The Russell Group LEGACY Learning Gain Programme

The Employability Strands

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Session outline

- A brief overview of Learning Gain
- An overview of strands
  - Internationalisation
  - Realise2 Strengths
  - Career Adaptabilities
- Q&A
Hefce’s Aims and Ambitions

- To demonstrate the quality of higher education provision
- Evidence the positive impact of HE
- Evidence the VfM of investment in HE

Learning Gain may be used to...

- Inform improvements to learning and teaching
- Provide information to prospective students and advisers
- Investigate the impact of particular L&T interventions
- Form part of the QA of L&T
What is Learning Gain?

“An attempt to measure the improvement in knowledge, skills work-readiness and personal development made by students during their time in higher education.”

OR

“The difference between the skills and knowledge demonstrated by students at two points in time”
Pilot Projects

13 collaborative projects involving 70 institutions including:

- UEL: academic skills tests, self-assessment of confidence with reference to academic study and career development
- Manchester: measures of dispositions and critical skills
- Portsmouth: measures of resilience and employability identity
- Ravensbourne: LG from work placements and WBL as part of a course of study
- London Careers Group: Careers Registration
This strand seeks to increase students’ understanding of their strengths so they are able to demonstrate a greater degree of self-awareness and better articulate what they have to offer recruiters.
Legacy Project - Strengths

Rationale

Theoretical underpinning
- Base-Positive Psychology, self-assessed questionnaire

Evidence base
- Strengths-based recruitment is increasing
- Students struggle to demonstrate self-awareness so can ‘undersell’
- Strengths awareness helps develop supporting, authentic evidence
Legacy Project - Strengths

The key outcomes of these support activities will be;

- Enhancing Finalist Undergraduates’ employability through understanding their personal strengths
- Supporting final year undergraduates to evaluate roles they are applying for and consider their suitability
- Providing supporting evidence of their relevant strengths to enhance their applications and interviews
This strand seeks to identify students' self-perceived employability gains from international experience and help develop more effective interventions.
Significant interest across the sector in measuring the impact of international experience on students’ employability

Current reports focus primarily on overseas experience and graduate destination data

Semi-structured interviews pre and post experience, seek to identify self-perceived employability learning gains achieved by current students who have undertaken one of the following activities:

- Study Abroad
- Work Abroad
- On-campus experiences
Study abroad
33 transcripts, pre experience - 6 institutions (saturation reached)
Three main areas identified in terms of motivation and hoped for gains: academic related, employability related, personal interest & development

Work abroad
8 transcripts, pre experience - 3 institutions
Extrinsic factors (CVs and experience) mentioned, intrinsic motivations more frequent and more emphasised. Hoped for gains tended to match global competencies (Diamond et al, 2011) but were not related to employability by participants

On-campus experience
4 transcripts pre & post - one institution
Reasons for not undertaking international experience: suggested risk averse behaviour
Despite no reported change in quantitative perception of global competencies (op cit), all reported a perceived positive impact (even if only slight) on at least one competency post experience.
Findings will be used to:

- Provide sector with better evidence on what students believe they gain from international experience
- Better design and promotion of international experiences
- Develop enhanced pre-experience preparatory resources and post-experience reflection
- On-campus cohort findings will identify activities and approaches that enhance employability learning gain from on-campus opportunities (particularly important for the widening participation agenda)
This strand explores the role of the UK version of the Career Adaptabilities Questionnaire and aims to measure and facilitate learning gain by tracking a cohort of students over the 2016/17 and 2017/18 academic years.
Legacy Project - Career Adaptabilities

Four Career Adapt-abilities (Savickas, 1997)

- Concern
  - Developing a positive optimistic attitude to the future

- Control
  - Exerting a degree of intrapersonal influence on situations

- Curiosity
  - Broadening horizons by exploring social opportunities and possibilities

- Confidence
  - Believing in oneself and in the ability to achieve a goal
Exploration of the role of the UK version of the Career Adaptabilities Questionnaire in measuring and facilitating learning gain by:

- Tracking a cohort of students over academic years 2016/17 and 2017/18
- Administering the questionnaire twice in each year
- Conducting a small number of interviews once in each year
- Data collection and analysis managed through UoN
Legacy Project - Career Adaptabilities

Respondents Phase 1
N = 431

Gender -
Female 60% (261)
Male 40% (164)

Age
Approx 97% aged 18-21
Mean age 19.09yrs

Domicile
80% home students

Ethnicity
75% white
25% BEM

Mean Career Adaptability Scores
- concern 17.9
- control 21.89
- curiosity 19.0
- confidence 21.14
- overall adaptability 80.03

- Means similar to the means found in the original UK study
- Score ranges - normal distribution with varying degrees of skewness to the right

Careers questions
15% (N=64) - spoken to careers about ideas/plans
27% (N=116) - attended a careers fair
12% (N=50) - attended a career skills workshop
16% (N=67) - position of responsibility in club/soc
32% (N=137) - done a CV
26% (N=111) - work or volunteering experience

Relationship between Career Adaptability and career related activity -
Correlation matrix between career related activity/no career related activity and career adaptability factor scores indicated no real relationship first time of testing.
The Legacy Opportunity

- Internationalisation
  - to better understand the employability gain from internationalisation and develop more effective interventions to maximise off and on campus experiences

- Strengths
  - to investigate the impact of a tool which can be used to help students understand their strengths and apply them to career decision-making and selection processes

- Career Adaptabilities
  - to develop a tool to help non-career-focussed students to develop career management capability
Thank you for Listening

Further information can be found at:
www.legacy.ac.uk

Any Questions?