

Employability Strategy

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Document Version Control

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1. Scope

The London School of Business and Management is dedicated to improving the employability of students to ensure they can compete and succeed in the competitive and constantly shifting knowledge-based economy of today. Our Corporate Plan 2015-2018 ensures we:

“provide our students with a transformational and high quality educational experience within an academic community which promotes learning and personal development, and within which they will develop into independent and critical learners, achieve their full potential and make valuable contributions to society.”

Our Employability Strategy is designed to contribute to the achievement of this corporate goal. Working within the framework of our Student Success Strategy, and in dialogue with the Teaching and Learning Strategy and the Research and Scholarship Strategy, the Employability Strategy brings together and enhances activity in a range of areas relevant to graduate employability.

2. Context

Employability has been defined by Mantz Yorke as

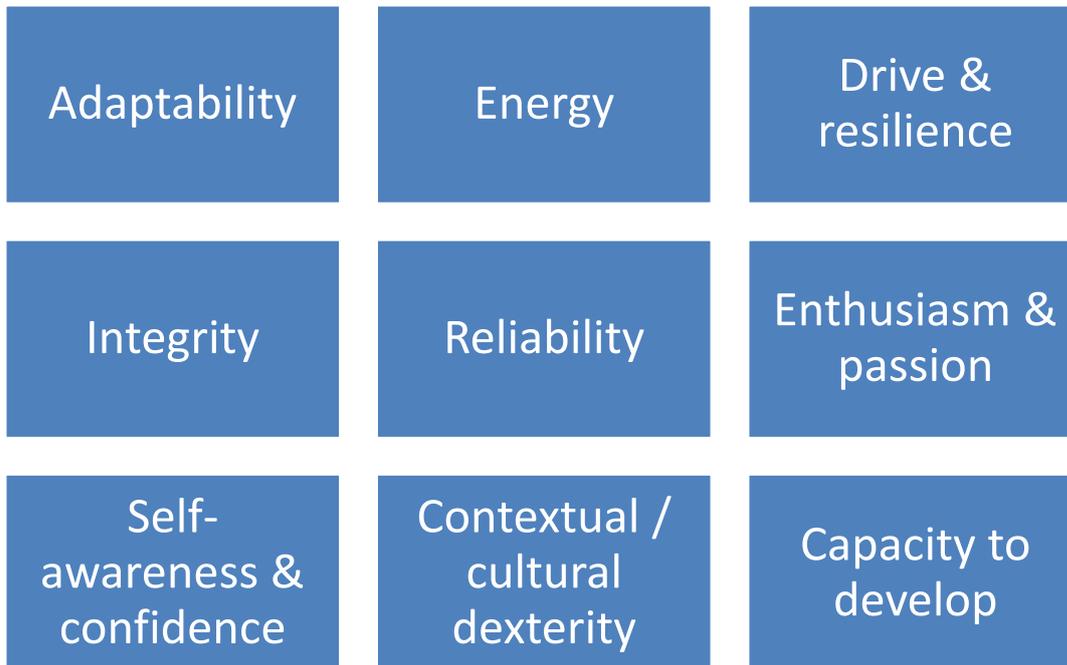
“a set of achievements- skills, understandings and personal attributes- that makes graduates more likely to gain employment and be successful in their chosen occupations, which benefit themselves, the workforce, the community and the economy.” (Yorke, 2006)ⁱ

Within the national employability conversation, a set of core attributes and transferable skills are recognised by graduate recruiters as indicators of their needs and as hallmarks of ‘graduateness’. These relate to ‘world of work’ behavioural practices such as reliability, good timekeeping, confidence and complex problem solving, and to transferable skills such as communication, team working ability, the capacity to operate independently and to demonstrate contextual sensitivity, including intercultural awareness. An appreciation of the worth of these attributes/skills and their bearing on HE delivery within and outside the curriculum supports the ambitions of this strategy document.

2.1 Transferable Skills



2.2 Attributes



2.3 External Drivers

The need for graduates to make an effective contribution to the labour market has been argued for some time. The Robbins Report (Committee on Higher Education, 1963) and the Dearing Report (1997) made strong cases by making explicit the importance of education for employability, and emphasised the value of core skills development and work experience in enhancing students' potential for employment.

The view of the National Student Forum, set up by the Department for Innovation, Universities and Skills (DIUS) in early 2008, to involve students in the enhancement of HE courses, was that

“employability emerged as a recurring, cross-cutting theme for the Forum Although we fully endorse the view that the rigorous study of a discipline is an end in itself, it is nonetheless clear that the link between higher education and better job prospects is high on the agenda for many students.”

In addition to these important voices, we have identified the following external drivers for this strategy:

- As a result of increasing competition and the continuously changing business environment, employers look beyond simple academic achievement and more towards employability skills and relevant work experience, which can give our graduates a competitive edge in the market.
- Even though the number of graduates increases every year and the Association of Graduate Recruiters Survey predicts a rise in graduate jobs of 17%, employers still expect to have some unfilled positions due to graduates having a lack of knowledge, skills and attitudes, for the job.
- A CBI (Confederation of British Industry) survey highlights that nine out of ten employers value attitude, ability and relevant work experience that will enable employees to be effective in the workplace above other factors such as degree subject and degree class. Half of the organisations surveyed by the CBI were disappointed with the graduates' level of business

and customer awareness, problem solving and communication skills, which should be a prime output of higher education and 55% of businesses were dissatisfied with the level of students' work experience.

- The Quality Assurance Agency promotes high quality employability provision within the Higher Education sector to encourage greater social mobility and successful career outcomes for graduates.
- The Student Employability Index 2014 shows that 92% of university students wish to have access to work experience, still less than half of students have had access to work experience and a quarter would like more links between organisations and their institution.
- The pressure is now on higher education institutions to boost graduate employability and work in partnership with industry to tackle skills shortages in order to supply the UK economy with highly skilled workers and increase their own reputation for excellence.
- The majority of businesses still use traditional channels when recruiting graduates, such as career fairs, links with universities and job advertisements. However, there is a new channel that has gained the approval of many employers. The CBI reports that 43% of employers use social media to connect with and recruit graduates.
- There is a legal requirement that universities provide information on the Destination of Leavers from Higher Education (DLHE) and that that information is produced annually by all universities. The information is used to inform careers advisers and management on the state of the graduate labour market and it also helps students in choosing their career path. Based on a recent survey, 88% of our graduates got a job within 6 months or went for a postgraduate degree either here or in another country, which is the same overall graduate market percentage from 2014 provided by Higher Education Careers Services Unit.

3. Objectives and Goals

In keeping with our commitment to inclusion and student wellbeing, the strategy will ensure opportunities are available to students at every level of study, regardless of their personal circumstances. Underpinning this strategic commitment are five primary **objectives**:

- To nurture the potential of each student and graduate by improving the overall quality of their first employment destinations, as evidenced in our annual Graduate Survey.
- To establish our institution as an example of cutting edge and transformative student employability practice.
- To incorporate employability-related skills and training activities across all academic disciplines and other relevant areas.
- To increase the range and availability of student placement opportunities in the UK and abroad.
- To establish and maintain high quality, co-ordinated links with leading national, international and local graduate recruiters.

To deliver these objectives we have the following **goals**:

1. Embedding subject specific, intellectual and transferable skills within the academic curriculum.
2. Promoting the use of Personal Development Plans (PDPs) as a core component of the student success.

3. Increasing and enhancing opportunities for work-related learning.
4. Preparing students for employment in the 21st century economy, through engaging student development activities.
5. Continuing to offer access to specific employability support activities for students and alumni through the Centre for Student Engagement, Wellbeing and Success (SEWS).
6. Reflecting on our work and using this reflection to enhance the services we provide.

4. Framework

The following table shows how we plan to meet each goal through specific actions. This table constitutes the focus of our Employability Strategy for the next three years, and will be reviewed for each year.

Goal	Action	Led by
1. Embed subject specific, intellectual and transferable skills within the academic curriculum	Embed transferable skills, attributes and employability material when developing curricula.	CETL
	Engage with employers and institutions at home and abroad to support and enhance curriculum design and delivery.	CETL
	Work towards recognising volunteering and work experience through assessment, accreditation or other forms of recording.	SEWS
	Provide regular updates on the destination of our graduates in order to enhance course design and delivery.	SEWS, Registry
2. Promote the use of Personal Development Plans (PDPs) as a core component of student success	Introduce all students to PDPs during induction.	SEWS
	Embed PDP in the delivery of the Student Development module.	CETL, Academic Leads for PDP
	Provide PDP to university programme students outside their class time.	SEWS, Academic Leads for PDP
	Include PDP in staff induction each year.	SEWS
	Work with the eLearning Team to develop appropriate platforms for PDPs.	SEWS, eLearning

<p>3. Increasing and enhancing opportunities for work-related learning</p>	<p>Increase the number of employers that offer work experience, internships and volunteering opportunities.</p> <p>Develop and maintain relationships with current and future employers and work together to provide high quality work experience to our students and graduates.</p>	<p>SEWS</p> <p>SEWS</p>
<p>4. Prepare students for employment in the 21st century economy, through engaging student development activities</p>	<p>Offer students the opportunity to develop their employability credentials through extra-curricular projects.</p> <p>Increase the number of employability workshops, seminars and events.</p> <p>Use our project supporting the Instituto Santa Maria in Paraguay to help our own students understand the importance of social justice and equity in their personal and professional lives.</p> <p>Establish one major project in London which links the employability skills of our students with our corporate concern for Servant Leadership and Social Justice.</p>	<p>SEWS</p> <p>SEWS</p> <p>SEWS</p> <p>SEWS</p>
<p>5. Continue to offer access to specific employability support activities for students and alumni through the Centre for Student Engagement, Wellbeing and Success</p>	<p>Develop a clear and deliverable strategy for strengthening alumni relations.</p> <p>Stress the employability benefits to students training as PALs and STARs.</p> <p>Advertise the career development assistance available at the Student Success Hub, such as CV writing, interview techniques and effective job searching strategies.</p>	<p>SEWS</p> <p>SEWS</p> <p>SEWS</p>
<p>6. Reflect on our work and use this reflection to enhance the services we provide</p>	<p>Regularly monitor the graduate employment market and share with colleagues on issues that are likely to affect future working lives.</p> <p>Collect data through emails, social media and the annual Graduate Survey, and use this data to evaluate employment metrics, developing other statistical and qualitative evidence so</p>	<p>SEWS, CETL, CRE</p> <p>Registry</p>

	we can assess the effectiveness of this strategy.	
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5. Evaluation

This strategy will be evaluated each year by SMLT on the basis of data supplied by the Centre for Student Engagement, Wellbeing and Success on student outcomes, student feedback and staff feedback.

ⁱ *Employability in Higher Education: what it is -what it is not, 2006, Yorke, M., No. 1 of the ESECT Learning and Employability Series. York: Higher Education Academy*