



**Career Development and Employability Subcommittee  
Meeting 3 – Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> January 2016  
Unconfirmed minutes**

Name of Member	Meeting 1 15/09/15	Meeting 2 27/10/15	Meeting 3 19/01/16
Richard Verrall (Chair)	√	√	√
Chris Clements, Education and Student Strategy Coordinator	√	√	√
Gemma Kenyon, Head of Careers	√	√	√
Ben Butler, Student Development Manager	√	√	√
David Street, Director, Development and Alumni Relations	A	√	√
Viola Polakowska, Head of Alumni Relations, Cass	A	A	A
Alex Elkins, Enterprise Education Manager	√	√	√
Sarah Juillet, Director of PG Careers and Professional Development, Cass	√	√	A
David Smith, Cass Representative		√	√
Ffyon Reilly, Law School Representative (Pupillage Advisory Service)	√	A	√
Sarah Gale, Law School Representative	A	√	√
Laurence Solkin, SASS Representative	A	√	√
Alison Coutts, SHS Representative	√*	√	A
Laura Blatchford, MCSE Representative	A	√	
Mohson Khan, MCSE Representative			√
Yusuf Ahmad, Students' Union Representative	√*	A	√
Pam Parker, Acting Director, LEaD		√	A

√ Indicates attendance

A Indicates apologies

\* Indicates present for part of the meeting

Attending: Issy Cooke (Students' Union President)

**1. Welcome and Apologies**

Apologies were received and noted. It was noted that David Smith would be the Cass representative going forwards. Mohson Khan was welcomed to the group.

**2. Minutes of the previous meeting**

The minutes of the previous meeting were approved with one minor amendment

**3. Matters Arising**

**The majority of the actions from the previous meeting were covered elsewhere in the agenda with the exception of actions 4 and 7.**

**Action 4** – It had been confirmed prior to the meeting that the Liverpool John Moores review had been sent through to the Head of Careers. Head of Careers to check this was received.

**Action 7** – This action relates to the LEaD sub-committee and will be taken to that group following the Careers Registration pilot in 2016-17

#### **4. Undergraduate Annual Programme Evaluation submissions**

Context as given around the Annual Programme Evaluation and that this year the Education and Student Strategy had been integrated into this quality assurance process. This meant that Programme Directors for every course were given the opportunity to comment on course developments related to each of the Education and Student Strategy hubs, including Career Development and Employability. The paper showed all submissions received so far related to the hub from Programme Directors. It was noted the MCSE APEs had yet to be submitted.

The Head of Careers offered some analysis of the key areas highlighted in the submissions and areas of overlap across the different schools. It was highlighted that programmes from all schools had mentioned industry focussed modules in some way, with all expect Law also mentioning work experience and the expertise of academic staff as part of their submissions. Other areas highlighted included offering specialist IT training relevant to the skills students will need in a specific industry, embedding employability within the curriculum, encouragement of engagement in extracurricular activity and the promotion of central services.

Discussion focussed on how we can highlight better to Programme Directors central services, as it was clear this was highly valued within the courses where they were effectively promoted. There was specific mention of careers services, professional mentoring and City Buddies. It was also mentioned that there were notable omissions such as Entrepreneurship activity and Volunteering.

It was expressed that there were a number of other areas where positive activity was taking place that was not effectively highlighted. As this was the first year of involvement it was hoped that there would be further engagement once Programme Directors could see how the information was used.

It was highlighted that it was necessary to look at how Programme Directors are supported to ensure the correct terminology is used. This was especially relevant with respect to the term "placement", which has connotations with Quality Assurance compliance. Specifically on placements it was highlighted that preparation for the student going on placement was key. It was also noted that at the moment SHS courses are closely linked to practice due to close links with the NHS, and with changes in funding arrangements we would need to be aware of any implications of this.

**Action 1: Brief report on the key areas to be highlighted as best practice to be circulated by Education and Student Strategy Coordinator**

#### **5. Placement Support**

The Chair introduced the paper, which looked to build on earlier reports to offer next steps to develop placement support at the University. It was expressed that this should be seen within a framework of the broader analysis of potential employability initiatives and developing the university offer.

The Head of Careers then offered further detail on the paper. It was noted that this proposal was coming alongside a quality review currently being undertaken by Student and Academic Services which incorporates placement provision. This review is yet to report, but there is potential a number of the areas highlighted in the paper to the previous meeting will also be seen within this.

A number of key areas that a Placements Manager could potentially focus on were highlighted. These included supporting schools in ensuring adherence to quality guidelines, having one central individual responsible for university wide coordination of placements, development of a consultancy module, recognition for summer internships and support for students looking to undertake a dissertation working with industry.

It was highlighted through discussion that there were some additional details to be worked through including the staffing structure and reporting lines and the cost to schools, including integration with school operating plans and financial forecasting. A more detailed financial forecasting would be needed, and it was suggested this should be developed working alongside University Finance. Any proposals would also need to be positioned within an overall strategy for Career Development and

Employability.

The MCSE representative indicated that from the experience within the school the assumption of income forecasts would be reasonably accurate. It was also highlighted that developing other opportunities for gaining experience in the workplace were important as for certain industries this was the preferred engagement and a yearlong placement was not always possible for students due to personal circumstances. It was also highlighted that as the placement support improves and there is additional engagement this helps to validate the fee paid by students for a placement year.

There was a specific query related to offering entrepreneurial placements, and it was indicated that exploring this possibility should be within the scope of the work outlined in the paper. There are some regulatory constraints but this could be an area to offer considerable benefits.

The benefits of developing this programme of work were clearly supported by the sub-committee. It was specifically highlighted from the group that this paper outlined an approach which the group broadly endorsed.

**Action 2: Chair, Head of Careers and Education and Student Strategy Coordinator to continue to develop proposals and plan next steps**

## 6. Microplacements

The Law School representative introduced the pilot aiming to offer 32 Microplacement opportunities to students from the school. The aim of the scheme was to offer an initial work based experience which would prepare students for future internships. The Microplacements would be subject to a full application process and based in non-law roles, offering an experience which helps with broadening students horizons. The Head of Careers highlighted that there was potential to expand this pilot to other schools if it was successful.

There was some discussion on the different approach this scheme would take compared to the StartEd internships, with Microplacements focussed on students from earlier years and for a shorter period of time. Due to the focus on students from Widening Participation backgrounds it was highlighted that this scheme would be of interest to the Retention and Success Manager and his work on the Access Agreement. It was highlighted that the pilot would require no funding and be run using existing resource, with academics supporting the interview process.

Sourcing the Microplacements was discussed, with the potential to use alumni links highlighted and the opportunity for departments within the University to offer experience also discussed. It was mentioned that a more joined up approach to managing interactions with external organisations would be preferential, with the ultimate goal of a CRM system. It was thought sharing of information could support this in the short term in lieu of a full integrated CRM system.

There were questions around the preparations for the Microplacements and the need to manage expectations was emphasised. Further discussion centred on the need to be careful with the wording when advertising opportunities primarily to Widening Participation students and there was an offer to link in to approach used by the CityBuddies scheme.

There was support for the pilot from the group, with an evaluation to come back to a future meeting. It was highlighted that longitudinal impact would be hard to measure from the pilot in a timely manner to enable this to provide justification for further roll out. Other measures of success and impact would be used in a report following the pilot.

**Action 3: Education and Student Strategy Coordinator to offer introduction to Retention and Success Manager to discuss Microplacements scheme and potential links to Access Agreement.**

**Action 4: Head of Careers to report on the progress from the Microplacements scheme for discussion and consideration of further roll-out to come to the Sub-committee in Autumn 2016.**

## 7. **Careers Registration**

Following approval to proceed with exploring the integration of Careers questions as part of the registration process for 2016/17, the Head of Careers offered an update on progress.

The group approved joining the University of London HEFCE funded 'Learning Gain' pilot, which would allow information sharing and support our work in this area. Following feedback from Cass PG Careers representative, it was thought that each school should have a representative on the Working Group looking to support implementation and members were asked to suggest who would be most appropriate from their school to be a part of this.

**Action 5: School representative to suggest members of the working group looking to support the implementation of the Careers Registration/Learning Gain pilot.**

## 8 **Employability Award**

The Student Development Manager introduced proposals for a pilot Employability Award based on feedback from previous meetings. These proposals offered an opportunity for students to record their achievements, looking beyond engagement in activities to how this engagement can be structured to support the core competencies necessary to succeed in specific industries relevant to individual courses. The pilot proposed working with Civil Engineering, developing a set of competencies working closely with firms from that specific industry. It was envisaged that some of these competencies would be universal, whilst some would be specific to this industry. The pilot would be run through Careers Hub, using existing software, and offering the opportunity for reflection, with a possible presentation as part of this process. To implement this a working group would be formed and a pilot launched in 2016/17.

There was a query on the selection of the course due to its very clear links to a specific industry, where the professional body sets defined standards. It was expressed that it may be preferable to run a pilot with two courses, one linked to a specific industry and one with a less clear link, such as Economics or Journalism, to fully understand how successfully this may be rolled out across the University. It was highlighted that department support would be key to implementing the pilot.

As with previous conversations in the meeting, due to the longitudinal impact of these initiatives measures are hard to define for a pilot. It was highlighted that the definition of a set of competencies would have a value in itself and the opportunity see if the existing systems could be used effectively to recognise skills development and reflect on students experiences would be extremely helpful in determining if a roll out would offer value.

It was suggested a Myers-Brigg type of set of questions could be asked before and after and result compared or a similar approach taken. It was important that scalability was taken into account and the amount of staff time spent on any pilot monitored. This would also be important when taking into account the approach to validation, and the Students' Union echoed concerns that this may create an increased workload if all activity had to be validated.

It was highlighted that taking this focussed approach could make the scheme more attractive to potential sponsors. Undertaking the pilot was approved by the committee.

**Action 6: SASS representative to scope appetite for Economics or Journalism to be involved in the pilot.**

**Action 7: Student Development Manager to form working group to implement a pilot and report progress back to a future meeting.**

## 9. **Employer/Industry involvement in programme development**

The paper was introduced, which following on from discussions at the previous meeting outlined key principles to gaining industry insight into programme developments, through Employer Advisory Boards or other mechanisms.

The DARO representative highlighted that the support of governance of any external engagement was vital, as previously this had harmed relationships for other areas of the university. It was hoped that this exercise would extract from schools information on existing arrangements and then following this advice/guidance generated into best practice. This would potentially include governance, focus of these groups and clear indications of roles and responsibilities. A selection of questions to ask Schools should be developed and thought given to how best to gain feedback.

**Action 8: Chair, ESS Coordinator and Head of Careers to develop questions to send to schools to gain feedback and explore how best to proceed.**

**10. Priorities**

The summary was introduced based on discussions at the last meeting. It was agreed that priorities should reflect on the impact and urgency of prioritising different aspects and should be clear where projects will be longer term.

It was highlighted that the key areas already discussed in the meeting make up the majority of the priorities. Student placements and work based experience, learning gain, the development award pilot and employability in the curriculum were outlined as priorities, with the proviso that the later was likely to be longer term and more based in programme detail.

There was some discussion on employer and business engagement, but this was more viewed as an enabler than a priority in itself.

**Action 9: ESS Coordinator to update priorities summary and circulate to group.**

**11. Definition of employability**

The group noted the definition of employability. This could be used to inform the work of the sub-committee, careers service and possibly in other interactions such as engagement with employer advisory boards. In time this could be built on by developing local level definitions at school, department or programme level.

**12. Review of Outcomes and Destinations – AGCAS Briefing**

The Head of Careers summarised the paper for noting.

**11. Date of next meeting**

**TBC**

**Actions:**

**Action 1: Brief report on the key areas to be highlighted as best practice to be circulated by Education and Student Strategy Coordinator**

**Action 2: Chair, Head of Careers and Education and Student Strategy Coordinator to continue to develop proposals and plan next steps**

**Action 3: Education and Student Strategy Coordinator to offer introduction to Retention and Success Manager to discuss Microplacements scheme and potential links to Access Agreement.**

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