Centre for Excellence in Teaching and Learning for Employability (e3i)

HEA Seminar at Sheffield Hallam University
12 May 2010

Volume 1: Presentation Slides

Sheffield Hallam University

SHARPENS YOUR THINKING

Itinerary

20 May 2010
Room 7139, Stoddart Building, Sheffield Hallam University

9:30-10:00:
Tea and Coffee

10:00-11:15:
Graduates' perspectives on the influence of HE on their employability **pp. 2-7**
by David Laughton

11:15-11:30:
Break

11:30-12:15:
Developing employability skills through the use of electronic learning logs **pp. 8-14**
by Jeff Waldock

12:15-13:00:
Developing autonomy and employability: The European Challenge Berlin 2008-2010 **pp. 15-20**
by Nick Nunnington

13:00:
Lunch, Hallam View

For more information on the Centre for Excellence in Teaching and Learning for Employability (e3i), visit the CETL website at http://employablity.shu.ac.uk or e-mail e3i@shu.ac.uk

Graduates' perspectives on the influence of HE on their employability by David Laughton

Graduates' perspectives on the influence of HE on their employability

Research undertaken by Nicola Barraclough, Joanne Luhrs and Ester Ehiyazaryan

e3i CETL

Sheffield Hallam University
SHARPENS YOUR THINKING

Centre For Excellence in Teaching and Learning in Embedding, Enhancing and Integrating Employability
http://employability.shu.ac.uk

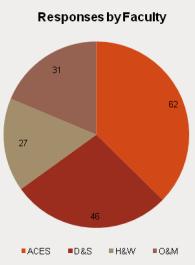
Research questions/method

- "To what extent do alumni perceive that their university experience has prepared them to gain employment; how has it enhanced their employability?"
- "To what extent did their university experience prepare graduates for performing in the world of work?"
- Research method: mixed approach using quantitative and qualitative methods; survey instrument followed by a number of case study interviews (open ended questions via telephone interviews).
- Sample: recent graduates enrolled on the university's alumni site; all students who graduated in 2006 and 2007 and who were enrolled on the alumni site were consulted; 168 responses, 13 telephone interviews

Sheffield Hallam University
SHARPENS YOUR THINKING

Centre For Excellence in Teaching and Learning in Embedding, Enhancing and Integrating Employability
http://employability.shu.ac.uk

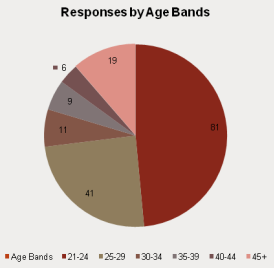
Responses by faculty



Sheffield Hallam University
SHARPENS YOUR THINKING

Centre For Excellence in Teaching and Learning in Embedding, Enhancing and Integrating Employability
http://employability.shu.ac.uk

Responses by age bands



Where do graduates perceive skills to be learnt best?

- See table 1
- Participants felt that eleven of the nineteen skills and attributes could be learnt equally well in either environment. Only two skills were identified as being best learnt in a work environment: these were **adaptability/flexibility** and **managing others**.
- The following skills were perceived to be best learnt in an academic environment: **lifelong learning**; **written communication skills**; **numeracy**; **taking responsibility for your learning**; **presentation skills**; and **information gathering skills**.

Skills/attributes which graduates would have benefited from more guidance on at university

- See table 2
- Top 5 responses: **managing others** 50%, **using new technologies** 35.7%; **presentation skills** 32.7%; **oral communication skills** 27.4%; **decision-making** 25.6%.

Work experience

- Opportunities for work experience whilst at university: 38% responded they had not had opportunities for work experience; 38% said they had WBL experiences whilst at university; 40 responses selected "neither/nor" or don't know/not applicable.
- WE deemed beneficial: acquisition of job search skills, application and interview process, opportunity to put theory into practice, to test drive a career, the WE itself
- Some evidence of lack of satisfaction with support whilst on placement

Career management skills

- See table 3
- CV writing: 75 respondents indicated they felt quite or fully prepared, compared with 57 who felt unprepared. A further 27 respondents answered "neither/nor."
- 67 respondents felt quite or fully prepared in terms of the skills needed for a job interview, compared with 59 who were not at all prepared or not very prepared; one-fifth of respondents (34 responses) replied "neither/nor
- Graduates responded positively regarding the skills required for a job, with 116 respondents (69%) stating they felt quite or fully prepared.

Which aspects of CMS would alumni have liked more assistance in?

- See table 4
- The aspect of CMS which most respondents would have liked more assistance in was "***identifying opportunities in the graduate job market*** "; 100 respondents (or 60%) selected this.
- The second most frequently selected option was "***researching careers and employers***" with 95 respondents (or 57%) identifying this.
- 93 respondents selected "***understanding what employers want from interviews***" and 92 identified "***understanding different routes into employment*** ".

Prepared for the workplace?

- Graduates responded positively regarding the skills required for a job, with 116 respondents (69%) stating they felt quite or fully prepared. A considerably larger proportion of alumni felt prepared in the skills required for a job than felt unprepared.

Prepared for the workplace?

- *"…my course in particular was quite vocational in that it was targeted for, you know to go into business analysis and pretty much systems analysis, pretty much straight away, so I feel that the module and the way the coursework and the way the modules were structured they did give a realistic view of what it would be like in business . . . and all the coursework was fairly similar to the type of tasks you have in day to day business, which is always very useful."*

Prepared for the workplace?

- *"I think there's a great deal of difference between the theoretical side of things what you learn and the actual reality in the outside world. Certainly in terms of how you apply the knowledge what you've learnt into outside opportunities, I think, yes."*

Career development and progression

- When asked about their ability to identify opportunities for future career planning, 42% of graduates agreed they had the ability to identify opportunities for future career progression compared with 32% who did not. A further one fifth of respondents did not feel they could answer the question
- 60% of alumni surveyed either did not have a clear plan for their development and progression, or expressed uncertainty over their career development plans.

Do graduates have an interest in their CPD?

- See table 5
- 70% of respondents indicated an active interest in their CPD
- 43% indicated they feel able to identify opportunities for future career progression
- 34% indicated they have a clear plan for career development and progression

Discussion points

- Skills – learnt better in university or the workplace? Although responses suggest equally well in either place, the nature of skills is perceived differently in these contexts – support for more WBL within course provision? How can this be achieved?
- Relative emphasis on skills development – is more needed in relation to ***managing others***, ***using new technologies***, ***communication skills*** and ***decision-making***? Can the HE curriculum accommodate more of these?

Discussion points

- Placement, yes, but is enough being done to build learning from other work-based experiences into the curriculum and encourage students to recognise a wider range of transferable skills? What can be done?
- Career development and progression – is more focus on this plus advice and guidance required – how can this be achieved in a "scaled up" manner?

Developing employability skills through the use of electronic learning logs by Jeff Waldock

Evidence-Based Practice Seminar Series, 2010

The Higher Education Academy

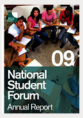
Developing employability skills through the use of electronic learning logs

Jeff Waldock

Sheffield Hallam University

Higher Ambitions, BIS, November 2009,

"All universities should be expected to demonstrate how their institution prepares its students for employment, including thorough training in modern workplace skills such as team working, business awareness, and communication skills"



The National Student Forum. Annual report, October 2009

"We would like all universities to provide a clear university or college-wide employability strategy incorporating increased resources for, and the promotion of the use of, personal development plans"

Unleashing Aspiration - Fair Access to the Professions. Milburn report, January 2010

"The Government should work with universities to develop proposals to integrate a flexible element of professional experience into all higher education courses"

Sheffield Hallam University
SHARPENS YOUR THINKING

Centre For Excellence in Teaching and Learning in Embedding, Enhancing and Integrating Employability
http://employability.shu.ac.uk

A Manifesto for Graduate Recruitment, AGR, 9 March 2010.

Universities should:

- *Embed employability skills in all degree courses*
- *Demonstrate the value of degree courses to students and parents*

David Lammy
Minister for Higher Education and Intellectual Property
Graduate Employability Conference, 3 March 2010

"More and more universities are coming to realise the sheer breadth of the skills-set that their students may need to carry into the world of work if they are to achieve their full potential"

"Many more [young people] will have not only have the specialist knowledge that employers value, but also the skills necessary to make best use of that knowledge, for themselves, for their employers and ultimately for all of us"

Sheffield Hallam University
SHARPENS YOUR THINKING

Centre For Excellence in Teaching and Learning in Embedding, Enhancing and Integrating Employability
http://employability.shu.ac.uk

4

Mathematics Subject benchmark - a 'National Curriculum' for HE

http://www.qaa.ac.uk/academicinfrastructure/benchmark/statements/Maths07.asp

*"MSOR graduates will possess general study skills, particularly including the ability to **learn independently**"*

*"They will also be able to **work independently** with patience and persistence, pursuing the solution of a problem to its conclusion. They will have had the opportunity to develop general **skills of time management and organisation**."*

*"They will also have general **communication skills**, typically including the ability to work in teams, to contribute to discussions, to **write coherently** and to **communicate results clearly**."*

5

Employability skills:

- Verbal communication
- Written communication
- Analysing and problem solving
- Team working and interpersonal skills
- Reflection and self-awareness
- Personal planning, time management and organisation
- Target setting, action-planning
- Initiative, enterprise, adaptability
- Autonomy
- Numerical reasoning, Information literacy and ICT skills

6

Employability skills, potentially developed through ***PDP***

- Verbal communication
- **Written communication**
- Analysing and problem solving
- Team working and interpersonal skills
- **Reflection and self-awareness**
- **Personal planning, time management and organisation**
- **Target setting, action-planning**
- Initiative, enterprise, adaptability
- **Autonomy**
- Numerical reasoning, Information literacy and ICT skills

Categories of Employability Skills

7

PLACEMENTS and WBL

Placement preparation (L4/5):

CVs
Job applications
Interview techniques / practice
Answering difficult questions
Interview types, and activities

Placement Reflection (L6)

Presentation
Report / poster

Career management
Enterprise skills
Entrepreneurship
Innovation
Commercial awareness
Other work/voluntary experience

SKILLS DEVELOPMENT
(A degree is more than ***)

Communication
Team Working
Leadership
Problem Solving
Reflection and action planning
Logical argument
IT skills
Numeracy
Transferability

Self-motivation
Self-management
Self-efficacy
Adaptability
Reliability
Autonomy
Articulation
... ooomph!

Mechanisms and inputs for embedding Employability Skills

8

INPUTS

Employers
Academic Tutors
Careers and Employment Service
Research
Employability Framework
Self Evaluations (AQR etc)
Reviews of practice
NSS
Internal Academic Reviews
Student Feedback
Student Union
QSME processes, Institutional Audit
LTA 'good practice'
Student support services
Widening Participation
Diversity

MECHANISMS

Assessment Practice:
Written presentation
Oral presentation
Viva

Teaching and Learning practices and styles:
Problem-based learning
Enquiry or experiential based learning
Project work
Simulated tasks
Seminar work
Group work

Personal Development Planning
Reflective practice
Problem identification
Action planning
Target setting
Reporting and evaluation

e-Portfolios

Peer-Assisted Learning/Mentoring

Extra-Curricular Work

SHUMaths e-Progress File system - key features

9

- Web-based framework to support PDP element of Progress File
- Students enter comments in logbook (at least weekly)
- Sections provided for each module, plus a 'general' section
- Staff can view comments, but not other students
- Entries receive marks (weekly for year 1 students)
- Staff can reply to comments made via direct email links
- Students can publish PDFs of their logbooks
- Year 1 students asked to review entries at the end of the year
- System adapted annually following student feedback

Personal development planning: guidance for institutional policy and practice in HE, QAA, 2009
http://www.qaa.ac.uk/academicinfrastructure/progressFiles/guidelines/PDP/PDPguide.pdf

10

JISC DeL-II Project

OBJECTIVES:

- Analyse logbook content, to determine:
  - how are students using the logs
  - provide better guidance to students on using this system (and others) effectively
- Improve the existing system
- Disseminate lessons learned, supporting further spread and embedding of practice
- Links to the More Maths Grads project, particularly around the development of graduate employability skills

11

Progress file usage statistics 2009-2010

Entries between 19 June 2009 and 17 April 2010

Course	Year	Num Entries (per person)	Num Words (per entry)	% takeup
Mathematics	1	7146 (85)	352688 (49)	(84/90) 93.3
	2	4945 (73)	388572 (79)	(68/79) 86.1
	3	34 (11)	4731 (139)	(3/12) 25.0
	4	770 (19)	85073 (110)	(40/46) 87.0
	Total:	**13143** (67)	**831264** (63)	(195/227) **85.9**
Business and ICT	1	2886 (80)	225055 (78)	(36/38) 94.7
	2	3977 (102)	304068 (76)	(39/42) 92.9
	3	755 (50)	184541 (244)	(15/16) 93.8
	4	43 (11)	9164 (213)	(4/26) 15.4
	Total:	**7661** (82)	**722828** (94)	(94/122) **77.0**
Information Technology with Business Studies	1	1593 (53)	108169 (68)	(30/31) 96.8
	2	1510 (69)	133565 (88)	(22/26) 84.6
	3	229 (114)	24501 (107)	(2/4) 50.0
	Total:	**3332** (62)	**266235** (80)	(54/61) **88.5**
Information Technology Management	1	1268 (79)	95270 (75)	(16/17) 94.1
	2	1023 (102)	57972 (57)	(10/11) 90.9
	3	239 (48)	41450 (173)	(5/6) 83.3
	Total:	**2530** (82)	**194692** (77)	(31/34) **91.2**
Sport Technology	1	1492 (55)	114532 (77)	(27/28) 96.4
	2	706 (64)	45007 (64)	(11/24) 45.8
	Total:	**2198** (58)	**159539** (73)	(38/52) **73.1**
Web Systems Design	1	**616** (103)	**79153** (128)	(6/6) **100.0**
Management, Communication and Technology	3	**277** (69)	**46012** (166)	(4/4) **100.0**
Management, Enterprise & Technology	2	**255** (42)	**16468** (65)	(6/6) **100.0**
Maths and Statistics	4	**53** (26)	**11071** (209)	(2/2) **100.0**
Enterprise Systems Professional	1	2 (2)	5 (2)	(1/2) **50.0**
	Grand Totals:	**29819** (69)	**2327267** (78)	(431/516) **83.5**

Sheffield Hallam University
SHARPENS YOUR THINKING
Centre For Excellence in Teaching and Learning in Embedding, Enhancing and Integrating Employability
http://employability.shu.ac.uk

12

Progress Files: student perceptions (top 6):

	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	All years	
Out of:	27	13	26	19	30	115	
Benefits:							
Planning and meeting deadlines, being organised	19	7	7	7	19	**59**	51%
Assessing understanding and reflecting on it	9	6	10	13	17	**55**	48%
Receiving replies from and communicate with lecturers	11	4	13	7	13	**48**	42%
Recording work done	4	5		10	12	**31**	27%
Gaining a view of progression over the year	8	2	4	4	10	**28**	24%
Express feelings	6	1	7	5	6	**25**	22%
Problems:	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009		
Every week is too much - may be nothing to write	12	3	8	11	19	**53**	46%
Lack of feedback, all tutors should read the comments	2	2	14	6	6	**30**	26%
Too time consuming, tedious	13	4	2	3	2	**24**	21%
Forget to fill it in	7	4	3	2	5	**21**	18%
Not relevant for me, unnecessary	5	1	4	1	2	**13**	11%
Shouldn't be compulsory	1		3	1	3	**8**	7%

Sheffield Hallam University
SHARPENS YOUR THINKING
Centre For Excellence in Teaching and Learning in Embedding, Enhancing and Integrating Employability
http://employability.shu.ac.uk

13

…. have the opportunity to develop general skills of time-management and organisation

"gave me constant awareness of my assignment deadlines … each week I would write about how I had ones due .."

"It has helped me keep a track of the activities that I have and haven't completed during the week. This has helped me work out what things are next in priority."

"It has helped me to condense my thoughts about what I am doing, what I have done, and more importantly what I still needed to do. This kept me on track."

14

… have general communication skills … write coherently and communicate results clearly

"From the usage of Progress File I gain lots of things like better apprehension in lessons, self-criticism and the most important helps me to improve better my English."

"The progress file has helped me to develop my communication skills and to become more confident in talking about my own work and feelings on the course."

15

… have 'the ability to work .. with a degree of independence' and 'the ability to learn independently'

"When you are entering a comment into the logbook you have to think about it carefully and if it is something that you have been struggling with then I sometimes find that by thinking about it I have solved my problem that I was going to write in the first place."

"This was very helpful, as it allowed me to break down problems and deal with them swiftly and effectively"

16

Additional perceived benefits...

Staff-student communication:

"It is a great place for communication and helped strengthen the bond between teacher and student because it allows the lecturers to understand more about what we the students want"

17

Additional perceived benefits...

Problem – response – action:

"I have definitely used it for reflection and taken the appropriate action from it as I have often listed problems that I have had then I have had a response and taken appropriate action from there on"

17

Additional perceived benefits...

Problem – response – action:

"I have definitely used it for reflection and taken the appropriate action from it as I have often listed problems that I have had then I have had a response and taken appropriate action from there on"

"The most useful thing about it is that the tutors read what I have put and sometimes have contacted me by email and the problem that I have had has been sorted before the next tutorial, which has meant I have been able to continue with my work and get the maximum from the tutorial questions"

Sheffield Hallam University
SHARPENS YOUR THINKING
Centre For Excellence in Teaching and Learning in Embedding, Enhancing and Integrating Employability
http://employability.shu.ac.uk

18

NSS - 'Personal development' section

	Question	2008	2009
Q19	This course has helped me present myself with confidence	91%	95%
Q20	My communication skills have improved	91%	95%
Q21	As a result of the course, I feel confident in tackling unfamiliar problems	94%	97%

Year	Score	National Ranking
2005	4.03/5	2nd (equal)
2006	4.00/5	4th (equal)
2007	96%	1st
2008	92%	1st
2009	95.7%	1st

19

For personal development planning to succeed...

- it needs to be embedded, and be **part of core academic activity**
- it needs to be carried out **regularly**
- the benefits and purpose should be **explained** to learners
- the **process** is more important than the **bureaucracy**
- **all staff need to be engaged** with the process
- collect and use **student feedback**
- the process needs a key **staff champion**
- it should gain **academic credit**

Developing autonomy and employability: The European Challenge Berlin 2008-2010 by Nick Nunnington

Developing Autonomy and Employability: The European Challenge Berlin 2008-2010.

Students as consultants, tutors as clients

Sheffield Hallam University
SHARPENS YOUR THINKING

Centre For Excellence in Teaching and Learning in Embedding, Enhancing and Integrating Employability
http://employability.shu.ac.uk

- Students and staff from 9 universities in 8 countries.
- Provides an intensive, authentic experience for undergraduate students from related degree courses (e.g. real estate, property) by setting them a professional assignment.
- Inter-professional, international student groups work together as consultants for a fictional global finance company seeking to establish a new European Headquarters.

Sheffield Hallam University
SHARPENS YOUR THINKING

Centre For Excellence in Teaching and Learning in Embedding, Enhancing and Integrating Employability
http://employability.shu.ac.uk

Sheffield Hallam University
SHARPENS YOUR THINKING

Centre For Excellence in Teaching and Learning in Embedding, Enhancing and Integrating Employability
http://employability.shu.ac.uk

- Over two weeks the students collectively apply their knowledge by assessing the company's requirements and analysing potential premises in several cities (e.g. Vienna, Bratislava).
- Students visit premises, interview local agents, and conduct field research in these cities. This provides each group with relevant, real data.
- Each group draws up a report and makes a professional presentation to the company board, which is played by tutors.

Sheffield Hallam University
SHARPENS YOUR THINKING

Centre For Excellence in Teaching and Learning in Embedding, Enhancing and Integrating Employability
http://employability.shu.ac.uk

- Employability enhancement is at the heart of the project.
- Evidence from past students that it has directly contributed to gaining employment.
- Develops many standard employability skills but also very contemporary ones – such as working in a multi-national cross cultural team.
- Puts AUTONOMY – the first feature of Sheffield Hallam's Employability Framework at the heart of its pedagogy.

Sheffield Hallam University
SHARPENS YOUR THINKING

Centre For Excellence in Teaching and Learning in Embedding, Enhancing and Integrating Employability
http://employability.shu.ac.uk

Students as consultants, tutors as clients

Sheffield Hallam University
SHARPENS YOUR THINKING

Centre For Excellence in Teaching and Learning in Embedding, Enhancing and Integrating Employability
http://employability.shu.ac.uk

How does the Challenge drive employability?

it pushes all the current topical employability buttons:

- *internationalisation - non UK centric - challenges a UK perspective*
- *team working (cross cultural)*
- *autonomy and self reliance*
- *commercial awareness*
- *client management*
- *communication, motivation . . .*

– "hit the ground running" ("What do graduates do" 2005)
– competitive, intensive and demanding
– raises profiles – CV's and interview
– It's FUN – yes **FUN - "work hard – play hard"**

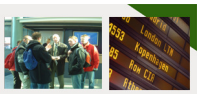
The Evidence

Seeing, hearing, doing

LEARNING

A Students Perspective

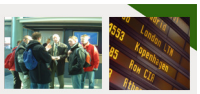
Student Comments



Pressure:

The pressure was constant and at times a concern – we worked all night on our brief.
We worked all through the night but had the sense to send the people delivering the presentation to bed.
It was pressured but we felt this was appropriate – it mirrors real life – work is not drip fed like at Uni it has deadlines and pressure points.
We learnt so much from our mistakes in the first part in terms of time management.
The pressure was an essential component of the experience – I would not have developed and changed so much without it.
The time scales forced us to work better as a team.
I find it hard to believe what we achieved in the time scales – I have never achieved such excellent work before even when I had much longer to complete it.
The time scales were brutal but they made us focus and looking back it worked...I do not think the project would have achieved the same results without the time pressure.

Student Comments

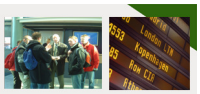


Intensity

This project was...well manic but talking to people in the real estate business they have told me times when they were working just as intensively – it is a great preparation or practice.
I have learnt so much in two weeks that I will NEVER forget, the intensity makes it stick, it seems real not a simulation.
The intensity really supported the doing by learning idea...I was seeing, hearing and doing all the time – the role play increased the intensity...the tutors playing.

The directors didn't let anything slip – they made us feel like idiots sometimes – but we deserved it and next Board meeting we upped our game – the intensity of the experience made me develop my skills over night – especially in managing the interaction with the client and making sure we extracted the right information from them.

Student Comments



Comfort Zone

The first day was really scary, whilst we had sent e-mails and used Facebook and hotmail, actually meeting the team was hard – especially at the same time we heard from the tutors just what was expected of us in two weeks.
I hadn't travelled much before this, so here I was in Berlin with five students from all over Europe and a huge Challenge in front of us...I was very unsure during the first hour or so...but after the ice breakers and team building events I felt more confident...we were all in the same boat...and the tutors were really supportive.
My team mates were so competitive I felt initially like I wasn't good enough and I felt really challenged but with the support of the tutors we examined why we were there and what we wanted to get out of the experience – sharing that really helped.
I was at times way out of my comfort zone, especially at the beginning. But now I realise how much I have grown and without this experience I really would not have the same amount of confidence...it has been...and I know this sounds silly but life changing.

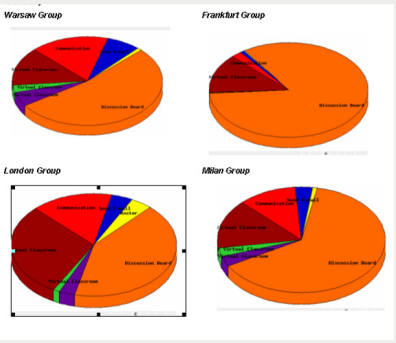
Student Comments

Intellectual Stretch

I have learnt more in these two weeks, than from a whole Semester...NO to be frank with some Modules the whole year.

When we looked at all the information presented in the conference session I realised just how complex this project was going to be and how much we all needed to know – but because we had "experts" in each team who had been studying parts of the knowledge needed it all came together.

We learnt from each other all the time as the project required bits of knowledge from each University – I saw it all come together and really understand now how a relocation needs so many different parts of my course and skills.

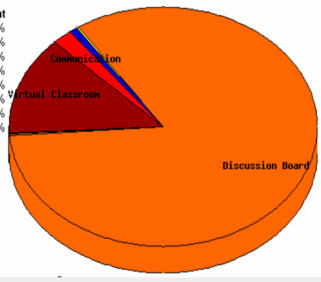


Student Autonomy

Evidenced by statistical analysis of Blackboard usage

1 Total Number of Accesses per Area

Area Name	Hits	Percent
Communication	89	2.10%
Send E-mail	38	0.89%
Roster	6	0.14%
Discussion Board	3516	83.10%
Virtual Classroom	13	0.30%
Enter Virtual Classroom	5	0.11%
Virtual Classroom	564	13.33%
Total	4231	100%



An astonishing 4231 interactions using Discussion Boards, Virtual Classrooms and e-mail for a group of 6 students represents another unprecedented level of communication averaging at 59 interactions per student per week.

Questions:

- What is the value of this kind of experience?
- How has it directly boosted employability?
- What new ideas does this make you think could be used to enhance employability in your own discipline?
- What is your own experience in using role play and simulation?
- What skills were developed in the Challenge ?
- International aspects of employability – how does this complicate things ?
- Can more digital technologies play a part in offering such experiences to large groups?

Sheffield Hallam University
SHARPENS YOUR THINKING

Centre For Excellence in Teaching and Learning in Embedding, Enhancing and Integrating Employability
http://employability.shu.ac.uk