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Placement Podcasts: The Employers' Perspective

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Educating tomorrow's professionals

Placement Podcasts
The Employer's Perspective

Lisa Ward and Jane Gaffikin

3rd September, 2008

ASET Annual Conference,

Plymouth

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Overview

- Why Podcasts?
- Phase One – Last Year's Work
- Phase Two – Current Work
- Employer's View
- Films A and B
- Conclusions and Findings

Why Podcasts?

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Strategic Aim A7

‘To produce employable and enterprising graduates’

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Placement Take Up Trends

- UK wide trend for decrease in sandwich placement take up since 1990s
- Why?
  - The research base is inconclusive
  - More students living at home?
  - Greater financial pressure?
  - Peer Pressure?

Previous Research

In our 2005 survey students who did placements tended to get:

- Better degrees
- Better jobs
- Better salaries

But we can not link this directly and say this is solely because of placements.

Previous Research

Placement tutors often say that students come back:

- More mature
- Ready to learn
- Improved context for academic learning
- More determined to do well and get a good job

Phase One
Last Year's Work

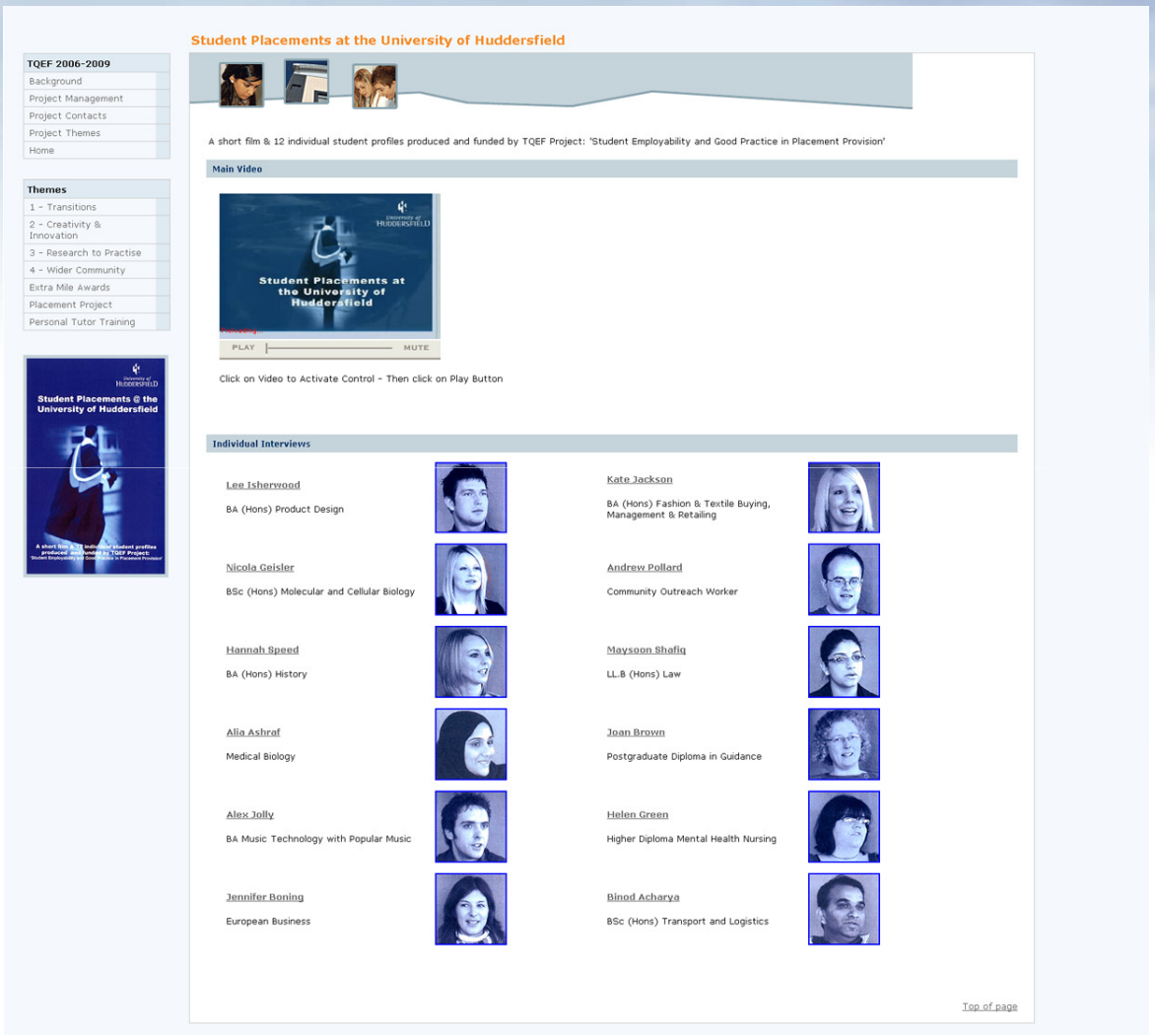
Phase One Podcasts – Student Selection

- Selected enthusiastic students via Jobshop
- Broad cross section
  - Disciplines
  - Ages
  - Genders
  - Ethnicity
  - International
- Included sandwich, professional and short term placements.

Phase One Podcasts- Outcomes

- 15 minute interview per student
- Edited into short individual film
- Composite of placements and learning experiences
- DVD produced
- Used at University Open Days
- Available via website: **www.hud.ac.uk/tqef/placementvideo.html**

Placement Podcasts: Website



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Phase One - Review

- Feedback from internal focus groups
  - Concentrate on sandwich students
  - Tutors to select
- Format
  - Three interviews per student
  - Interview with employer
  - Interview with tutor
- Student's professional development and growth

Phase Two
This Year's Work

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Why Bother?

- Placement lifecycle
- Generic resources
- Convenient
- Triangular partnership
- Student awareness of employer needs
- Better placement preparation
- Web resource for second phase

Phase Two – What's Different?

- Three triangular viewpoints: student, employer, university
- Getting employers and students involved
- Placement units input
- Nine employers, 14 students
- Filmed students in autumn term, 2007
- Employers and students - summer, 2008
- Focus on employer's views

Phase Two – The Employer's View

- Several employers were placement student's themselves
- Support ethos
- Commonalities of successful students:
  - Interest in the job
  - Enthusiasm
  - Quick to adapt and become part of the team

Employers

- Don’t expect ‘finished product’
- Develop and train professionals
- Placement Students and graduates – difference?
- Liked real examples at interview

Film A
What Employer's Want

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Benefits to Employers

- Desire to learn, enquire and challenge
- Recent academic knowledge – plus market place developments
- Challenge existing processes and procedures
- Keen to volunteer
- Research projects
- Quick to acquire skills - flexible

Project Progressions – Hospitality Industry

Start off by helping at functions

- work independently supported by the team
- supervise agency staff
- independently manage their own small dinner function
- manage bigger numbers – e.g. a conference
- culminating with large events such as weddings.

Team Working

- Quick to become key members
- Hard to replace at end of year

Student	Vs	Admin Assistant
Genuine interest in company		Just want a job
Initial output levels good		Initial output levels good
More flexible, happy to move, extra experience		Covering jobs = more work

3-6 months later a huge difference

Findings - Employer

- Regard students as their workers for a year
- Skills built over year
- Deeper projects
- Shy - > confident
- Working within ‘real’ teams
- Specialist equipment in ‘real-life’
- Widen social circles – e.g. mature colleagues
- Time management
- Career ‘try outs’

Findings - University

- Triangle: student, employer, university
- Long term relationships with university - service to future generations
- Knowledge back to University re business practice
- Linking employers to university for potential
  - Consultancy
  - Knowledge transfer
  - Partnerships

Film B

Skills and Employers

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Conclusions and Findings

Conclusions – Phase Two

- Highlight employers perspective
- Students broader appreciation of world of work
- Insights into interviews
- Enthusiasm, positive attitude and desire to learn
- Work skills can be taught
- Genuine interest in job role and company
- Students treated ‘similarly’ to graduates
- Triangle supports all three

Learning Points

- More complicated to set up
- Chose on the basis of companies
  - Local
  - Blue chip
  - Highly specialised
- Impact on students
- Time consuming
- Transcripts typed up to assist editing
- Web resources – ‘access details cards’

Future Work to Complete

- Finals edits of all films so far
- Final interviews with students
- Interviews with tutors
- Loading materials onto web
- Consultation with staff for dissemination and embedding into curriculum

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Web Resources

TQEF Homepage

www.hud.ac.uk/tqef

Placement Podcasts – Phase One

www.hud.ac.uk/tqef/placementvideo.html

Placement Podcasts – Phase two

(Coming soon)