# ENhance Quick Guides

Edinburgh Napier UNIVERSITY

Department of
Learning & Teaching
Enhancement

Theme: Employability

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What is Employability in the curriculum?

Employability is a lifelong process which is applicable to all students, develops knowledge, behaviours, attitudes, and attributes and requires partnership working across the university (Advance HE, 2024). At Edinburgh Napier, our working definition of employability focuses on developing our students' expertise and skills in a manner that enables them to contribute to our society, apply their learning to real-world scenarios, and graduate into the world with confidence and professionalism.
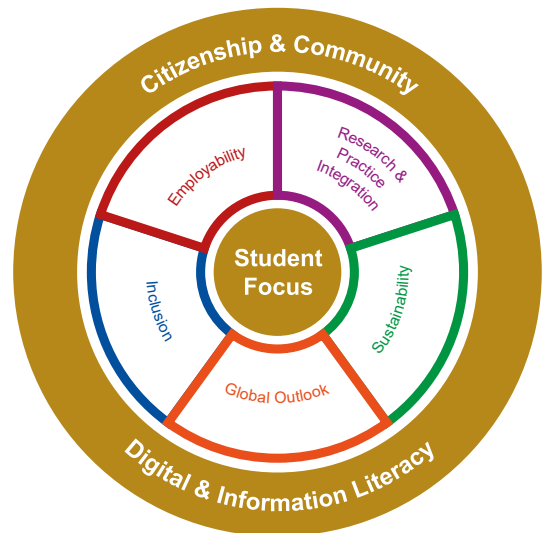
Why is Employability important in Learning & Teaching?

Employability in learning and teaching is important as it links to retention, student success, successful transitions and, in the long term, benefits the global, national and local economy (Advance HE, 2019). Graduate employability is also one of Edinburgh Napier's key strategic priorities. In line with 'Shaping Our Future: Driving Distinctiveness' strategy, the university has been positioning a range of new initiatives and areas which have links to shaping greater practice around employability and our external reputation as the home of difference makers.

The QAA suggests that appropriately planned opportunities on employability that support students to develop reflective practice, resilience, make meaning of situations and expose them to unfamiliar settings can link to greater subject learning which is, in turn, relates to positive retention (Gunn, Bell & Kafmann, 2010). Embedding employability can support with enhancing graduate outcomes and contribute to meeting the needs of employers by developing graduates with essential competencies; support students to enhance their career prospects and contribute positively to the economy (Advance HE, 2024).

Tips to help you embed Employability in curricula:

At ENU we work to embed employability so all students can benefit, not just those who can participate in extra-curricular activities or awards. The second pillar of the ENU Employability Strategy identifies the need to 'ensure tailored employability [is] an integral part of all students' education'.

To successfully embed employability it is recommended that it is "...embedded into all aspects of education, from the curriculum to the wider student experience" (Advance HE, 2024, p2) and involves "... partnership between internal and external stakeholders" (Advance HE, 2024, p3).

There are a wide range of ways to embed employability including the delivery of credit bearing live projects and placements which can be optional or part of the core curriculum; 'extracting' and emphasising the knowledge, skills and experience inherent in the module or focusing learning outcomes, teaching methods and assessment on employability (Winter, 2023). Other options include the delivery of non-credit bearing compulsory programmes which provide participants the opportunity to develop desired employability attributes. A programme may have a mixture of these approaches.

All these approaches can be found in different programmes at Edinburgh Napier University and some case-studies are listed below:

- The Placement is optional in the BA (Hons) International Festival & Event Management but a Live Project has been developed for those who unable to complete a placement to ensure that this work-based learning is accessible for all students.
- Placements form a compulsory part of the PG Cert Career Guidance and Development.
- The programme Leader and Career Development Consultant worked together to embed career development learning in the MSc Healthcare Management.
- The Employability Skills Programme (now 'My Development in TBS') is part of the UG curriculum in TBS. It is non-credit beating and non-optional and provides employability learning for all students. Completion of the programme appears in the student academic transcript each year.

Prompt statements/questions

The following prompt statements should help you begin to sketch out how you can embed this theme in your programme(s), or evidence how you do this already.

I want to support my students to EXPLORE SELF AND CAREER OPTIONS

Tool	How
Online career resources offer an insight into and encourage reflection on personality style; self; motivations and values: ▪ Career Assessments ▪ Career Planner | What job should I do? | Prospects.ac.uk	Reports provided by these tools could be used in tutorials, discussions, reflective assessment etc. to: ▪ highlight the flexible nature of degree programmes and graduate career paths ▪ encourage students to consider what skills and qualifications they might need to develop or obtain. ▪ Develop self-awareness and career paths that might be of interest.
CareerEDGE+ personal development tool	CareerEDGE+ is a personal development tool that can be used to support students to identify possible areas for development.' Apologies that this text was missing from the original version.
Online labour market information resources: ▪ Prospects Job Profiles ▪ targetjobs job descriptions ▪ Prospects Sector Profiles ▪ What can I do with my degree? | Prospects.ac.uk ▪ Professional bodies and associations	Professional bodies, role and sector profiles, case studies, alumni and external speakers can provide information on skills, qualities and qualifications needed. Some career paths might require postgraduate study. These tools allow students to evaluate their academic performance, career aspirations and broaden horizons.
External speakers, alumni input, case studies	Alumni destinations can be used to highlight the range of options available. Alumni input could include: ▪ Case studies ▪ Quotes ▪ Panel sessions ▪ Recorded videos
Career fairs/events	Attendance at a career fair and engagement with employers could provide the basis of a tutorial discussion and the sharing of information on available opportunities.

I want to support my students to GAIN EXPERIENCE AND PLAN	
Tool	**How**
Develop experience: ▪ Forage - Virtual self-paced experience programmes of 5 – 6 hours have been developed by Forage in partnership with industry. These are free of charge to all ENU students.	Experience can support students to apply theory and knowledge to real-world situations and problems. Forage provide coursework examples and downloadable guidance on how Forage can be integrated or used as an assessment within a class here.
▪ Placements/Live Project - Many students have the opportunity to undertake a placement within their academic programme. Student Futures support a range of placement modules across the University ranging from 20 to 120 credit modules.	If you're planning for a new placement or want support for an existing one, please contact the Placement Coordinator in your School. Contact details for the team can be found here. A range of digital tools have been developed to support placement preparation. There are online placement preparation programmes for each programme with an embedded placement. Students can work through these at their own pace or the activities could be incorporated into tutorials or discussions.
▪ Volunteering or internships	Encourage students to explore their interests beyond the classroom via volunteering or internships.
Use online labour market information resources: ▪ Prospects Job Profiles ▪ targetjobs job descriptions ▪ Prospects Sector Profiles ▪ What can I do with my degree? | Prospects.ac.uk ▪ Professional bodies and associations Hear from industry: Employer panels/alumni	Online resources, speakers and hearing from alumni can support students to understand the connections between their degree and industry, how the skills they are developing can be applied in a professional context, plan their career development and consider the goals and actions they want to set.
Develop personal and professional skills: My Development/Student Futures Skills Development Resources	Development resources can support with goal-setting, action planning and developing enterprise and employability skills.

I want to support my students to GAIN EXPERIENCE AND PLAN	
Programme assessment e.g.: Final year dissertation or project/logbooks/ journals/reflective portfolio	Dissertation, projects and log books allow for development and reflection of skills and knowledge.

I want to support my students to APPLY	
Tool	**How**
Application Resources: • Skills Record CV and Cover Letters: • CV Builder • Student Futures CV Guide • CV360 • Cover Letter Builder Psychometric Tests: • Aptitude Tests Assessment Centres: • Assessment Centres Interviews: • Interview360 • Answering questions using the STARR technique	Designing an assessment which requires completion of an application resource(s) and reflection on the process and application of their learning may support students to prepare for employer selection processes.

Further Resources/References

Advance HE (2019) Essential Frameworks for Enhancing Student Success. Available at: Enhancing Student Success in Higher Education Framework.pdf (advance-he.ac.uk)

Advance HE (2024) Framework for Embedding Employability in Higher Education. Available at: https://advance-he.ac.uk/knowledge-hub/framework-embedding-employability-higher-education-0?_cldee=mmA5NHOjyHEx2bP9vcCWXimQkZUi7IuAO9CVCp0nhESVBFKYwSsce6IEXDhcPVcb&recipientid=contact-1a2b27f69709ec11b6e5000d3a86d537-075e6892c16a4e37a02a884349f8cfc9&utm_source=ClickDimensions&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=global-global-tal-studentsuccessfw-emplaunch-jan24&esid=030b4ce8-bdab-ee11-be37-002248c6f9d0#form

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Gunn, V., Bell, S. & Kafmann, K. (2010) Thinking strategically about employability and graduate attributes: Universities and enhancing learning for beyond university. Available at: https://www.qaa.ac.uk/docs/qaas/focus-on/thinking-strategically-about-employability-and-graduate-attributes.pdf?sfvrsn=2b11c081_6.

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