculum enhancement								
Supporting students to understand the real world relevance of academic learning	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Generating ideas and gaining access to resources for programme development	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓
Using expertise from other university departments						✓		
Including realistic learning experiences (e.g. problem-based learning)	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	
Reflecting employment sector developments in curriculm	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	

Ensuring effective engagement of employers

Before embarking upon a new initiative or activity, schools and programmes can use this 'health-check' form to see if there are any risks that could prevent plans from being successful. Negative responses indicate risk factors that require serious attention.

Factor	Contribution	Yes or No?
Timing	Have you identified an implementation date, working backwards and recognising constraints on partners?	
Clarity	Do you understand what you are seeking to achieve and can you explain this concisely to others?	
Deal makers	Can you understand partners' values and establish a common set of objectives?	
Will to succeed	Just how much do you need to do this? Is it a number one priority? Are your partners fully committed to it?	
Win-win	Do all partners stand to gain from the proposed collaboration?	
Funding	What will be the demand on funding streams? Is this realistic and achievable?	
Resources	In addition to funding, are there enough hours for your team to engage and deliver the project?	
Critical input	Key team strengths – do you have them? Do your intended partners have them?	
Adaptability	Can your plan adapt to the possible changing requirements of your proposed partners?	
Cultural alignment	Do you have adequate understanding of the cultures that will need to blend in order for the programme to succeed?	
Top-down	Do institutional leaders not only approve but actively support and champion the proposal?	
Grass-roots	Do staff on the ground understand and appreciate the rationale for the programme?	
Critical path/ review	Are all the key interactions and related timings understood? Are suitable evaluation steps in place?	

More resources and references for engaging with employers in the curriculum

Recent reports and policy statements

Future Fit: Preparing graduates for the world of work (CBI, 2009)

www.universitiesuk.ac.uk/Newsroom/Media-Releases/Pages/CBI-UUKfuturefit.aspx

A report on research into HE /employer views of employability, strategic and practical issues for employer engagement and has good practice examples

HEFC

www.hefce.ac.uk/econsoc/employer

Policy on and provision for HEFCE's workforce development programme. Information on funding, projects and reports.

Higher Level Learning: Universities and employers working together (UUK, 2006)

www.universitiesuk.ac.uk/Publications/Pages/Publication-251.aspx

Interesting examples illustrating different ways that HE and employers can collaborate at a discipline level.

Influence through collaboration (CIHE, 2007)

www.cihe.co.uk/category/themes/key/skills

Nuanced discussion of the issues around employer engagement and the need to move beyond a simplistic notion of employers as customers

Unleashing Aspiration (Cabinet Office, 2009)

www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/strategy/work_areas/accessprofessions.aspx

Wide ranging recommendations which if implemented would include implications for university sector.

Websites with reports and research

3Ei CETL

extra.shu.ac.uk/cetl/e3i/case%20studies.html

Case studies illustrating different approaches to providing real word learning activities, work-based learning, professional skills modules, and activities conducive to PDP and developing learner autonomy.

Bridges CETL

www.beds.ac.uk/bridgescetl/projects/fellows

Information about T&L projects looking at PDP, employability and professional practice etc.

Centre for Employability Through the Humanities (CETH) UCLan

www.uclan.ac.uk/ahss/ceth/index.php

Descriptions of a range of innovative approaches for embedding employability in arts and humanities programmes

CETLS

www.hefce.ac.uk/Learning/TInits/cetl

There are 74 CETLs in England and NI. Many are involved in work connected with employers and employability. A number are focused upon specific sectors and discipline groups

Council for Industry and Higher Education

www.cihe.co.uk

Research and reports; employer perspectives on HE issues, especially strong on international comparisons and sensitive to the particular issues facing HE and employers

Enhancement Themes

www.enhancementthemes.ac.uk/themes/Employability/publications.asp

Reports and wide range of case studies on employability produced by the Scottish QAA as part of their employability enhancement theme

HEA Subject Centres

www.heacademy.ac.uk/ourwork/learning

Subject centre websites often have resources for employer engagement/employability and examples of approaches undertaken across the UK

HECSU

www.hecsu.ac.uk/hecsu.rd/index.htm

Wide range of current research into employability, including the longitudinal FutureTrack survey

Tools for employer engagement

EDORT

careers.ulster.ac.uk/staff/edort.html

Sophisticated curriculum auditing tool developed by the University of Ulster and used extensively within the institution. Allows perceptions of staff and students to be compared using rating scales

HEA Employability resources

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

Tools for promoting employability within the curriculum and papers which relate theory to practice

Books and articles exploring the pedagogy and ethics of employer engagement and employability

Greenberg. D. S. (2007), *Science for Sale: The Perils, Rewards, and Delusions of Campus Capitalism*, **Chicago: Chicago University Press**

Polemical argument about the risks and opportunities for research collaboration between industry and academia

Knight, Y., and Yorke, M. (2004), *Learning, Curriculum and Employability in Higher Education*, **London: RoutledgeFalmer**

Nuanced and comprehensive discussion of employability and associated pedagogic challenges

Little, B. and Harvey, L. (2006), *Learning Through Work Placements and Beyond*, **Manchester: HECSU**

Research on potential for work placements to enhance use and acquisition of higher level degree knowledge

Sewell, P. and Dacre-Pool, L (2007), The key to employability: developing a practical model of graduate employability, *Education and Training*, **Vol. 49, No.4, pp277-289**

Discussion and synthesis of different research based models of employability

University of Reading resources: sources of support and advice

Career Management Skills (CMS)

www.reading.ac.uk/careers/employer/withstudents.asp

CMS is an award winning scheme which incorporates education on careers directly into undergraduate programmes. CMS helps students reflect on their strengths, explore their options after graduation, consider work experience and articulate their skills on paper. Employers can get involved by providing recent graduates from the University of Reading to talk about their own career decision-making process and to provide an insight into a typical working day. Employers may also be involved by, for example, running an exercise to develop/assess key skills (e.g. team work), giving a short presentation on career opportunities in their field of expertise, or on job seeking advice (e.g. how they recruit and what employers look for in a good CV).

Centre for Entrepreneurship (CfE)

www.henley.reading.ac.uk/management/undergraduate/enterpriseandentrepreneurship/ mgmt-ugentrepreneurship.aspx

- Student Enterprise – a first year module offering students from across the University the chance to create and run their own venture, including guest speakers & surgery sessions.
- Social Enterprise – a module for final year and masters students which includes consultancy visits with existing local social enterprises to learn about the sector first hand.
- Entrepreneurial Management for Food Scientists – a subject- specific module using a live case study and exploring entrepreneurial thinking in an existing organisation.
- Enterprise Experience – a scheme matching talented students with entrepreneurial companies and SMEs for short work experience placements on specific projects.

With a selection of four different 20-credit modules, students can access entrepreneurship at any stage in their degree. It is now also possible for students to create a 'minor' in entrepreneurship by choosing one module each year.
For advice on entrepreneurship, contact Dr Jess Co: **j.co@henley.reading.ac.uk**

Headstart Programme

www.reading.ac.uk/careers/employer/withstudents.asp

Headstart is the centralised careers workshop programme run by CAS. It offers employers the opportunity to run "skills based" or vocational workshops in areas such as interview technique, writing effective application forms, mock interviews and commercial awareness. The Headstart programme is open to all students across year groups and disciplines, and enables students to choose what help they need and when they need it. Students rate the sessions highly and really appreciate employer input.

Reading Placement Tutors' Form (only accessible to staff at Reading University)

www.reading.ac.uk/careers/staff-only/placements/index.asp

Run by the Careers Advisory Service (CAS). Helps tutors and staff prepare students effectively for their placement. Promotes and disseminates information relating to placements, including good practice guidelines. Includes: list of placement tutors at Reading, guide to opportunities for students – Experience Works – and the University of Reading Placement Code of Practice, as well as many other useful documents from national bodies. CAS offers advice to staff and students on work experience and a wide range of related aspects of employability.

SEED and other University-wide placement opportunities

Summer Enterprise Experience & Discovery is an innovative, project-based internship scheme for University of Reading students and local/regional business and enterprise. The Careers Advisory Service co-ordinates SEED to provide students with valuable project-based work experience, whilst giving local employers requiring additional help with access to a resourceful pool of talented, willing and able interns. SEED is open to all first and second year undergraduates. In addition, it is open to any third year undergraduate or postgraduate who is a returning student in the forthcoming academic year.

For more information contact Em Sowden, International Employability Development Manager, **e.l.sowden@reading.ac.uk**, or Andy Port, Employability Projects Manager, **a.r.port@reading.ac.uk**

Glossary of abbreviations

AGCAS	Association of Graduate Careers Advisory Services
AGR	Association of Graduate Recruiters
CAS	Careers Advisory Service (University of Reading)
CCMS	Centre for Career Management Skills (University of Reading)
CDoTL	Centre for the Development of Teaching and Learning (University of Reading)
CETL	Centre for Excellence in Teaching and Learning
CfE	Centre for Entrepreneurship (University of Reading)
CIHE	Council for Industry and Higher Education
CMS	Career Management Skills (module at University of Reading)
NCWE	National Council for Work Experience
NASES	National Association of Student Employment Services
PDP	Personal Development Planning
RES	Research Enterprise Services (University of Reading)

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(School of Law)

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(School of Law)

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(School of Systems Engineering)

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(Careers Advisory Service)

Dr. Julia Phelps
(Center for the Development
of Teaching and Learning)

Dr. Chris Phillips
(Management: Henley Business School)

Professor Rob Robson
(Vice-Chancellor's Office)

Dr. Gillian Rose
(Agriculture; School of Agriculture,
Policy and Development)

Mr. Alun Rowlands
(Fine Art: School of Arts, English
and Communication Design)

Ms. Carey Singleton
(Student Recruitment & Schools Liaison;
External Affairs Directorate)

Ms. Rhianedd Smith
(Museums & Special Collections
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Mrs. Emma Sowden
(Careers Advisory Service)

Dr. Rachel Stewart
(Academic Services Directorate)

Mr. Kevin Thompson
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Ms. Kriss Turner
(Institute of Education)

Miss Sophie Verzylbergen
(Management: Henley Business School)

Mrs. Liz Victor
(School of Systems Engineering)

Professor Christine Williams
(Vice-Chancellor's Office)

Dr. Patricia Woodman
(School of Continuing Education)

Engaging employers to
enhance teaching and learning

ⓘ For more information,
please contact:

David Stanbury

University of Reading
Carrington Building
Whiteknights
PO Box 217
Reading RG6 6UA
United Kingdom

d.r.stanbury@reading.ac.uk
Tel (0118) 378 8506
Fax (0118) 378 8355
www.reading.ac.uk/ccms

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2009

Appendix 4 – Sample programme specifications for programmes with a Maxi PO

BSc Applied Information Technology   **UCAS code: G503**
For students entering Part 1 in 2009/0

Awarding Institution:	University of Reading
Teaching Institution:	University of Reading
Relevant QAA subject Benchmarking group(s):	Computing
Faculty:	Faculty of Science
Programme length:	4 years
Date of specification:	03/Sep/2009
Programme Director:	Dr Gerard McKee
Programme Advisor:	Dr Steve Han
Board of Studies:	IT Board of Studies
Accreditation:	Accredited by the British Computer Society.

Summary of programme aims

This programme aims to prepare students for a career in the Information Technology industry, with a particular emphasis on the elements of computer systems and their use in business. The student's placement year aims to provide an understanding of how the methods and technologies learnt in the parts 1 and 2 of this degree relate to the requirements of industry; this deepens the student's appreciation of the topics studied and encourages a more effective approach to their final year modules and project. Graduates will be well qualified to play a disciplined and creative part in a development or support environment.

The programme aims to develop the students' knowledge of the practice and underlying theory of Information Technology, necessary for them to secure employment as a professional in a wide variety of industries; to encourage their critical and analytical skills, including computational thinking; and to develop their skills in applying practical concepts to the design of computer systems, and the development of Management Information Systems.

Transferable skills

During the course of their studies at Reading, all students will be expected to enhance their academic and personal transferable skills in line with the University's Strategy for Learning and Teaching. In following this programme, students will have had the opportunity to develop such skills, in particular relating to communication, interpersonal skills, learning skills, numeracy, self-management, use of IT and problem-solving, and will have been encouraged to further develop and enhance the full set of skills through a variety of opportunities available outside their curriculum.

As part of this programme students are expected to have gained experience in the following transferable skills: IT, technical writing, oral presentations, team-working, problem-solving, use of library resources, time-management, career planning and management, and business awareness.

Programme content

The programme is based around five themes:
 1. E-business systems
 2. Information systems and software engineering
 3. Software tools, Packages and Computer Applications (COTS - Commercial Off the Shelf Software)
 4. Programming and design
 5. IT Support (including infrastructure)

Material from all themes must be taken to qualify for the degree; in addition there is some general material that is compulsory for all students.

Part 1 (three terms)
Compulsory modules

Mod Code	Module Title	Credits	Level
SE1TQ5	Commercial off-the-shelf Software 1	20	4
SE1TR5	E-Business 1	20	4
SE1SB9	Software Engineering	20	4
SE1SA5	Programming	20	4

Optional modules 40 credits from:

SE1EB9	Computer and Internet Technologies	20	4
SE1SC9	Computer Science Roadmap	20	4
MM1F10	Student Enterprise	20	4

Other options (including a foreign language from the IWLP) may be selected with the approval of the Programme Adviser. Options are subject to timetabling constraints.

Part 2 (three terms)
Compulsory modules

Mod Code	Module Title	Credits	Level
CS2TS6	Software Engineering 2 and Career Management	20	5
CS2TR6	E-Business 2	20	5
CS2TQ6	Databases for Business	20	5
CS2TX6	Business Programming	20	5
CS2TA6	Information Systems Engineering	20	5

Optional modules

MM270	Practice of Entrpreneurship	20	5
CS2TT6	IT Support 2	20	5

Students may alternatively choose up to 20 credits from other modules, with Programme Adviser's permission and subject to timetabling.

Year away/Additional year (three terms)
Compulsory modules

Mod Code	Module Title	Credits	Level
SE2W9	Industrial Year	120	5

Part 3 (three terms)
Compulsory modules

| SE3Z5 | Social, Legal and Ethical Aspects of Science and Engineering | 20 | 6 |

And

| CS3TU4 | Individual Project | 40 | 6 |

Optional modules:
Select 60 credits from:

CS3TQ7	Data Management	10	6
CS3TA4	Enterprise IT Architectures	10	6
CS3TC4	Project Management	10	6
CS3TB4	Software Quality and Testing	10	6
CS3TZ4	Network Security	10	6
MM374	Informatics for e-Enterprise	20	6
CS3TE4	Requirements Analysis	10	6
SE3C9	Computer Networks	20	6

Students may choose up to 20 credits from other modules from the Computer Science programme or elsewhere, with Programme Adviser's permission and subject to timetabling. This may include up to 20 credits 'out of year' material, such as the modules CS2K7 *XML and Web Technologies* (10 credits at level 5) and CS2L7 *Human Computer Interaction* (10 credits at level 5).

Progression requirements
To gain a threshold performance at Part 1 and qualify for the CertHE a student shall normally be required to achieve an overall average of 40% over 120 credits taken in Part 1, where all the credits are at level 4 or above, and a mark of at least 30% in each modules amounting to not less than 100 credits. In order to progress from Part 1 to Part 2, a student shall normally be required to achieve a threshold performance at Part 1.

To gain a threshold performance at Part 2 and qualify for the DipHE a student shall normally be required to achieve an overall average of 40% over 120 credits taken in Part 2, and a mark of at least 30% in individual modules amounting to not less than 100 credits. In order to progress from Part 2 to Part 3, a student shall normally be required to achieve a threshold performance at Part 2. At least 100 credits must be at level 5.

Satisfactory completion of the placement period (detailed in the relevant module descriptions) is required for continuation into Part 3 of the four-year degree programme in Applied Information Technology. Those who do not complete the placement year satisfactorily will be permitted to continue to Part 3 of the three-year degree course in Information Technology.

To be eligible for Honours, students must obtain an overall average mark of 40% **and** at least 40% in the Individual Project. At least 100 credits must be at level 6. Part 2 contributes one third of the final assessment and Part 3 the remaining two thirds.

Summary of teaching and assessment
Teaching is organised in modules that typically involve both lectures and practical work. Most modules are assessed by a mixture of coursework and formal examination. There are some modules which are assessed only as coursework and others wholly by examination; the details are given in the relevant module descriptions.

Admission requirements
Entrants to this programme are normally required to have obtained:
 300 points from 3 A levels or 350 from 3 A levels + an AS

GCSE English: grade B; maths: Grade B
Equivalent qualifications are acceptable.

Admissions Tutor: Dr Mike Evans

Support for students and their learning
University support for students and their learning falls into two categories. Learning support includes IT Services, which has several hundred computers, and the University Library, which across its three sites holds over a million volumes, subscribes to around 4,000 current periodicals, has a range of electronic sources of information and houses the Student Access to Independent Learning (S@il) computer-based teaching and learning facilities. There are language laboratory facilities both for those students studying on a language degree and for those taking modules offered by the Institution-wide Language Programme. Student guidance and welfare support is provided by Personal Tutors, School Senior Tutors, the Students' Union, the Medical Practice and the Student Services Centre. The Student Services Centre is housed in the Carrington Building and includes the Careers Advisory Service, the Disability Advisory Service, Accommodation Advisory Team, Student Financial Support, Counselling and Study Advisors. Student Services has a Helpdesk available for enquiries made in person or online, or by calling the central enquiry number on (0118) 378 5555. Students can get key information and guidance from the team of Helpdesk Advisers, or make an appointment with a specialist adviser; Student Services also offer drop-in sessions on everything from accommodation to finance. The Carrington Building is open between 8:30 and 17:30 Monday to Thursday (17:00 Friday and during vacation periods). Further information can be found in the Student Diary (given to students at enrolment) or on the Student website.

An Industrial placement officer is available to help you find a suitable role in your placement year (subject to successful application and employee interview). An academic supervisor is allocated to you to support you whilst you are out on placement.

 Within the providing Department additional support is given though practical laboratory classes. The development of problem-solving skills is assisted by appropriate assignment and project work. There is a Course Adviser to offer advice on the choice of modules within the programme. Course handbooks are provided for each Part of the course: these give more details about the modules which make up the degree. In addition, the School produces a Handbook for Students, which provides general information about the staff and facilities within the school.

Career prospects
This new degree is designed to be industry oriented. It is expected that all graduates will work both within the IT industry as a developer/manger and in a wide range of industries in a support role. Graduates in Information Technology could be expected to have the following generic job titles:
programmer, systems analyst, analyst/programmer, software engineer, applications developer, web developer, helpdesk/support technician, system support engineer, network engineer, communications specialist, database administrator, project manager, data analyst, software/hardware trainer

Accreditation will be sought for this degree from the British Computer Society.

Opportunities for study abroad or for placements
Placements are compulsory in the third year.

Programme Outcomes

Knowledge and Understanding

A. Knowledge and understanding of:

1. Software including:
 1a) Programming languages
 1b) Software tools, Packages and Computer Applications, including those used in business
 1c) Structuring of data and information
 2. Practice
 2a) Problem identification and analysis
 2b) Design, development and evaluation
 2c) Management and organisation
 2d) Professionalism and ethics
 2e) Commercial and industrial exploitation
 3. Hardware
 4. Communication and interaction
 5. Theory

Teaching/learning methods and strategies

The course concentrates on aspects 1. and 2. with teaching of all aspects involving an introduction of the aspects in theoretical manner and re-enforcement by related practical work, with the first year providing the core, subsequent years involve deeper study, with the student concentrating on a single theme in their final year.
 Aspects 2c) and 2d) will additionally be covered by the compulsory material in the final year.
 Aspects 3 and 4. feature within the IT Support and COTS themes particularly from a practical perspective.
 Aspects 3, 4. and 5. are presented as supporting material and taught in the context of aspects 1. and 2. as and when they are needed.

Assessment
Knowledge is tested through a mixture of formal examinations and practical work.

Skills and other attributes

B. Intellectual skills - *able to:*

1. Demonstrate knowledge and understanding related to aspects outlined above.
 2. Apply such knowledge and understanding to the modelling of computer systems.
 3. Recognise and analyse criteria and specifications appropriate to a specific problem.
 4. Critically evaluate and test a computer based system.
 5. Deploy appropriate methods and tools for creating computer systems.
 6. Reflect and communicate
 7. Recognise and conform to appropriate professional, ethical and legal practices

Teaching/learning methods and strategies

1 and 2 as above.
 3, 4 and 5 will be taught as part of the themes; Software Engineering; Programming and Design and COTS. The taught element will be re-enforced by practical work.
 6 will be taught as part of COTS 1 and e-Business 1, throughout the course the students will be expected to use these skills and they will be particularly exercised in the individual Project.
 7 will be pervasive throughout the course but will be covered specifically in the Software Engineering theme and the compulsory material in the final year.

Assessment
These skills are tested through a mixture of formal examinations, presentations, reports and practicals. The individual project provides a major piece of work in which among other

things the student will be assessed on their abilities to reflect and communicate. Oral presentations will be required in the Software Engineering and COTS themes and the Project, in the latter the presentation will be assessed by two members of staff.

C. Practical skills - *able to:*

1. Specify, design and construct computer-based systems
2. Evaluate systems
3. Recognise Risks and Safety aspects
4. Effectively deploy software tools
5. Operate computing equipment effectively

Teaching/learning methods and strategies

1 will be covered both theoretically and practically, particularly in the IT Support and Programming and Design themes.
2 will be particularly covered as part of IT Support and COTS themes.
3. The IT Support theme will cover practical and theoretical aspects of risk and safety, the compulsory material in the final year will also cover managerial aspects.
4 will be covered theoretically and practically as part of the COTS, Programming and Design and Software Engineering themes.
5 will be covered both as part of the COTS and IT Support themes in a theoretical and practical manner.

Assessment
Skills 1-5 will be assessed by a mixture of practical work and examination.

D. Transferable skills - *able to:*

1. Effectively retrieve information
2. Present cases in a quantitative dimension
3. Manage own learning and development
4. Appreciate the need for continuing professional development (CPD), be able to plan and execute their own CPD
5. Organise and work as part of a team
6. Plan and manage their own careers
7. Communicate in a manner appropriate to the situation
8. Effectively use Information Technology

Teaching/learning methods and strategies

1. Information retrieval will be covered theoretically and by practical work necessitating the use of browsers and search engines. It will be first introduced in COTS 1 but exercised extensively elsewhere.
2. Numerical skills will be introduced as needed and used in programming examples and project planning. They will also be exercised in COTS1. The IT Support theme will require a study of quantitative issues related to aspects of costs, efficiency, performance and economics.
3. Time management and organisational skills will be taught as part of Software Engineering. The students will also be expected to use a number of on-line learning tools. Tutorial support for self-managed learning will be provided in COTS 1.
4. Professionalism will be an important issue throughout the course. Students will be encouraged to join the BCS and participate in local meetings.

5. The theory of team work will be covered, in Software Engineering, and the students required to undertake a piece of group work.
 6. The University's Careers Management Skills module component will be included in the second year of the Software Engineering theme.
 7. The role of written and verbal communications will be covered in the COTS and Software Engineering themes.
 8. Information Technology will be used throughout the course. The COTS theme will specifically include the use of Information Technology.

Assessment
1 to 3, and 5 to 8, will be assessed by a mixture of practical work, presentations, reports and examinations. 4 will be assessed by formal examination. Communication skills (7) will also be assessed with the Individual Project.

Please note - This specification provides a concise summary of the main features of the programme and the learning outcomes that a typical student might reasonably be expected to achieve and demonstrate if he/she takes full advantage of the learning opportunities that are provided. More detailed information on the learning outcomes, content and teaching, learning and assessment methods of each module can be found in the module description and in the programme handbook. The University reserves the right to modify this specification in unforeseen circumstances, or where the process of academic development and feedback from students, quality assurance process or external sources, such as professional bodies, requires a change to be made. In such circumstances, a revised specification will be issued.

BSc Agricultural Business Management with Industrial Training   UCAS code: DN42
For students entering Part 1 in 2009/0

Awarding Institution:	University of Reading
Teaching Institution:	University of Reading
Relevant QAA subject Benchmarking group(s):	
Faculty:	Faculty of Life Sciences
Programme length:	4 years
Date of specification:	04/Sep/2009
Programme Director:	Dr Alison Bailey
Programme Advisor:	Dr Alison Bailey
Board of Studies:	Agriculture, Policy and Development
Accreditation:	Not applicable

Summary of programme aims

The BSc in Agricultural Business Management will provide students, through an appreciation of business management and agriculture, with the ability to pursue careers in commercial and practical management within agriculture and related industries.

The objectives of the degree are to:
- Develop the student's understanding of the economic, technological and organisational principles that underlie the practice of business management, particularly in the agricultural and rural sectors;
- Enable the students to learn how to apply such principles to the management of agricultural and other businesses ;
- Develop the critical appreciation of the techniques and concepts available to assist effective execution of the business management function; and
- Develop the range of personal and transferable skills that are expected from 'Reading Graduates' in order to become successful managers, leaders, advisers and communicators.

Part 1 of the programme will provide the student with a foundation of core skills and knowledge. Part 2 will cover the more demanding aspects of business management and agricultural science. Part 3 will complete the formal education, with the dissertation as a major component

The programme aims to provide a thorough degree-level education in Agricultural Business Management, with emphasis on the principles and methods of management and economic principles underlying agricultural production and land use, alongside key skills in IT and personal communication. Students will undertake 12 months work experience with a relevant organisation. This will develop the practical skills and in-depth industrial knowledge that employers demand of graduates.

Transferable skills

During the course of their studies at Reading, all students will be expected to enhance their academic and personal transferable skills in line with the University's Strategy for Learning and Teaching. In following this programme, students will have had the opportunity to develop such skills, in particular relating to communication, interpersonal skills, learning skills, numeracy, self-management, use of IT and problem-solving , and will have been encouraged to further develop and enhance the full set of skills through a variety of opportunities available outside their curriculum.

Transferable skills will be delivered both within the modules listed as well as via other methods:
1. Communicate effectively, using a variety of means, with a wide range of individuals
2. Use problem-solving skills in a range of professional and practical situations
3. Manage change effectively responding to shifting demands
4. Take charge of Personal Development and Career Planning
5. Manage time, prioritise workloads, recognize and manage personal emotions and stress
6. Employ IT skills, including use of the internet.

The programme will include both instruction and practice in these skills using a range of seminars, visits and case studies.

Programme content
The profile which follows comprises a number of compulsory modules, together with a list of modules from which the students can choose (optional modules). Students will choose from the optional modules, avoiding timetable clashes, with guidance from their tutor or programme advisor, to make 120 credits in each 'part' of the degree. Most modules are equivalent to 10 credits, except for the language option which is equivalent to 20 credits, and the dissertation in Part 3.

Part 1 (three terms)
Compulsory modules

Mod Code	Module Title	Credits	Level
AP1A02	Introduction to Agricultural and Food Systems	10	4
AP1A03	Introduction to Livestock Production Systems	10	4
AP1A08	British Agriculture in Practice (AGRIC & ABM)	10	4
AP1A10	Countryside and the Environment	10	4
AP1A12	Introduction to Crop Production	10	4
AP1EE1	Economics 2	10	4
AP1EE3	Economics 1	10	4
AP1EM1	Introduction to Marketing	10	4
AP1EQ4	Quantitative Methods 1	10	4
AP1SB1	Introduction to Management	10	4
AP1SCMS	Career Management Skills (APD Students Only)	0	4

Optional modules to be selected (guided choice, 20 credits)

Mod Code	Module Title	Credits	Level
AP1A16	Varieties, Seeds and Crop Establishment	10	4
AP1A17	Crop Appraisal and Agronomy	10	4
AP1ED2	International Development: Global and Local Issues	10	4
AP1EF1	The UK Food Chain	10	4
*BI1EI1	Soil Use and Management	10	4
MM1F10	Student Enterprise	10	4
**SS1A2	Soil, Land and Environment	10	4
LA1 XX1	IWLP Institution Wide Language Programme	10	4

The soils module marked * is recommended for students with suitable science qualifications. Suitable science qualifications would be biology, chemistry or environmental science to A-level. Maths, biology and chemistry are needed to GCSE standard.

The soils module marked ** is recommended for students who only have science to GCSE standard.

Part 2 (three terms)
Compulsory modules

Mod Code	Module Title	Credits	Level
AP2A20	Agricultural Field Study Tour (Agric & ABM)	10	5
AP2A31	Farm Business Administration	10	5
AP2A36	Animal Production	10	5
AP2A39	Environment and the Farm Business	10	5

AP2A44	Practical Farm Analysis and Cereal Agronomy (Agric and ABM)	10	5
AP2EQ1	Research Methods and Data Analysis	10	5
AP2EQ4	Quantitative Methods 2	10	5
AP2SB1	Business Management	10	5
AP2SB2	Financial Management	10	5

Optional modules to be selected (guided choice, 30 credits)

AP2A26	Forestry and Woodlands	10	4
AP2A33	Agricultural Mechanisation	10	5
AP2A35	Animal Health and Disease	10	5
AP2A37	Practical Nature Conservation	10	5
AP2A38	Organic Farming	10	4
AP2A42	Agronomy of Root and Tuber Crops	10	5
AP2A51	Grassland Ecology and Management	10	4
AP2EB3	Management of Non-Profit Organisations	10	5
AP2EE4	Economics 3	10	5
AP2EE5	Economics 4	10	5
AP2EM1	Marketing Management	10	5
AP2EM2	Food Retailing	10	5
AP2EP1	Policy Analysis	10	5
MM270	Practice of Entrepreneurship	10	5
LA1XXX	IWLP Institution Wide Language Programme	20	4/5

Year away/Additional year (three terms)
Compulsory modules

Module	Title	Credits	Level
AP2ST1	Industrial Training	120	5

Part 3 (three terms)
Compulsory modules

Module	Title	Credits	Level
AP3A54	Business Management Case Studies	20	6
AP3A82	Business Planning and Control	20	6
AP3A81*	Dissertation	40	6
AP3A86*	Final Year Project	20	6

*Students can choose to undertake either AP3A81 Dissertation or AP3A86 Final Year Project. If the latter is chosen then an additional 20 credits of optional modules must be selected.

Optional modules to be selected (guided choice, 40 credits)

Module	Title	Credits	Level
AP3A45	Agricultural Systems in the Tropics	10	6
AP3A47	Cereal Management and Marketing	10	6
AP3A64	Human Resource Management	10	6
AP3A67	Animal Welfare	10	6
AP3A68	Wildlife in the Farming Environment	10	6
AP3A74	Business Entrepreneurship	10	6
AP3A75	Equine Management	10	6
AP3A78*	Agronomy of Root and Tuber Crops	10	6
AP3A84	Dogs and Cats	10	6

AP3A85	Horses	10	6
AP3A90	Climate Change and Food Systems	10	6
AP3EB1	Business Strategy	10	6
AP3EB3	Supply Chain Management	10	6
AP3EE1	Economic Aspects of the Food Supply Chain	10	6
AP3EM1	Marketing Strategy	10	6
AP3EP3	Rural Policy and Countryside Planning	10	6
AP3EP4	Consumer Policy	10	6
LA1XXX	Institution-Wide Language Programme	20	4/5/6
RE3ALV	Agricultural Law and Valuation	20	6

Progression requirements

To gain a threshold performance at Part 1 a student shall normally be required to achieve an overall average of 40% over 120 credits taken in Part 1 and a mark of at least 30% in individual modules amounting to not less than 100 credits. In order to progress from Part 1 to Part 2 of this programme, a student shall normally be required to achieve a threshold performance at Part 1 and achieve a credit weighted average of not less than 40% over the compulsory modules and a mark of not less than 30% in each compulsory module.

If you gain a threshold performance at Part 1 and do not proceed to achieve a higher award, you are eligible to receive the award of Certificate of Higher Education. The Part 1 Examination does not contribute to the classification of your degree.

The Part 2 Examination is used to assess a student's suitability to proceed to Part 3 of their programme. It also determines eligibility for the Diploma of Higher Education. In addition, the marks achieved in the Part 2 Examination contribute to the classification of your degree.

To gain a threshold performance at Part 2 a student shall normally be required to achieve an overall average of 40% over 120 credits taken in Part 2 (of which not less than 100 credits should normally be at Intermediate level or above), and a mark of at least 30% in individual modules amounting to not less than 100 credits. In order to progress from Part 2 to Part 3, a student shall normally be required to achieve a threshold performance at Part 2.

If you gain a threshold performance at Part 2 and do not proceed to achieve a higher award, you are eligible to receive the award of Diploma of Higher Education.

Progression from Part 2 to the placement year is dependent on successfully completing the application process set by the placement providers. You are ultimately responsible for finding a suitable placement, although the School will help to identify potential employers. The placement year module is assessed by coursework: including a presentation, reflective report and employer report; and does not contribute to your final degreee mark, although recognition of the completion of an industrial placement will appear on your degree transcript. If you are unable to find a suitable placement, or if you progress from Part 2 to the placement year but fail to successfully complete the placement year module, you will be permitted to transfer to Part 3 of the BSc Agricultural Business Management.

The classification of the degree will normally be based on the marks for Part 2 and Part 3 modules, weighted in a ratio of 1:2. Full details of classification conventions (that is, the rules for determining your final degree award) can be found in your Programme Handbook.

Summary of teaching and assessment

Teaching is organised in modules that typically involve lectures, seminars and practicals. Farm and business visits are undertaken, normally involving projects and problem solving case studies. Students are expected to attend a week long study tour in Term 3.

Assessment of course work is undertaken via a range of methods including essays, presentations and short answer exams. Formal examinations take place in weeks 4 to 8 of the Summer Term.

The placement year assessment is designed to encourage critical reflection of the experience.

Admission requirements
Candidates for this programme are normally required to have obtained a minimum UCAS tariff of 280 points including at least two full A Levels. A wide range of subjects are acceptable for this degree. OND applications with good results in appropriate Agriculture and Business related subjects will be considered as will mature applicants with unconventional qualifications. HND candidates who achieved good results in HND Agriculture or Business Studies can be exempted from the first year of the course. A special arrangement with Sparsholt College allows selected students to complete an honours degree in 3 terms after studying at Sparsholt.

Admissions Tutor: Dr A P Bailey

Support for students and their learning
University support for students and their learning falls into two categories. Learning support includes IT Services, which has several hundred computers, and the University Library, which across its three sites holds over a million volumes, subscribes to around 4,000 current periodicals, has a range of electronic sources of information and houses the Student Access to Independent Learning (S@il) computer-based teaching and learning facilities. There are language laboratory facilities both for those students studying on a language degree and for those taking modules offered by the Institution-wide Language Programme. Student guidance and welfare support is provided by Personal Tutors, School Senior Tutors, the Students' Union, the Medical Practice and the Student Services Centre. The Student Services Centre is housed in the Carrington Building and includes the Careers Advisory Service, the Disability Advisory Service, Accommodation Advisory Team, Student Financial Support, Counselling and Study Advisors. Student Services has a Helpdesk available for enquiries made in person or online, or by calling the central enquiry number on (0118) 378 5555. Students can get key information and guidance from the team of Helpdesk Advisers, or make an appointment with a specialist adviser; Student Services also offer drop-in sessions on everything from accommodation to finance. The Carrington Building is open between 8:30 and 17:30 Monday to Thursday (17:00 Friday and during vacation periods). Further information can be found in the Student Diary (given to students at enrolment) or on the Student website.

Within the Department of Agriculture additional support is given through practical classes in IT. There is a Programme Director to offer advice on choice of modules within the programme.

Practical experience
Encouragement is given to students to gain experience in practical agriculture and rural businesses during vacations.

Career prospects
The Agricultural Business Management degree programme helps students to prepare for a wide range of careers in the agricultural industry and the rural sector. Job opportunities include: agricultural business management, consultancy and advisory roles, banking and accounting and other managerial positions in agriculture's ancillary activities.

Opportunities for study abroad or for placements
The Department of Agriculture encourages students, provided they have passed Part 2, to consider the possibility of studying abroad for a term or a year.

Programme Outcomes

Knowledge and Understanding

A. Knowledge and understanding of:

1. Farming systems in the UK and overseas
2. The rural sector and its main components
3. Methods and techniques for studying the above
4. Factors and processes influencing the rural sector and its main components
5. Management functions and methods relevant to rural businesses
6. The economic, technological and organisational principles that underlie business management
7. Specific industrial careers via the placement scheme

Teaching/learning methods and strategies

Knowledge is gained through a combination of lectures, fieldwork and individual and group project work. Compulsory modules the ensure that knowledge is built on progressively throughout the course and students can specialise in agricultural business management, estate management (or a combination) through their choice of optional modules. The placement year will develop practical skills specific to the host organisation/industry.

Assessment
Most knowledge is tested by coursework (including project work) and formal examination. Presentations and the final year dissertation contribute.

Skills and other attributes

B. Intellectual skills - *able to:*

1. Obtain and synthesise information from relevant sources to develop an understanding of theory and practice
2. Critically evaluate theories, concepts and methods
3. Critically evaluate and apply management techniques for a variety of functions in relation to rural businesses
4. Develop informed, logical and justified opinions on issues related to the rural environment

Teaching/learning methods and strategies

The first two intellectual skills listed are developed through a combination of lectures and project work. The second two intellectual skills are developed though the same means and by problem solving project work. The final dissertation combines all four intellectual skills. Emphasis on independent learning is encouraged from Part I of the programme.

Assessment
These skills are tested by coursework (including project work) and formal examination. Presentations and the final year dissertation contribute.

C. Practical skills - *able to:*

1. Apply appropriate business management approaches and methods
2. Develop a business management plan
3. Design and implement a research project
4. Logically analyse data
5. Construct reports using appropriate IT

Teaching/learning methods and strategies

Throughout the degree programme students are expected to carry out a variety of individual and group projects within specific modules and the final year dissertation. In addition to farm and business visits the degree programme contains a week long field trip further a field where students investigate a variety of issues.

Assessment

These skills are mainly assessed by coursework (particularly project work) and the final year dissertation. Some modules involve the 'commissioning' of reports which are then partly assessed by professionals in the field (i.e. a bank manager).

D. Transferable skills - *able to:*

1. Communicate ideas, arguments and information using appropriate means
2. Use problem-solving skills in a range of professional and practical situations
3. Take charge of Personal Development Planning
4. Identify goals and plan and manage time to achieve them
5. Use and apply up to date IT
6. Work in teams to perform a variety of tasks

Teaching/learning methods and strategies

Transferable skills are generally incorporated within modules and related to relevant assessments as appropriate. Examples of strategies include: seminars; individual and group project and investigative work; presentations and the final dissertation.

Assessment

Assessment of transferable skills is generally an integral part of the degree curriculum and is thus tested within modules from Part 1 through to Part 3.

Please note - This specification provides a concise summary of the main features of the programme and the learning outcomes that a typical student might reasonably be expected to achieve and demonstrate if he/she takes full advantage of the learning opportunities that are provided. More detailed information on the learning outcomes, content and teaching, learning and assessment methods of each module can be found in the module description and in the programme handbook. The University reserves the right to modify this specification in unforeseen circumstances, or where the process of academic development and feedback from students, quality assurance process or external sources, such as professional bodies, requires a change to be made. In such circumstances, a revised specification will be issued.

Appendix 5 – Sample module description forms for work/academic placement opportunities

Micro PO

EN2CAW-Communications at Work

Module Provider: English
Number of credits: 20 [10ECTS credits]
Level: 5
Terms in which taught: Spring
Module Convenor: Dr L Becker
Pre-requisites: EN1LL EN1RS EN1WKT
Co-requisites:
Modules excluded:
Module version for: 2010/1

Email: l.m.becker@reading.ac.uk

Aims:
This module aims to provide students with a practical and theoretical understanding of the role of communication in the commercial world, and to equip them to analyse the production and dissemination of texts in different media. It is also designed to develop students' own communication skills through oral and written exercises, problem-solving, teamworking, and an employer-based Fieldwork project.

PLEASE NOTE: PLACES ON THIS MODULE ARE RESTRICTED.

Assessable learning outcomes:
By the end of the module it is expected that students will be able to:

- demonstrate awareness of a number of communication briefs for appropriate audiences

- discuss and appraise different kinds of publicity and media material

- make individual oral presentations and work collaboratively

- summarize and adapt material for different communication purposes

- research, appraise and deploy in argument a variety of secondary sources

- organize and articulate a coherent argument in written work .

Additional outcomes:
The practical work encourages interpersonal skills, including the ability to take the initiative and to accept real-life risks and benefits, and students will also develop their IT competence through the word processing of assessed work and the use of relevant web sources and databases.

Outline content:
The module is concerned with effective communication in industry, commerce, public organizations and the media. Although the emphasis is on written and oral English, attention is also paid to graphic modes of communication. The compulsory element of the seminar programme concentrates on three broad areas: print journalism; broadcasting; advertising and publicity. There is also scope for considering aspects of book publishing, ITC and new media, which allows an element of individual student choice and specialization. Fieldwork placement opportunities are in arts and media, retail companies, charity and conservation administration, government offices, information technology, publishing, research institutions, and museums.

Brief description of teaching and learning methods:
Students will be committed to 16 hours of seminars/workshops. The compulsory element of the programme includes practical preparation for a two-week fieldwork placement (normally scheduled for the Easter vacation of Year 2), and tutorial assistance in planning and research for the assignments.

Contact hours:

	Autumn	Spring	Summer
Lectures			
Tutorials/seminars		17.5	
Practicals			
Other contact (*eg* study visits)		2 week fieldwork placement (vacation)	
Total hours		17.5	
Number of essays or assignments		2	
Other (eg major seminar paper)		Fieldwork report	

Assessment:
Coursework
Students write one essay of approx. 2000 words for formal assessment (carrying 33% of the final mark), a Fieldwork Report (carrying 50% of the final mark) and a formal presentation (carrying 17% of the final mark).

Relative percentage of coursework
100%.

Penalties for late submission
Ten marks (out of 100 on the normal University scale) will be deducted from a piece of work submitted up to one calendar week after the original deadline or any formally agreed

extension of that deadline. Once this period has elapsed, a mark of zero will be recorded.

Examinations
None.

Requirements for a pass
An average mark of 40%.

Reassessment arrangements
Re-examination in September. Coursework will be carried forward if it bears a confirmed mark of 40% or more. Otherwise it must be resubmitted by 1 September.

Last updated: 8 April 2010

Mini PO

LW3PRO-Writing Credit Pro Bono

Module Provider: School of Law
Number of credits: 20 [10ECTS credits]
Level: 6
Terms in which taught:
Module Convenor: RE Horton
Pre-requisites:
Co-requisites:
Modules excluded: LW3DUG or LW3WC3 or LW3ILM or LW3WCM
Module version for: 2010/1

Email: r.e.horton@reading.ac.uk

Aims:
The module provides a formal setting for students who chose to undertake voluntary work in an approved pro bono organisation. It allows students to develop their practical legal skills. It also allows the Law School to evaluate the contribution the student has made to the organisation concerned.

Assessable learning outcomes:
By the end of this module it is expected that students will have:
- demonstrated and reflected on their ability to use the legal knowledge and/or legal and practical skills in a range of activities,
- provided regular practical assistance to the organisation concerned over a period of at least 6 months during their final year or by way of an approved internship during the summer vacation preceeding their final year,
- critically assessed the purpose and structure of the organisation concerned and its role in relation to the provision of or need for legal services,
- reflected on their experiences and evaluated how the work they did fits into the work that the organisation was set up to do and how it fits into the legal system.

Additional outcomes:
The module aims to facilitate the development of team working and oral communication skills. Students will develop an awareness of the role of the organisation concerned in the context of the legal system.

Outline content:
Not applicable

Brief description of teaching and learning methods:
In the Summer term prior to the final year:
- The student should discuss with the Module Convenor the organisation in which he or she wants to work, and provide the Module Convenor with details of what he or she proposes to undertake as the pro bono project.
- The organisation concerned must confirm that there are opportunities for the student to be involved in pro bono work during the summer vacation (in the case of a vacation internship) or over the next 6-9 months, and that it will provide a short report on the training and/or work undertaken by the student.
- The Module Convenor must give approval for the pro bono activity planned, and its suitability for Pro Bono Writing Credit.

- The Module Convenor will discuss and agree with the student the level of commitment to the organisation required by the student.
- A Supervisor in the School of Law will be agreed, who may be someone other than the Module Convenor.

The student will:
- Keep a reflective diary of the training and work done for the organisation concerned, and provide the Supervisor with written interim reports on this in November and January of the final year (or in October of the final year in the case of an internship completed in the summer vacation).
- Prepare and write a portfolio in accordance with the Pro Bono Writing Credit Handbook issued to all students undertaking this module.

Contact hours:

	Autumn	**Spring**	**Summer**
Lectures	1		
Tutorials/seminars			
Practicals	1 Portfolio creation in Blackboard		
Other contact (*eg* study visits)	1 meeting with supervisor	1 meeting with supervisor	
Total hours			
Number of essays or assignments			
Other (eg major seminar paper)			

Assessment:
Coursework: 100%
- A portfolio formatted in accordance with the Assessed Work rules to be found in the current edition of the School Guide (Programme Assessment). The content and length of the portfolio as specified in the Pro Bono Writing Credit Handbook.
- The portfolio to be submitted by noon on the first Thursday of the Summer term in the final year.

Examinations: Not applicable

Requirements for a pass: 40%

Reassessment arrangements: Resubmission of the portfolio. See School Guide (Programme Assessment).

Last updated: 7 April 2010

Maxi PO

AP2ST1-Industrial Training

Module Provider: Agriculture
Number of credits: 120 [60ECTS credits]
Level: 5
Terms in which taught: Autumn, Spring and Summer
Module Convenor: Mr NF Beard
Pre-requisites:
Co-requisites:
Modules excluded:
Module version for: 2010/1

Email: n.f.beard@reading.ac.uk

Aims:
- to gain insight into a course-related industry and apply the knowledge and skills developed in Part 1 and Part 2 to the benefit of the host organisation
- to further develop the student's knowledge and practical skills
- to develop and implement the use of transferable and interpersonal skills
- to be aware of the aims and goals of the organisation as a whole and relate the outcomes of the placement department with the aims of the organisation

Assessable learning outcomes:
By the end of the module, students should be able to demonstrate:
- knowledge and awareness of their placement organisation and their contribution
- problem-solving skills
- the successful use of IT
- effective team working skills
- efficient communication skills (written and oral)
- application of knowledge and skills acquired during Part 1 and Part 2
- career managements skills including job search and effective applications

Additional outcomes:

Outline content:
The nature of the placement will vary widely depending on the host company, but students should integrate into the relevant organisation and become a useful asset. See the Blackboard site for this module for further information.

Brief description of teaching and learning methods:
One year industrial placement to gain relevant work experience in an industry related to the student's degree programme.

Contact hours:

	Autumn	Spring	Summer
Lectures			
Tutorials/seminars			
Practicals			

Other contact (*eg* study visits)		1 visit (dependant on location)	
Total hours		1	
Number of essays or assignments	2		
Other (eg major seminar paper)	As advised	As advised	As advised

Assessment:

Coursework

Students are required to produce a 2-5 minute podcast to be submitted by the 1st October of the year the placement begins. A 15-minute presentation will be given in the Autumn term of the year you return, detailing the placement organisation and the student's contribution. See the Blackboard site for detailed information. The employer will rate the student's performance.

The three elements of assessment are:

1. Podcast
2. Presentation
3. Employer report

Examinations

This module is not examinable.

Requirements for a pass

Students must complete their placement and pass all three components of the assessment.

Reassessment arrangements

Re-submission of all assessment elements which are not passed at the first attempt.

Last updated: 8 April 2010