Attempting to build graduates’ capacity towards global employability

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Higher Education graduates have traditionally been highly sought after as employees. However, the current situation globally is that new graduates are finding it more difficult to obtain graduate level work, and often impossible to enter the sectors they were aiming at. Together with subject-specific skills all graduates need to be able to draw on generic, transferable skills such as those developed via work-based learning, skills like reflection, flexibility, adaptability, integrating and making connections.

This paper examines a Graduate Intern Programme in its third year at a UK university and attempts to measure its impact on the graduates’ employability skills as well as the impact on the University’s building and enhancement of its relationships with businesses. From the available data some tentative conclusions are drawn around how such schemes compare to having these opportunities embedded into degree programmes, prior to graduation.

The scheme aims to build capacity in at least 3 ways, by: facilitating students thriving in the workplace; supporting local companies with a 12 week paid placement and developing the skills of academic staff in new areas such as interviewing graduates, liaising with companies, running development sessions, and evaluating the scheme.

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