

Ruskin College Employability Model 2015-20

The Context of Employability at Ruskin College

- The College defines 'Employability' as the development and enhancement of personal attributes, skills and knowledge that makes graduates able to be more successful in their chosen field of work, which brings benefits to themselves, their communities and society as a whole.
- The College aims to enable students to make links with a range of opportunities for work in the wider world including the 3rd sector, social change organisations and traditional work environments.
- The College recognises the drive and passion of students and aims to provide learning opportunities which recognise that fulfilling work will stem from individual's initiative and creativity.
- The College will offer students a range of opportunities to develop and strengthen the skills that will enhance their future and lifelong association with their chosen area of work.

The College Model

Quality Assurance.

- To ensure that employability data is collected and analysed at a programme level and ensure it is included in the AMR's and College promotional literature/website/facebook. Material to be collected and reported at the end of the academic year.
- Ensure the process of assessment and monitoring of placement/fieldwork is clearly identified.
- Include professional qualifications to enhance employability.
- Annual survey of graduates to be completed to establish accurate data on progression routes and destinations.

Curriculum

- Ensure the curriculum is flexible to meet and reflect the needs of employment.
- Teach communication skills as applied to the professional context.
- The curriculum is to emphasise professionalism and preparation for employment.
- Ensure there are different forms of assessment for a range of contexts. Academic work arising from contexts such as blogs/videos.
- Build and maintain good relationships with employers.
- A 'sharing practice' group to consist of those who present their findings and share their 'practice' covering design, delivery and management of employability in the curriculum.
- Use student profiles to promote the experience of placement and fieldwork.
- Promote digital literacy to enhance the skills of students.
- The promotion across College of the careers service and support in terms of employability.

Managing Placement

- Establish a distinctive placement unit at the College. Programme specific or cross-college.
- Support for students on placement needs to be robust and developmental
- Identify the roles in terms of placement
- Need a risk based analysis of placement/fieldwork.
- Staff development to allow for the sharing of practice.

Recruitment and Induction

- Ensure students are initially assessed and have the potential qualities to succeed on the programme.
- Ensure that the employability and progression outcomes are embedded in all phases of the recruitment, selection and induction process.

Definitions of Employer Engagement and Work Based Learning

- Employer engagement, work based learning and enhancing students 'employability' are significant aspects of higher education programmes at the College. The level of outside organisation involvement varies according to the nature of the programme. The College's approach to work based learning encompasses a wide range of methodologies exposing students to fields of work alongside their chosen programme of study in a flexible and responsive manner to suit both the individual students and programmes.
- Where courses are vocational and subject to the requirements of professional, statutory and regulatory bodies the work related component will be high. For courses without a specifically vocational element the work related component may be less but there will be mechanisms for preparing students for work.
- In all cases, the College ensures that all insurance, and health and safety aspects of the 'placement' are appropriate and this is monitored by dedicated College staff.
- Additionally, students are actively encouraged to participate in voluntary activities in their communities to enrich their learning and to make links with a range of opportunities for work in the wider world.
- To provide clarity the following details define and describe the various models that apply in the College.

Model 1: 'to determine competence'

- This will apply where there is a statutory, professional or regulatory requirement that a student must be deemed competent in order to qualify as a designated "professional", the Social Work, and Community Development and Youth Work programmes. The duration of such a placement is specified by the regulatory body and the purpose is to provide the opportunity for a student undertaking a

programme of study to demonstrate that they have the knowledge, competence and skills related to the profession. Students on such placements are assessed in the workplace according to the professional criteria. While there is academic assessment associated with this activity a student failing to demonstrate competence cannot progress. Such placements are mandatory and formally sought.

Model 2: 'for workplace experience'

- This applies to programmes with a requirement that a component of the course is based in an organisation, such as Foundation Degrees. These programmes have this mandate and organisations will be involved in the planning and overseeing of the WBL activities. This may involve the organisation as a venue for a major project module that is weighted and carries the award of credit. While organisations may advise and inform the programme team as to the abilities of students all academic assessment is undertaken by programme staff.

Model 3: 'for workplace exposure'

- It is recognised by the College that some programmes enable students to undertake projects which involve outside organisations to contribute to their overall learning experience. Students may be placed with an organisation for a period of time for the purposes of 'exposure to' the working environment. This will not be a mandatory component of the course and will be for the purpose of enhancing learning. In these situations students may find their own 'placement', it will feature as part of the students' personal development planning and there may be academic weighting and credits awarded and for the activity. In other cases, the experience of work will be undertaken through engagement with specialists and professionals from associated areas of work.