Annual Learning and Teaching Conference
Student Transitions

2013
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Foreword

These proceedings bring together papers presented at Nottingham Trent University’s Annual Learning and Teaching Conference 2013. The conference theme this year was transitions and, in his opening address, the Vice-Chancellor spoke of the multiple transitions students make during and after their time in higher education.

There were two keynote speakers this year. Rebecca Huxley-Binns invited delegates to recall what it was like to be 18 and reflected upon the changes that have taken place in society and education since the fifties. Paul Redmond discussed the “Generation Crunch” and how Generation Y (those born 1978-1999, meaning many of our current undergraduates) will experience employability and the changing workplace.

The ALTC could not take place without the support and commitment of colleagues who engage in discussion and sharing of practice. This year there was again a wide range of papers, which encompassed themes such as preparing students for the challenges of learning at university, reflections on NTU course tutorials, developing new strategies for employability, and supporting students in achieving graduate attributes.

Thanks are due to all colleagues who presented papers, chaired sessions, planned the programme, attended on the day and supported the event in many other ways.

Jane McNeil
Director of Academic Development
Welcome address
Professor Neil T. Gorman
Vice-Chancellor

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Keynotes
Professor Rebecca Huxley-Binns,
Nottingham Law School

Do you remember what it was like to be 18?

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Dr Paul Redmond, Head of Careers and Employability, University of Liverpool

Generation Crunch: Gen.Y, employability and the new world of work

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Using a rites of passage approach to prepare students for the challenges of learning at university

Ed Foster

Rites of passage are the rituals and processes involved in formally becoming members of a community. They have tended to be most clearly used in tribal and religious communities. To 21st Century Westerners, they can appear freakish and alien, yet may have a role helping students to navigate their way through higher education.

Rites of passage are used around the point when individuals and groups progress from one stage to the next of their lives. These stages include marriage, entering the priesthood and, of most relevance to HE, entering adulthood. Rites of passage normally involve crossing a knowledge threshold, such as learning the secrets of the adults or priestly rituals and are normally considered liminal events.

Much of the work into rites of passage originates with the French anthropologist Arnold van Gennep (1960). Van Gennep notes that there are three common stages to most rites of passage: separation, transition and incorporation. This model was in turn used by the influential writings on student retention by Tinto (1993). There is often a territorial aspect to rites of passage. In the separation phase, the individual is removed from their previous home (usually the parental home). During the separation they tend to live with others in the same station and in the final stage they will often move once more. The transitional period has a distinct identity; young warriors, novices or apprentices are regarded as neither child nor fully adult.

Rites of passage are not without problem. Rites of passage can support patriarchal or repressive norms and there are practices such as scarification and clitoradectomy that are widely regarded as abominable. Moreover, in the west the concept is widely challenged by societal norms such as individualism, commercialism and secularism.

Potentially, rites of passage can have a role helping students to cope with the transition through higher education. They create an opportunity to explicitly explore our expectations of the student, to discuss the rules of the tribe and explore students’ roles in the new environment. The other aspect
worth noting is that we don’t tend to celebrate with students their new achievements. Whilst it might be facetious to applaud attendance in students’ first lecture, asking students to mark the date and take a moment to remember who they are probably isn’t.

Finally, in 2010, I ran a workshop on rites of passage at a European conference. We discussed the notion of the dress often associated with rites of passage. A Danish chemistry lecturer explained how on their course they simply handed out lab coats at the start of the year. In future, she planned to take time to actually celebrate the donning of the chemists’ uniform and create a rite of passage from the process.

References

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For further information please contact Ed Foster

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Is the first year undergraduate curriculum fit for purpose? Evidence from psychology in schools and higher education (HE)

Phil Banyard

The first A Level syllabus in psychology was made generally available to schools in the mid 1970s. During the next 20 years there was exponential growth (Radford & Holdstock, 1996) and although the pace of expansion has slowed the number of entries continues to grow each year. It is now the fourth most popular A-level in the UK with over 56,000 entries in 2011 for the full A-Level and over 100,000 entries for the AS (JCQ, 2011). One effect of this has been a dramatic increase in university applications for the subject. Psychology is now the third most commonly studied subject at university behind law and business. There are currently over 77,000 undergraduate students which is more than double the number of ten years ago (Trapp et al., 2011).

A second key impact of the growth in A Level psychology has been that the majority of students enrolling for a degree in the subject have already studied it for 2 years. This has created a challenge for university departments as they attempt to adjust their curricula to deal with the prior knowledge of their students. This transition has attracted some interest for over twenty years (see Foot & Gammon, 1990; Smith, 2010) though the issue is far from being resolved and there has been little movement towards the development of an integrated curriculum for psychology across the different sectors of education.

A key concern for both sectors is assessment. Many assessments are still conducted using traditional (i.e. pre-digital technologies) techniques, and focus on traditional academic skills. A major change in the way students learn concerns digital technologies which have transformed the way we access information, the way we construct written work and even the way we think. Today’s students are digital natives (Prensky, 2001) and their assessments do not reflect their new skills set.

A second issue of concern with assessment has been the drive towards tests that are easy to administer and easy to teach to. This approach makes it strategic to ‘teach to the test’ (Halonen et al., 2003) and in so doing
minimise the more sophisticated and subtle aspects of student learning. The strategic approach to assessment can influence student learning (Conner-Greene, 2000) as it becomes strategic for the student to focus on the text and therefore not engage in more advanced kinds of thinking and learning because the assessments simply do not demand it (Bol & Strage, 1996).

This paper reports on data from A Level students, A Level teachers and group discussion with lecturers from HE and curriculum providers on the fitness of A Level psychology and the preparedness of HE to deal with the prior learning of its students.

The issues raised by this data about transition between school and HE include the raised expectations of students about teaching resources and teaching styles. On the side of HE there has been a failure to engage with school based examinations and hence a lack of understanding of the prior learning of students starting their undergraduate courses.

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Truly, madly, deeply... An exploration of approaches to studying in higher education (HE) learners at the School of Animal, Rural and Environmental Studies at Nottingham Trent University

Nia Huws, Eunice Simmons

This session related to an exploration of approaches to studying in Higher Education (HE) learners at the School of Animal, Rural and Environmental Studies (ARES) at Nottingham Trent University.

We firstly introduced the demographic profile of ARES HE students, many of which progress to HE from vocational Further Education (FE). Previous research has identified that learners progressing to HE from FE tend to achieve lower degree outcomes compared to students from a more traditional background (Huws and Taylor, 2008; Bailey and Bekhradnia, 2008). We wished to explore whether this difference could be partly attributed to approaches to studying. Our hypothesis was that learners from a non-traditional background may be less prepared for independent learning and therefore find it harder to make an effective transition to studying at HE.

We introduced the ‘Approaches and Study Skills Inventory for Students’ (ASSIST) used in the study (http://www.etl.tla.ed.ac.uk/questionnaires/ASSIST.pdf). This questionnaire was specifically designed to measure approaches to learning in HE students and has been previously employed as a tool to inform curriculum design to enrich the learning experience of Veterinary students (Ryan et al, 2004). The ASSIST contains 52 items on a five point scale to measure deep, strategic and surface approaches, and has been shown to be a reliable and valid psychometric measure which predicts some unique variance in academic performance (Huws, 2006, Diseth and Martinsen, 2003). Previous research has shown that a deep strategic approach is associated with higher academic outcomes, whereas a surface apathetic approach is linked with lower academic achievement (e.g. Ward, 2011).

First year students (72 vocational, 85 non–vocational) completed the ASSIST in tutorial sessions. The results were analysed and tutors provided with descriptive statistics at group level, and detailed feedback for individual students who had requested this. This included their dominant approach to
studying and preferred teaching and learning method. The questionnaire enabled the identification of sub-sets of factors – including one encapsulating students’ ‘fear of failure’. This was of specific interest as there is previously documented correlation between this and poor achievement / attrition (Tait and Entwistle, 1996).

Results were shared with tutors and students considered ‘at risk’ (surface apathetic learners with a high fear of failure) were highlighted. Tutors agreed that these students would benefit from additional academic support to develop their confidence as independent learners and make an effective transition to HE.

Analysis of results confirmed that learners from a vocational background were more likely to adopt a surface apathetic approach than those who had studied A levels (p < 0.01). This was largely due to the subset ‘routine memorising’ (p <0.01) and ‘fear of failure’ (p < 0.05).

We outlined how we intend to follow up the results with an analysis of attendance patterns and learner achievement, with the aim of implementing intervention strategies for ‘at risk’ students.

A discussion followed of how to engage learners in exploring and developing their own approaches to study, and in particular how to encourage ‘surface’ learners to develop more deep strategic study skills in order to facilitate their transition to HE

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‘There’s more to this than a good CV!’
Ann Allen, Dean Penford, Helen Reed

The presentation was underpinned by research which suggests that all transitions have the potential to cause anxiety (Adams et al., 1976;, Goodman et al., 2006, Levinson, 1986 and Lazarus and Folkman, 1984) and that preparation is a key indicator to a successful transition (Adams et al., 1976;, Roberts, 2000 and Roker and Coleman, 2007). It explored preparation for transition from university to graduate employment from the perspective of the School of Social Sciences and was led by the School’s Employability Coordinator, Careers Consultant and Associate Dean.

Within the context of the current employability agenda – which explicitly prioritises preparation for successful transitions – the presentation focussed on the importance of career planning and career decision making.

Informed by the School’s extensive experience of delivering qualifying and continuing professional development courses for career guidance practitioners, the presenters outlined the School’s prevailing approach to career planning. They hypothesised that the likelihood of success in implementing career plans is greater where these derive from a systematic approach to their formulation. They argued for a recalibration of employability-related resources and activities such that particular emphasis is given to the critical stages of

1. engagement: whereby students consciously ‘own’ their career planning, believing that to take a proactive, personally responsible approach to decision making as well as decision implementing, is likely to yield better personal outcomes, and
2. decision making: whereby students are taught a clear, methodological approach to making career related decisions, and
3. self and opportunity awareness: whereby students are taught both how to identify and reflect on their career related priorities; ambitions; skills; inherent abilities etc, and how these relate to their opportunity structure.

Secondly, the presentation addressed the range and nature of enquiries
raised by students with the School’s Careers Consultant in the course of the academic year. Analysis of these enquiries had suggested that even where students referred themselves for help with implementation issues – typically seeking assistance with C.V.s, the guidance need which emerged related to the earlier, decision making stages of career planning.

Finally, the presentation provided an account of a range of employability activities planned and delivered within the School and intended for both for current students and recent alumni. These events had been purposefully ‘mapped’ to the career planning continuum to ensure proper focus on the earlier, critical stages of decision making.

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Supporting student transitions into higher education: Some reflections on the NTU tutorial system

Verity Aiken, Tina Byrom, David Hindley

The topic of student transition into Higher Education has attracted considerable academic interest in recent years (Knox, 2005; Nevill and Rhodes, 2004; Wingate, 2007). This has in part been motivated by discussions around retention of undergraduate students, universities’ concerns about the quality of the student academic experience in the context of the new funding regime, how best to support and prepare students for life at university and how to acquire the necessary skills to successfully make the transition into HE (Goldfinch and Hughes, 2007; Wilcox, Winn and Fyvie-Gauld, 2005).

It is against this backdrop that Nottingham Trent University (NTU) introduced a group tutorial scheme (piloted in 2011-12) whereby all first year undergraduate students will be allocated a named personal tutor prior to university induction, and will meet with their tutor group a set number of times over the course of each academic year. The initiative is intended to create an environment in which students are helped to become effective participants through the development of their sense of identity, belonging and community (HERE Project, 2011). Furthermore, by developing high quality personal relationships within the tutor group and between the lecturer and students and by fostering a learning community within the classroom, it is envisaged that the effective transition can be enhanced (Tinto, 1997; HERE Project 2011).

Research aims
The aims of the paper were twofold. Firstly, to examine first year undergraduate students’ perceptions of the tutor group meetings, informed by an online survey of L4 students on the Joint Honours Education (JHE) course; and secondly, through conducting follow-up focus group interviews and reflecting upon tutor’s experiences, to gain richer insights to the student experience of the tutorial system and to what extent it has supported their transition into Higher Education.
Discussion themes
As stated above, one of the primary purposes of the conference paper was to critically examine first years students’ perceptions of the tutor group meetings, exploring issues around attendance and engagement, and ultimately questioning to what extent the tutor groups had helped prepare students for the challenges of learning at university.

The paper also sought to raise a number of critical questions about how best to support students in their transition into Higher Education, drawing on the authors’ experiences and reflections of the tutorial system, as well as feedback from the current year one cohort on the Joint Honours Education course.

With regards the latter, the paper outlined how the personal tutor groups have been embedded on the JHE. The sessions were closely aligned to a core level 4 module, Professional Studies 1: Learning in Contexts, whilst the content of each session was developed by the Module/Year Leader who disseminated a range of interactive activities and teaching materials to the tutor team in advance of each session. This strategy had been adopted to try and counter any issues around inconsistency of practice, and to ensure a joined-up approach across all of the tutors. It is also worth noting that the course team actively chose to increase the number of hourly tutor group sessions from the University requirement of 12 to 24 (something that we were able to do as part of the alignment with a module).

A particular focus centered on the perennial issue (which anecdotally seemed to be University-wide) of student attendance and engagement with the tutor groups, as well as student perceptions of the purpose and usefulness of the tutorials. The survey feedback from the level 4 cohort was mixed with regards to attendance, with 55.5% having attended 7 or more sessions (NB the questionnaire was distributed at a time when there had been 10 timetabled tutor group sessions). This level of engagement was mirrored in subsequent monitoring of attendance later in the academic year. Some of the reasons for the relatively poor attendance were that the group sessions were perceived to be ‘a waste of time’ and a duplication of information so that some of the aspects included had already been covered elsewhere within the course. However, it had been noted that the scheduling of the sessions on days when the year 1 cohort were already timetabled had been a positive approach.

Whilst some of the qualitative data identified issues around the value and relevance of the tutorials, there were in contrast a number of positive comments. They were seen by some to be an effective forum for discussing ‘important information regarding academic writing and future career’, as well as providing valuable ‘guidance and support’, and as a way of making friends and getting to know your tutor.

Emerging from the conference presentation and the discussion that it stimulated amongst the audience was the need for how best to move the tutor group initiative forward, and how the findings of the paper may inform future practice. On this point, from the survey data collected students suggested that the tutor groups could be enhanced by providing more one-to-one tutorial support, as well as more guided support on assignments. These ideas raise some interesting issues in that students clearly see the value of being allocated a subject tutor, as well as wishing for the sessions not to be in groups but more personalised and timetabled as individual tutorials.
References


WILCOX, P., WINN, S., and FYVIE-GAULD, M., 2005. It was nothing to do with the university, it was just the people: the role of social support in the first-year experience of higher education. Studies in Higher Education, 30 (6), 707-722.


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Is it really so strange? Giving feedback before submission

Lloyd Pettiford

With tangential (and intended comic) reference to research on North Korea, this paper argues against ideological rigidity, suggesting we should be open to re-examining policy and amending it where this would, for instance, lead to better standards and NSS scores. The paper argues that there are already permitted exceptions to the personalised 3-week feedback rule and that there might be others. This was not a complaint about 3-week personalised feedback, but an observation that even our most cherished objectives should remain open for discussion and consideration.

The paper draws from 2 particular sources:

2. A study presented at an Oxford Brookes conference on the experiences of a module at an FE College with ‘fragile students’

The example from FE was of a module where students were typically returners to education, often unemployed. These students felt insecure, experiencing something of a culture shock. To address some of these issues, the students submitted a draft essay and the tutor ‘marked’ a random sample of these for the purposes of producing whole cohort ‘traffic light’ feedback which was discussed by the students in class. [Green is good things observed in essays; Amber things to consider; Red things to avoid]. Students discussed their work in the context of the whole cohort sample feedback and had several weeks to redraft their work. As part of final submission, they described how they had used the feedback to better meet criteria. After submission, the students received further cohort feedback and grade only.

Student performance improved relative to previous years/other modules and the argument was made that early in their studies students needed confidence in knowing they would/could pass and how to do so, more than personalised critique which might feel damning, however developmental. This approach developed students’ assessment literacy, enabling them to
better engage with criteria/feedback in future.

The paper did not attempt to address all ‘snagging’ issues of such an approach. Rather to conclude that in the formative year of university study this approach **could** provide a useful way of buttressing the curriculum, building in students an ability to better engage with feedback going forwards such that both standards and NSS scores might be improved ultimately.

The paper concluded by observing that NTU’s commitment to personalised 3-week feedback is welcomed and situated in the context of on-going formative feedback too. However, it suggests we should also look at what works best given limited time available. How we assess must involve choices since a ‘perfect model’ would be too time consuming. Accordingly the argument is made that in the transition to HE (where students may be somewhat ‘fragile’ in many ways) the kind of approach discussed may work better for many students than personalised feedback/critique. If this feeds forwards into better standards and NSS scores we may want to question our choices and priorities at the transition stage.
Graduate employability is a key priority for HE institutions given the major changes facing the sector (Mercer, 2011). As a result of the introduction of higher tuition fees in 2012 the level of financial investment for the majority of undergraduate students will increase significantly. Given this scenario it is assumed that students will become active and rational consumers within a marketised HE sector, looking for a return on this investment via future employment that satisfies financial expectations (Browne, 2010; CBI, 2011; Mercer 2011; Porter, 2011; Willetts, 2011). In such a competitive market there would appear to be a clear imperative: that HE institutions must provide support and learning opportunities to enable their students to gain the knowledge, skills and attitudes to improve their chances of accessing future employment (Browne, 2010; CBI, 2011; Yorke and Knight, 2006).

Many commentators have been critical of the consumer rationalism that predominates in official discourse of employability, pointing to more complex issues of emotional engagement and identification experienced by students in HE (see: Archer et al, 2003; Ball et al, 2000). Graduate employability also has a history together with a literature that comments on its reductive qualities: that a concern with making students employable can reduce the undergraduate ‘career’ to a mere calibration of skills that are valued in the flexible labour market (see McCash, 2006). It is of historical note that attempts to curricularise such a skills-based approach to employability have been highly unpopular with students.

The premise of this presentation was to focus on the undergraduate ‘career’ and its potential to be narrativised and personalised via career development theory. ‘Career’ is presented here as an integrative concept that brings together the various strands of the undergraduate experience (the academic, social, vocational, etc.). The presentation utilised case studies from teaching and learning practice to demonstrate how the construction of theoretically informed student career narratives can provide a means of contextualising the development of specific career management skills, whilst also aiding a
reflexive understanding of social theory. The presentation argued that such an approach locates employability in its proper place: as something that becomes meaningful and helpful when placed within a wider theoretically informed ‘career’ narrative.

The presentation then utilised career development theory within the room to aid participant reflection upon personal career narratives. Doing so prompted an understanding that career development theory can be applied in various settings and can cross disciplinary boundaries. A brief synopsis of career development theory was presented highlighting its cross-disciplinary nature and where future literature could be found so as to inform curriculum endeavours.

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Eportfolios and Transition
Helen Boulton and Steve Wheelhouse

Portfolios of authentic evidence for professional competencies have formed part of higher education in different forms for many years. More recently aspirational educators across Europe have successfully embedded eportfolios in higher education programmes (Granberg, 2010). However, research into how eportfolios can impact on professional development, focussing on evidencing employability skills, knowledge and understanding is still relatively under-researched. This paper presented experiences in the School of Education relating to eportfolios in the transition into higher education and onto employment at both undergraduate and post-graduate level.

The paper briefly reported on longitudinal research, part funded by the Training and Development Agency, on how eportfolios have been developed to support primary and secondary pre-service teachers in the transition into employment. It then reported current developments with eportfolios into undergraduate courses which is a new, developing project. The aims of this latter project are to consider the potential development of an eportfolio engagement model for contextualised, authentic evidence building and digital storytelling of professional development. A multi-perspective account is being generated encompassing experiences from a range of stakeholders.

The paper identified how eportfolios are providing students with an opportunity to develop a repository of multi-modal authentic evidence which they are able to share with various audiences as part of their professional development. Research had explored how developing an on-line eportfolio could provide opportunity to develop criticality through making links to evidence in a way that is difficult for paper-based systems and provide a richer opportunity for formative feedback while developing a professional identity and lifelong learning skills which students can continue to develop during their career.

The paper aimed to help others who may be considering eportfolios for students, and indicated that eportfolios have significance for future activities for both HEIs considering eportfolios and for those looking for new ways to support students in developing a lifelong learning resource evidencing professional identity.
Alignment can also be made with developing reflective practice in undergraduate programmes across a range of disciplines

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What do we know about preparing students for value conflicts in the workplace?
Graham Ferris

The transition to graduate employment entails entry into workplaces that may be governed by professional codes of ethics (such as exist in legal professions) or may not be so governed. Regardless of the existence of such a professional code the graduate employee will be faced by “values conflicts” – occasions when there is pressure upon her to do, or say, or stay silent about, something that is wrong – in terms of the professional code if one exists, or of the regulatory code that governs the industry, or of the internal regulation of the organisation, or of more general social values, or of the interests of the people the organisation is supposed to serve.

Building upon research undertaken in the light of the Legal Education and Training Review (LETR) into the possibility of introducing ethics teaching into the LLB and joint honours degrees (professional examination exempting undergraduate law degrees) the paper considered:

- What we might realistically attempt to achieve;
- What we have good evidence to suppose will be effective;
- What peculiar problems arise in teaching ethics with an intention to alter post-graduate-behaviour;
- Why people’s values are bound up with the sense of self;
- What the above mean for our conception of Graduate Education.

The paper drew on: the analysis of what factors lead to ethical action by Moorhead, Hinchly, Parker, Kershaw, Holm (2012) Designing Ethics Indicators for Legal Services Provision; Kohlberg’s developmental model; Rest’s four elements of ethical education Rest & Narvaez (1991); Gentile’s Giving Voice to Values model; SOMUL project reported by Brennan et al (2010) Improving What is Learned at University: An exploration of the social and organisational diversity of university education; and Pascarella and Terenzini’s review of educational literature and research in the USA (2005) How College Affects Students: A Third Decade of Research: 2. The
importance of where (socially and intellectually) ethics is taught was also
touched upon Brown, Collins and Duguid, Situated Cognition and the Culture

There is quite a lot we do know about ethics teaching.

However, the debate about what Higher Education should strive to
accomplish is rudimentary, despite the obvious importance of the subject
for “graduateness” and “employability”. Silence on personal values and their
role in the workplace is a clear failure to prepare undergraduates for the
transition into work. The assumption that either subject-identity or post-
graduate education will make up any deficit has not been confirmed in
practice.

The paper linked the themes it explored to recent papers at the Association
of Law Teachers 48th Annual Conference 24th – 26th March 2013: Graham
Ferris, Is Acting Ethically A Skill; and Anneka Ferguson & Stephen Tang,
Australian National University Preparing students for the reality of practice
through practice management: Empowering values and relishing uncertainty

The paper was the final one in a session in which all three papers shared an
interest in the formation of student identity.

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Assessing individual work alongside a group project—a partially-automated approach

Peter Rowlett

A final year mathematics module was developed (not at NTU), aimed at developing graduate skills, including enhanced problem-solving, working in depth on projects, report writing and group working. One concern about group work is that students who are carried as a ‘passenger’ by their group ([1], p. 7) are not being well-prepared for the transition to employment.

Previous experience of group work used minutes of meetings to gather evidence of uneven contribution, but undetected uneven contribution still occurred [2]. Here, therefore, a formal peer assessment of contribution was used, along with individual assignments.

One assignment asked students to solve a problem similar to those in the group activity and discuss this in a real-world context. The similarity to the group task made the risk of in-team plagiarism high, but the deeper, more open questioning would not well suit timed exam conditions and is beyond the limits of automated marking.

For such circumstances, a novel approach is proposed, in which e-assessment is used to set coursework questions for marking by hand. This means that individualised work can be set without the limitations of automated marking; an unusual combination for assessment in mathematics [3]. This would allow the use of individual assessment on the same learning outcomes as the group project with reduced risk of collusion.

Implementation used the Numbas e-assessment system [4], adapted to produce printable worksheets. Questions were written which included randomised or calculated parameters. Answers, where possible, or the individualised information, where not, were generated for marking. Question and answer sheets were saved as PDF in the browser for printing.

44 students took the coursework. Questions were sufficiently open-ended that marking was not significantly more onerous than other pieces of coursework. Evaluation is in progress, exploring three avenues:
1. Anonymous student feedback (42 students): In free-text, concerns were expressed about the reliability of peer assessment of contribution, including lack of objectivity. 22 students admitted to having copied work from other students, and 35 said others had copied from them, while at university. 24 agreed that some members of their group would have copied from others if questions were identical.

2. Second-marker experiment: A 10% sample was blind second-marked by three markers. The original and second marks agreed (intraclass correlation coefficient) at a level comparable to a reference piece of traditional open-ended coursework. Second-markers, asked to hypothesise what the assignment was assessing, identified the intended learning outcomes and proposed no additional ones.

3. Analysis of marks: the mean individual mark in each group correlates well with the marks for the main group project, but the raw individual marks do not. This suggests that uneven contribution was taking place, that collusion was not a big problem, and that individual work might provide an indicator of individual contribution.

In conclusion, the results suggest that plagiarism does happen, didn't in this case, but would have if the work had not been individualised. The individualised work was comparable to traditional coursework for marker reliability. Relatively low stakes individual work around the same learning outcomes as a group project may be a useful indicator of individual contribution to the group mark, given criticism of peer assessment of contribution.

References


Acknowledgments
I am grateful to Christian Perfect, School of Mathematics and Statistics, Newcastle University, for adapting the Numbas e-assessment system for my experiment.

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How can universities develop strategies to deliver employability expectations to students?

Katie Holbrook

The parallel session commenced with a reference to a Business Improvement project run by Capita at NTU, reviewing placements on sandwich courses and how this led to a two year study for an MA with the above title. It was made clear to the audience that as an academic who has taken the responsibility for placements on a sandwich course for twelve years the issues identified were current.

Students’ aspirations for their future have become more focused and whilst obtaining a degree is a recognised acknowledgment of their capabilities, it has to be accompanied by successful employment, for the University education to be deemed an overall success and validate their financial investment.

Universities are not recruitment agencies but by their research and teaching interactions and contacts it means they are well placed to facilitate a student’s ambitions. The key is to source academics with a relevant industry profile that will act as enthusiastic drivers and motivate students to view the whole preparation and application process as an individual, marketing exercise.

Universities also have to recognise that these applications for employment represent the profile of the University to the working environment and that little direction and support will be counterproductive to their brand image. Universities take great care of their brand image and yet seem unconcerned that students often send out to prospective employees job applications that are of a poorly written academic standard.

In order to gain employment students must research and prepare professional application letters, CV’s and application forms. They need to grasp the fact that if they cannot do this to their highest standard they will not be given the chance to demonstrate their suitability for employment at the next stage of the recruitment process. Additionally they have to practice and develop confidence for interview and assessment centres. However these cannot be too prescriptive and the support issued must develop
autonomous learning of the student.

In the last three years it has become evident that without a variety of relevant work experience students will not be eligible for a year’s placement on a sandwich degree. However this does not only apply to sandwich degrees traditional three year undergraduate programmes need to have relevant work experience or summer holiday placements to be even considered for graduate recruitment schemes or employment.

It is a long term strategy going forward; we had well over 623 weeks of work experience students last year, well a bit over the 12 months. It was about 200 students. We employed 21 students as well in addition to placements. We want to be a big employer brand profile; these students give us a database of people who we realize, we can’t employ all of them but we may do in the future and we will have a database of people to headhunt.

Paul Jenkins, Head of Recruitment, George at Asda, 2010

Academics need to stress the importance of employability from when students arrive for their induction week and throughout the course. Work experience must be encouraged to all students but specifically first year students to ensure summer breaks are used effectively to enhance their employability status.

Universities will need to respond to students’ requests and formulate an active campaign to increase contacts and produce employment opportunities. Students on three year courses should have the same support as sandwich courses in order to give equal opportunities. Students need to be taught how to manage their career path.

The role of the academic is paramount to the successful employment of students. Each course should have a dedicated enthusiastic academic who has employability development as part of their job description. Universities should consider this as part of their selection criteria for new recruits. Modules should be developed on all courses that provide practical assistance with written applications and they need to teach students how to market themselves. Obtaining employment is a daunting process at the beginning of a career but it is a process and it can be taught. The success of the Fashion Management course in the School of Art and Design in obtaining placements over a long period of time provides the justification that it is necessary part of their education.

Universities are being asked to justify what they provide for their fees. Students leaving three/four years of University with both a degree and future employment would provide the necessary evidence.

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Engaging third-year undergraduates to evaluate psychology in the real world using spiral learning

Gareth J Williams, Anne Emerson

The Integrative Perspectives module, as part of the Psychology combined honours courses, was generally aimed at helping the transition from undergraduate studies to graduate employment and integrating content from other modules. It further aimed to support transferrable skills and facilitate students to reflect on their abilities as they studied their final year. The module had an unusual structure in that the primary mode of teaching was a fortnightly tutorial and there was only one introductory lecture. Furthermore, the module had a presentation and an essay as its assessments. This presented a number of challenges relating to student engagement across the duration of the module. Although the module in previous years had modelled itself on general academic skills, or as support for the empirical research project that was carried out in a different module, it was felt that the design did not foster an optimum student learning experience.

To address the challenges faced by the teaching team, we identified that one of the key issues was that the tutorials were arranged in a linear structure with one assessment not necessarily reinforcing the other. Instead of a linear approach, we designed a series of tutorials based on a spiral learning principle (Bruner, 1977) so that the students could engage in deep learning about how psychology can be applied to solve real world problems. The two assessments were re-designed so that they would drive the learning process and a series of tutorials were developed that fostered group engagement and peer support, these were inspired by enquiry based learning principles. Students were required to explore the psychology surrounding the events in a media article that was allocated to them in the first tutorial. In the first assessment, they provided a brief presentation of their article then, in the second assessment they wrote a solution focused report that integrated a range of psychological perspectives and was aimed at addressing the needs of a specific audience. An evaluation of the module (see Emerson & Williams, 2012) found that this tutorial design had more positive feedback, compared to previous years, and had improved student
perception of the relevance of the module to the outcomes of the psychology course

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Writing buddies: using a formalised peer assessment technique to support academic writing

Beverley Lawe, Jamie Tinney, Sarah Davies, Alison Hardy, Paul Boyd

This session aimed to explore the possibilities of supporting and enabling students to achieve by not only encouraging them to engage with the learning outcomes associated with the task, but also to get students to help each other. The background to this started from previous work within the department coupled with the move from a PGCE course with the option of 60 credits at masters level to a PGDE with default 120 masters level credits.

For the last three years or more there has been an input into the undergraduate teacher training course as part of induction to encourage students to assess work using the learning outcomes. The model used for this was based on the work of Price & O’Donovan (2006); this work is not well developed and probably needs more input/activity with the students throughout the course.

In 2013 following a significant revalidation of the PGCE secondary education course, there was a directive which asked that all courses provide grade-based assessment (GBA) criteria for all assignments. On such an intense course, it was realised that more support was needed to enable the students to achieve. A significant number (though not all) of the students following Design & Technology and Engineering routes into teaching will not have completed a lot of academic writing to complete their degrees. Added to this the profile of intake has not significantly changed and students with a lower 2.ii degree classification are still joining the PGDE.

An exercise was carried out via the tutorial system to give the students the opportunity to look at anonymous work at masters level previously submitted along with the GBA criteria. Students’ worked collaboratively to assess the work and a discussion followed. The students were then assigned a ‘buddy’ who there were expected to consult during the production of their first assignment.

Results from the first assignment were encouraging with 78% achieving masters level on the first assignment, compared to an average 50%
achieving masters overall in previous years. The second assignment had 66% achieving masters level, suggesting that some are unable to maintain the standard on such an intense course.

A survey monkey was carried out after the first assessment to try to find out about the use of and usefulness of the buddy system. Students who said that they had used their buddy were in a minority, but they all had found using their buddy helpful and provided good feedback about the support they had offered each other. The feeling of the tutors was that the rest had missed out by not using their buddy. Some of the students were very reluctant to share their work with others displaying a lack of trust. The concerning aspect here, is that we would expect teachers to use these peer assessment methods with those that they teach.

What did come through very clearly from the survey was that the students need to choose their buddy and consult with someone they already have a relationship with. For the future we need to develop the support offered to enable students to assess their own work, but also encourage them to choose a peer to act as support during the writing period.

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The History Department’s undergraduate reading challenge
Nicholas Morton

This paper for the 2013 Teaching and Learning Conference discussed an initiative entitled the NTU History Reading Challenge that was launched in the History Department in the academic year 2010/2011. The purpose of the ‘Challenge’ was to encourage students to read for pleasure during the course of their degree. Participants were required to read a total of 20 books and watch 6 classic films from a detailed bibliography which was made available to them in the early stages of their first year. The bibliography has been specially designed to make it as accessible as possible and to encourage those students who are unaccustomed to reading for the pleasure to begin to do so.

The paper discussed the progress of the challenge thus far, covering topics including:

- Why the Challenge was launched;
- How the bibliography was put together;
- What the reaction has been from the students;
- Media interest in the scheme (three articles on the scheme have been published);
- Future aspirations for the Reading Challenge.

The presentation was well attended and received and has helped to identify interested parties within the university who expressed a desire to become more closely involved with the scheme.

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Show and tell: A mentoring Mosaic
Sarah Johnson, Rebecca Cameron, Joanna Hartley

At NTU there is a wealth of mentoring aimed at supporting students in transition and offering opportunities for them to develop employability attributes such as problem-solving, capacity to work with others, reliability and time-management. In our session we aimed to outline just some of the mentoring schemes on offer here at NTU.

At the 2013 ALTC, we used the format of a ‘Show and Tell’ presentation as an opportunity to discuss good practice in a range of mentoring schemes here at NTU. A group of 3 speakers used 3 slides and 5 minutes each to introduce how their particular brand of mentoring supports students in transition; engages those involved and develops the skills and attributes desired by employers. Presenters also provided posters and leaflets to promote discussion in the informal session which followed and participants had the opportunity to view the promotional materials laid out at a delegated stand, and ask questions of the presenters.

Rebecca Cameron is responsible for The Inspire Mentoring Scheme which has been running for the past 11 years. Rebecca presented on the involvement of NTU students mentoring young people in years 9-12 in local schools and colleges. The aim of the scheme is to raise aspirations and increase confidence to motivate local young people to achieve their educational potential. Rebecca demonstrated how the mentors benefit greatly from their involvement in the scheme in terms of increased confidence; improved academic ability and other study skills. She also outlined how the scheme engendered the development of employability skills such as time management, planning and organisation skills, and the ability to demonstrate leadership and gain experience in working in a professional environment.

Joanna Hartley runs a student ambassador scheme within the School of Science and Technology which carries credits towards the final award; Certificate in Mentoring and Leadership Development. Jo and her Student Ambassador Zach presented on how this module enables students to
develop personal and professional skills further and gain experience that will prove valuable on both CVs and at job interviews:

- develop confidence and leadership skills
- provide an opportunity to establish new personal and career goals
- develop listening and communication skills
- improve your employability potential
- develop organisational & problem solving skills
- develop the ability to undertake roles both independently and within a team

Sarah Johnson has a responsibility for running a Student Mentor scheme across the six schools which previously had little or no one-to-one academic writing support. At the ALTC, Sarah, together with a 2 Student Writing Mentors outlined the collaborative nature of the scheme and discussed how mentoring not only breaks down the power barriers relating to staff-student relationships, but also helps students to identify their own areas for development and strategies for improvement.

The talks generated much discussion in terms of the practicalities of setting up a mentoring scheme and delegates were interested in how specifically involvement in the schemes had benefitted the Mentors. In response, the Mentors cited increased confidence, improved organisational skills and enhanced engagement in their own studies.

In response to the question, ‘What have you found most useful and interesting today?’ we received the following comments from delegates on the day:

- ‘the mentoring talk’,
- ‘using Student Mentors to part-present the session’,
- ‘information on mentoring’

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The importance of linking experience and reflection to enhance student employability

Caroline Day, Jamie Marshall, Fliss Miller

Nottingham Trent University aims to support students to develop their employability skills, knowledge and experience, not only through their course of study, but also through a variety of additional extracurricular opportunities. This includes areas such as:

- Volunteering
- Students in Classrooms
- SU unpaid positions (e.g. elected posts)
- Media work (Fly FM, Platform, Trent TV etc.)
- HIVE activities
- Participation in sports clubs, committees & lifestyle events
- And many more

The workshop examined the importance of gaining practical work experience, using the examples of participation in Students in Classrooms and Volunteering activity, with reflection drawn from The University’s Acceler8 Award.

**Students in Classrooms**

Based within the Schools, Colleges and Community Outreach department, Students in Classrooms has been providing paid opportunities for students to enhance their skills, knowledge and experience for over thirteen years.

The work forms a key part of NTU’s Access Agreement, with more than 500 students recruited each academic year to support in local schools, academies and colleges, fulfilling a variety of roles such as literacy assistants (Primary Literacy Scheme), mentors (Inspire Mentoring Scheme), NTU Ambassadors (Student Ambassadors Scheme) and classroom assistants (Teacher Associates Scheme).

Placements are targeted particularly at areas of higher deprivation and/or learners under-represented in higher education. Students are recruited at the start of the academic year from across NTU, as well as from the
University of Nottingham, in a collaborative approach.

During the academic year 2012/13, NTU students undertook more than 20,000 hours of support with local teachers and pupils.

**Volunteering**

Nottingham Trent Volunteering is based within the Schools, Colleges and Community Outreach department and has been providing volunteering opportunities for students in conjunction with the Students Union, for more than ten years.

The work forms a key part of NTU’s Access Agreement, with more than 1000 students supported into placements each academic year. Opportunities primarily support local not-for-profit community organisations through regular volunteering placements, one day project opportunities, student led projects and sports volunteering. Recent developments have also included international volunteering placements to destinations such as Romania, South Africa and Morocco.

During the academic year 2012/13, NTU students undertook more than 33,000 hours of voluntary opportunities.

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Student volunteering in the community: connections to their discipline and potential for creating future career aspirations

Sharon Hutchings, Ann McCarthy

“Experience is a starting point, an object of inquiry that can be affirmed, interrogated, and used to develop broader knowledge and understanding”. (Giroux 2010)

The above understandings framed and shaped our new module for year one sociology students, the Volunteering project. The intention was to afford students the opportunity to ‘live’ their sociology, to connect to their communities and hopefully make links that were truly felt beyond what our teaching could offer. We hoped this might be achieved through planning and engaging in small volunteering projects. Our presentation, with contributions from our students, sets out to evaluate and reflect on how far it met those aims but also to question possible longer term impacts on their employability; did the module begin to engage students in thinking about their future graduate employment?

What does the module look like?

Term 1  Academic content - sociology of community
Term 2  Group and leadership skills - volunteering projects
Term 3  Presentations and reflective reports

The focus of the module was to bring together the real world, students growing disciplinary knowledge and a development of their resourcefulness through planning and delivering their project. A secondary aspect and of growing significance as the module progressed was the unintentional but important outcome of graduate employability. Whilst acknowledging the absolute need to approach issues of employability in a critical way we came to recognise that:

...graduate employability as a core interest, engaging both students and staff, will be crucially important in an era of increased costs, higher fees and loans, and increased competition for initial, and continuing, employment locally, nationally and internationally. (Pegg et al. 2012, p.6)
Where we take small comfort in this changing landscape of HE is in the possibility of creative and disciplinary focused developments in the curriculum. To embrace those aspects which allow for a deeper connection to disciplinary identity providing opportunities for confidence and skills beyond NTU allows for some easing of the tensions and anxieties evident in the current wider employability agenda. This module is not about cataloguing skills, although we do not dismiss them, it’s hopefully about connecting ways of learning so they are felt more deeply beyond our teaching. To that end we might argue that the HEA definition of employability is one we can work with:

Employability is more than 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, in Pegg, et al. 2012, p.4).

Through contributions from our students we hope to explore how far “Learning by doing and reflecting in authentic contexts” (Pegg et al., 2012 p.44) offers different insights to their discipline, their wider communities and the potential for future career aspirations.

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This session reviewed our experiences of delivering one of 8 subject-specific ‘versions’ of a new compulsory 20 credit employability module for Level 3 students in the Business School. The module had two assessment points in 2012-13: a group project bespoke to each ‘version’ in the first term, supported by discipline-specific lessons; and an individual reflective element common to all students in the second term, supported by a school-wide programme of career management, job-search and values-based lessons, aligned to the NTU Graduate Attributes for Global Citizenship (e.g. sustainability, ethics, responsible leadership, etc.).

We introduced the session with an overview of the literature, emphasising the lack of a single, widely agreed definition of ‘employability’. Some commentators present it as an inherent outcome of good curricula design – regardless of the subject. Improved employability can be achieved through a review of how things are taught, rather than what is taught (Knight and Yorke, 2003). This provides further justification for ensuring course outcomes include verbs like ‘apply’, ‘evaluate’, ‘communicate’, ‘reflect’, and ‘negotiate’. These verbs not only indicate the higher level cognitive activities students need to master to learn their subject, but also relate to attributes particularly valued by employers (see Biggs and Tang, 2007, for advocacy of active learning aligned to such outcome verbs, and Economics Network, 2007 and 2012, for employer survey evidence on the need for graduates to demonstrate them in the workplace).

Others argue that, because careers have become so complex, the skills required for sustained employability are akin to the attributes of lifelong learning, such as intellectual curiosity, alongside a range of ‘generic’ skills’ transferable to all modern workplaces (e.g. team-working, project management). In this view, the degree subject is increasingly irrelevant (Fallows and Steven, 2000). However, recent employer surveys contradict this – with employers across most sectors continuing to value highly subject-specific skills (see UKCES, 2012, and Economics Network, 2007 and 2012). This view is also challenged by many subject specialists, including ourselves,
who strongly believe that certain disciplines profoundly affect the way practitioners solve problems (such as an economist's training to balance benefits against both costs and opportunity costs), approaches that are valued across many industry sectors.

The literature also includes areas of clear agreement. Despite most UK institutions now delivering some form of discrete employability-focussed module (see Dixon, writing in the Telegraph, 2013), commentators from a range of disciplines agree that employability outcomes are unlikely to be achieved through such modules alone - but as a consequence of activities embedded throughout entire courses (see Knight and Yorke, 2003). Colleagues at the National Institute of Economic and Social Research (NIESR) demonstrated this empirically. Using graduate destinations data alongside a depth review of university curricula, they found no evidence that individual, explicit employability modules or lessons affected graduate outcomes. Conversely, courses that were designed with employer input and included appropriately embedded work-experience were found to be strongly positively correlated to improved employability outcomes (Mason et al., 2009).

With these cautionary points in mind, we designed an assessment task that attempted to build on the transferable skills valued by employers and link them to attributes specifically associated with an economics degree. Employers have identified strengths amongst economics graduates, including analytical thinking, strong ICT skills, and good project management and team working skills. However, they were much less impressed with many graduates’ ability to solve practical problems, especially in unfamiliar contexts, and also reported weaknesses in certain communication styles. For example, graduates were often very poor at producing report-style documents, power-point presentations, management briefings etc. – and often failed to follow instructions accurately (Economics Network, 2007 and 2012).

Drawing from our own on-going and past experiences as active consultants and government analysts, our task required students to work in small groups to produce a consultancy ‘bid’ (a costed research proposal and business case) in response to one of a number of real-world challenges. Options included an environmental impact assessment of the Thames Estuary (‘Boris Island’) Airport and an assessment of the impact of new regulation on the UK financial services sector. This exercise was based on the principles of problem-based learning (students were not given a reading list or told which theories to apply – they had to decide themselves). It also explicitly required students to develop a number of those skills identified by employers as lacking amongst graduates. Throughout this task, we hoped that students would not only become more proficient in such skills, but would critique the wider utility and limitations of their subject in light of contemporary issues.

On reflection, and in discussion with colleagues following the session, we felt that this exercise was valuable in enabling students to practice writing in a non-academic voice (also highlighted by Jeffery Goatcher in the 2012 NTU LTC). We were also very satisfied with the extent to which students began to view their subject as a tool that can, and is, applied to address real-world problems – and that economics, like many subjects, is far more than a collection of purely academic theories and approaches. However, there were a number of challenges that were also observed by colleagues who had delivered similar exercises. Students needed significant support to grasp the full requirements of the task – perhaps as it appeared to differ from traditional academic exercises (and reflecting employer views that graduates
can struggle in unfamiliar contexts). There was also a lot of negative student feedback at the start of the exercise around the requirement for group work, despite our justification in terms of employer expectations. Positively, these concerns lessened as the work progressed - and a large proportion of the completed bids were of high quality and demonstrated good engagement and communication within each group.

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Biographies

Verity Aiken

Verity Aiken is a Lecturer on the Joint Honours in Education (JHE). She is the subject strand leader for Professional Studies and the module leader for two of the programmes year-long modules in context-based learning and work-based learning. Verity has previously worked in learning support and has interests in student transitioning and skills development. She is currently studying for a Doctorate of Education with a focus upon learner identity and undergraduate academic writing.

Ann Allen

Ann Allen is the Associate Dean of the School of Social Sciences. She spent 12 years in a variety of careers advisory roles before joining NTU as a Senior Lecturer in Career Guidance, later becoming the Head of the Division of Guidance, Youth Studies and Youth Justice. Ann’s specialist academic territories include: rational career planning (and a strategic approach to guidance interviewing) planning and designing career education, and the concept of youth.

Phil Banyard

Phil Banyard is Reader in Psychology in the School of Social Sciences. He is currently leading on the submission to the REF Education Panel of research from the College of Business, Law and Social Science. He has been involved in researching and developing school based syllabuses (such as A-Level) throughout his career and recently led on a report for the British Psychological Society on *The Future of A-Level Psychology*.

Helen Boulton

Helen Boulton is a National Teaching Fellow, Reader in technology enhanced learning and teaching and the LTC in the School of Education. Helen's research is focused on using new technologies in learning and teaching, assessment and feedback. Helen has co-authored several books focusing on learning and teaching and reviews for a variety of journals and conferences. Helen's work is published nationally and internationally.

Paul Boyd

Paul Boyd is a Senior Lecturer in the School of Education.

Tina Byrom

Tina Byrom is the Partnerships Manager for Undergraduate Education, as well as currently the Course Leader for Joint Honours Education. She teaches across a number of modules on the course, as well as contributing to the Professional Doctorate, where she is the Centre Lead for HKTC. Tina’s research interests include: widening participation in Higher Education; intervention programmes to widen HE participation; pupil voice; influence of research on policy.

Rebecca Cameron

Rebecca Cameron is responsible for coordinating the Inspire Mentoring Scheme and supporting students, schools and pupils in making the most of the initiative. Becky also has responsibility for monitoring e-mentoring, delivering training and undertaking recruitment and selection of students.
Sarah Davies

Sarah Davies works within the School of Education and is responsible for Secondary Teacher Education (STE) routes within the strand of Design and Technology.

Caroline Day

Caroline Day is responsible for developing volunteering projects at NTU in partnership with external organisations and supporting students into the various opportunities available in the local area. Caroline is also responsible for recruiting student volunteers and organising various key volunteering events across the academic year for external partners and NTU students.

Anne Emerson

Anne Emerson has a background in speech and language therapy. She has worked at NTU for 7 years teaching in the area of developmental disabilities. Her research projects include evaluation of communication interventions with children and adults with severe learning disabilities.

Ed Foster

Ed Foster works as the Study Support Coordinator, based in the Library. He is heavily involved in students' early transition into HE and helps deliver Welcome Week and the Starting at NTU resources. Once term starts he co-ordinates a range of study support and leads research into student retention & success.

Graham Ferris

Graham Ferris is a Reader in Law, published in property and legal history and legal education. Professionally qualified (Solicitor) but has taught at Universities for 20 years, Graham has been at NLS for over a decade.

Dean Garratt

Dean Garratt is principal lecturer and Economics Undergraduate Course Leader. He won the Economics Network and HEA Outstanding Teaching Award in 2006. Dean has co-authored several books and is interested in developing new ways of teaching economics, including through issues- and problem-based approaches to engage students with the wider applications of the subject.

Ricky Gee

Ricky Gee is a senior lecturer in the School of Social Sciences. Ricky’s research interests lie within the field of Career Development Theory and its application within the guidance profession e.g. providing guidance practitioners a much needed voice on groupwork practices with young people in educational settings.

Alison Hardy

Alison Hardy works within the School of Education and is course Leader for BSc (Hons) Secondary Design and Technology Education. She is a member of the Design and Technology Education Research Steering Group.

Jo Hartley

Jo Hartley is Senior Lecturer in Computing and Technology and Senior Admissions Tutor for the Computing and Technology team; Lead Tutor for the Certificate in Mentoring and Leadership Development; and Module
Leader for: Applied Maths and Graphics; and System Analysis and Design. She also teaches on the modules Applied Maths and Graphics; Maths for Computing; System Analysis and Design; and Personal and Professional Development.

**David Hindley**

David Hindley is the Academic Team Leader for the Undergraduate and Professional Education team based in the School of Education. A central part of his role is to oversee a range of courses from a Foundation Degree in Educational Support through to an MA in Education and Doctoral study. He is also the School Lead for the personal tutor group system, as well as actively involved in teaching on the JHE (Sports Education subject strand).

**Katie Holbrook**

Katie Holbrook is a Chartered Textile Technologist by profession and a senior lecturer for the Fashion Management sandwich course. Additionally for the last thirteen years she has been the academic responsible for student employability of this course. The MA awarded in 2010 by NTU researched *How can Universities develop strategies to deliver employability expectations to students?*

**Sharon Hutchings**

Sharon Hutchings is a Senior Lecturer who teaches across a range of programmes in the Sociology and Professional Practice Divisions in the School of Social Sciences.

**Nia Huws**

Nia Huws is Development and Progression Manager for vocational programmes at the School of Animal Rural and Environmental Science (ARES) at Nottingham Trent University (NTU). Prior to this she worked for Vetnet LLN, a national Lifelong Learning Network committed to enhancing progression opportunities for vocational learners on animal-related courses.

**Rebecca Huxley-Binns**

Rebecca Huxley-Binns is Professor of Legal Education at Nottingham Law School. She is also co-Director of the Law School’s Centre for Legal Education. Rebecca is a National Teaching Fellow, and was awarded UK Law Teacher of the Year in 2010. Widely published, Rebecca is author or co-author of five textbooks in law and has published extensively in journals on topics ranging from witness anonymity in criminal proceedings to the development of soft skills in law students.

**Sarah Johnson**

Sarah Johnson is a Learning and Teaching Officer at NTU with a responsibility for running a Student Mentor scheme across the six schools which previously had little or no one-to-one academic writing support.

**Beverley Lawe**

Beverley Lawe works within the School of Education and contributes to both the BSc (Hons) Design & Technology Education course and the PGDE secondary ITE course. She is currently module leader for Design & Technology in Education & Society 1 and is a member of the Sustainability Action Forum.
Chris Lawton

Chris Lawton is senior research fellow in the Economic Strategy Research Bureau, a research unit within the Division of Economics. In 2012-13, Chris was Leadership & Employability Module Leader for Economics courses. He previously worked as a Government analyst, contributing to the development and evaluation of education and training policy.

Phil Mignot

Phil Mignot has a particular interest in the concept of ‘career’ and its application within social science disciplines. He is currently developing a curriculum that integrates career development theory with classical and contemporary perspectives on the sociology of work.

Jamie Marshall

Jamie Marshall is Students in Classrooms Manager at NTU, has worked at the University for 12 years developing the Students in Classrooms scheme, placing students in local schools.

Fliss Miller

Fliss Miller has worked on a number of employability focused projects at NTU, including research into the academic value of placements, the Acceler8 Award and IoD student membership.

Ann McCarthy

Ann McCarthy is a Senior Lecturer who teaches across a range of programmes in the Sociology and Professional Practice Divisions in the School of Social Sciences.

Nicholas Morton

Nicholas Morton is a lecturer in History since 2009 specialising in medieval history. Nicholas has published extensively on the subject of the crusades and the military orders. Teaching commitments focus predominantly on first and second year undergraduates, responsibility for the year-wide HIST104 World History and contributing to HIST102 Medieval History. At level 2 Nicholas is responsible for a module on Charlemagne’s World.

Dean Penford

Dean Penford A well thought through personal career path of coal miner – higher education (Social Science) – Careers Adviser – Adult Guidance Manager – Careers Services Manager – Higher Education Champion(!) – College Partnership Manager – NTU Careers Consultant; joins together degree, postgraduate guidance qualification and MA Education as a seamless journey!

Lloyd Pettiford

Lloyd Pettiford is Associate Dean in the School of Arts and Humanities

Helen Reed

Helen Reed is the School of Social Sciences Employability Coordinator and a lecturer in the Division of Social work and Professional practice. Helen has a research interest in transition, having researched the implications of the transition from primary to secondary school on behalf of Nottingham Central Educational Improvement Partnership, and is currently researching graduate transitions.
Paul Redmond
Dr Paul Redmond is Head of Careers & Employability at the University of Liverpool and one of the country’s leading experts on generational theory and the graduate labour market. An experienced writer and speaker, Paul has presented at numerous events and conferences both in the UK and overseas.

Peter Rowlett
Peter Rowlett is a Senior Lecturer and PhD student in the School of Science and Technology looking at the use of computers in assessment.

Eunice Simmons
Professor Eunice Simmons is Dean of School at ARES (NTU). She has qualifications in Biology, Soil Science, Forestry, and a PGCE. Teaching experience in a rural comprehensive and posts in five very different Universities contribute to Eunice’s expertise in maximising educational opportunities for a wide range of learners.

Jamie Tinney
Jamie Tinney works within the School of Education and contributes to both the BSc (Hons) Design & Technology Education course and the PGDE secondary ITE course. He is a member of the School of Education’s Blended and E-Learning Technologies Group and the Design.

Steve Wheelhouse
Steve Wheelhouse is the Employability Coordinator for the School of Education and Chair Person of the Blended and eLearning Teaching (BELT) Group within the School. Steve was a secondary school teacher for 23 years and worked for a local authority as a secondary learning consultant for five years. He has been tasked with considering various strategies to embed the use of eportfolios to support the employability agenda across the school.

Gareth J Williams
Gareth J Williams is a senior lecturer in psychology. He has worked at NTU for four years and his main teaching areas are in developmental psychology and statistics. His research background is in reading, writing and spelling development in children.

Fiona Winfield
Fiona Winfield Fiona is a principal lecturer in Marketing, NBS. Since Jan 2012, she has been Employability Coordinator within that school. Previously, Fiona worked in building materials in sales and marketing and for the last few years has been a first and final year tutor and a course leader within NBS.