



INFORMATION FOR UNIVERSITY STAFF

**CAREERS &
EMPLOYABILITY
WITH
PLYMOUTH
UNIVERSITY**

www.plymouth.ac.uk/employability

What is employability?

The Higher Education Academy defines employability as:

"A set of achievements - skills, understandings and personal attributes - that make graduates more likely to gain employment and be successful in their chosen occupation."
(ESCT based on Yorke, 2006)

"Employability is having a set of skills, knowledge, understanding and personal attributes that make a person more likely to choose and secure occupations in which they can be satisfied and successful".
(Dacre Pool and Sewell, 2007)

"Employability is not just about getting a job. Conversely, just because a student is on a vocational course does not mean that somehow employability is automatic. Employability is more than about developing attributes, techniques or experience just to enable a student to get a job, or to progress within a current career. It is about learning and the emphasis is less on 'employ' and more on 'ability'. In essence, the emphasis is on developing critical, reflective abilities, with a view to empowering and enhancing the learner."
(Harvey 2003)

"... an ongoing process of engaging in reflective, evaluative and decision-making processes using skills for self-management and career building, based on certain underlying traits and dispositional factors, to effectively acquire, exhibit and use generic and discipline-specific skills in the world of work."
(Brigestock, 2009)

Employability is about having the skills, attributes, abilities and knowledge to obtain a job that is a job of choice and even students on highly vocational programmes of study want to and need to actively engage with the employability agenda so that they can compete in the job market now and in the future.

Employability statement

Plymouth University is committed to transforming lives through education, research and innovation.

The Raising Aspirations and Driving Engagement strategy (<https://www.plymouth.ac.uk/your-university/about-us/strategy-2020>) Goal 3 identifies action to "Generate economic growth, business propagation and employability". It clearly states the following actions:

- *"Enhance the **employability** of our graduates through opportunities for volunteering; work place learning; internships and engagement with industry.*
- *Improve our relationship with key high profile employers to provide students with greater access to such opportunities (**employment**).*
- *Increase opportunities and experiences for our students through university led initiatives that embody the spirit of **enterprise**".*

Employability, Employment and Enterprise

Employability

At Plymouth University academic and professional support staff engage regularly with public sector bodies and professional associations to ensure that the curriculum is relevant, adaptable and meets the needs of current and future employers.

Many of the University's courses are professionally accredited and as such add significant value in terms of progression into the chosen career path of our students.

There are opportunities for employers to actively engage in curriculum design and academic, Careers and Employability Service staff, the Alumni and External Relationships teams actively seek out employers to engage in curriculum delivery.

Careers Consultants and Careers Advisers are assigned to work with schools to support, develop and enhance curriculum based employability provision and to deliver career development and planning curriculum sessions.

All students are given the opportunity by their faculties to engage with an enriched curriculum, and the recent Curriculum Enrichment Project has led to greater embedding of employability in much of the curriculum. The introduction as a result of the project of Plymouth Plus modules, the range of co-curricular and extra-curricular activities support and encourage students to try new things, have fun, participate fully in student life and to make a valuable contribution to the communities to which they belong. This encourages and supports students to develop the knowledge, experience skills and attributes that graduate recruiters are looking for.

The University of Plymouth Students Union (UPSU) through their governance opportunities, award winning Raising And Giving (RAG) activities and extensive volunteering services are key partners in supporting the development of the employability for our students. Working collaboratively with the Careers and Employability Service on the articulation of skills and attributes development, they are focussing on employability as one of their strategic priorities.

The University's Employability Policy and Framework (2012) has been revised and the new Employability Framework is being rolled out. It supports students to:

- explore and plan their career development
- identify what knowledge, skill and attributes employers are looking for
- recognise the knowledge, skills and understanding that they are developing as a result of the teaching that they are receiving
- reflect on what activities outside of their course will support the development of graduate attributes (in line with Graduate Compass) and enhance their development further
- confidently describe the skills and attributes that they possess

Goal 4 of the Teaching and Learning Strategy (<https://www.plymouth.ac.uk/your-university/about-us/strategy-2020>) has an action to "support students to understand their employability attributes, career opportunities in general and in relation to their programmes".

Through the evolution of the graduate attributes framework into the Compass framework, students are encouraged and supported to effectively articulate the graduate employability skills that they have developed.

Employment

The University is in the process of developing a Job Shop in which there is:

- an extensive part time and temporary Student Jobs service offering a range of interesting and varied opportunities on campus and increasingly to local and national businesses
- access to advice and support to access placements and work based learning opportunities
- an internship and graduate vacancy service
- access to information and support to apply for temporary and full time employment opportunities and vacancies with Plymouth University

The University of Plymouth Students Union (UPSU) provides an extensive number of employment opportunities to students for part time employment and works in partnership with the Careers and Employability Service to support student staff to reflect on and confidently articulate the skills that they have developed whilst working for UPSU.

The Careers and Employability Service works to ensure that all students and graduates develop the career and employability skills required by graduate recruiters and that all aspects of the student experience assist the skills development and career prospects of Plymouth students. It is aligned to and works collaboratively with faculty colleagues, delivering a careers curriculum, a placements curriculum and an employability skills development programme that encourages students to:

- *explore* their options
- *plan* their career journey
- *expand* their employability skills
- *challenge themselves* to succeed
- *develop* into a confident professional

Enterprise

Through

- Peninsula Arts
- the Peninsula Dental School Social Enterprise
- the Centre for Eyecare Excellence
- the Futures Entrepreneurship Centre
- our Formation Zones and Innovation Centres
- Research and Innovation and the Graduate Acceleration and Investment Network (GAIN)

Plymouth University is at the forefront of shaping enterprise and innovation and providing our students with valuable experiences that are both enterprising and entrepreneurial.

Through our active membership on the Local Enterprise Partnerships, Growth Boards, Business Councils and Chambers of Commerce we are an anchor institution, forging relationships and building partnerships based on shared values and mutual benefits, making a significant contribution to the local economic and skill agenda so that we are supporting and responding to the need of our communities.

What the Careers and Employability Service does

The Careers and Employability Service has administrative bases at:

- The second floor, 3, Endsleigh Place (Careers and Placements Advice) and
- the 4th Floor of the Nancy Astor Building (Student Jobs and graduate recruitment).

It delivers one to one and employability skills development workshops in the Careers and Employability Hub on the ground floor of Roland Levinsky Building. It offers the following services:

Careers Information – this is available through our website, our on line careers portal called Career Navigator, social media feeds and paper based resources in the Careers and Employability Hub on the ground floor of the Roland Levinsky Building.

Careers Advice – a one to one diagnostic and quick advice service is available on a drop in basis every day in the Careers and Employability Hub and weekly during advertised sessions in the Cookworthy and Smeaton buildings. Advice sessions last for approximately 15 minutes and give the student or graduate an opportunity to ask quick questions or have their CV, covering letter, or application form checked by our Information Advisers. In quiet times we can spend longer with a student.

Careers Guidance – if a student or graduate needs to talk to someone in more detail about their ideas, decisions and plans then they can book a careers guidance interview in the Careers and Employability Hub with a Careers Adviser. The appointment can only be booked on the day, although if the student or graduate has a good case an appointment can be pre-booked. Students with caring responsibilities, who have to travel far or who have limited availability through their studies or work commitments can have a pre-booked appointment. The appointment will be a 45 minute one to one conversation about any career related issue. Conversations are confidential. Students need to phone us on 01752 587456 or call into the Careers and Employability Hub to book an appointment. Advice and guidance sessions are delivered at the Knowledge Spa and PAHC as agreed with the relevant courses.

The Job Shop – located in the Careers and Employability Hub, the Job Shop provides access to part time, placement internship and graduate vacancies, and job search support and advice as well as career planning advice.

Events – throughout the year three major careers and placements fairs take place every year to coincide with graduate recruitment cycles, arts showcase activities are organised, faculty and university interview and FLUX competitions are delivered, 2 faculty themed employer networking evenings are coordinated. To see the full range of sessions please visit the employability events calendar: <http://bit.ly/plymevents>

Employer presentations and skills sessions - A programme of visits sees employers delivering sessions on a weekly basis during semester time. At presentations employers will be looking to meet students to explain more about their organisation and the opportunities they have for placements, internships and graduate roles. At skills sessions they will be focusing on helping students to develop a certain skill or knowledge base, this could be what they look for at an interview or how they shortlist applications. To see the full range of sessions please visit the employability events calendar: <http://bit.ly/plymevents>

In faculty support and delivery – Careers Consultants and Careers Advisers are assigned to work with schools to support, develop and enhance curriculum based employability provision and to deliver career development and planning curriculum sessions. Placement and Employer Liaison Advisers are assigned to courses to

develop and enhance curriculum based placement provision, to deliver placement career development and planning curriculum sessions and to administer the placement process for courses.

Plymouth Award - The service administers the Plymouth Award, which recognises and celebrates student achievements outside of their studies. Many Plymouth University students already make significant contributions to the life of the University and the communities in which they live and work. The Plymouth Award is one way of showing how valuable these contributions are and highlighting the learning and personal growth the student gains from these activities. Help is available from the Careers and Employability Service for all students in any year. You can signpost a student as follows:

- Drop in to the Career and Employability Hub in Roland Levinsky Building to find out more and to get help with any aspect of the Plymouth Award or HEAR.
- Book an optional one to one discussion to talk through their progress and get advice on how to capture this in the reflective portfolio.
- Email for advice to: plymouthaward@plymouth.ac.uk.
- Check out the website: <https://www.plymouth.ac.uk/employability/plymouth-award>

It would be helpful for academic staff working with students on employability to refer them to the careers and employability pages of the website, where there is extensive information for staff and students on our careers and employability offer:

www.plymouth.ac.uk/employability, especially to access Career Navigator, our on line careers portal and the link to our events calendar.

When and how to refer to the Careers and Employability Service

Students with the following needs should be encouraged to make contact with us to access careers guidance and support:

Students at any stage of their studies who:

- are thinking about changing courses or who have decided to withdraw from their course
- are looking for part time, temporary work, placements, internships and graduate employment
- need help with their CV, application forms, interviews and assessment centres for part time, temporary work, placements, internships and graduate employment
- you think need to **explore their options** in detail – this may be a student who does not seem focused on any career either because they have too many ideas or no ideas, or because they are struggling to make a decision on two or more possible pathways
- you think need help with **career planning** - they know what they want to do when they leave university but seem unclear on how they will achieve this, who can help them, what they need to do and the timescales and processes involved
- you think will need some assistance in **competing** for a job or course of further study - perhaps they may need practice in articulating on an application form or in a job interview the employability experiences that they have, their motivations, skills, strengths, and graduate attributes
- you think might need some additional advice, support and encouragement or referral to other support structures to make a successful **transition** from university to work or onto a course of further study
- you think are unrealistic in their career expectations e.g. they may be under-aspiring or over-aspiring

You can encourage the student to use Careers Navigator, drop into the Careers and Employability Hub, or with their agreement you could email the Careers Adviser linked to their course or the main Careers and Employability in box to make a referral.

We deliver a service throughout the holidays and all of our services are available to graduates up to 3 years after graduation.

Career Planning and Personal Development Planning (PDP)

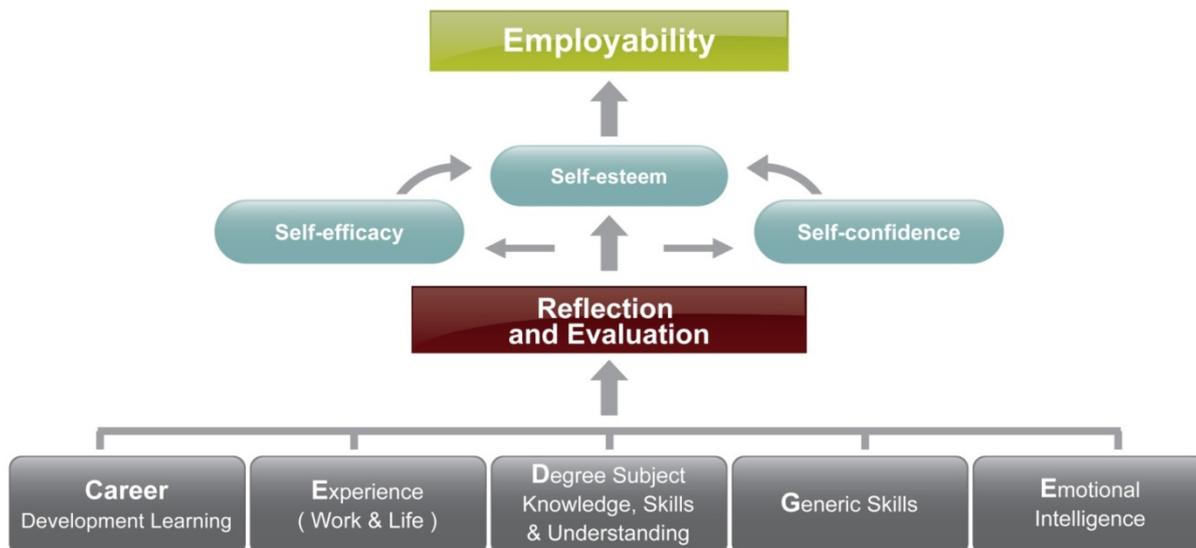
The employability co-curriculum and skills based workshops are complemented by our Personal Development Planning (PDP) one to one work where we use guidance techniques to support students and graduates to:

- reflect critically on and evaluate their learning, work and life experiences
- be self-aware by identifying their knowledge, strengths, generic and employability skills, attributes and motivational factors
- identify their areas for development and internal and external influencing factors that need to be considered
- gently challenge and support them to make realistic informed decisions; giving them alternatives and a choice of pathways by which they can achieve their overall aims
- plan actions and activities that will help them to build on their strengths even further and to address identified areas for development and growth; and outline the action required by them and others and the timescales involved to achieve their goals
- Identify back up plans
- take the action required, monitor progress and where appropriate, re-plan their career journey and plans

Our work on career planning is based on the Egan model “The Skilled Helper” that takes clients through 3 stages:

- identifying and clarifying problems, situations and unused opportunities.
- developing a preferred scenario.
- formulating strategies and plans.

We follow the Career EDGE model developed by Dr Peter Sewell and Lorraine Dacre Pool at the University of Central Lancashire.



Dacre Pool & Sewell (2007)

The Job Shop

The Job Shop in the Careers and Employability Hub provides information and advice and access to vacancies for students seeking part time, placement, internship and graduate vacancies.

Students Jobs provides flexible, part time employment that fits around a student's studies during semester time and that can extend to full time temporary jobs during holiday time. Offering a range of interesting and varied opportunities on campus, an increasing number of local businesses now use Student Jobs to recruit their temporary and part time staff.

We advertise part time job vacancies through <https://plymouth.ac.uk/student-jobs>, students can follow us on Twitter **@PlymUniJobs** or on Facebook **Student Jobs : Plymouth University** to be notified of jobs as soon as they come in, or they can just drop into the Careers and Employability Hub and talk to one of the team.

Regular placement and work based learning drop in sessions are delivered in the Careers and Employability Hub and a range of vacancies are displayed on the placements job boards. Support is available with the placement and work based learning application processes for all students and the administrative processes for those placements that are administered by the Careers and Employability Service.

The graduate and internship service is located in the Job Shop, providing access to local and national employer vacancies and a professional service to employers looking to recruit our students.

The Job Shop is the hub for the Santander Universities UK SME Graduate Internship Programme. The internship programme offers small and medium enterprises (SMEs), start-ups and high growth potential businesses the opportunity to access up to £1500 towards the graduate salary for recruiting one of our recent graduates.

All students at any stage of their studies and recent graduates can register with the graduate recruitment service, but it would be helpful for staff working with final year students to refer them to the graduate recruitment service. They can be contacted as follows:

- Facebook **PlymouthUni Graduates**
- call on 01752 587773
- email at jobshop@plymouth.ac.uk
- drop into the Careers and Employability Hub

Contact us

Careers and Employability Service:

01752 587456

employability@plymouth.ac.uk

Twitter: @plymuniemp **Facebook:** Plym Uni Emp

Student Jobs:

01752 587722

studentjobs@plymouth.ac.uk

Twitter: @PlymUniJobs **Facebook:** Plym Uni Jobs

Graduate Recruitment and Internships:

01752 587773

jobshop@plymouth.ac.uk

Facebook: PlymouthUni Graduates

Visit us...

The Careers and Employability Hub, Ground Floor,
Roland Levinsky Building