

# Developing graduate attributes and improving student employability through work-based learning: opportunities, successes and challenges

Learning and Teaching Conference  
April 14th 2015



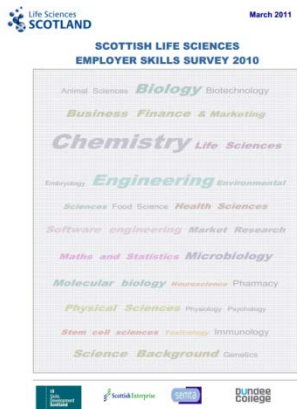
## Background

- Changes to QAA Quality Code requiring review of quality processes, including those in relation to work-based learning arrangements
- Publication of Work-based and Placement Learning Code of Practice:  
<http://www.gla.ac.uk/services/senateoffice/policies/regulationsandguidelines/work-basedandplacementlearningcodeofpractice/>
- Funding earmarked to support WBL development

## Bids for funding invited from Colleges April 2014

- To enhance existing WBL
- Develop new WBL activity
- Supported by Deans, L&T
- 5 Project bids received-all supported
- Employers involved as 'critical friends'
- Projects share common issues
- Identification of future priorities

# Closing the Skills Gap of Graduate Applicants



*“ In the Life Science sector, skill shortages are much more about applicants lacking the right skills and experience, as opposed to difficulties attracting people with appropriate qualifications”*

**Employers Skills Survey-Scottish Life Sciences Association 2010**

The School of Life Sciences is addressing this by a series of measures focussed on further developing attributes or soft skills in our students, increased workplace learning and flexibility in our curriculum, to address changing needs in a rapidly developing life science sector.

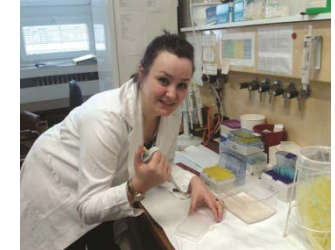


# Closing the Skills Gap of Graduate Applicants

## Build graduate work readiness:

- Develop graduate lab skills
- Develop graduate soft skills
- Encourage realistic expectations of working in the industry
- Develop work experience opportunities

Initiative 1



Initiative 2

## Initiative 1: Further development of pre-honours labs

- Embed numeracy and mathematical skills as well as transferable skills such as scientific communication, team work and self-management, research writing and presentation, working to deadlines.

## Initiative 2: Increased work experience opportunities and realistic expectations in graduates

- School of Life Sciences MSci programme
- Work Shadowing opportunities
- Work Internship opportunities

## Advancing Graduate Attributes through Service-Learning

Dr Susan Deeley, School of Social and Political Sciences  
*Service-Learning*



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## Advancing Graduate Attributes through Service-Learning

### **Aims** to investigate:

- students' development of GAs with assessment \*
- placement providers' views on students' GAs
- reciprocity and mutuality between campus and community

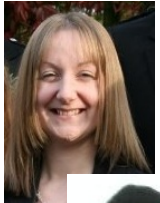
\* **Assessment** - a reflective journal, critical incident, and oral presentation

### **Methods:**

6 qualitative in-depth interviews with placement providers  
3 focus groups with service-learning students (19 in the class)

5-year degree (inc. work placement 4<sup>th</sup> year) from 2012

**Project:** *Enhancement of the student experience  
and employer engagement*  
(August 2014 - July 2015)



## Aims:

- To develop student skills in relating their statistical training to a work environment;
- To build a sense of community for students on the programme;
- To develop employer engagement within the programme.



Prof. Marian Scott  
MSci WP programme  
co-ordinator



Dr Ludger Evers  
Stats LTC convener





## Outcomes:

### 1. Online materials and training sessions

- MSci Work Placement Moodle Page <http://moodle2.gla.ac.uk/course/view.php?id=5568>
- Group mock-interview session led by Stephen Shilton (Careers)

### 2. Away days

- Monday 8<sup>th</sup> December 2014 - The Lighthouse
  - 28 attendees (3 employers, 4 Stats staff, 2 previous/18 current students)
  - MBTI delivered by Stephen Shilton (Careers)
- Friday 29<sup>th</sup> May 2015 - Blythswood Square Hotel



### 3. Employer engagement

- Flyer and website being developed

## **Embedding work-based learning in the PGT curriculum: developing a model of excellence for PGT placement provision**

### **Aims:**

- To strengthen and expand PGT placement provision within CCA;
- Undertake a review of existing placement provision;
- Investigate different models of placement provision with a view to developing a shared strategy and scaffold of support for delivering placement learning;
- Identify and develop new placement opportunities; and,
- Develop a series of supporting resources for both staff and students involved in placement learning.

## **Key outcomes of the project:**

- enhancement of current PGT placement provision;
- a review of current assessment methods to foster and support an articulation of the Graduate Attributes developed through the placement process;
- strengthening and enhancement of current placement partnerships and the identification of new placement providers to ensure expansion and long-term sustainability of PGT placement provision;
- development of a new school-wide work placement course;
- development of a body of e-resources; and,
- development of strategy for sharing good practice and for capitalising on our placement learning opportunities in recruitment and conversion activities.

## **College of Social Sciences Work Based Learning project:** Providing work based learning opportunities for postgraduate taught students at the University of Glasgow

Dr Dickon Copsey, College Employability

Officer

Chris Roden, Employability Project Coordinator

### **Project timeline**

- |             |  |
|-------------|--|
| Oct 14:     | Project Coordinator recruited                    |
| Nov 14:     | Steering group convened                          |
| Oct-Dec 14: | Project scoping inc. working document            |
| Feb 15:     | Steering group progress meeting                  |
| Mar/Apr 15: | Evaluation / write-up                            |
| May 2015:   | Final steering group inc. recommendations report |

## Work based learning models

External organisation visits (on/off campus)

Professional practitioner seminar series

Work shadowing

Placements

Internships

Consultation projects

Collaborative dissertations

## Key stakeholders

Student(s)

External organisation(s)

Academics

University support staff

## Intermediary support?

Work based learning coordinator / officer

- Role / responsibilities?
- Remit / boundaries of role?