

e3i Validation Pack



THE SHEFFIELD HALLAM UNIVERSITY EMPLOYABILITY FRAMEWORK

This is an official policy document of the university, adopted in 2004, and is intended to guide the curriculum and LTA design and practice of courses.



Sheffield
Hallam University

SHARPENS YOUR THINKING

Employability Framework

1. Purpose of the Framework

The University Framework provides a definition of employability and outlines those features of a course which contribute to enhancing students' employability.

The Framework is intended to:

- ensure that University staff and students share a common understanding of employability
- enable Faculties to develop their own curriculum and support strategies appropriate to their portfolio of courses
- build on and extend existing good practice.

2. Key Feature

The Framework is underpinned by the following key features:

- the development of employability is focussed on student needs and should reflect the diversity of individual career and life paths
- good learning, teaching and assessment practice is the corner stone of employability development in students
- the encouragement of the transfer of learning on the course into employment and other lifestyle choices e.g. accredited learning from work through independent study, work placement etc.
- the framework builds on and integrates current and developing policies and strategies related to Key Skills, Learning from Work, Progress Files, Enterprise and Career Management.

3. A definition of employability

The definition published by the Employability Working Group (late 2002). This definition is non-restrictive, and encompasses a wide range of career and lifestyle choices.

Enabling students to acquire the knowledge, personal and professional skills and encouraging the attitudes that will support their future development.

4. What employability means in practice

4.1 Enhancing employability from a student perspective has a number of elements

See Appendix 1 for an expansion of the following:

Core features of a programme of study:

1. The progressive development of autonomy.
2. The development of skills (cognitive/intellectual; subject specific; professional; Sheffield Hallam Key Skills: Communication - Writing Skills, Oral Communication Skills, Visual Communication Skills, Information Skills; Information Technology; Working with Numbers; Working with Others; Improving own Learning; Solving Problems. See

the Sheffield Hallam Generic Learning Outcomes at http://registry.shu.ac.uk/dept/intranet/ac_pol_frme/4_GenLO.doc).

3. Personal Development Planning (involving reflection and action planning), supported within the curriculum and by tutors.
4. The inclusion of activities which are similar to those required in external environments (to encourage students' ability to see how their skills and knowledge might be transferred).
5. Students' explicit reflection on their use of knowledge and skills in order to identify what is appropriate for different contexts eg: operating in different groups; using subject knowledge in work tasks; writing reports on the course and then in employment (to encourage students' ability to see how their skills and knowledge might be transferred).
6. The encouragement of career management skills: self awareness; opportunity awareness; decision making; transition skills (including job application skills). These enable students to pull together and make sense of their experiences in order to identify and attain their future goals.
7. Engagement with work-related learning.

Other features which may be provided by a programme of study

8. Preparation for specific professional areas
9. Engagement with activities with a specific enterprise focus both within and outside the subject.

4.2 Examples of current features of University curricula supporting the development of employability

Core features of all existing courses, encouraged by validation and quality processes:

- good learning, teaching and assessment practice
- the integration of cognitive, subject specific, professional and key skills (see 4.1.2 above)
- the integration of progress files
- the incorporation in the curriculum of employability issues in any relevant QAA bench marking statement.

Features to be found on a less consistent basis but which are nevertheless established in several if not many areas:

- a vocational focus
- student projects in partnership with/in industry and commerce
- sandwich placements/professional practice
- accredited learning from work
- elective and option modules
- Independent Study Modules - mainly Cultural Studies and Student Volunteering
- Career Management Modules and career management activities within other modules forming part of the curriculum
- modules on topics such as enterprise / setting up own business
- self directed study in the Learning Centre.

5. Bibliography (from the Generic Centre)

- (1) Lees, D. (2002) Graduate employability - literature review.
- (2) Lees, D. (2002) Information for Academic staff on Employability
- (3) Yorke, M., Knight, P. (2003) The Undergraduate Curriculum and Employability
- (4) Allison, J., Harvey, C. and Nixon, M. (2002) Enhancing Employability: a long term strategic challenge
- (5) Edwards, G. (2001) Connecting PDP to employer needs and the world of work
- (6) Generic Centre: Guide for busy academics No 5 - Enhancing student learning through voluntary work

For additional publications see the Generic Centre Resources database

<http://www.ltsn.ac.uk/genericcentre/index.asp?id=18285>

Appendix 1

Note. In column 3 'well covered' means there are already well embedded institutional policies.

Core features of a programme of study	Examples	Current institution-wide policies/strategies
1 The progressive development of autonomy	Students given specified tasks, then tasks with guidance, then tasks with limited guidance; students are supported in moving from one stage to the next.	The Sheffield Hallam Generic Learning Outcomes - part of the Academic Framework.
2 The development of skills (cognitive/intellectual; subject specific; professional; Sheffield Hallam Key Skills: for a clarification of the skills subsumed under these headings, see the Sheffield Hallam Generic Learning Outcomes at http://registry.shu.ac.uk/dept/intranet/ac_pol_frm e/4_GenLO.doc).	- Explicit learning outcomes and assessment criteria, relevant and valid learning, teaching and assessment methods.	The Sheffield Hallam Generic Learning Outcomes - part of the Academic Framework. Institutional resources (e.g. Key Skills resources such as 'Key Skills Online' and 'Infoquest'). Programme Specifications.
3 Personal Development Planning (involving reflection and action planning), supported within the curriculum and by tutors.	- PDP processes are being planned into curricula. - Reflection and action planning are part of the Sheffield Hallam Generic Learning Outcomes (examples of methods include self assessment, peer review, portfolios building, reflective logs, learning contracts etc)	The Framework for the implementation of Progress Files. Institutional resources (e.g. Key Skills resources, ePDP in Blackboard). The Sheffield Hallam Generic Learning Outcomes - part of the Academic Framework.
4 The inclusion of activities which are similar to those required in external environments (to encourage students' ability to see how their skills and knowledge might be transferred).	'Real world' course activities can include report writing, making presentations, group work, projects, simulations, case studies, learning from work (e.g. placements, professional practice, work-based learning, Independent Study Modules etc)	Guidelines for awarding academic credit for Learning from Work (under discussion and informing the Assessment Working Group).

<p>5 Students' explicit reflection on their use of knowledge and skills in order to identify what is appropriate for different contexts eg: operating in different groups; using subject knowledge in work tasks; writing reports on the course and then in employment (to encourage students' ability to see how their skills and knowledge might be transferred).</p>	<p>Activities requiring use of skills in different context with explicit learning outcomes, assessment criteria and reflective activities - to help students see connections</p>	<p>To be addressed by the LTI: staff understanding of the transfer issue; guidance on how to foster transfer.</p>
<p>6 The encouragement of career management skills: self awareness; opportunity awareness; decision making; transition skills (including job application skills). These enable students to pull together and make sense of their experiences in order to identify and attain their future goals.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Activities throughout the curriculum which encourage reflection and autonomy. - Learning from work activities. - The encouragement of autonomy. - Career Management modules or career management sessions in the curriculum. 	<p>The Sheffield Hallam Generic Learning Outcomes - part of the Academic Framework. Proposed new Programme Specification. QAA Code of Practice (Careers Education, Information and Guidance).</p>
<p>Other features which may be provided by a programme of study</p>	<p>Examples</p>	<p>Current policies/strategies</p>
<p>7 Engagement with work-related learning.</p>	<p>Voluntary work, structured work experience (e.g. placements, professional practice, Independent Study Modules, work based learning, accreditation of part time work), extra curricula activities</p>	<p>Hallam Volunteering. Hallam Award. Guidelines for awarding academic credit for Learning from Work (under discussion and informing the Assessment Working Group).</p>
<p>8 Preparation for specific professional areas</p>	<p>Meeting professional/statutory body requirements, professional practice, development of knowledge and skills related to a specific profession</p>	<p>Engagement with professional and statutory bodies at a course/programme of School level.</p>

<p>8 Engagement with activities with a specific enterprise focus both within and outside the subject.</p>	<p>Projects with outside organisations, competitions eg Learn to lead; the IBM sponsored University Business Planning Competition. Stand-alone enterprise modules in the School of Science and Mathematics: level 4 'Concept Realisation'; level 5 'Product Development' and 'Innovation Case Study'; level 6 'Small Business Development'. Enterprise modules within courses eg Leisure and Food Management Division of School of Sport and Leisure Management.</p>	<p>Enterprise Coordination Group. Proposed Enterprise Award. Ongoing development by the Enterprise Centre.</p>
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