Workshop 1: developing work-ready skills, confidence and experience in students to enable them to move into work and further study

Sue Bennett and Steve Maggs
University of Warwick
Student Careers & Skills, Warwick Manufacturing Group
This session will cover

- Linking business/university partnerships to your university or business’s objectives
- Case study: how the University of Warwick works in partnership with business to make students work-ready
- Time to reflect how your university or business can develop mutually beneficial partnerships
Challenges for Universities

“We prepare graduates for jobs that don’t yet exist, who will have to solve problems we don’t yet know about”

In a VUCA (volatile, uncertain, complex, ambiguous) world that needs work-ready and future-proofed graduates

Being employer-informed, not employer-led

→ SCS’s mission: “enabling students to take personal responsibility to become successful students and employable graduates”
Employers want:

- Good degree from a good university
- Relevant work experience
- Extra-curricular experiences, e.g. sports, charity work, volunteering
- Ability to record and understand their experiences, tell their unique story, and adapt it for different audiences. Then be able to secure a job in the graduate labour market
Why these are important

- Good degree = guarantee of quality
- Work experience = can deliver quickly
- Extra-curricular experiences = proves skills, attitudes and qualities, e.g. leader, team-player, enthusiastic, agile, committed, flexible
- Tell their story = demonstrates fit with employers and independence in a globalised VUCA world
What this means

 Universities need staff* to work with the labour market/employers, who can interpret and mediate that knowledge for students

 Employers need staff to work with the universities, who can interpret that knowledge for their organisations

 *Student Careers and Skills has the External Relations unit of Employer Connect, Internship Development, Volunteering = 18 staff. We work alongside the academic curriculum
Mission: enabling students to make good decisions about their futures by providing an extensive range of graduate employment, work experience and volunteering opportunities.

Context: employers compete for best talent in a global VUCA labour market. Skills shortages/labour market changes create demand; we enable employers to access suitably qualified and able graduates.

External Relations unit: creates mutually beneficial and innovative partnerships, done with care and thought by skilful people.

The team works with 3,200 local, regional, national and international employers to provide 1,000 students volunteers in the local community, 7,300 work experience opportunities on campus/in local area, 65 students on internships, 261 in receipt of bursary, 100 employer events, 9 fairs and 18 mini fairs p.a. Specialist areas include: international employers; SMEs*; PhD employers.

*Small and Medium Enterprises, with less than 250 employees
WMG objectives

- Facilitating technology transfer and knowledge for industry
- Through applied research that addresses industry’s problems
- Through education programmes that are designed to meet industry’s needs
And what about you?

What are your university’s or business’s plans for business/university engagement?

What are your strategies to find the best graduate talent?

What works well with the university/business partnerships now?

What needs changing and why?
University services for employers

- Advertising vacancies for graduate jobs and vacation internships
- Meeting students at fairs, mini fairs, skills sessions, interviews on campus
- Attracting students using vacation internships; experience days; projects within curriculum; sponsorship of individuals and degrees; guest lectures; input to curriculum design, etc.
Attracting and securing graduate talent

- How attractive are your graduate programmes, and how do you compete with other employers looking for the same graduate talent?

- Early engagement, e.g. in Y1 and 2. spring weeks, summer internships, projects → spot top talent, and secure them before graduation. NB: 35% of Times Top 100 graduate roles are filled prior to graduation by students who worked in the organisation whilst studying; this rises to 74% in investment banking.

- Many graduate employers cannot find suitable graduates, so recruit school leavers to programmes.
The WMG story, Academy to DTC

Developing skills from school to doctorate
– Academic Knowledge and Skills
– Transferrable skills

http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/fac/sci/wmg/
WMG Academy for Young Engineers

What is the problem?
Institute of Engineering Technology report Skills gaps amongst school leavers are:
- Practical experience
- Technical skills
- Leadership skills
- Communication skills
- Ability to work on own initiative
- Literacy
- Numeracy
- Teamwork

What we did
- A new school in Coventry
- Governed by Business and University
- Longer hours (like a business)
- Behavior Framework
- Business-like and business-led
- Business led projects to deliver engineering education
- [http://www.wmgacademy.org.uk/](http://www.wmgacademy.org.uk/)
Applied Engineering UG Programme (AEP)

- Responds to the notion that traditional engineering graduates don’t have the ability to apply knowledge from ‘day one’.
  - Part Time, BEng degree in Applied Engineering taken over 4 years part-time
  - Company based assignments and projects
  - Blended and flexible learning supported by the VLE (Virtual Learning Environment)
  - Common first two years
  - Engineering Specialisation in Years 3 and 4
  - Close relationship with business and able to respond to business needs
  - New needs: New modules

- Companies pay and can choose to further develop their own staff
  - With the ‘right’ engineering skills for the business
  - AEP can help companies attract and retain the best talent
  - Low financial commitment from the student means the company can then encourage its staff to develop their skills in the direction the business needs
Technical Accreditation Scheme

- Developed with Jaguar Land Rover and now offered to supply chain.
- Masters level modules.
- Up-Skilling for the **Engineering Needed in 2010 to 2020** and Beyond
- Offer to staff business-needs driven training, which will also engage employees and encourage continuous self development.
- Engage with Universities, who can offer leading teaching and training on specific technical subject areas, where possible linked directly to university research projects.
- Develop necessary skills, to support future technology and product development and supporting strategic skills needs highlighted by UK government for the automotive industry.

27 May, KBTU
Programme established in 2010, first modules delivered in 2010-2011 academic year
Partnership of 9 universities, led by WMG
76 MSc modules offered
4927 module places booked to date since the programme began
1553 module places booked for 2014-15 academic year
68% of JLR Product Development engineers have undertaken at least 1 module
Accredited by Institute of Mechanical Engineers, Institute of Engineering Technology and Institute of Materials, Minerals and Mining
The WMG Engineering Doctorate

Aim…to create a future generation of manufacturing leaders with high-level know how and research experience that is essential to succeed in a global environment…

Current focus: “High Value, Low Environmental Impact Manufacturing” – not sector specific

The award will be an EngD with an embedded MSc in Innovation & Entrepreneurship where relevant

The sponsoring company will benefit from a portfolio of commercially valuable research and a potential future industry leader already embedded within the organisation.

Those Research Entrepreneurs will:

- Be champions for high value, low environmental impact manufacturing
- Be adept at working in multidisciplinary teams
- Be exceptionally well networked - both nationally and internationally
- Have experience and appreciation of different working environments in other companies and locations
- Be able to challenge the global manufacturing issues of tomorrow
WMG Internships

- WMG Summer Research Internships
- Undergraduates spend the summer working in research groups
- The aim is to identify and develop researchers of the future.
- The eventual goal is to significantly grow the number of students studying for an EngD and PhD.
- But, the internship improves employability by developing experience and key skills such as problem solving, team working and self discipline.
Success measures

- Number of employers, vacancies advertised, sectors covered etc.
- Graduate employment rates and salaries, x months after graduation
- Number of graduates in different sectors
- Graduate and employer feedback
- How well we meet labour market needs
- How well we serve our economy
And what about you?

Universities: how do you measure success of your service to employers?

Business: how do you measure the success of your work with universities?

How will you use measures and feedback to improve these?
And what about you?

Which ideas from this workshop can you use to improve your services to each other?

How and when will you implement them?

3 questions: (1) what will you do for your university or business; (2) what will you do for your team; (3) what will you do for you?