Exploring the complexities of cooperation: issues and approaches in improving the partnership between the Careers Centre and the Faculties at the University of Prishtina

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Some strategic options for the University of Prishtina
Delivery strategies

- Special modules
  - Generic
  - Adapted

- Cross-curricula
  - Bespoke
  - Integrated

Three models of cooperation

• Central specialist provision
  – CDC staff develop and deliver

• Integrated
  – CDC staff Faculties jointly develop and deliver

• Consultancy
  – CDC supports Faculties to develop courses which embed CMC
  – Delivery mainly by Faculties

Adapted from Watts, T.G. (2006) *Career Development Learning and Employability*, York: Higher Education Academy, p. 27.
What role does the CD want to play?
The choice?

Teaching

Educational development
Any careers centre that tries to be solely responsible for delivering CMC in the Faculties will be constrained by limited delivery resources
A careers centre that supports Faculties to deliver CMC by designing and piloting content, as well as training academics, 
reaches more students indirectly through the Faculties.
Consultancy

Advantages
✓ Faculties responsible for enhancing THEIR programmes
✓ CDC resources targeted more strategically
✓ CDC grows organically from the discipline

Challenges
• CDC staff need to act as educational developers
  – Learning new skills set
• Faculties need to find staff to really engage with CDC
• Keeping labour market information that students get from Faculties up-to-date
Bringing academics on-board with CMC
Many shared goals

CMC for employment

• Critically evaluate options
• Be creative
• Identify gaps in knowledge
• Research new knowledge
• Solve problems
• Communicate persuasively
• Manage time effectively
• Work ethically
• Work in teams
• Drive and ambition

Pedagogic capabilities for learning

• Critical subject understanding
• Creative learners
• Self-directed learners
• Able to synthesize learning from across the degree
• Communicate clearly
• Have good time-management
• Ethically aware
• Motivated
Development promoted by

1. Constructivist pedagogies
2. Integrative learning
3. Volunteering and placements

Ill structured problems

1. Promote employability
   – Knight and Yorke, 2003
2. Characterise professional careers
   – Schön, 1987
3. Promote higher cognitive development
   – Moon, 2004
Promote shared agenda & mutual respect
Complementary expertise

**Faculties**
- Pedagogic expertise
- Knowledge of the discipline curriculum
- Understanding of students (attitudes, issues, learning styles) on a particular course
- Able to identify points where CMC and the discipline naturally arise

**CDC**
- Guidance expertise
- Knowledge of career development theory
- Understanding of the labour market and sources of careers information
- Able to identify employers and relevant to work related learning, and ways of ‘tuning’ the curriculum
Shared responsibility

CDC

Faculties

Many students!
Challenges that we all face
Romer’s Rule

‘...organisms generally evolve by changing just enough to maintain, as near as possible, their existing state.’

HE organisational types

- Bureaucracy
  - Emphasise regulation, formal procedures
- Corporation
  - Power and authority central to operation
- Enterprise
  - Puts service to the client at centre
- Collegium
  - Prizes academic freedom
  - Values academic arguments

Perhaps a lot of universities look like this?

Where do careers sit?

What culture shapes the approach of careers to Faculties?
Cooperative attitudes
Successful relationships

1. **Willingness** to work together when you don’t have to
2. Looking for ways of helping them
3. Process is more important than the product
4. Ongoing contact and communication
5. Trust and friendliness
Cooperation grows slowly

• Why?
  – Learning isn’t instantaneous
  – We change as we learn
• We need a constructivist stance to cooperation
• We need to go on shared learning journeys
  – Read the same journals
  – Grapple with the same intellectual challenges
• Conversations are key
Rogers’s mental stages

Awareness

Adoption

Interest

Trial

Evaluation

Influence instead of power

• Influence comes from:
  – Relationships
  – Expertise
  – Information

• Information about
  – What do our graduates do?
  – Students / graduate feedback
  – Employer feedback
  – Innovative CDC practice in the Faculties at Prishtina
  – Innovative CDC practice at other universities
Both are needed

• **Top**
  – Sets a direction of travel (and time frame)
  – Broad and capable of being flexibly adapted
  – Enables units to cooperate

• **Bottom**
  – Uses grounded experience to find practical ideas
  – Shares ideas and good practice
  – Creates communities of practice
It’s about sharing the work
Finding a transforming vision

“We know why we are doing employability; we are doing it for the next generation.”
END
Further info


Dave will be based at the University of Essex from July, promoting employability and internationalisation – please keep in touch!

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Extra surplus content
How a single module could be extended across the curriculum

Different examples
Agriculture: Reading Uni

- Autumn term 3rd year: mini careers fair
- Summer term 2nd year: CMC module
- Summer vacation optional work experience
- Summer term 1st year: CMC module
Show things that the Faculties can do
European Community Law module, Middlesex Uni

• Second year module (joint Law and Business degree)
• Taught through problem based learning and group work
• Students were assigned the role of the company’s legal team NewFoods plc, a producer of specialist food products.
• Their task was to identify the problems and evaluate how the situation was compatible with EC law.
• Students were provided with fictional background documents on the company, the export markets and some specific direction to decided EC cases.
Tasks and materials (Law)

• The task was to examine the potential obstacles to the company expanding into 3 fictitious export markets.
• The task is set out in an internal memo asking the legal team to look into any potential pitfalls.
• Course materials are a mixture of documents (newspaper articles, government circulars and press releases) about the company’s expansion plans and a series of measures introduced by the three countries.
Hence overlapping pedagogies

**EBL / PBL** → **Pedagogic challenge** → **Real World problems**

**Employability by-product** ← **Engaging content**
Management degree PBL example

- Second year marketing module
- Taught by academics and staff from the mobile phone company O2
- Students have to solve ill structured business problems set by O2
- These are real problems and use confidential company information
- Assessment: a report with recommendations and presentation

Example: University of Reading
Literary Festival, Middlesex University

• Students from 2\textsuperscript{nd} and 3\textsuperscript{rd} year modules collaborate to run a two day literary festival for university and local community (has run for 14 years)

• Have to
  – Apply knowledge of literature to choose appropriate speakers and themes
  – Find speakers, arrange talks, publicise event

• Develop range of employability skills and attitudes, e.g.
  – Team work, planning, resilience, resourcefulness

• Gain knowledge of cultural industry and contacts

• Learn to apply subject knowledge to world of work

Gaining Influence: Employer Engagement

• We wanted to persuade the University to encourage Faculties to develop CMC by involving employers in the curriculum
• An academic found examples of good practice across the University of Reading
• The Careers produced a booklet of case studies with analysis and advice
• Influential because it was research based
• Persuasive because they were ‘home-grown’ examples
Graduate competencies

1. Academic skills
2. Professional working skills
   – Adaptability, flexibility, team work, leadership
3. Career development
   – Career planning, opportunity awareness, job seeking, self presentation skills etc.
4. External awareness
   – Knowledge of working cultures, enterprise, ethics
5. Personal development planning
   – Reflection, action planning, self-awareness, time-management
6. Experience of work
   – Learning from life, volunteering, work experience, paid jobs

University of Essex (2011)
http://www.essex.ac.uk/ldev/muse/employability.aspx