Measuring Employability in Learning Gain

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Content

- Employability as an outcome of HE
  - HEIs possibilities to enhance students’ employability
- Three different ways to measure students’ enhanced employability
  - Strengths
  - Internationalisation
  - Career Adaptabilities
- Conclusion
Employability aspects

- Employability refers to gaining, sustaining and progressing in employment
- Becomes broader over time and has extended beyond the individual
- HE can provide enabling support factors, individual factors, individual circumstances
- HE can not influence LM factors
Means to enhance employability

- Careers Advice
  - Subject-specific skills and attitude
  - International experiences
  - Extra-curricular activities
  - Careers adaptability
  - Work experience
Strengths - Overview

Theoretical underpinning
- Base-Positive Psychology
- R2 Strength

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Feel well-prepared for interview</td>
<td>-62</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not daunted by an interview</td>
<td>-73</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Know the career path</td>
<td>-47</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Confident to answer</td>
<td>-56</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Developed my strengths during my course at uni</td>
<td>-16</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- **Disagree**
- **Agree**
Internationalisation

- Impact of international experience on students’ employability (Wright and Jones, 2014)
- Study abroad
- Work abroad
- On-campus experiences

How can internationalisation enhance students’ employability skills?

- Method:
  - Semi-structured interviews
  - pre and post experience
  - Identify self-perceived employability learning gains
Internationalisation – initial findings

- Study abroad
  Motivation: academic related, employability related, personal interest & development

- Work abroad
  Extrinsic factors (CVs, experience)
  Intrinsic motivations
  Gain global competencies (Diamond et al, 2011)

- On-campus experience
  Risk averse behaviour
  *Perceived* positive impact
Career Adaptability

‘The capability of an individual to make a series of successful transitions where the labour market, organisation of work and underlying occupational and organisational knowledge bases may be subject to considerable change’ (Bimrose et al, 2011)

• Stages of Careers Adaptability

Source: Frigerio and Wright (2014)

• Four Career Adapt-abilities (Savickas, 1997)
• CAAS-International validated in 13 countries (Savickas & Porfeli, 2012)
Career Adaptabilities – initial findings

Career Adaptability Scores

- Mean concern: 17.9
- Mean control: 21.8
- Mean curiosity: 19.0
- Mean confidence: 21.1
- Mean overall adaptability: 80.0

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

Careers questions

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

• The concept of employability needs a broad approach to cover all its potential impact factors. The impact of higher education on students’ and graduates’ employability is limited.

• HEIs can enhance students employability by Careers Advice; international experiences; and careers adaptability skills.

• Legacy aims to measure the impact of these enhancements on employability.
Final remarks

Follow me on @HeikeBehle

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Reports and documents used for this presentation