



Issue 11 – Friday 26th
February 2016

Introduction

The Science Placement and Employability Panel consists of Academic and Support Staff representatives who meet regularly to discuss placement and employability matters arising within the Faculty. The SPEP Newsletter has been devised to report back the matters discussed and keep all Faculty of Science staff up to date.

The following items have been discussed at the most recent SPEP Meeting:

Online Pre-placement Module: Curriculum Internship Bid

The Faculty are applying for funding for the development of an online pre-placement module through the University's Curriculum Enhancement Project fund.

Two project outcomes have been agreed for the proposed online pre-placement module:

The module must link with the existing database being used by the PLSU.

The module must have wider impact / transferability so that it can be adapted and used by other Faculties.

This module will sit within a community site on Blackboard and be available to all students within the Faculty. It was inspired by an online pre-placement module developed by the Department of the Built Environment.

Resources from the placement preparation presentations delivered by the PLSU will be included within the module, along with other relevant generic resources including pre-placement paperwork documents. A core quiz based on the LJMU Placement Code of Practice will be developed which will apply to all students within the Faculty who go out on placement as part of their programme. Additional quizzes could be developed to add more specific programme related testing. Results could then be incorporated into weekly module reports that are sent to module leaders by the PLSU and report on the pre-placement requirements.

The proposal is for two interns over a 10 week period. One intern to work on the database, whilst the other to develop the quizzes.

Resourcing in the Placement Learning Support Unit

There has been progress made with the resourcing in the PLSU. Two Work Based Learning Officers have been advertised and applications closed on Monday 15th February 2016. Shortlisting for the roles will begin shortly. This will mean long awaited support for the School of Pharmacy and Biomolecular Sciences.

Placements

The difficulties of sourcing placements for Work Based Learning modules at both UG and PG level is still an ongoing concern. Increasing numbers of students across all levels without additional time allowance for academics or other supporting resources to increase the numbers of placements available and maintain relations with Placement Providers is a challenge.

Another continued concern with placements is their timing. There are ongoing discussions to ensure that placements are not clustered together and there is sufficient time allocated to sourcing and managing the administration of placements. Projected numbers of students that will be going on placement need to be considered (particularly in relation to changes in current programmes or the development of new programmes), alongside the Faculty resource that is available to support the administration of the pre-placement duty of care documents. Further discussions need to be carried out with programme and module leaders.

WOWCC Updates

Lisa O'Farrell was welcomed back to SPEP!

It has been a busy semester for the WOWCC and the uptake for events has been good. For

the 'Pre-Registration Pharmacy Event' on the 17th February 2016 there were 19 employers present and 130 students attended. On the 24th February 2016 a 'Careers in Therapeutic Radiography' event was held and 25 students attended. There are a range of employer based events that are confirmed for this semester which are relevant to undergraduates from all 3 Schools.

The WOWCC are aiming to arrange more bespoke events for students. The employer based events and new contacts that come from these could provide placement opportunities for students, particularly in support of placement modules.

Some concerns have been raised concerning how the PG open day is viewed by students; that it is externally facing and our own students may not see it as relevant to them. The WOWCC could help to support a local bespoke PG day for internal MSc applicants. There was also a suggestion that the PG open day could be put onto timetables to ensure that current UG students are made aware that the event is relevant to them.

Requests for any events that may benefit students for the next academic year can be sent directly to Lisa O'Farrell.

Laura Aldridge is currently undertaking a HESA careers research project, and as such, Hayley Fallon has now taken over supporting the School of Natural Sciences and Psychology.

SPEP Circulation List

It has been decided that all of the Faculty's Employability Champions will be added to the SPEP circulation list so that they have access to current Faculty discussions with regard to employability. This will also give Employability Champions the option to attend future SPEP meetings but attendance is not compulsory.

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Should you have any information you wish to feed back to the Science Placements and Employability Panel, good practice you would like to share or any input with regard to the items mentioned above please contact your School Representative or Sarah Dutton.

Date of the next Science Placements and Employability Group Meeting: **TBC**