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The Discourse of Careers Services: A Corpus-Based Critical Discourse Analysis of UK University Websites

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A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements of the
University of Sunderland for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

December 2017

Acknowledgements

First of all, I would like to express my deepest appreciation, admiration, and gratitude to my teachers and supervisors, Dr Michael Pearce and Professor Angela Smith, for their support and guidance during my undergraduate and postgraduate studies at the University of Sunderland. Their linguistic modules introduced me to critical discourse analysis and corpus linguistics. I am indebted for their advice, constructive meetings, out-of-hours emails, critical feedback, and constant encouragement and support throughout my studies.

I also wish to acknowledge the Faculty of Education and Society at the University of Sunderland and specifically the Culture Beacon for its financial support and for making this research project possible. Furthermore, I owe my deepest thanks to Dr Fritz Wefelmeyer, Dr Geoffrey Nash, Dr Neil Johnson, Dr Kim Gilligan, Professor Peter Rushton, and Dr Charlotte Taylor for their constructive feedback and advice.

Finally, I would like to thank my family and friends, in Greece and the UK, for their constant support, understanding, and comforting words. My mother and brother, who are always present, show their unconditional love and support no matter how unusual my ideas/decisions may seem to others. Most importantly, writing this thesis would have been almost impossible without the support and endless love of my best friend, co-traveller, partner, and husband, Giorgos.

Abstract

This thesis examines the discourse of careers services in UK university websites. The notion of employability has been presented and promoted by powerful groups, such as governments, organisations, the media, employers, and higher education institutions, as the remedy to the social problem of unemployment. Careers services in UK universities were given the role of ‘expert’ professionals who are there to support and guide students towards developing their employability and skills. This study examined the ideas and messages reproduced and promoted by the careers services, which could affect the students’ understanding of the ‘job market’ and their role in it.

The chosen methodology, that is corpus-based critical discourse analysis, combined qualitative and quantitative methods and tools for the analysis of 2.6 million words deriving from 58 UK universities’ websites, and more specifically the careers services sections.

In general, this thesis highlights some of the problematic, common-sense ideas that are being promoted by these services and encourages the denaturalisation of the careers services’ discourse. The main argument is that the language used by the careers services in UK universities reproduces and promotes neoliberal ideology. The analysis shows that higher education students are encouraged to develop ‘job-hunting techniques’ and are presented as responsible for their own ‘survival’ in a ‘fiercely competitive job market’. The notion of employability is promoted as the main solution to this highly problematic ‘reality’. The services advertise that they ‘know’ what employers are looking for from prospective employees and claim that they can ‘help’ students with their job search. The close analysis of linguistic data reveals that these services act as the ‘enablers’ of the students’ self-beneficiary action. In addition, besides their role as careers counsellors, the services’ use of language demonstrates their involvement in the therapeutic field.

Finally, the language used by post-1992 and Russell Group universities was found to be quite similar. There are, however, some differences that could be viewed as signs of competition between these two university ‘groups’ and a preference of the job market towards a particular ‘group’ of graduates from elite institutions.

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Table of Abbreviations

ADJ	Adjective
AGCAS	Association of Graduate Careers Advisory Services
BA	Bachelor of Arts
BIS	Department for Business, Innovation and Skills
BNC	British National Corpus
CADS	Corpus-Assisted Discourse Studies
CBI	Confederation of British Industry
CDA	Critical Discourse Analysis
CDI	Career Development Institute
CEDEFOP	European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training
CL	Corpus Linguistics
CMS	Critical Management Studies
CMT	Conceptual Metaphor Theory
COCA	Corpus of Contemporary American English
CPTF	Careers Profession Task Force
CS	Careers Services
CV	Curriculum Vitae
CVCP	Committee of Vice-Chancellors and Principals
CWBC	Corpus of Written English Creole
DHA	Discourse-Historical Approach
DLHE	Destination of Leavers from Higher Education
EU	European Union
HE	Higher Education
HEA	Higher Education Academy
HEFCE	Higher Education Funding Council for England
HEI	Higher Education Institutions
ICLE	International Corpus of Learner English
ICT	Information and Communications Technology
IT	Information technology
KIS	Key Information Set
KWIC	Keyword in Context
LL	Log-Likelihood
LMI	Labour Market Information
LSE	London School of Economics
MI	Mutual Information
MICASE	Michigan Corpus of Academic Spoken English
NACUE	National Consortium of University Entrepreneurs
NCGE	National Council for Graduate Entrepreneurship
NOW	News on the Web
NP	Noun Phrase
NSS	National Students Survey
NUS	National University of Singapore
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OED	Oxford English Dictionary
P92	Post-1992 (universities)

PDP	Personal Development Plan
PP	Prepositional Phrase
QAA	Quality Assurance Agency
REF	Research Excellence Framework
RG	Russell Group (universities)
RQ	Research Question
SFG	Systemic Functional Grammar
SFL	Systemic Functional Linguistics
STEM	Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics
SUM	Summary
SWOT	Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats
TEC	Translational English Corpus
TEF	Teaching Excellence Framework
UK	United Kingdom
USA	United States of America
VAT	Value Added Tax

Chapter 1. Introduction

The early 1980s in the UK is associated with the government's shift towards a neoliberal ideology promoted by the Thatcher government which closed down the heavy industries of ship-building, coal-mining, and steel-making and replaced it in the mid-1980s with the service sector of banking, retail, call centres, and emerging new technologies. The reforms continued with the health and education services, housing, social and legal services, and this 'legacy' was passed on to the next governments of John Major, Tony Blair (Tomlinson, 2005, p.4), the 2010 coalition government, and the current conservative government. The current economic crisis, which began in 2008, reinforced and intensified the neoliberal ideologies and their effects on society.

The marketisation of higher education in the UK has been associated with the successive governments' approaches to capitalism through liberalising markets and creating a competitive society. As Giroux (2014, p.1) points out, since the 1970's 'neoliberalism or free-market fundamentalism has become not only a much-vaunted ideology that now shapes all aspects of life [...] but also a predatory global phenomenon'. Amongst many things, neoliberal ideology promotes privatisation, commodification, and deregulation. Undoubtedly, universities are 'caught up in the changing relationship between the economy and non-economic areas of life, and in the tendency of the former to colonize the latter' (Fairclough, 2001, p.30). The Higher Education (HE) scene in the UK changed dramatically with the increase of student numbers which led to more graduates entering the 'job market' and a large number of educational reforms that were gradually introduced by all governments. Although the governments and the politicians that enable these educational reforms (examples of which are discussed in chapter 2) defend their necessity due to the 'unavoidable' current economic climate, for some people, mostly academics, these reforms are considered an attack on HE. The result from this 'attack' is the universities' 'privatization, intensive marketization, rampant financialization and a challenge to the very notion of the university as a mechanism for addressing social inequality and facilitating the circulation of knowledge whether or not it has immediate practical consequences' (Freedman, 2011, p.2).

The marketisation of HE is a topic that has been widely discussed and criticised especially within academia. An enormous literature has been produced over the years by academics, who are trying to capture the changes and connect these to each country's socio-political and economic affairs. As Brown and Carasso (2013, p.123) note, 'the literature on the marketization of higher education is extensive and becoming even more so almost by the minute'. There have been arguments about whether HE's primary role 'should be liberal, academic and for the public good' (Williams, 2013, p.40), or more vocationally focused. One thing is for sure, 'the UK has clearly moved in a market direction since 1979' (Brown and Carasso, 2013, p.126).

Since the early 1980s, UK governments have introduced numerous reforms to the educational system. These governments' stance agrees with Friedman's point who suggested that 'the only way that good *social* ends can be achieved is to leave individuals to compete through markets to get what they *individually* want' (Couldry, 2011, p.38, original italics). Quite similarly, emphasis on the individual was one of the main points presented in the Browne Report which states that 'The primary beneficiary of higher education is the individual student' (2010, p.54). HE students are presented in this report as 'powerful' customers who are in need of employability skills.

In more recent years, and especially since the increase in tuition fees in 2012, students have been urged 'to focus solely upon developing private employability skills' (Williams, 2013, p.72). The concept of employability is an extension of neoliberal values that managed, with the support of dominant groups, such as economic and political unions (EU), official agencies (for example, the European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training (CEDEFOP)), governments, business organisations, employers, HE institutions, and the media, to enter and establish itself as a naturally occurring phenomenon within academia. Such organisations and agencies emphasise the development of employability skills as necessary for those who wish to succeed in the 'global graduate job market'.

A key factor in the establishment of employability in UK higher education was the introduction of undergraduate tuition fees. When fees were introduced in 1998 (£1,100), and then increased to £3,000 in 2006, these fees were 'additional funding' whereas the 2010 reform introduced the 'replacement funding' aiming to

remove the central block grant fully to universities (McGettigan, 2013, p.25). While prospective HE students and their parents are being ensured that their money will have value, current students are encouraged to become employable, ‘make the most of [their] time’ at university and ‘land [their] dream job’. Specifically, UK universities advertise, through their *careers and employability* services, their ability to assist and guide HE students towards becoming employable during their time at university.

1. Why examine the discourse of careers services?

When people decide to use a service, there is a problem that needs to be addressed. Higher education students visit careers services in person or online to ask for assistance, for example, with job searching, writing CVs and applications or preparing for an interview. Also, when students are invited for an interview or at an assessment centre, they might ask assistance with preparing for such events or understanding the procedure and what is expected of them. This is due to the difficulty some students face in finding employment after graduation. A quick search of online newspapers shows articles that stress HE graduates’ struggle to find employment (see, for example, Espinoza, 2015 and Viña, 2016). Similar evidence can be found in *The Student Room*, an online student community, with discussions initiated by HE students entitled, for instance, ‘Do you know what career you want to do or [are] you still clueless?’, ‘Keeping yourself occupied while job hunting’, ‘I feel so unemployable’, and ‘Struggling To Find A Job After Uni’ (*The Student Room*, 2017).

A regularly used expression is: ‘a degree is not/no longer enough’ (Berntzen, 2012; Okorie, 2016; Ortlieb, 2015). Young people are told that they need to develop skills and become employable should they wish to succeed in the competitive job market. As Mautner notes, ‘industry, politics, and the media are vociferous in their demand for more “employable” graduates’ (2010, p.81). UK universities promote their ability to assist and guide students towards becoming employable during their time at university. Some even state that the employability of their graduates is their ‘priority’, or ‘central’ to their institutions’ academic approach (Chapter 6). Thus, universities have accepted the role of preparing students for the ‘world of work’. But what is employability?

As we will see in chapter 2, a popular definition regularly used in employability books, research articles, and the careers services (CSs) websites, states that employability is ‘a set of achievements’ that can help graduates ‘gain employment and be successful in their chosen occupations’ (Yorke, 2006, p.8). However, a critical interpretation of this notion sees employability as a problematic concept that reinforces the ‘new’ social arrangement where the state and employers are not responsible for the citizen’s well-being and prosperity (Chertkovskaya et al., 2013). On the contrary, individuals are expected to develop, enhance, improve, or update their skills, become flexible, adaptable, and employable.

The notion of employability has been promoted by UK governments and accepted by Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) (see chapter 2). One of the ways students learn about the idea of becoming employable while at university is through the CSs. Careers staff are given the roles of the ‘expert’ professionals who are there to support and guide students towards developing their employability skills. In brief, the CSs suggest that if HE students focus on ‘gaining’, ‘developing’, ‘enhancing’, ‘improving’ their skills while at university, they will become more employable and earn an advantage in ‘securing’ a job after graduation. Employability is thus presented as a remedy to the social problem of unemployment. Careers services in UK HEIs have direct access to students who are trying to figure out how to ‘succeed’ in this stressful and insecure graduate ‘job market’. The language used by the services can affect the way HE students view the job-seeking ‘reality’ and their role in it. Thus, due to the CSs’ influential role and the possible consequences on the students’ perception of ‘reality’, it is essential to look closely at the discourse of CSs.

2. The aim and position of the thesis

As previously mentioned, HE students are expected to ‘invest’ their time at university in getting prepared for the transition from HE to the workplace. This thesis aims to explore the main issues that evolve around the practices of CSs and advisers, such as the representation of the job-searching reality, competition in the ‘graduate job market’, the notion of ‘employability’, the focus on skills development, and the nature of the CSs’ role(s).

The discourse of employability and skills has been touched upon by critical discourse analysts. However, a thorough analysis of this topic has not been conducted before. This thesis presents some studies that mention this topic and points out that the concept of employability and skills has been of major interest in other disciplines, such as Education and Critical Management Studies. In linguistic studies, employability and skills are mentioned briefly as one of the results of the marketised and entrepreneurial university and its effects on students (for example, Mayr, 2008; Mulderrig, 2012; Fairclough, 2015). These studies concentrate on the colonisation of academia by market forces and the changes in academic discourse and the institutions' role.

The approach adopted in this thesis is in line with the general critical view taken by critical discourse analysts on the marketisation of HE (as displayed in chapter 4), and the pervasive nature of market forces, and uses the findings from previous research to inform the discussion of the corpus-based critical discourse analysis. It also considers the language used by careers services of vital importance, as it is one of the services where students face directly the neoliberal 'reality'. Thus, the main aim is to explore the discourse used by the CSs and also understand their role(s) inside academia. This research project is the first systematic and in-depth linguistic analysis of the careers services' sector in UK HEIs. Thus, this thesis intends to fill in this gap. Also, I have not come across any other similar studies in other countries. However, filling in a gap in the academic literature is not the only reason for conducting this research project. Understanding the role of careers services and the consequences of their linguistic choices on the students' perception and interpretation of the 'job market' and general employment 'reality' is important, as it can highlight any problematic issues and raise awareness that will, ideally, in time, bring about social change.

To examine the discourse of careers services, I use a combination of critical discourse analysis (CDA) and corpus linguistics (CL) methods and tools. The study of language and its use in contemporary capitalism can unveil the promotion and circulation of ideologies by powerful groups that intend to promote their interests, influence people's perception of how the world works, and affect their choices and actions. As Fairclough and Wodak (1997, p.258) explain, CDA sees discourse as a form of 'social practice'. Social practice is further explained as a 'social activity' (Chiapello and Fairclough, 2002, p.193), such as a career

consultation or an online text produced and published by a careers service on a website. Those who choose to do discourse analysis accept that ‘language shapes reality rather than simply mirroring it’ (Mautner, 2016, p.12). So, there is a dialectical relationship between language use and ‘reality’. In addition, ‘discursive practices may have major ideological effects: that is, they can help produce and reproduce unequal power relations’ (Fairclough and Wodak, 1997, p.258) between powerful and powerless groups, such as employers and their prospective employees. Unequal power relations often employ linguistic strategies that can make certain ideologies appear as ‘normal’ or ‘common sense’. CDA aims to unravel or ‘denaturalise’ ideologies or “to investigate how ideologies can become frozen in language and find ways to break the ice” (Bloor and Bloor, 2007, cited in Mautner, 2010, pp.33–34).

For example, Mautner notes that: ‘The language of the market is now so fully integrated into everyday text and talk that it can easily go unnoticed’ (2010, p.2). Universities are described as ‘entrepreneurial’, they ‘produce’ entrepreneurial graduates, they have strategic goals and plans. HE students are often described as ‘paying customers’ who are looking for courses and degrees that offer ‘value for money’. Graduates are presented as ‘employable’ or ‘work-ready’, while some universities instruct their students to ‘sell themselves’ to employers (as shown in chapter 6).

My methodology is corpus-based critical discourse analysis. As Baker notes, we use corpora and corpus processes ‘to uncover linguistic patterns which can enable us to make sense of the ways language is used in the construction of discourses’ (2006, p.1). The use of CL software, tools, and methods allows the exploration and examination of a large number of electronically encoded linguistic texts. I collected the data and built my corpus, the Careers and Employability Web pages Corpus (CEW15), in 2015. It consists of 2.6 million words deriving from 58 UK university websites and, in particular, their careers (and employability) services web pages. For reasons explained in chapter 5, I have chosen to collect texts from 24 Russell Group and 34 post-1992 (ex-polytechnics) universities. University websites have become huge databases of information for prospective and current students, accommodating multiple discourses. Their content is significant not only because it targets prospective or current students, but because it also expresses the universities’ formal views on various matters

surrounding issues of importance for this thesis, such as the ‘job market’ or the notion of employability.

3. Research questions

As the issue of employment is of significance to students who choose to ‘invest’ in their HE, this study aims to examine whether the ideas and messages disseminated from these services could affect the students’ understanding of the ‘job market’ and the workplace, and their role in it. For this reason, I will be looking at the CSs’ description of the ‘world of work’, the notion of employability, and I will also focus on the services and advisers’ professional role. In addition, I have added a comparative angle to the analysis by observing the possible similarities and differences in the language used by two university ‘groups’, namely the Russell Group and post-1992 groups. The reasons for the selection of these two university groups are explained in chapters 5 and 8.

Thus, the overarching research question is: *How do the careers services use language to inform and support their clients?* The following three sub-questions aim to assist in answering the central question in the three analytical chapters:

RQ 1. What kind of job-seeking ‘reality’ is being presented by the CSs to their users? (Chapter 6),

RQ 2. What is the nature of the careers services’ professional role? (Chapter 7),

RQ 3. Are there any similarities and differences in the language used by Russell Group and post-1992 universities’ careers services? (Chapter 8).

The following section provides an overview of the thesis’s chapters.

4. Overview of the thesis

The exploration of the discourse of careers services develops around the theoretical, recent historical, economic, and social background that has led to the development and progression of CSs in UK universities. This study starts with a policy and literature review on the marketisation of HE in the UK. In particular, chapter 2 gives an overview of HE policy since the 1980s and focuses on topics

that emerge from these documents, such as the abolition of the binary line with the *Higher and Further Education Act* (1992), the introduction of tuitions fees, competition between HEIs, the representation of a ‘competitive’ world reality, and the representation of students as customers. The role of CSs’ staff is particularly emphasised in recent HE policy and is also considered vital for the development of the students’ future course. Thus, this part of the thesis also examines the CSs’ role, as presented in HE policy and the services’ professional organisation. It also explores one of the most central notions for this thesis, namely employability and its meaning.

Chapter 3 presents the theoretical background. It starts with an introduction of ‘social power’ and the two traditions of ‘power’, namely the ‘mainstream’ and the ‘second-stream’. The ‘second-stream’ tradition represents the ‘productive’ side of power (Scott, 2001), which is of particular importance for the understanding of the CSs’ role(s). Other important concepts introduced and discussed in this chapter include ‘ideology’, ‘hegemony’ and ‘expertise’. The chapter ends with an introduction of ‘discourse’, its ‘desire’ to move between the micro and macro levels (Mautner, 2016, p.17), and its importance in the construction of ‘realities’.

The next chapter (Chapter 4), explores the linguistic background this thesis uses for the analysis of the data. It is centred around critical discourse analysis, corpus linguistics, and their synergy. Emphasis is also given to Halliday’s Systemic Functional Grammar (1994), van Leeuwen’s work on social actors (2008), and other linguistic theories and concepts (technologisation of discourse, presuppositions and assumptions, and metaphors), which contribute to the explanation and interpretation of the results. This chapter also provides an overview of previous studies using CL and/or CDA for the examination of the marketisation of HE and the notion of employability. In general, this part of the thesis demonstrates the effectiveness of the CDA and CL synergy and shows that the discourse of CSs in UK universities has not been examined before.

Chapter 5 discusses the selection of careers services for the creation of the CEW15 corpus and its division in two sub-corpora (the Russell Group and post-1992 corpora). In particular, this chapter explains the reasons for the selection of university websites as the primary source of data for the linguistic analysis and provides an overview of the data selection process, the corpus design,

construction, and some methodological issues relating to its creation. The methods and tools utilised for the linguistic analysis of the CSs corpus are also introduced in this chapter. In addition, there is a discussion on the corpus-based discourse analytical stages that combine quantitative and qualitative linguistic analysis before it moves on to present the framework for each analytical chapter.

The analysis of the data evolves around three major themes: (i) the representation of the job market and the notion of employability (Chapter 6), (ii) the careers services and advisers' professional role(s) inside academia (Chapter 7), and (iii) the similarities and differences in the language used by post-1992 and Russell Group CSs (Chapter 8). Specifically, chapter 6 explores the construction and representation of the job-searching 'reality', the importance of the notion of employability, and the development of skills. In chapter 7, we look closely at the CSs (their professional titles, the places in which they act, and their involvement in the educational part of HE), the resources and tools offered to their users, their focus on 'helping' HE students, and the development of a therapeutic culture and discourse. In addition, since HEIs in the UK are not a homogenous group, chapter 8 compares two university groups that are described in the literature as 'prestigious', 'elite', 'old', and 'research-led' (the Russell Group), and 'newer', 'less prestigious', or 'ex-polytechnics' (the post-1992 group).

In the final part of the thesis (Chapter 9), there is a general discussion of the major issues raised by the corpus-based critical discourse analysis. This is where the linguistic analysis meets critique in order to point out the general consequences of the CSs' use of language.

Chapter 2. HE in the post-welfare society

1. Introduction

This chapter starts with an examination of the marketisation of HE in the UK and then moves to the abolition of the binary line in HEIs, the introduction of undergraduate tuition fees in 1998, and the rises in 2006 and 2012. The idea of student ‘choice’ is then discussed with an emphasis on its effects on competition between the different university ‘groups’. Furthermore, there is a discussion on the governments’ representation of a ‘competitive’ reality and the role of HE, in addition to the representation of students as customers and as ‘powerful’ actors. As the literature review shows, the role of careers advisers and services in HEIs is considered crucial for the students’ development. Thus, what follows is an examination of the CSs’ representation in government policy and assigned reports and their role within HEIs. The final section introduces the notion of employability and explores its meaning.

2. Towards the marketisation of HE

The marketisation of HE has been widely examined over the last four decades, and an extensive literature was and is still being produced. According to Brown and Carasso (2013, p.2), there has been a ‘long process of marketization under which, through the policies of successive governments of all political parties since 1979, British Higher Education [...] has increasingly been provided on market or “quasi-market” lines’. Although the marketisation of HE is a global phenomenon, it has to be noted that the United Kingdom is one of the ‘first countries, after the US, to introduce market conditions in higher education’ (William, 2011, p.74). The UK ‘has gone further than most in developing mechanisms to promote market behaviour among HEIs, students and other consumers of higher education services’ (*ibid*). Businesses and employers are included in the category of ‘other consumers’ of HE services.

Even though universities in the UK are ‘legally independent from the national governments of England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland’, and thus operate as institutions autonomously, ‘the governments of the UK still exercise a considerable degree of influence over institutions’ (William, 2011,

pp.74–75), mostly through the allocation of funding and the regulation and evaluation of main HE activities, such as research (REF) and teaching (TEF). Thus, in reality, the government and its intermediary bodies and agencies, ‘attempt to steer institutions in the direction of government policy’ (William, 2011, p.75). For this reason, it is necessary to take into consideration the position taken by the UK governments and the ideology they express.

This chapter aims to review the key educational acts and policies produced in the UK since the 1980s. Over the last 20 years, there have been published more ‘government documents on the topic of HE’ than there ‘were published in total up to the Second World War’ (Williams, 2013, p.43). These government practices describe the gradual transition of universities towards the ‘market society’. As Mautner (2010, p.7) explains, there are many ‘general trends, such as de-regulation, competition, partial withdrawal of the state and increasing dependence of private-sector funding’, that ‘have directly impacted on universities, triggering socio-cultural transformations that are widespread and reach deep’. This chapter presents examples of such market ‘trends’, as promoted by governments in the UK, in educational policy since the early 1980s. We will explore HE’s shift to ‘managerialism’, and its colonisation by ‘market forces’ and the ‘market economy’, and the role of careers services within HEIs. Emphasis is placed on the policy documents produced by UK governments. As the legal authority of this country, the discourse produced and disseminated by the government has the power to *legitimise* ideologies and *naturalise* the practices of certain social groups (Chapter 3). As will be shown shortly, one of these groups are the careers services within HEIs.

3. HE Policy since the 1980s

As Silver (1990, p.94, cited in Tomlinson, 2005, p.40) notes, universities ‘suffered under a combination of cuts and greater government control in 1981, with reductions in student numbers and staffing’ which has led them to ‘greater industrial and commercial relevant, responsiveness to economic needs and the world of business’. The ‘financial uncertainty’ of the time and ‘national economic difficulties’ has affected the funding universities received as the ‘quinquennial system has been abandoned since the mid-1970s’ (Pratt and Lockwood, 1985,

cited in Tight, 2009, p.137). This situation led to an investigation of universities' existing management practices which was fulfilled with the Jarratt Report in 1985.

The Jarratt committee, which was 'led by an industrialist', carried out 'efficiency studies of the management of six universities' and it was 'one of the first bodies in the UK to refer to students as "the university's customers"' (Tight, 2009, p.137). As the Jarratt committee was led by a businessman, the results of the investigation indicated the need for 'radical changes' in UK HEIs and 'the adoption of private sector management practices' (Tight, 2009, p.138). Thus, efficient management and planning were one of the key recommendations of the Jarratt Report in addition to the 'need for reliable and consistent performance indicators' (*ibid*). The report also commented on the role of Vice-Chancellors. Vice-Chancellors were presented as 'powerless' actors or 'scholars', executing the will of academic groups instead of acting as 'leaders' (CVCP (The Jarratt Report), 1984, pp.26–27). The committee expressed the necessity of transforming the scholar Vice-Chancellor to the business-focused role of 'chief executive' that would be responsible for the management of the institution (*ibid*).

The Jarratt Report was clearly an example of the early stages of 'managerialism' introduced in UK HEIs. As Anderson (2008, p.251, cited in Mautner, 2010, p.19) notes, managerialism is "the introduction of private sector management practices to public sector institutions". The report noted that the shift to 'managerialism' was rising and considered vital for the future of HEIs. There is also an indication that the 'transformation' from the educational to the business model would 'spread' and be followed by other academic staff in managerial positions, such as Pro-Vice-Chancellors. So, since the 1980s, universities were forced into adopting managerial methods and staff were urged to change their roles from academics to entrepreneurs. As far as the application of these suggestions, the Jarratt Report was taken into serious consideration by universities which responded 'quickly at national level' to adopt the suggested changes in management (Tight, 2009, p.139).

3.1 The abolition of the binary line

The *Further and Higher Education Act* (1992) is considered a turning point in the history of HEIs in the UK. Two of the most important changes brought with this Act include: (a) the creation of a unified funding council, the 'centrally controlled

Higher Education Funding Council for England' (HEFCE), which aimed to 'distribute money to universities in England and Wales and hold them accountable for spending', and (b) the abolition of the 'binary' line between polytechnics and universities (Tomlinson, 2005, p.65). This development allowed ex-polytechnics and some HE colleges – called 'new universities' at the time – to become HE degree awarding bodies, but it also meant that there would be competition between the 'new' the 'old' universities for state funding. Very soon a clear division between the two groups emerged. As Tomlinson (*ibid*) notes, 'A quick pecking order quickly appeared among the universities', the Vice-Chancellors of the 'old' and research-focused universities met and decided to create a group, called the Russell Group after the hotel they met. Competition between university groups will be examined in section 3.3. Before that, however, it is necessary to discuss the introduction and rise of undergraduate tuition fees.

3.2 The introduction and rises of undergraduate tuition fees

In 1996, the conservative government assigned a committee chaired by Ron Dearing to provide recommendations on 'how the purposes, shape, structure, size and funding of higher education, including support for students, should develop to meet the needs of the United Kingdom over the next 20 years' (Dearing, 1997, p.3). As a result, the report recommended that the participation of young people in HE should be raised to 45 percent (Dearing, 1997, p.97). This suggestion was justified as a response to 'increased demand for higher education' (Dearing, 1997, p.100). The committee also 'acknowledged and confirmed the wider public benefits of higher education which justified continuing state involvement in funding' (Brown and Carasso, 2013, p.83). However, due to 'evidence' that was taken into consideration, it was deemed necessary to introduce the 'contribution by graduates in work to their tuition' (Dearing, 1997, p.321). It is also interesting to note that the committee recommended the government's 'planned' shift 'away from block grant [and] towards a system in which funding follows the student' and their 'choices' by the year 2003 (Dearing, 1997, p.297).

Although the Labour party came to power in 1997, the new government which in opposition 'had consistently opposed the introduction of tuition fees for undergraduate students', passed the *Teaching and Higher Education Act* in 1998.

This Act included the introduction of ‘student loans and the abolition of maintenance grants’, on top of the introduction of £1,100 per year up-front tuition fees for undergraduate students (Tomlinson, 2005, p.155). The introduction of tuition fees directly paid by students became ‘the most obvious symbol of the marketization of HE’ (Williams, 2013, p.48).

In 2001, New Labour was re-elected and although their election manifesto stated that there was not going to be an introduction of top-up fees, the ‘first announcement by the incoming Secretary of State for Education Charles Clarke in November 2002 back-tracked on this position and claimed that more money should come from students and alumni’ (Tomlinson, 2005, p.156). This idea was realised with the 2004 *Higher Education Act* when the Labour government announced the application of variable tuition fees (up to £3,000 a year), to be active from 2006. Students would be allowed to pay their tuition fees taking out interest-subsidised loans through the Student’s Loan Company, and then repay their debt after graduation and while being employed. Since students were expected to have an income after graduation to repay their debts, the loan was considered a financial investment that should bring ‘secure’ income in return. This message was forwarded to students and HEIs. Students had to make a difficult decision: ‘In choosing a university to attend, the job of potential students is to weigh up the known cost against a hypothetical return’ (Williams, 2013, p.53). This twist in the British educational system was presented as the only available alternative especially by politicians: ‘as countries throughout the world have discovered, requiring students to contribute to the cost of their education is the only realistic alternative’ (Charles Clark, Education Secretary 2002-2004, cited in Freedman, 2011, p.4).

Also, the Browne review (2010), *Securing a Sustainable Future for Higher Education*, includes an evaluation of the system where the committee discusses HE policies ‘over the last 50 years’ starting with the Robbins Report in 1963. This part aims to justify the introduction of variable fees with students positioned as the main ‘contributors’ of ‘their own’ higher education. The review notes that ‘previous reforms failed to deliver a real increase in private contributions for higher education’ and highlights that due to the ‘limited’ public resources, there is a need for ‘new investment’ which ‘will have to come from those who directly benefit from higher education’ (Browne, 2010, p.27). Thus, besides the

representation of a reality where the government is presented as having financial difficulties (“limited” public resources) without explaining the reasons, HE is once again presented as an ‘investment’ which mainly benefits the student.

Although the Browne review was commissioned by the Labour government, the recommendations were taken into consideration and put into action by the coalition government even though one of the Coalition’s partners, the Liberal Democrat party, ‘had made a manifesto pledge to abolish university tuition fees’ (Brown and Carasso, 2013, pp.92–93). In the White Paper *Students at the Heart of the System* (2011), the coalition government makes specific mention of this:

We inherited an enormous deficit which required difficult decisions. The changes to student finance have been controversial. We could have reduced student numbers or investment per student or introduced a less progressive graduate repayment mechanism. But these would all have been unfair to students, higher education institutions and the country. Instead our proposals for graduate contributions ensure good universities will be well funded for the long term. (BIS, 2011, p.5)

Thus, one of the ‘difficult decisions’ was to raise the cap of undergraduate tuition fees to £9,000 per year for students entering HE from 2012 onwards. This statement could be viewed as a rhetorical technique. The coalition government, presents the worst version of ‘reality’ (‘reduced student numbers’, ‘less progressive repayment mechanism’), to convince citizens that the ‘required difficult decisions’ are for the students’ own good. As the worst version of ‘reality’ is regarded ‘unfair’ to students, then it could be assumed that the ‘new’ measures taken by the coalition government were deemed ‘fair’.

This version of ‘reality’, however, is considered highly problematic. The reform programme that was announced by the coalition government in 2010 is, according to Brown and Carasso (2013, p.1), ‘the most radical so far in the history of UK higher education, and amongst the most radical anywhere’. On the whole, it is considered that students are in the worst place ever in the history of HE in Britain, with an estimation of £40,000-£50,000 (depending on family income) of ‘real student debt at graduation’ (Crawford and Jin, 2014, p.21). So, there is ground to claim that this measure cannot be considered, in any democratic ‘reality’ presented by the coalition government, as ‘fair’ to those students who entered HE since the year 2012. The introduction and rise of tuition fees have,

on the other hand, managed to increase competition between universities in the UK.

3.3 Competition between HEIs in the UK

As discussed above, HE policy highlights the idea of student ‘choice’ when it comes to deciding which university to attend. Student ‘choice’ and its effect on the amount of public funding HEIs would receive from the government, took competition between universities in the UK to a higher level. As students are expected to get ‘a hypothetical return’ (Williams, 2013, p.53), from their ‘choice’, HEIs are expected to use every available resource at their disposal to ‘persuade students that they should “pay more” in order to “get more”’ (Browne, 2010, p.4). Student ‘choice’ has been associated with ‘quality’ (DfES, 2003, p.47), and ‘quality’ is raised by ‘competition’ (Browne, 2010, p.2). As the Browne review states, HEIs in the UK are called ‘universities’ but ‘this one word does not capture the reality of their diversity’ (*ibid*).

The meaning of the noun ‘diversity’ is rather vague when it comes to the characterisation of HEIs in the UK. To be more specific, UK HEIs are ‘highly differentiated by origin, status, mission, resources, research activity and income, educational provision and student characteristics’ (William, 2011, p.75). As William (*ibid*) continues, the ‘key sub-groupings are fairly stable and largely delineated by age, historical wealth and relative focus on research’. These include: the ‘old’ and ‘research-intensive’ Russell Group universities; those institutions that were universities before the 1992 Higher Education Act; the post-1992 universities (ex-polytechnics and some colleges), and the post-2004 universities. Thus, according to the Browne review, the introduction of variable tuition fees aimed to reinforce this ‘diversity’ and increase competition between HEIs in the UK.

Furthermore, the Browne committee states: ‘one size does not fit all’ (Browne, 2010, p.2), or in other words, even though all HEIs are called ‘universities’ in the UK, the ‘products’ on offer are not the same. The notion of market competition is further displayed with the following statement: ‘Relevant institutions will be able to expand faster to meet student demand; others will have to raise their game to respond. [...] Their choices will shape the landscape of higher education’ (Browne, 2010, p.25). This quote differentiates universities to

'relevant' and, although not clearly stated, 'irrelevant'. Those that are 'relevant' are also powerful, resourceful, and able to withstand the new challenges brought by the removal of the block grant and their dependence on student 'choice'. On the other hand, it is interesting to note the distant and unsympathetic stance towards those universities that could face severe consequences from the removal of government funding.

The competition between HEIs for funding has 'winners' and losers, with 'winners being those universities who can best respond to these evolving economic challenges' (BIS, 2009, p.7). Taking into consideration the sub-groups of HEIs mentioned above, the powerful or 'relevant' institutions that are expected to be the 'winners' of the 'evolving economic challenges' are the prestigious 'old' universities (Russel Group and pre-1992 universities), while those that need to 'raise their game' include the post-1992 and post-2004 universities. It is interesting to observe that both quotes presented above only mention the 'powerful' and winning group while the 'losing' group is not clearly described. In the Browne review, the phrase: 'others will have to raise their game to respond', shows that HEIs should not expect any assistance from the state or the government and this can be viewed as total withdrawal of state assistance. It is also an example of how marketised ideology is being disseminated by government policy and a solid confirmation of the 'market forces' that now rule HEIs.

The Browne review also highlights that student 'choice' will 'shape the landscape of higher education'. It is thus important to understand what shapes student 'choice' when it comes to selecting which HEIs to attend. The idea of student 'choice' is mentioned in most HE policies produced by the governments since the introduction of tuition fees, for example, DfES (2003), BIS (2009), Browne (2010), BIS (2011), and Hubble (2016). To inform student 'choice', HE policies stressed that students must have access to better and more information. For this reason, the UK government has introduced a number of 'consumerist measures that are supposed to inform students' choices' (William, 2011, p.77). These include *The National Student Survey*, the *Destinations of Leavers from HE* survey, and the *Unistats* website. The *National Students Survey* (NSS), for example, 'asks all final year undergraduate students for their views about the quality of their teaching and learning experience' (BIS, 2011, p.34). Hence,

student ‘choice’ is associated with the ‘quality’ of services offered by universities. However, ‘the reality of student choice is unlikely to be significantly influenced by these sources of “quality information” as long as there is a reputational hierarchy among institutions’ (William, 2011, p.77).

As Watson (2008, cited in William, 2011, p. 77) points out, “Evidence is growing in developed systems that students are choosing “reputation” over quality in selecting universities, and that as long as employers screen for the same thing they are acting rationally doing so”. Regardless whether such practices can be characterised as ‘rational’ or not, the key idea here is that the ‘reputation’ of HEIs matters more than the ‘quality’ of services offered to students. It is regarded by ‘universities, employers, the government and some students’ as ‘ultimately more important than quality’ (Zemsky, 2005, cited in William, 2001, p. 80). Ehrenberg (2002, cited in Brown, 2011, p.28) observes that ‘Many students are keen on attending prestigious institutions, and many employers are keen to recruit there’. Thus, ‘prestige’ is equally essential for HEIs, students, and employers.

A key source of such information comes from the popular ‘league tables’ published by private sources, such as *The Complete University Guide*, the *Guardian University Guide*, or the *Times Higher Education* world university rankings. Locke et al. (2008, p.14), performed an analysis of five league tables in the UK and concluded that ‘The resulting rankings largely reflect reputational factors and not necessarily the quality or performance of institutions’. Thus, the reputation of HEIs in the UK is an important factor that is taken into consideration not only by the student-customer but also by employers.

3.4 Representation of a ‘competitive’ world reality

In the *Future of Higher Education* White Paper, the education secretary Charles Clark stated that in a fast-changing world, the UK’s ‘national ability to master the process of change [...] depends critically upon our universities’, and he also saw two main areas where universities ‘have to improve’: (a) the expansion of HE to ‘the talented and best from all backgrounds’, and (b) ‘to make better progress in harnessing knowledge to wealth creation’ (DfES, 2003, p.2). The paper highlights the ‘fast-changing and increasingly competitive world’ (DfES, 2003, pp.10 and 92). Changes in the global scene and the success of the country are linked to the

success of HE. Thus, universities in the UK can assist with the ‘process of change’, which is usually presented as an inevitable one to which people should adjust. In a ‘fast’ and ‘competitive’ reality, ‘knowledge’ can be used by states, businesses, and individuals (macro, meso, micro-level), for ‘wealth creation’ which is presented as the ‘ultimate goal’. As Brown (2011, p.83) notes, there is a general ‘preoccupation with outcomes’ when it comes to the role of HE, ‘particularly the contribution of higher education to the economy and, increasingly, its role in business survival and economic recovery’. Moreover, ‘knowledge generation’ for the benefit of ‘economic growth’ is also mentioned in the paper *Higher Ambitions: The Future of Universities in a Knowledge Economy* (2009). ‘Economic growth’ comes with ‘commercial application’ of the knowledge produced by HEIs and at the same time through the preparation of ‘our people for the world of modern work’ (BIS, 2009, p.7).

In addition, the same paper explains that the government is trying to ‘set out’ its ‘strategy for sustaining the strength of higher education in this increasingly demanding and competitive environment’ (BIS, 2009, p.3), which means that HE is somehow threatened by competition. The report states that besides its social and cultural role, HE is also ‘central to the country’s economic performance in the twenty first century’ (BIS, 2009, p.7). One of HE’s contribution to the country’s ‘economic performance’, and excellence is its ability to equip ‘people for the increasingly complex challenges of the modern workplace by teaching skills and instilling intellectual curiosity and self-confidence’ (*ibid*). Thus, the government highlights, and at the same time legitimises, the difficult and complex nature of the ‘modern workplace’ and offers a solution that depends on ‘individual’ effort which involves the acquisition of ‘skills’. This kind of discourse (‘helping’ students ‘improve’ their ‘confidence’ or ‘inspiring confidence’ with the tools and resources provided to them), is also used by CSs as will be explored in detail in chapter 6.

3.5 Students as customers and ‘powerful’ actors

As mentioned above, one of the first occurrences of the ‘student-as-customer’ metaphor (Mautner, 2010), can be found in the 1984 Jarratt Report. This representation, however, was confirmed and established with the introduction of tuition fees in 1998. The *Further and Higher Education Act* (1998) also introduced the *Quality Assurance Agency* (QAA), that establishes the student-as-customer

role. As students were expected to pay a share of their higher education, a reassurance of ‘quality’, or ‘value for money’, was deemed an appropriate measure. As Williams notes, quality assistance ‘is presented as a form of student empowerment as the QAA “champions” the voice of students through regulating institutions’ teaching and assessment practices’ (2013, p.48).

Even though students are presented as ‘customers’ of HEIs, it is also expected of them to ‘become intelligent customers of an increasingly diverse provision, and to meet their own increasing diverse needs’ (DfES, 2003, p.47). HE provides ‘choice’ to the student-customer, but it is the responsibility of the latter to use this provision ‘wisely’ and to meet their own individual ‘needs’. This is one of the key points promoted in HE policy; the idea of HE as a ‘private good’ that benefits mostly the individual and less society. According to the Browne review, this very same idea explains the acceptance of the rise of tuition fees by HEIs, employers and the *National Union of Students* (2010, p.20), in 2006:

The primary reason for this is that graduates benefit directly from higher education. The public also receives a benefit but this is less than the private benefit. Recent OECD research shows that in the UK the benefits of higher education to the individual are, on average, over 50% higher than the public benefits. (Browne, 2010, p.21)

Thus, the acceptance of the increase of undergraduate tuition fees by students themselves, their representatives and employers, is justified due to HE’s ‘direct benefit’ to graduates. HE ‘benefit’ can also be measured as the ‘private benefit’ is almost double size than the ‘public benefit’. As a result, it is presented as ‘reasonable to ask those who gain private benefits from higher education to help fund it’ (Browne, 2010, p.21).

As education is considered a ‘private benefit’ the degree is also described as ‘a good investment’ (Browne, 2010, p.5), and as ‘investors’, students need to be persuaded by HEIs. The idea that students need to be persuaded/convinced to make an ‘investment’, positions the student directly as a customer, and the HEI as a business. This representation is reinforced throughout the Browne review with the characterisation of students as ‘powerful’ actors who have ‘choices’ and the funds that HE needs:

Choice is in the hands of the student (2010, p.3)

Their choices will shape the landscape of higher education (2010, p.4)

The money will follow the student (2010, p.4)

Students are best placed to make the judgement about what they want to get from participating in higher education (2010, p.25)

As a consequence, HE institutions are placed in the position of marketing their courses and programmes to ‘convince students of the benefits of investing more’ (Browne, 2010, p.27). It has to be noted, however, that when it comes to the ‘quality’ of HE, the Browne review observes that students are ‘no more satisfied with higher education than ten years ago’ and at the same time ‘employers report that many graduates lack the skills they need to improve productivity’ (2010, p.23). Thus, both students and employers are looking for better outcomes from HEIs.

A significant development for the nature of HEI’s role was the government’s recommendation on ‘stronger alliances between business and their sectors and the relevant departments in higher education institutions’ (DfES, 2003, p.37). These collaborations aimed to ‘develop market courses’ that would ‘involve employers in the delivery of learning’ (DfES, 2003, p.37). The involvement of employers in the promotion, expansion and ‘delivery’ of HE ‘market courses’ was considered ‘critical’ for the preparation of ‘new entrants to the workforce and continuous professional development’ (DfES, 2003, p.42). That is mainly because employers noted significant ‘skills-gaps’ in those who graduate and enter the job market. It is important to note here the significance of such statements in official policy documents made by the government. The 2003 White Paper includes the employers’ needs and aspirations from their future employees: ‘Employers claim that they want graduates whose skills are better fitted for work’ (DfES, 2003, p.17). These statements highlight industry’s and employers’ primary and key role in the structure of HEIs. The government legitimises universities as institutions that aim to prepare young people for the ‘world of work’.

Moreover, HEIs are presented as ‘increasingly flexible’ offering ‘a wide range of subjects’ and ‘qualifications’, conforming and evolving around the ‘important challenge’ of offering ‘what students want and the skills needed by employers’ (Browne, 2010, p.15). This, however, does not mean that ‘students and employers’ were satisfied with the results of HE. As the report further notes, ‘evidence suggests there needs to be a closer fit between what is taught in higher

education and the skills needed in the economy' (Browne, 2010, p.23). 'The system', as the Brown review further explains, is 'not responsive to the changing skills needs of the economy', as there is evidence that 'the higher education system does not produce the most effective mix of skills to meet business needs' (Browne, 2010, p.45). As mentioned above, there are 'skills-gaps' in the 'existing workforce' and the *Confederation of British Industry* (CBI) 'found that 48% of employers were dissatisfied with the business awareness of the graduates they hired' (*ibid*). Employer opinion is presented as particularly important for the students' development, and their role as benefactors of graduates is often highlighted.

The preparation of students for the 'world of work' (BIS, 2011, p.4), is thus one of the main roles of HEIs in the UK: 'one of the purposes of higher education is to prepare students for a rewarding career' as 'most students want their study to help them towards a worthwhile career or a good job' (BIS, 2011, p.38). It is assumed that students attend HEIs in order to get a 'rewarding career', 'a worthwhile career or a good job' thus the involvement of businesses and employers in the HE setting is expected. In order for students to prepare for the 'world of work', the government insists on encouraging collaboration between HEIs and businesses: 'We also want our universities to look again at how they work with business across their teaching and research activities, to promote better teaching, employer sponsorship, innovation and enterprise' (BIS, 2011, p.6). This collaboration aims to 'ensure that students gain the knowledge and skills they need to embark on rewarding careers' (BIS, 2011, p.33). The importance of 'internships' is stressed in the report (BIS, 2011, p.43). They are described as 'a good way [...] to develop the skills' students need for employment and 'to get into the professional jobs market' (*ibid*).

Moreover, the government announces its plans to create 'enterprise societies' which 'play a key part in helping students gain the necessary skills and knowledge' (BIS, 2011, p.44). The organisations involved in this plan is shown below:

We want to see enterprise societies increase their effectiveness and have challenged the sector to embed a society in all universities in England and at least half of further education colleges. BIS has invited the National Consortium of University Entrepreneurs (NACUE), the National Council for Graduate

Entrepreneurship (NCGE) and representatives of the sector to provide recommendations to Ministers on how this ambition can be realised. (*ibid*)

The involvement of enterprise and its different professional organisations in the government's plans is openly displayed in the above passage. Organisations such as the BIS, NACUE, and NCGE, in addition to representatives of the business sector, are actively involved in the actions of 'creating' and 'embedding' 'enterprise societies' in all HEIs in England. As the report continues, readers understand that these societies aim to 'educate' students and guide them towards the development of 'entrepreneurial' skills. For this reason, and in order to support the creation of entrepreneurialism in HEIs, the QAA summoned a group 'to develop guidance for UK universities on enterprise and entrepreneurship' which would 'set out the skills and knowledge, attitude and approach that students should acquire through enterprise education' (BIS, 2011, p.45). It must be noted, however, that the task of 'educating' students towards an 'enterprise society' and the development of their 'employability' and 'entrepreneurial' skills is also part of the role of careers services in UK universities.

4. Careers services and advisers in HEIs

Careers services in British universities are the 'strongest example of specialist careers guidance services within educational institutions' (Watts, 1996, p.127). The history of CSs in UK academia is rich and there has been an extensive literature produced on their development (for example, Watts, 1996 and Peck, 2004). Its roots can be traced to the University of Oxford and around 1892 (Watts, 1996, p.128). In this section, however, I focus on HE careers guidance over the last two decades.

The importance of the careers services' role in UK universities has been mentioned in HE policy since the early 2000s. As Williams notes, when the Labour government was elected in 1997, it 'made offering careers advice and guidance to young people a priority' (2013, p.67). The *Future of Higher Education* White Paper highlighted that students have to make a 'complex' choice and 'decide which HEIs to apply to' (DfES, 2003, p.47). Besides the information provided by 'family and friends', careers advisers are also mentioned as providers of information that could affect the students' choice (DfES, 2003, p.47). The

Browne Report also notes that universities have invested in the expansion of their ‘career advisory services’ with the additional funding collected from the 2006 rise in undergraduate tuition fees (2010, p.19). Moreover, the White Paper *Students at the Heart of the System* (BIS, 2011) notes that many universities ‘provide excellent services to support [students] during their time in higher education and to prepare them for life afterwards’ (BIS, 2011, p.35), or, for the ‘world of work’ (BIS, 2011, p.4). Such services include careers guidance. Careers services and advisers within HEIs have an ‘expertise’ that is considered ideal for such training.

The coalition government (2010–2015) introduced its plans and willingness to improve careers services by establishing ‘a strong quality assurance framework for careers guidance’ (BIS, 2011, p.57). The document states that the advisers’ ‘status as trusted experts’ needs improvement so that the profession is treated with ‘respect’ in educational institutions, but also by ‘young students and their parents’ (BIS, 2011, p.57). For this reason, the government set up a committee in 2010, the *Careers Profession Task Force* (CPTF). As the report states, the Task Force was ‘given a clear remit: to set out our vision for a transformed careers workforce in England which can offer young people the excellent careers service they deserve and expect’ (CPTF, 2010, p.2). According to the Chair of the CPTF committee, that was ‘a key turning point in the history of career guidance’ (CPTF, 2010, p.1). ‘Helping’ and ‘supporting’ young people in ‘making decisions about their future’ is presented as the careers advisers’ obligation (‘we owe it to all young people’) (CPTF, 2010, p.1). The report also highlights the significance of ‘professionalism’ in careers advice:

The Task Force has no doubt that professionalism underpins quality and our recommendations are designed to uphold common professional standards and ethics that will raise the status and integrity of career guidance in this country. (CPTF, 2010, p.1)

Thus, it was not too long ago that careers services restructured their professional occupation and practices, with the government’s support, to become more ‘respected’, ‘raise [their] status integrity’, and show the importance of their field’s work in the educational setting. The committee’s recommendations were taken into consideration by the *Careers Profession Alliance* ‘to develop new professional standards for careers advisers’ (BIS, 2011, p.57).

The primary mission of the *Task Force* committee was to ‘set out’ their ‘vision for a transformed careers workforce in England which [could] offer young people the excellent careers service they deserve and expect’ (CPTF, 2010, p.2). The report highlights the necessity for the development and establishment of careers advisers and ‘educators’ as ‘a single authoritative voice’ and a professional, expert body (CPTF, 2010, pp.3–6). Interestingly, the committee recommends that the ‘Government **should** demonstrate its active support and encouragement for this process’ (CPTF, 2010, p.15, emphasis added). In other words, the careers profession seeks support and endorsement from the government, as this legitimises the profession, naturalises their practices in the educational setting, and also gives ‘power’ to advisers as professional actors. As will be explained in chapter 3.4, for an organisation or an individual to claim professional status in an occupation, they need to show that they ‘possess a distinct body of specialized knowledge that is essential for the exercise of their occupational tasks’ (Scott, 2001, p.100). Thus, it was understood that CSs in educational settings needed to acquire the necessary professional status that would secure ‘obedience’, ‘trust’, and the ‘acceptance’ of the careers advisers’ expertise by the students (Scott, 2001, p.104).

Besides the government’s support, professional associations are presented as vital for the establishment of a professional body. In the careers context, according to the CPTF (2010, p.14), the ‘five main professional associations for the careers profession’ are shown below:

Professional associations

Institute of Career Guidance (ICG)

Represents career guidance practitioners/managers/leaders, and Careers Advisers working in the public, private and voluntary sectors across the UK. Its annual average membership is over 4,500.

Association of Graduate Careers Advisory Services (AGCAS)

Has a membership of around 2,130 careers service managers, Careers Advisers and other careers service staff based in higher education institutions across the UK.

Association for Careers Education and Guidance (ACEG)

Represents Careers Educators - mainly Careers Coordinators and Careers Leaders - and has a membership of around 1,330.

National Association for Educational Guidance for Adults (NAEGA)

Has around 700 members who provide adult career guidance at different levels and in different settings.

Association of Career Professionals International (ACPI)

The United Kingdom arm of this international body represents individuals working in careers, or career-related roles, in the private sector. The total membership is 450, of whom 38 are active UK members.

Figure 1 - Careers professional associations

As the document explains, the careers profession covers a wide range of age groups, or ‘customers’ and their ‘individual interests’ (*ibid*). For this reason, there are different professional associations which aim to represent their customers’ individual needs and interests. In the HE context, the *Association of Graduate Careers Advisory Services* (AGCAS), is the professional body ‘for careers and employability professionals working with higher education students and graduates and prospective entrants to higher education’ (AGCAS, 2017). Specifically, AGCAS aims to: ‘provide a lobbying voice for its members’; ‘be the focal point for sector-wide research and expert opinion’, and ‘provide a range of support and development opportunities for its members’ (*ibid*).

So, what is the careers professionals’ goals when working with young people? The CPTF document (2010, p.11) states that the role of careers professionals is to ‘help’ young people:

The role of a careers professional working with young people

Careers professionals provide young people with impartial CEIAG that challenges preconceptions and stereotypes, is free from institutional bias, values both academic and vocational routes and is informed by the labour market. This helps young people to:

- choose the subjects and qualification routes that are right for them and meet their aspirations for further and higher education, work-based learning and work; and
- make decisions that enable them to achieve in education to the highest possible level.

A careers professional contributes to a young person's preparation for, and understanding of, the world of work by helping him or her to:

- understand the opportunities within a dynamic labour market;
- access local, national and international labour market information;
- understand the requirements and demands of particular occupations;
- understand the attributes and values required for working life; and
- gain first-hand experience of career and educational opportunities.

A careers professional supports young people to progress and prosper by helping them to:

- plan, manage and develop their careers;
- develop a strong sense of personal responsibility and the resilience to overcome barriers to achieve their goals;
- broaden their horizons, raise aspirations and appreciate their potential to progress;
- understand the benefits of further and higher education; and
- gain access to wider networks, which increase their understanding of career routes and the knowledge and skills they need to succeed.

Figure 2 - The role of a careers professional

Thus, besides choosing subjects and qualification routes, and making decisions, careers professionals assist in the students' preparation and understanding of the 'world of work'. A key process highlighted in Figure 2 is the process of 'understanding' the: 'dynamic labour market', 'requirements and demands of particular occupations', 'attributes and values required for working life', 'career routes and the knowledge and skills they need to succeed' (*ibid*). They also 'help' students with planning their careers, developing 'personal responsibility' and 'resilience', 'raise' their 'aspirations', become more confident ('appreciate their potential to progress'), and 'gain access to wider networks'.

It would be interesting to briefly examine in practice what CSs in HEIs state when introducing their practices to prospective or current users. Figures 1-8 in Appendix 1, present snapshots of eight UK universities' careers websites deriving from general sections, such as 'About us', 'Our missions', or 'Statement of

Service'. I have deliberately included four Russell Group universities (University of Durham, Edinburgh University, University of Cambridge, University of Exeter) and four post-1992 universities (Coventry University, Glasgow Caledonian University, Manchester Metropolitan University, and Kingston University London). It must be noted that not all CSs' websites include 'About us' or 'Our Mission/goals' statements. The universities mentioned above were not chosen based on the content of the texts discussed below but rather on the ease of gathering such information displayed on their web pages.

The central themes discussed in these sections include:

- Providing **support, advice, and guidance** (Figures 1, 4, 8).
- Providing **services, tools, and resources** (Figures 1, 2).
- **Preparation** for future career (Figure 5).
- Providing **information** (Figures 3, 4, 5, 9).
- Assistance in **understanding**: the market, student competencies, aspirations, options, goals, and employers' expectations (Figures 2, 3, 7).
- Assistance with **networking** (Figures 3, 6, 9).

These services also highlight their focus on collaborations with 'employers, partners, professional networks' and 'external agencies' (Figures 1, 2, 7), or establishing working partnerships with employers and external agencies' (Figure 7). One of the services aims to be 'known for [its] expertise, professionalism and customer-focused approach' (Figure 4), while others focus on the importance of being 'impartial', 'independent', and 'objective' (Figures 3 and 9). Also, five of the eight universities mention 'employability' (Figures 1, 5, 7, 8, and 9). Thus, it is clear that the main points highlighted by UK governments in educational policies and documents when it comes to the students' preparation for the 'world of work' and the CSs' role in it, is present in the universities' web pages. This argument will be examined in more detail in the analytical part of the thesis (Chapters 6-8). The final section of this chapter introduces one of the main concepts in contemporary academia that is considered to be of great importance to HE students, institutions, businesses, and employers.

5. Employability and skills

As demonstrated above in the review of key government policies and reports and a sample of UK universities' careers services websites, the development of skills and 'enhancement' of employability is viewed as a necessity for HE students who are willing to compete with 'success' in this financially insecure environment. As the Wilson review points out, there is a need for employability and enterprise 'strategies', and it is the universities' responsibility to implement them:

Strategies to ensure the development and recording of students' employability, enterprise and entrepreneurial skills **should be implemented** by universities in the context of the university's mission and promoted through its public literature to inform student choice. (Wilson, 2012, p.2, emphasis added)

Thus, the employability agenda is considered vital and should be projected to the universities' 'mission and public literature' so that the student-customer can make an informed decision on choosing degrees and courses.

As has already been shown in this chapter, since the 1980s, UK governments have introduced numerous reforms to the educational system. By the mid-1990s, 'universities were considered by the policy makers to be more about conferring private benefit upon individuals than public benefit upon society as a whole' (Williams, 2013, p.41). The 'burden of financing' HE was placed on the 'individuals' (BIS, 2009, p.17), as it was considered that HE 'transforms the lives of individuals' by giving access to 'higher status jobs' with higher earnings (Browne, 2010, p.14). The Browne review clearly states that

The primary beneficiary of higher education is the individual student. The student chooses where to study and what to study; and the student chooses where to use the new skills they have acquired. Businesses benefit from employing highly skilled graduates and they pay for that benefit through higher wages. (2010, p.54)

Besides the fact that the individual is considered the primary beneficiary of HE and the one who has the 'power' to choose (the power of the consumer), this statement creates a direct link between HE, students, and employers which all have one thing in common: the interest in teaching, acquiring and using (respectively) employability 'skills'. The notion of employability is particularly linked with the promotion of 'individual' 'needs' and 'benefits' when it comes to HE. The next paragraphs examine the meaning of the notion of 'employability'.

5.1 What is employability?

A widely quoted definition used by a variety of sources such as, employability books (Gravells, 2010, Neugebauer and Evans-Brain, 2016), research articles (Boden and Nedeva, 2010), government policy (BIS, 2011), and the CSs websites (for example, University of Edinburgh, University of Kent, University of Strathclyde, Abertay University, University of Sussex), states that employability is:

a set of achievements – skills, understandings and personal attributes – that make graduates more likely to gain employment and be successful in their chosen occupations, which benefits themselves, the workforce, the community and the economy. (Yorke, 2006, p.8)

It is also defined as ‘the ability to keep the job one has or to get the job one desires’ (Rothwell and Arnold, 2007, p.25). So, like HE, ‘employability’ is considered beneficial for the individual. It enhances the chances of ‘gaining’ employment, but it is also viewed as beneficial to the ‘workforce, the community and the economy’. Employability also ‘helps’ individuals ‘keep’ their jobs. This is due to its link with ‘lifelong learning’ as individuals are expected to ‘refresh their knowledge, upgrade their skills and sustain their employability’ (DfES, 2003, p.16).

Prior research on the concept of employability (Grazier, 1999, McQuaid and Lindsay, 2005), reveals that it can be traced at three historical eras: the beginning of the twentieth century, the 1950s-60s, and the 1980s (Fejes, 2010). The concept of ‘employability’, as we now know and understand it, came to its current form with the expression ‘initiative employability’ in the 1980s (Grazier, 1999). As Fejes (2010, p.89) notes,

A couple of decades ago, employability emerged as a discourse that replaced the previous way of describing the workforce [...]. Instead of speaking about a shortage of employment and describing the citizen as employed or unemployed, policy now spoke about a lack of employability, and the citizen came to be described as employable or not employable [...] or in need of employability skills.

Thus, besides the popular definition of employability cited in different contexts including CSs within the UK HE sector, there is a critical interpretation of this notion that highlights the distance kept by the state in contemporary societies

when it comes to the welfare of citizens. In other words, the notion of employability takes away responsibility from the state. Instead of ‘speaking about a shortage of employment’, in terms of what governments could do to create more employment positions that would lead to stability and security in the ‘labour market’ and into the citizens’ lives, we talk about ‘employable’ or ‘not employable’ citizens who are responsible for developing their ‘employability skills’ in order to compete in the ‘competitive job market’. The discourse of employability promotes a reality where economic insecurity and labour competitiveness are presented as natural, or ‘common sense’. The notion of employability is thus used ‘as an explanation, and to some extent a legitimisation, of unemployment’ and this use of discourse ‘positions the citizen as responsible for her/his own employment, and less emphasis is placed on structural inequalities and problems in the labour market’ (Fejes, 2010, p.90).

As has been argued in this chapter, HEIs in the UK have accepted and promoted the notion of employability. More specifically, the UK government has excluded itself from any blame with regards to the ‘market dysfunction’ while universities were given the responsibility of preparing the ‘workers’ that employers need (Boden and Nedeva, 2010, pp.43–44). Thus, universities have taken up the task of preparing students to enter the ‘job market’. As a matter of fact, employability is ‘at the heart of today’s university practices’, and as Chertkovskaya and Watts further note, this notion ‘has come to redefine what universities are ultimately for’ (2017, p.184).

6. Summary

The financial difficulties faced in Britain in the 1980s have resulted in higher government control over universities, cuts in funding, reductions in students and staff and the gradual turn to the ‘business world’ and its practices. The Jarratt Report was one of the first official documents that referred to HE students as ‘customers’ (Tight, 2009, p.137). The committee’s recommendations signal the first stages of the implementation of ‘managerialism’ in the UK HE system. This ‘transformation’ was believed of crucial importance for the future and survival of HEIs. A key development in the history of UK HEIs is the abolition of the binary line between ‘old’ universities, polytechnics, and some colleges in 1992. As the

number of HEIs grew, so did competition between them for government funding. This change has led to the non-official differentiation between ‘old’ and ‘new’ universities with the formation of the Russell Group universities, which were (and still are) described as ‘research-focused’ universities. In addition, after the recommendations of the Dearing committee, the Labour government introduced up-front undergraduate tuition fees to be paid by employed graduates. This was the first time after the creation of the welfare system in the UK that the state partially withdrew its responsibility to provide HE to its citizens. It was not, however, the last regulation involving students and the funding of HEIs. In 2006 there was a rise in tuition fees and students were given the alternative of taking students loans which would be repayable after graduation and while being in employment. HE was presented as an ‘investment’ on the students’ future that would eventually bring a ‘hypothetical return’ (Williams, 2013, p.53). The involvement of students as the main ‘contributors’ and sole ‘investors’ of their own HE became official in 2012 after the recommendations of the Browne review that was implemented by the coalition government.

This development was justified as the only possible solution due to the ‘fast-changing’ and ‘increasingly competitive’ world we are experiencing over the last couple of decades. In this kind of ‘reality’, UK governments discuss the potential of ‘knowledge’ to the creation of ‘wealth’. Thus, HEIs are expected to assist in the country’s ‘economic growth’ by preparing its citizens for the ‘world of work’ which is also described as difficult, complex, and competitive. Besides their role as ‘investors’, HE students are also considered customers who must take into consideration their own ‘individual’ needs. HE is promoted as a ‘private good’ that brings benefits to the ‘individual’ student. As ‘customers’ who have the ‘choice’ of selecting where to ‘invest’, students need to be persuaded. Thus, universities are encouraged to ‘market’ their courses and provide more satisfaction to their clients, which include both students and employers. For this reason, the government encourages the development of stronger links and partnerships with employers and businesses. Besides the collaboration between HEIs and employers and direct links created between students and businesses, this development aims to ‘bridge’ the ‘skills gap’ noted by employers.

The preparation of students for the ‘world of work’ is presented as one of the main roles of HEIs. Investors are expected to have better chances of getting

'a rewarding career' and the collaboration between enterprise and HEIs aims to 'ensure' that prospective employees become accustomed to the 'needs' of employers. The 'education' of students towards entrepreneurialism is not, however, only dependent on partnerships with businesses and their involvement with the 'enterprise societies' promoted by the government. It is also the 'responsibility' of careers advisers which are already a significant part of HEIs.

Universities have invested in the development and establishment of careers services within the HE setting. Careers advisers are considered an important part of information providers to HE students. An interesting development over the last decade or so is the acknowledgement of these services by the government and its support towards their professional establishment. In relation to the theoretical background that will be presented in chapter 3.4, it was discussed in this chapter that CSs in UK universities were in need of professional acknowledgement, acceptance, and status not only by the government, professional associations, and HEIs but also from students and their parents. The role of CSs in universities is presented as crucial because they can provide invaluable information to students and their parents about the 'subjects', 'qualification routes', 'decisions', and understanding the 'world of work'. It is also presented as 'supportive', providing 'advice', 'guidance', and 'assistance' towards the students' future career. As shown, however, in the analytical part (Chapter 6), the services' role is much more complicated and significant.

A key notion for truly understanding the role of CSs and the governments' persistence towards presenting HEIs as a 'private investment', is the concept of 'employability'. Thus, the final part of this chapter introduced the 'employability' agenda pursued by UK governments and promoted by HEIs and their CSs. Specifically, there is a discussion on the two approaches of explaining the meaning of the notion of 'employability' ('popular' and 'critical' approach). In general, the 'development' and 'enhancement' of the students' 'employability', is considered necessary for 'gaining' employment in the 'competitive job market' as will be further discussed in the analytical part (Chapter 6).

Chapter 3. Theoretical background

1. Introduction

This chapter aims to present and discuss some of the key notions that regularly inform critical linguistic analyses, such as ‘power’, ‘ideology’, and ‘hegemony’, and the idea of ‘expertise’ by reviewing the relevant literature. It also lays the ground for the next theoretical chapter with an introduction of ‘discourse’. Chapter 3 thus starts with a discussion of ‘power’ and its two research traditions: the mainstream, and the second-stream. It focuses on the second-stream tradition of power and its ‘productive’ side (Scott, 2001) and explains why this form of ‘legitimised’ power is usually accepted by the lay people. The chapter then moves on to examine the notions of ‘ideology’ and ‘hegemony’. The general discussion around these concepts can shed light on the power relations between powerful and powerless groups and the actions taken by the former to persuade the latter and achieve ‘consent’. There then follows an examination of ‘expertise’ which is one of the key concepts relating to the careers services’ professional power within the HE context. The chapter closes with the introduction of ‘discourse’, the different types of discourse examined by discourse analysts, and its link with the construction of ‘realities’.

2. Power

In general, the concept of ‘power’ is associated with the authority and influence of powerful groups and socially constructed mechanisms, such as institutions, which can have privileged access to social resources, for example, knowledge and wealth. This thesis is mostly interested in ‘social power’. Social power is ‘In its strongest sense, [...] an agent’s intentional use of causal power to affect the conduct of other participants in the social relations that connect them together’ (Scott, 2001, p.11). A social relation is thus established between two agents or participants who can be called the ‘principal’ and the ‘subaltern’ (‘subaltern’ term adopted by Gramsci (Scott, 2001, p.2)). The power relationship between these two agents is quite straightforward: the principal is the powerful party whereas the subaltern is the one affected by this power. However, these power roles can be altered in different situations: ‘a principal in one relationship may be a

subaltern in another, and subalterns often exercise countervailing power to that of their principal' (Scott, 2001, p.2). For example, although careers advisers are the subalterns as far as the university's management (the principal) is concerned, they also take the principal's role when it comes to 'supporting' HE students.

An important point, raised by Scott, is that both principals and subalterns are autonomous: they 'have the ability to choose among alternative courses of action, however constrained these choices may be' (Scott, 2001, p.3, original italics). In particular, principals can use their power to engage in activities that promote their interest whereas subalterns are free to oppose those interests and resist. An 'act of power' then occurs when 'principals are able to restrict the choices that subalterns are able to make: the greater the restriction (the more limited range of choices available to subalterns), the greater is the power of the principal' (*ibid*). It is thus essential to examine whether subalterns or in this case HE students are offered 'a range of choices' and what these choices are, if any, when it comes to looking for employment or entering the 'world of work'. Restriction from the 'principals', in this case, governments or employers, in the choices that are made available to students/graduates who are looking for employment would thus be considered an 'act of power'.

The notion of 'power' has attracted major interest over the years by a multitude of researchers. Research on 'power' has thus been divided in two streams: the mainstream and the second stream. The origin of the mainstream tradition is found in the work of Weber (1914) and his analysis of 'the structuring of authority and administration in modern and pre-modern states', while later studies focused on states and the political power of individuals and groups, with a key area of interest being the relationship between economic and political power (Scott, 2001, p.5). This tradition that views power as dominance is not only exercised within the state but is also present in other sovereign organisations such as businesses, the church, or educational institutions, such as universities.

While the mainstream tradition examines 'power' as dominance, the second-stream tradition of research on 'power' focuses on its 'productive' aspects, rather than the repressive ones, and its persuasive influence (Scott, 2001, p.9). More specifically, 'power' is seen as 'the collective property of whole systems of cooperating actors, of the fields of social relations within which particular actors are located' (*ibid*). This tradition is thus mainly interested in social

mechanisms and the power exerted by their coordinated actors. As Scott further notes, ‘of particular importance are the communal mechanisms that result from the cultural, ideological, or discursive formations through which consensus is constituted’ (*ibid*). ‘Consent’ is thus considered one of the key notions of the second-stream tradition of ‘power’. In democratic societies, ‘power’ needs to be accepted by the people, or in other words, it needs to be ‘legitimised’. According to Fairclough (2003, p.219), ‘any social order requires legitimisation’ which is a ‘widespread acknowledgement of the legitimacy of explanations and justifications for how things are and how things are done’. In other words, powerful groups (the ‘principals’) can use their legitimate power to present versions of ‘reality’ according to their needs which are, in turn, accepted by the lay people (or the ‘subalterns’). To fully understand this side of ‘power’, it is essential to take into consideration the notion of ‘ideology’ and Gramsci’s work on ‘hegemony’.

3. Ideology and hegemony

The term ‘ideology’ is generally used to indicate the ‘ability of ideas to affect social circumstances’, and its function has been described by sociologists and philosophers (such as Mannheim, Marx, and Engels), as ‘the capacity to advance the political and economic interests of groups or social classes’ and ‘the capacity to produce cohesion’ (Poulantzas, 1978, cited in Turner, 2006, p.278). Ideological apparatuses can exist and act from the macro-level of state mechanisms to the meso-level of institutions and organisation, such as HE institutions or businesses, but also the micro-level of individual actors, such as employees in institutions or businesses. As van Dijk notes, ideologies ‘may involve social collectivities such as classes and other groups, as well as institutions, organization and other parts of social structure’ (1998, p.5).

According to Fairclough, ideologies can be viewed ‘critically’ or ‘descriptively’. The descriptive view sees ideology as the positions, attitudes, beliefs of social groups without any ‘reference to relations of power and domination between such groups’, whereas the ‘critical’ one considers ideologies ‘as representations of the aspects of the world which can be shown to contribute to establishing, maintaining and changing social relations of power, domination and exploitation’ (Fairclough, 2003, p.9). As we will see in chapter 4, the idea of

ideologies as representations of the world is important for CDA. As Fairclough and Wodak (1997, p.276) note, ‘it is useful to think of ideology as a process which articulates together particular representations of reality, and particular constructions of identity, especially of the collective identities of groups and communities’. Thus, it would be interesting to examine in the analytical part of this thesis (Chapters 6-8), what kind of roles are allocated to groups such as CSs and HE students, and what kind of ‘reality’ is constructed or represented in the discourse used by the CSs when it comes to the ‘world of work’.

As indicated in the introduction of this thesis (Chapter 1) and further explained in chapter 2, the UK governments which act in accordance with neoliberal ideology, promote the notion of employability as a solution to the social problem of (youth) unemployment. Thus, certain ideologies are promoted and supported by legal authorities and their various institutions. This is where Gramsci’s work on ‘hegemony’ can help us to understand the importance of ‘legitimacy’ and ‘common sense’ when it comes to sustaining and maintaining power. As Scott notes (2006, p.86), Gramsci added a new dimension to the concept of ideology:

For Gramsci ideology was more than a conception of the world or a system of ideas; it also had to do, like religion, with a capacity to inspire concrete attitudes and give certain orientations for **action**. It is in ideology that social classes become aware of their position and historical role, and it is in and by ideology, therefore, that a class can exercise ‘hegemony’ over other classes. (original emphasis)

Hegemony is thus associated with action, and in particular, the actions of the ruling class which aim to ‘secure the consent of the ruled’ (Turner, 2006, p.268). It ‘highlights the mechanisms through which dominant groups in society succeed in persuading subordinate groups to accept their own moral, political and cultural values and their institutions through ideological means’ (Mayr, 2008, p.13). Boggs (1976, p.38) explains that for Gramsci, no regime, however authoritarian, ‘could sustain itself primarily through organized state power’ but the popular support or ‘legitimacy’ could provide ‘stability, particularly during times of stress or crisis’. Hegemony for Gramsci was the ‘penetration through civil society’, meaning a range of structures, such as schools, churches, and the family, ‘of an entire system of values, attitudes, beliefs, morality’ which are supportive of the dominating groups and their interests (Boggs, 1976, p.39). These agencies

promote a particular worldview or ‘reality’ which aims to become ‘common sense’. As Smith and Higgins explain, these dominant ideologies ‘are not imposed on our consciousness, but rather they dovetail into ways of thinking that seem to make sense, or even be viewed as being common sense’ (2013, p.8).

Thus, the subalterns, the lay people, are led to believe that certain ‘realities’, built in accordance to the powerful groups’ preferred values and interests, are the ‘norm’, the way social life is and should be. In chapter 6 we will see that besides the promotion of the notion of employability as a ‘common-sense’ solution to the problem of unemployment, students are encouraged to ‘sell’ and ‘market’ themselves to employers in order to ‘stand out from the crowd’ in the ‘fiercely’ ‘competitive job market’. This is an example of ‘hegemonic struggle’ between the powerful and powerless groups (government and students), where the former attempt to promote neoliberal values and interests as the ‘norm’, as a ‘reality’ that cannot be challenged.

Ideologies are expressed by social actors, or groups, through different social situations, in everyday social practices and typically expressed through language use or discourse. The use of different discursive strategies by dominant groups for the dissemination of ideologies has been examined by many (critical) linguists and specifically (critical) discourse analysts. To understand the ways underlying ideologies work, from their creation to their production, dissemination, and interpretation, we need to look closely at their discursive manifestations, which is, mostly, what critical discourse analysts aim to achieve. However, before reviewing the literature of CDA, its theoretical background, models and aim (Chapter 4), we need to understand the idea of ‘expertise’ which is directly linked to the second-stream tradition of power and the CSs’ practices.

4. Expertise

Foucault is considered one of the most important and influential scholars to have examined the notion of ‘power’. One of his focus areas was the ‘productive’ side of power and discipline, practised by experts, ‘whose empowerment is due to their formation by scientific and technical forms of discourse’ (Scott, 2001, p.92). Socially constructed mechanisms, such as systems of criminal justice, health, welfare, or education, belong to what Foucault called a ‘carceral archipelago’

(1977), which is ‘a network of expert power through which disciplinary controls reached throughout the entire society’ (Scott, 2001, p.97). These agencies are linked, and their co-operation has created a strong mechanism expressed mainly through the discursive domain, which poses a great level of difficulty for subalterns questioning their legitimacy and expertise. An example of ‘disciplinary control’ is found in the analysis of the careers services’ expert role in chapter 7.5.1, where HE students are represented as ‘disciplined’ and ‘obedient’ individuals. As Fairclough notes, expert systems claim to possess ‘highly technical knowledge which we are all increasingly dependent upon’ and they project their power through the ‘discursive practices’ they use (1993, p.140). These ‘discursive practices’ or linguistic mechanisms and strategies promote mainly the ‘values’ – or the ideologies – of dominant groups.

Expertise ‘is central to the dynamics in modern societies’, because experts ‘are empowered as principals by virtue of the recognition of their legitimate competence to intervene in ways that produce disciplined – and even self-disciplined – subalterns’ (Scott, 2001, p.92). The subalterns, or the non-experts

are convinced or persuaded to accept the claims that are made by the experts because of ‘expert systems’ – systems in which technical knowledge is acquired through long and specialized training – that encourage the building of trust on the part of the lay majority in the expert minority. (Scott, 2001, p.93)

In the case of careers experts, as will be further discussed in chapter 7, it is not their ‘technical knowledge’ that gains the students’ ‘trust’, but a problematic social situation, a highly dysfunctional employment market that leaves students no choice but to ask for the experts’ assistance. As will be shown later in the analysis (Chapter 7), careers services advertise their professional role and expertise.

For an individual to be able to claim professional status in an occupation, they need to show that they ‘possess a distinct body of specialised knowledge that is essential for the exercise of their occupational tasks’ (Scott, 2001, p.101). Their exclusive control over a body of knowledge is, according to Freidson (1994), the professionals’ key resource of power. Specialists in different kinds of disciplines, such as welfare, education, law, and medicine, owe their professional power to ‘their professional training and their possession of esoteric ways of understanding and acting upon conduct grounded in codes of knowledge and claims to special wisdom’ (Rose, 1998, p.12, cited in Scott, 2001, p.101). Their

professional practice is a system of knowledge that is supported through ‘academic work of classification, investigation, and instruction, and that is embodied in forms of diagnosis and treatment’ (Scott, 2001, p.101). However, as Freidson argues, ‘Knowledge itself does not give special power: only *exclusive* knowledge gives power to its possessors’ (1994, p.67, original italics). The CSs in UK universities, who act as a professional body inside academia, also make claims about their field’s ‘special wisdom’. Therefore, in the analytical part (Chapter 7) the CSs’ ‘specialised knowledge’ or ‘exclusive knowledge’ will be further examined, and particular emphasis will be given to the ‘diagnostic’ procedure, and the ‘treatment’ offered to students.

The experts’ rules can be confirmed with an ‘agreement’ between the participants, which is a ‘characteristic of those systems in which principals claim and are accorded expertise’ (Scott, 2001, p.103). In other words,

Subalterns recognize the technical character of expert knowledge and see its use as something that will benefit them or will produce outcomes of which they approve. Obedience, then, is a means to an end: subalterns are persuaded that it is the best way of achieving a goal that they desire. (*ibid*)

People believe in the benefits of applying the experts’ rules or advice and value the possible results. Thus, although principals *claim* specialised knowledge and expertise, there must also be ‘acceptance’ by the subalterns, and this is the only way that expertise can exist: ‘when both these elements coincide’ (Scott, 2001, p.104).

There is a general rule of acceptance when it comes to the ‘expertise’ of socially constructed mechanisms, such as systems of education, welfare, criminal justice, and health. The ‘expert knowledge’ of, for example, health or educational systems is usually recognised by the lay people who see their use as something that will benefit them or will produce the desired outcomes. By accepting the professionals’ claims of special knowledge, they become the ‘disempowered patients’, the users of expert services, ‘making them the subalterns of the professional participants’ (Scott, 2001, p.104). This gives power to the expert services which also involves the building of trust. Although ‘trust’ is a deciding factor in the subalterns’ acceptance of ‘expert knowledge’, it must be noted that it

is not build from an informed acceptance of the evidential basis for the body of knowledge – the knowledge-gap precludes this – but involves simply a practical acceptance of expert knowledge claims on the part of those who have no rational grounds for appraising them. (Scott, 2001, pp.104–105)

Thus, those who make use of expert or professional services accept the ‘experts’ claimed knowledge because they believe that they do not have the skills or knowledge to find solutions to their problems. For example, HE students visit the CSs because they believe they need assistance with understanding the employment market and making successful applications. As mentioned at the beginning of this section, the operation of such powerful social mechanisms and the projection of their power relies on the ‘discursive practices’ that they use. Before we move on to chapter 4 and the introduction of CDA, the following section examines the notion of ‘discourse’ and acts as a link between the theoretical background presented in this chapter and the linguistic background discussed in the next.

5. Discourse

Fowler (1991, p.10) notes that ‘[a]nything that is said or written about the world is articulated from a particular ideological position’. As Mautner states, discourse ‘is composed of a variety of linguistic choices’ which allow ‘us to conjure up different versions of reality; nothing more, nothing less’ (2016, p.12). Defining ‘discourse’ is a difficult task as mentioned by some academics (for example, Fairclough, 1992; van Dijk, 1997; Philips and Hardy, 2002; Smith and Higgins, 2013; and Mautner, 2016). The term ‘discourse’ is used by many academic disciplines and in many different contexts. Thus, those who have been trying to provide a general definition seem to address this term’s complexity with frustration. Mautner provides an alternative view to dealing with the complexity of ‘discourse’. She suggests a different approach which is ‘to abandon any attempt to give one unitary and authoritative definition, settling instead for treating discourse as a “cluster concept”’ (Mautner, 2016, p.17). She further explains:

As a ‘cluster concept’ [...] discourse has many shades of meaning. [...] the desire to move beyond the word in the sentence, towards texts and groups of texts; and the desire to move beyond the text and towards the socio-political and cultural contexts in which text does its work. Discourse can simultaneously refer to both the micro-level of language use at a given moment – what Gee (2011, pp. 34-35)

refers to as ‘little “d” discourse’ – and the macro-level of discursive patterns that are associated with particular values, ideologies and identities (*ibid*).

An example of an instance of language found in the micro-level of discourse, which is also at the same time a ‘pattern’ associated with the values of neoliberalism, is examined in chapter 7 (‘we are here to help you’). Thus, critical discourse analysts are interested in the socio-political and cultural context where the text is structured and also performed. CDA aims to understand any connections between the ‘little d’ and the ‘big D’, or between the micro and macro levels of language. For example, and with relevance to the topic of this thesis, ‘if a university’s Vice-Chancellor chooses to refer to their university as *entrepreneurial*, they tap into and contribute to the *Discourse* of entrepreneurialism which pervade many areas of social life’ (Mautner, 2005, 2010, 2016, p.20, original italics). Or, when the CSs encourage students to become ‘employable’ they contribute to the Discourse of neoliberalism.

Furthermore, it has to be noted that the word ‘discourse’ is also used in its plural form. Discourses are, according to Fairclough (2003, p.206), ‘diverse representations of social life’. This is because ‘differently positioned social actors ‘see’ and represent social life in different ways, different discourses’ (*ibid*). For instance, immigrants can be represented differently by the media, governments, *The International Organization for Migration*, *The United Nations*, or political parties, whether these are left or right wing. The ‘different discourses within each of these practices [correspond] to different positions of social actors’ (*ibid*). One of the definitions that link discourse(s) to the representation of (social) reality discussed above is provided by Philips and Hardy (2002, p.3) who state that social reality ‘is produced and made real through discourses, and social interactions cannot be fully understood without reference to the discourses that give them meanings’. The ‘job’ of the discourse analyst is ‘to explore the relationship between discourse and reality’ (*ibid*). However, this is not the case for all the different types of discourse analysts. This point is noted by Mautner (2016, p.21) who explains that:

Linguists are trained to look very closely at minutiae of language use. If they are discourse analysts, they will relate their findings to the social context and will be keen to explore what language *does* rather than simple what it *is*. If they are critical discourse analysts, social issues will in fact have triggered their desire to look at language in the first place. (original italics)

The meaning of the word ‘critical’ is explained in the next chapter because it is of great importance to this thesis’s analytical process. For critical discourse analysts, there is no difficulty in making a clear link between social context and discourse. On the contrary, the analysis is usually driven by a social, political, historical, or economic problematic situation.

6. Summary

The first part of this chapter began with an introduction of power relations and ‘acts of power’ between ‘principals’ and ‘subalterns’. It was discussed that both participants have autonomy over their actions and choices unless the powerful agent(s) restrict the choices of the subaltern(s). The research tradition of ‘power’ that is of interest in this thesis is the second-stream which focuses on the ‘productive’ rather than the ‘repressive’ side of power.

One of the key notions examined in detail in this chapter is ‘ideology’. It was mentioned that ideological apparatuses act for the benefit of the interests of socially powerful groups, whether these are economic or political. The interests of the principals can be pursued in the macro, meso and micro-social level. Ideologies represent versions of ‘reality’ aiming to establish, maintain, and change ‘social relations of power, domination and exploitation’ (Fairclough, 2003, p.9).

The notion of ‘hegemony’, as discussed by Gramsci, is particularly relevant as it focusses on the powerful mechanisms that act in order to persuade the lay people to accept and adopt the principals’ ideas and ‘values’. These powerful mechanisms, which can take different social, cultural or religious institutional forms, promote their own ‘worldviews’, or versions of ‘reality’, that the lay people are expected to accept as the ‘natural order of things’ (Fairclough, 2003, p.45). This form of power ‘forces’ the powerless social groups to recognise dominant ideologies. One of these influential groups that have managed to become important in different areas of contemporary life is experts.

As discussed in this chapter, the subalterns are persuaded to accept the experts’ claims and also ‘trust’ their professional opinions (Scott, 2001). In return, experts need to be able to show that they possess the essential professional special knowledge of their field. In particular, it is their field’s ‘exclusive

'knowledge' that gives power to experts (Freidson, 1994). The subalterns must accept the experts' claims and this acceptance makes the subalterns the 'disempowered agents' (Scott, 2001, p.104). The lay people agree to accept this powerless position because they believe that the experts' 'special knowledge' will benefit them and get them closer to their goals. 'Expert systems' are promoted as a necessity in contemporary life and their power is exerted through the 'discursive practices' used which promote particular ideologies (Fairclough, 1993, p.40).

The final section of this chapter introduced 'discourse' and its connection with the construction and development of different versions of 'reality' (Mautner, 2016, p.12). A point that was highlighted in this section was that some discourse analysts are interested in exploring the relationship between 'discourse' and 'reality'. As we will see in the next chapter that explores CDA, these linguists are interested in the *critical* component of discourse.

Chapter 4. Linguistic background

1. Introduction

This chapter aims to review the literature and present the synergy of the theoretical and methodological background that informs this thesis, namely critical discourse analysis and corpus linguistics. It starts with an examination of the ‘critical realist social ontology’ (Fairclough, 2005, p.915), which can explain the theoretical underpinnings of CDA. The next section explores in more detail the central concept of ‘critique’ before we move to the development of CDA and its theoretical background, models, and aims. Fairclough’s three-stage analytical framework is particularly highlighted as it explains the relationship between ‘text’, ‘discourse practice’, and ‘social practice’, and the importance of examining the relationship between these three ‘social conditions’ (Fairclough, 2015). Van Leeuwen’s work on the representation of social actors is also explored as its contribution to the analytical part of this thesis is quite significant (Chapter 7). Of equal importance is Halliday’s Systemic Functional Grammar which is regularly used within the critical discourse framework. Emphasis is given to the system of *Transitivity* which is central to the examination of the role of careers services in chapter 7. Other linguistic concepts and theories used for the analysis of the data, such as the ‘technologisation of discourse’, ‘presuppositions and assumptions’, and ‘metaphors’, are also introduced in this part of the thesis. In section 8, there is also a brief discussion of criticisms of CDA and some responses to them.

Besides CDA, this chapter explores CL and its robust methods and tools. There is a section that discusses the criticism directed to the corpus linguistics’ field and the studies using its tools. Also, this chapter explores the combination of CDA and CL methods and briefly mentions the different approaches to corpus-based/assisted discourse studies. The final section explores previous linguistic research on the marketisation of HE and the notion of employability.

2. Critical realism

The idea that language only acts as a means for the communication of information was challenged with what we now know as the ‘linguistic turn’. The ‘linguistic turn’, which originates within the social sciences,

elaborates a central tenet where language is deemed to be the dominant symbolic resource available for accomplishing social reality [...]. In part, this is premised upon a simple but profound understanding that language use or talk is a form of action, drawing upon ‘ordinary language philosophy’. (Austin, 1962; Searle, 1969 cited in Mautner, 2016, p.11)

This definition includes two essential notions for this thesis, namely that language is a ‘dominant symbolic resource’ more than capable of constructing ‘social reality’, and it is also a ‘form of action’. The linguistic turn is associated with social constructivism which ‘centres on the idea that “reality” is at least in part constructed by the way we talk about it’ (Mautner, 2016, p.11). The same view is shared by practitioners of CDA. In this kind of linguistic understanding, ‘reality and discourse are regarded as linked dialectically; reality shapes discourse, and discourse shapes reality’ (*ibid*). As will be discussed below, the dialogicality of discourse and society is also strongly advocated in CDA.

‘Critical realism’ was developed to find a balance between the constructivist and realist viewpoints. As Fairclough (2005, p.922) explains, Realism is ‘the claim that there is a real world, including a real social world, which exists independently of our knowledge about it’. Similarly, critical realism, which is mostly associated with Bhaskar’s work, supports the idea that ‘the natural and social worlds differ’ and more specifically a social world is ‘dependent on human action for its existence’ (*ibid*). In other words, critical realists argue and believe that social worlds are socially constructed. When it comes to our knowledge of ‘reality’, Fairclough (2005, p.922) notes that

we must avoid the ‘epistemic fallacy’ of confusing the nature of reality with our knowledge of reality. This does not at all imply that reliable knowledge about reality is easy to come by, but it does mean a rejection of ‘judgemental relativism’ – of the view that all representations of the world are equally good – and a search for grounds for determining whether some representations constitute better knowledge of the world than others.

Just as ‘reliable knowledge about reality’ is difficult to locate, determining which ‘representations’ of the world utilise world knowledge at its best is equally challenging. This is one of the main interests in CDA which aims to evaluate whether some representations of the world inadvertently hide or willingly disguise parts of such knowledge. In the case of CSs, it would be interesting to see what kind of ‘job-seeking’ reality is presented to HE students (Chapter 6).

In addition, the adoption of a critical realist position and the pursuit of ‘normative agendas’ are strongly linked, which means that the analyst does not only aim to ‘explain what *is*, but also what *might* and *should* be’ (Mautner, 2016, p.13, original italics). Hence, describing or understanding the representation of reality projected or constructed by powerful groups is not where a critical realist position ends. Social realities are constructed based on historical, social, political and economic events. Language plays a vital role in the representation of these events and their effects in the world. Different groups of people can construct different versions of ‘reality’. Thus, the examination of different ‘realities’ than the ones promoted (‘what might be’), can lead to an evaluation of foregrounded ‘realities’ (‘what should be’).

As Reed (2009, p.61) further notes, a critical realist-based analysis is by its nature ‘focused on the underlying power mechanisms and control relations that generate and sustain institutional structures perpetuating inequality and injustice’. As we shall later see, CDA shares the same focus with the critical realist-based analysis. That is, to understand, explain and interpret such complex and powerful apparatuses and the ways these are involved in the creation and maintenance of influential institutional structures, which in turn could assist in the production and dissemination of ideas or ideologies, which can result in severe social injustices.

When it comes to understanding ‘institutional facts’, Searle (2010, p.90) notes that ‘We live in a sea of human institutional facts, much of this is invisible to us’. Searle’s main point is that people do not realise the importance of language in the plethora of institutional facts we are surrounded by. The same point is also highlighted by Mautner who notes that although the importance of language in the construction of reality is ‘widely accepted among social scientists, [...] outside academia it is still quite common to encounter a naively realist position – the assumption, that is, that language merely provides labels that are ‘stuck’ on objects without affecting them in any substantial way’ (Mautner, 2016, p.14). For this reason, creating ‘that awareness is also the job of the discourse analyst’ (Mautner, 2016, p.13). Analysing language alone, however, is not sufficient. Social issues trigger the critical discourse analyst’s decision to look closely at language use. This means that there is a need to take into consideration the historical, socio-political and economic background (in this thesis, chapters 1 and 2), in which texts, or other semiotic elements, are produced. The next part

introduces CDA in more detail. It focuses on its development and methods and looks closely at ‘critique’ before moving on to Fairclough and van Leeuwen’s work on CDA and Halliday’s systemic functional grammar.

3. Critical discourse analysis

As Smith and Higgins note, ‘In the tradition of critical theory, CDA aims to make transparent the discursive aspects of societal disparities and inequalities’ (2013, p.10). CDA can be described as a collective effort in developing a theory and methodology that could combine the notions of ‘power’, ‘ideology’, ‘discourse’, ‘critique’ and ‘social structure’, in order to examine different ‘social practices’ and the linguistic choices of their actors. More specifically, CDA perceives discourse ‘as a form of “social practice”’ (Fairclough and Wodak, 1997, p.258). Social practice is a ‘form of social activity’ (Chiapello and Fairclough, 2002, p.193), such as classroom teaching, a work situation, or a careers consultation within the HE context. The use of language as a form of social practice can be ideologically loaded and, most of the time, power relations in such practices are not transparent, or are purposely blurred. Hence, CDA aims to make these unclear aspects of discourse more visible. As KhosraviNik (2015, p.47) explains,

a critical analysis of discourse investigates various qualities of hegemonic ideologies interwoven in discourse, and contributes to the socio-political critique of social problems/issues/wrongs by raising awareness of the opaque ways in which power is legitimized in language.

Hence, critical discourse analysts consider language use, or discourse, and its legitimization or naturalisation, central by to the construction of social reality and unequal power relations. The following part explains in more detail the notion of ‘critique’.

3.1 Critique

The term ‘critical’ is associated with the Frankfurt School of Philosophy (Fairclough and Wodak, 1997, p.261). The difference between CDA and the more descriptive aims of discourse analysis is the focus on ‘critique’. Critical discourse analysts typically examine sources that employ linguistic strategies that appear as common sense but are in fact ideologically enabled. However, as Fairclough

notes, there is more to being critical than just revealing discourses that can be characterised as ‘manipulative’ (2015, p.7). A researcher must also ask for the reasons. In other words, we need to ask *why* language is being used this way and search for explanations.

In everyday language use, the term ‘critical’ seems to have a ‘negative semantic prosody’ (Mautner, 2016, p.28). However, if we look at the etymology of the term, as Mautner (2016, p.29) does, we see that ‘critical’ derives from the Greek noun ‘κριτής’, which means ‘judge’, and the verb ‘κρίνω’, which means ‘to judge’. Thus, the origin of this term has an inquisitive nature and that does not necessarily carry a ‘negative semantic prosody’. Hence, in a research context, ‘a critical approach is not necessarily about seeing things in a negative light but about shining light on things that would otherwise be kept in the dark’ (*ibid*). Or, as Mingers (2000, p. 225, cited in Mautner, 2016, p.29) notes, ‘being critical is not about criticizing but about critiquing’, which means that being critical can also mean being ‘supportive and constructive’.

Moreover, ‘Critique is grounded in values, in particular views of the “good society” and of human well-being and flourishing, on the basis of which it evaluates existing societies and possible ways of changing them’ (Fairclough, 2013, p.7). ‘Change’ is of particular importance when using ‘critique’. Similar to the critical realist position, a critical approach to research does not only ‘assess’ ‘what exists’, but also ‘what might’ or ‘what should’ exist and as Fairclough further notes, ‘it is a matter of highlighting gaps between what particular societies claim to be (‘fair’, ‘democratic’, ‘caring’ etc.) and what they are’ (*ibid*). In other words, a critical approach to research aims to examine every possibility when it comes to problematic social situations. For example, societies might claim to be competitive, or in crises, where in fact these representations can be constructed. Competition could be relevant to the majority of the population (or the ‘subalterns’), but not to the powerful or wealthy minority. In relation to the topic of this thesis, the reason for conducting critical research exists in the

shared assumption that the social structures underpinning capitalist economies based on commodity exchange lead to unequal power relations, and that the social theory and the research based on it should attempt to change society for the better rather than merely to describe it. (Mautner, 2016, p.30)

For example, one of these ‘social structures’ discussed above is careers services in HEIs. A critical analysis of the discourse used by these services would search for representations of ‘unequal power relations’ between the key participants, such as students, advisers, and employers. If there is linguistic evidence that suggests such relations, then these need to be pointed out to raise awareness that could lead to social change. The possibility of social change based on the analysis of discourse is further discussed in section 8 and chapter 9. There is, however, an important step that needs to be taken before having a real chance in changing problematic social situations, that is, ‘denaturalisation’ or ‘defamiliarisation’.

A critical point of view in research aims to interpret and explain social areas and also ‘identify the causes of social wrongs and produce knowledge which could (in the right conditions) contribute to righting or mitigating them’ (Fairclough, 2013, p.8). Interpretations and explanations of ideas, notions, parts of social life, already exist and they do not only include ‘people who live and act in particular circumstances, but also those who seek to govern or regulate the ways in which they do so, including politicians and managers’ (*ibid*). For example, interpretations of notions (‘employability’, ‘competition’) which can be provided by powerful groups, such as governments, professional organisations, managers, academics, CSs in universities, are also interpretations of the social world, or the ways the world ‘works’. Most importantly, these interpretations have become legitimised and are expected to be seen as normal or ‘common sense’.

As a result, such ‘worldviews’ can have effects on the social world and can transform it or shape people’s opinion which can lead to possible actions or reactions. As Alvesson and Deetz (2006, p. 275, cited in Mautner, 2016, p. 31) note, ‘A particularly important element in critical research is to turn the self-evident and familiar social world into something less obvious, natural, rational and well-ordered’. The process of ‘defamiliarisation’ of powerful contemporary institutions, or organisations, and the discourse they use can ‘counteract the effects of ideology and normalization’ (*ibid*). Thus, ‘a critique of some area of social life must therefore be in part a critique of interpretations and explanations of social life. And since interpretations and explanations are discourse, it must be in part a critique of discourse’ (Fairclough, 2013, p.8).

The following sections present Fairclough's analytical framework and van Leeuwen's take on the representation of social actors.

3.2 Fairclough's three-stage analytical framework

Fairclough's three-stage analytical framework includes: 'text', 'discourse practice', and 'social practice'. To understand language as social practice, we need to look at the difference between text and discourse. Discourse is the whole process of social interaction which includes the 'process of production', in which the text is a 'product', and the 'process of interpretation', in which the text becomes a 'resource' (Fairclough, 2015, p.57). The role of text is particularly important as it expresses and captures what Fairclough names the 'Members Resources', that is, the knowledge, ideas and opinions people carry with them and use in order to produce and interpret texts (*ibid*). Although these resources are cognitive, they have 'social origins – they are socially generated, and their nature is dependent on the social relations and struggles out of which they are generated' (*ibid*). Most importantly, these become internalised and act as resources in the reproduction of discourses.

Moreover, discourse 'involves social conditions' which are associated with three levels of social organisation: 'the level of social situation, or the immediate social environment in which the discourse occurs; the level of the social institution which constitutes a wider matrix for the discourse; and the level of the society as a whole' (Fairclough, 2015, pp.57–58). Figure 3 presents a visualisation of the 'Levels of social organisation'. It does not intend to produce an extensive representation of social organisations as these are theorised in the field of sociology. Rather, this is an attempt to provide a visual interpretation of the macro, meso, and micro social level that is regularly used in CDA.

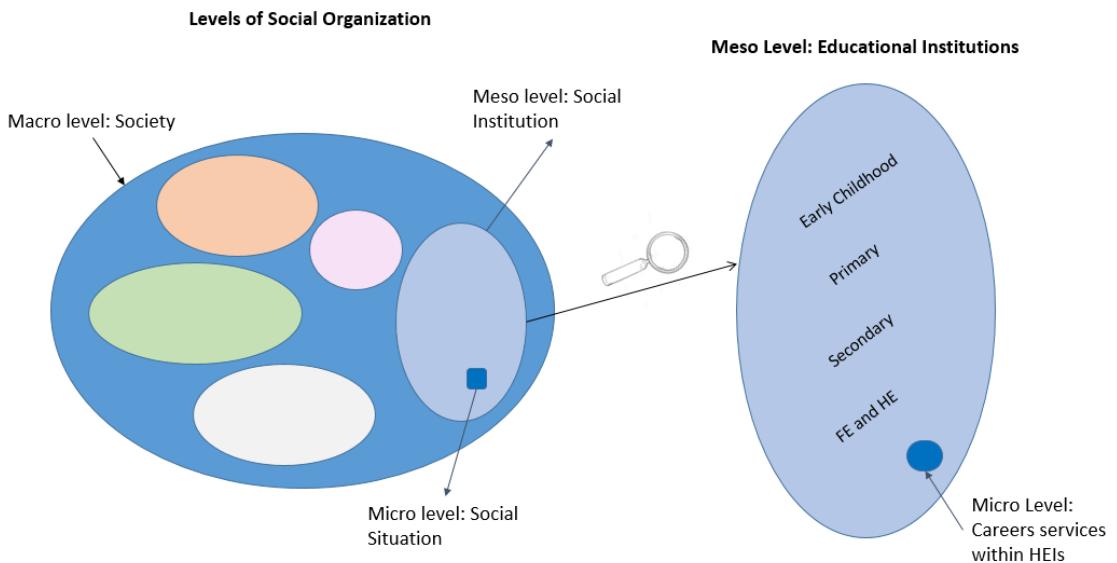


Figure 3 - Levels of social organisation

So, as shown in Figure 3, society (macro-level) is constituted by a number of social institutions (meso-level), such as the government, the family, and religious, economic, educational or political institutions. The sizes and shapes of each institution in the image are randomly designed. If we zoom in the meso-level of educational institutions, these are comprised of sub-levels, such as early childhood, primary, secondary, and further and higher education institutions. Thus, the careers and employability services that are part of HEIs in the UK are also part of and linked to the wider educational and social matrix that Fairclough highlights. Although this study analyses linguistic data produced and used in the 'level of social situation, or the immediate social environment in which the discourse occurs' (micro-level) (Fairclough, *ibid*), it needs to be stressed that the micro, meso, and macro levels are inter-related and thus affect one another. However, as will be further discussed in section 3.3, it can be claimed that some social institutions have the knowledge and the power to affect others significantly in the meso and micro-level, which can have serious consequences on the macro-social level.

At the textual level, the analysis identifies and describes the linguistic features of the texts in question. Fairclough (2015, pp.129–130) suggests a number of linguistic features that can be investigated, such as 'textual structures', 'lexical choices', or 'grammatical features', which can be analysed using Halliday's (1994) *Systemic Functional Grammar* (SFG) and the systems of

Transitivity, Mood, and Theme. Halliday's SFG is regularly used within the critical discourse analytical field because 'its approach to the linguistic analysis of texts is always oriented to the social character of texts' (Fairclough, 2003, p.5) (further discussed in section 4). At the level of discourse practice, the analysis considers the production and interpretation of texts and these features are explored within a larger social context. The 'social practice' dimension explores issues that relate to society by examining notions such as 'power relations' and 'struggles'. For example, and in relation to this thesis's topic, the lexicogrammatical features used by careers services for the production of the texts published on their websites, will be analysed and interpreted taking into account the wider social power relations between the participants (advisers, students, employers), and the possible ideologies involved, such as neoliberalism.

In one of his latest writings, Fairclough emphasises the fact that CDA 'combines **critique** of discourse and **explanation** of how it figures within and contributes to the existing social reality, as a basis for **action** to change that existing reality in particular respects' (Fairclough, 2015, p.6, original emphasis). He also notes that this combination and the links between discourse and 'social elements' such as 'power relations, ideologies, social institutions', did not go unnoticed by critical social science (*ibid*). However, CDA was able to offer the 'detailed attention' these relations 'require' (*ibid*). And this is, according to Fairclough, 'the essence of CDA' and what distinguishes this model from other models of critical discourse analysis. Namely, it is not only critique of discourse that the analysts need to pursue. Critical discourse analysts also need to provide 'explanation of how it relates to other elements of the existing reality' if the aim is to change our existing societies for the better (*ibid*). Fairclough's three-stage analytical model and his emphasis on elements such as 'critique', 'explanation', and 'action', is very close to the corpus-based analytical model proposed by Baker and McEnery (2015) (presented in chapter 5) and provides a sound theoretical background for a critical linguistic analysis.

3.3 Technologisation of discourse

One of the concepts that can assist with our understanding of 'reality' and shed light on the links between 'power', 'ideology', 'discourse', and 'society', is the 'technologisation of discourse'. Fairclough (1992, p.215) explores Foucault's

work on ‘the technologies of power’ and applies it to the use of language when he talks about the technologisation of discourse. It is considered a ‘form of top-down imposition of new discursive practices by organizations upon their members’ (Fairclough, 1993, p.141). ‘Discourse technologies’ have resulted as institutions and powerful groups realised the importance of language use in society. This realisation has led to linguistic change which in turn resulted to ‘a greater level of conscious intervention to control and shape language practices in accordance with economic, political and institutional objectives’ (Fairclough and Wodak, 1997, p.260).

Specifically, ‘discourse technologies’ and the ‘technologisation of discourse’ are ‘characteristics of modern orders of discourse’ (Fairclough, 1992, p.215). By ‘orders of discourse’ Fairclough means the ‘totality of discursive practices of an institution, and relationships between them’ (1993, p.138). ‘Orders of discourse’, as Smith further explains, can be ‘viewed as domains of hegemony and hegemonic struggle’ which can take place ‘within institutions such as education as well as within the wider social formation’ (2014, p.21). In other words, a ‘social practice’ is a ‘social activity’, such as careers counselling. Social activities can be interconnected with other activities and this constitutes a ‘social order’, or a ‘social structure’. Thus, for example, the CSs in UK universities are a social structure which is also linked with other powerful social structures, such as the careers profession. Some examples of ‘discourse technologies’, include:

Examples of discourse technologies are[:] interviewing, teaching, counselling and advertising. In calling them discourse technologies, I am suggesting that in modern society they have taken on, and are taking on, the character of transcontextual techniques, which are seen as resources and toolkits that can be used to pursue a wide variety of strategies in many diverse contexts. [...] They [discourse technologies] are coming to have their own specialist technologists: researchers who look into their efficiency, designers who work out refinements in the light of research and changing institutional requirements, and trainers who pass on their techniques. (Fairclough, 1992, p.215)

In other words, ‘expert’ discourse ‘technologists’ use specialised knowledge – or in Fairclough’s terms ‘social scientific knowledge’ (2015, p.212) – which aims to direct a broad range of professional groups and equip them with linguistic tools which could be used to persuade the masses. As an example of a ‘transcontextual technique’, of ‘discourse technologists’, Mayr (2008, p.39) mentions the act of teaching ‘communication skills’. As will be further explained

in chapter 5, teaching and developing skills is a particularly popular task and one that is being promoted by governments. The ‘discourse technologists’ associated with this task, which in this case could be officials in agencies (such as CEDEFOP mentioned in chapter 1), that produce employment and training policies and whose use of discourse may be adopted by recruiters, employers, interviewers, or careers ‘experts’. These ‘experts’ are ‘hardly ever linguists, who tend to adopt a descriptive approach to language’ (*ibid*). They do use, however, linguistic tools, such as ‘choices in vocabulary, grammar intonation, organisation of dialogue’, but other non-linguistic techniques, such as ‘facial expression, gesture, bodily stance, and movements’ (Fairclough, 1992, p.216), are also considered essential for achieving the desired outcomes.

Thus, there are some professional groups which ‘are targeted for training in discourse technologies’, such as ‘teachers, interviewers, advertisers, and other “gate-keepers” and power-holders’ (*ibid*). The job interview process is, according to Fairclough, a ‘gatekeeping encounter’ (2015, p.77). In this encounter, the interviewer, or “gate-keeper”, is considered to be part of a dominant social group that ‘controls’ the process and ‘determines whether someone gets a job’ (*ibid*). These groups are provided with ‘techniques’ that are ‘context-free’ and can thus be applied to different settings (Talbot, Atkinson and Atkinson, 2008, p.77). Also, these linguistic strategies are passed on and become integrated to other ‘domains of interaction’ (‘textual hybridisation’) (*ibid*), such as the use of promotional language which has become part of HE discourse (Fairclough, 1993; Askehave, 2007; Zhang and O’Halloran, 2013), or the use of ‘therapeutic discourse’ regularly applied in the student services’ context (as discussed in chapter 7).

Besides interviews, other types of discourse technologies that are relevant to the careers setting include questionnaires, tests, applications and CVs. Such documents are ‘themselves the object of social scientific investigation’ and the results are ‘fed back into the discourse technologies, helping to shape and modify them’ (Fairclough, 2015, p.212). As Fairclough adds, ‘discourse technologies fall within the more general category of strategic discourse, discourse oriented to instrumental goals and results’ (*ibid*). These techniques of ‘discourse technologies’ aim to bring ‘particular effects upon publics (clients, customers, consumers) who are not trained in them’ (Fairclough, 1992, p.216). Thus, as the

discourse of careers services is considered a ‘discourse technology’, it would be interesting to examine the linguistic techniques involved that aim to bring ‘particular effects upon’ the student-customers. Examples of such ‘techniques’, which also shed light on the careers advisers’ professional role(s), can be found in the analytical part of this thesis (Chapters 6-8).

4. Halliday’s systemic functional grammar

It was mentioned earlier that Halliday’s SFG, is regularly applied in critical discourse analysis. SFG aims to answer the following question: ‘what are the basic functions of language in relation to our ecological and social environment?’ (Halliday and Matthiessen, 2014, p.30). Halliday and Matthiessen propose that there are two functions of language, ‘making sense of our experience, and acting out our social relations’ (*ibid*). The following extract explains the ‘metafunctions’ (a term that was ‘adopted to suggest that function was an integral component within the overall theory’ (Halliday and Matthiessen, 2014, p.31)) of language as theorised by Halliday:

language provides a **theory** of human experience, and certain of the resources of the lexicogrammar of every language are dedicated to that function. We call it the **ideational** metafunction, and distinguish it into two components, the **experiential** and the **logical** [...].

At the same time, whenever we use language there is always something else going on. While construing, language is always also **enacting**: enacting our personal and social relationships with the other people around us. The **clause** of the grammar is not only a figure, representing some process – some doing or happening, saying or sensing, being or having – together with its various participants and circumstances; it is also a proposition, or a proposal, whereby we inform or question, give an order or make an offer, and express our appraisal of and attitude towards whoever we are addressing and what we are talking about.

This kind of meaning is more active: if the ideational function of the grammar is ‘language as reflection’, this is ‘language as action’. We call it the **interpersonal** metafunction, to suggest that it is both interactive and personal. (original emphasis)

Thus, Halliday points out that there is another ‘dimension’ to language besides the lexicographical function, the mode of ‘meaning’. These two ‘metafunctions’, the ‘ideational’ and the ‘interpersonal’, can help us to understand the ways our social world is perceived, considered, described, or understood by its three most common ‘elements’: participants, and the plethora of their social roles; actions or reactions – whether these are tangible or intangible – and the different social or personal conditions we find ourselves in, in our everyday lives.

This thesis uses the two ‘metafunctions’ mentioned above as these can be incorporated in the linguistic analysis using both CDA and CL methods and tools. However, there is a third component in grammar as explained by Halliday, the ‘textual’ metafunction that is a ‘mode of meaning that relates to the construction of text’ (*ibid*). The textual metafunction acts as ‘an enabling or facilitating function since both the others – construing experience and enacting interpersonal relations – depend on being able to build up sequences of discourse, organizing the discursive flow, and creating cohesion and continuity as it moves along’ (Halliday and Matthiessen, 2014, pp.30–31). The following table, found in Halliday and Matthiessen (2014, p.83), shows the ‘three lines of meaning in the clause’ as described above.

Metafunction	Clause as ...	System	Structure
textual	message	THEME	Theme \wedge Rheme
interpersonal	exchange	MOOD	Mood [Subject + Finite] + Residue [Predicator (+ Complement) (+ Adjunct)]
experiential	representation	TRANSITIVITY	process + participant(s) (+ circumstances), e.g. Process + Actor + Goal

Figure 4 - Halliday and Matthiessen's 'three lines of meaning in the clause'

The application of Halliday’s *interpersonal* and *experiential* metafunctions in the analytical part of this thesis is described in chapter 7. The following sections present the systems associated with these metafunctions, namely *Transitivity* and *Mood*.

4.1 Transitivity

Halliday notes that by examining ‘the clause in its experiential function’, we are concerned with ‘its guise as a way of representing patterns of experience’ (1994, p.106). More specifically, he notes:

Language enables human beings to build a mental picture of reality, to make sense of what goes on around them and inside them. [...] the clause plays a central role, because it embodies a general principle for modeling experience – namely, the principle that reality is made up of PROCESSES.

Thus, the representation of what we perceive as ‘reality’ takes ‘form’ and is communicated with our lexicogrammatical choices which are then used for the construction of clauses or sentences. The importance of grammatical choice in

clauses that express the actions, reactions or ‘goings-on’, is particularly highlighted in the *Transitivity* system. A clause is not only ‘a mode of action, of giving and demanding goods-&-services and information’, but it is also ‘a mode of reflection, of imposing order on the endless variation and flow of events’ (Halliday, 1994, p.106). This complex communication of meaning is achieved by the socio-semantic system of *Transitivity* which ‘construes the world of experience into a manageable set of PROCESS TYPES’ (*ibid*).

The world we experience has two dimensions: the ‘external world’ or the ‘outer experience’ that consists of ‘actions and events’ that can involve more than one participants; and the ‘internal world’ or the ‘inner experience’ that describes, reflects, or reacts to the events of the ‘outer experiences’ and is ‘partly a separate awareness of our states of being’ (*ibid*). The division of these two ‘worlds’ of experiences is embodied in Halliday’s grammatical categories of *Material* and *Mental* processes. There is also another type of processes as people ‘learn to generalize’ and ‘relate one fragment of experience to another’ (Halliday, 1994, p.107). These grammatical types of ‘classifying and identifying’ are called *Relational* processes (*ibid*). These three process types ‘are the three main types of process in the English *Transitivity* system’ (*ibid*). There are also three additional process types: the *Behavioural*; *Verbal*, and *Existential* processes. The *Transitivity* system is used for the examination of the CSs’ role in chapter 7.

4.2 Participants

The participant(s) of clauses can be expressed as *Actors* (*Material* processes), *Sensers* (*Mental* processes), *Carriers* (*Relational* processes), etc. (Mayr, 2008, p.18). When analysing *Material* processes, an *Actor* is ‘the one that does the deed’, and according to Halliday, in the ‘traditional view of transitivity in western linguistics’ there is a sequence of functions: (a) ‘Every process has an Actor’ and (b) ‘Some processes, but not all, also have a second participant’, which he calls the *Goal* (1994, p.109). A simple example would be the clause: ‘The bird chased the cat’, where ‘the bird’ is the *Actor*, the process is ‘chased’ and the *Goal* is ‘the cat’. Besides the term *Goal*, participants that take such roles in clauses can also be called a *Patient*, which means ‘one that “suffers” or “undergoes” the process’ (Halliday, 1994, p.110). Halliday notes that both terms, namely *Goal* and *Patient*, are not truly accurate and explains that a more ‘relevant concept is more like that

of “one to which the process is extended” as ‘the concept of extension’ is included ‘in the classical terminology of “transitive” and “intransitive”, from which the term “transitivity” is derived’ (*ibid*). In chapter 7 there is an examination of the main participants in grammatical patterns found in the corpus. The analysis starts with an examination of the careers services’ role as *Actors* to understand the nature of the advisers’ roles. It then moves to examine the relationship between the two main participants, that is the advisers and the students. Chapter 7.7 presents an example of what Halliday means when he writes about participants to ‘which the process is extended’ (1994, p.110). In my analysis, these participants are named ‘patients’ or ‘clients’.

4.3 Circumstances

Besides grammatical choice (*Transitivity*), and the different actors involved in these choices (*Participants*), the circumstances of clauses must be taken into consideration to understand the representation of what we perceive as ‘reality’. The circumstantial elements of a clause can be realised by adverbial (for example, ‘we are here...’), or prepositional phrases (‘we know that...’). Halliday distinguishes between several ways of identifying different circumstances such as: ‘extent’, ‘cause’, ‘location’, ‘matter’, ‘manner’, ‘role’ and ‘accompaniment’ (Halliday, 1994), to name a few. However, for the interpretation of the CEW15 corpus findings, instead of following Halliday’s classification of circumstances, I will consider them as general prepositional and adverbial phrases taking into account the Longman corpus-based grammar (Biber et al., 1999). This is due to the large number of concordance lines (see, for example, Table 35), that must be closely examined to ‘capture’ the meaning of these clauses or sentences. As I am searching general meaning/ideas/ideologies construed by the language used by the services, I will expand my analysis and consider different elements that may be included in the same sentence, not just at the clause level.

4.4 Mood

The element of *Mood* is also of interest in chapter 7 and the examination of the careers services’ role(s), as we can examine statements, questions and their responses that ‘are typically expressed by means of a particular kind of

grammatical variation' (Halliday and Matthiessen, 2014, p.139). The *Mood* element consists of two parts: '(1) the **Subject**, which is a nominal group, and (2) the **Finite** operator which is part of a verbal group' (Halliday and Matthiessen, 2014, p.140, original emphasis). For example, in the clause 'we can help' (examined in chapter 7.7), 'we' is the subject and 'can' is the finite. The finite element can be expressed by a number of 'verbal operators expressing tense', such as the verbs 'is' and 'has', or modality, such as 'can', 'might', and 'must'. The 'finite verbal operator' is also distinguished by the systems of *Polarity* and *Modality*. *Polarity* is explained as 'the opposition between positive [...] and negative', such as ('can' or 'can't'), and modality 'as the speaker's judgement, or request of the judgement of the listener, on the status of what is being said' (Halliday and Matthiessen, 2014, p.172), such as 'you must leave', 'they might come'.

According to Verscgueren (1999, cited in Fairclough, 2003, p.165), 'modality involves the many ways in which attitudes can be expressed towards the 'pure' reference-and-prediction content of an utterance, signalling factuality, degrees of certainty or doubt, vagueness, possibility, necessity, and even permission and obligation'. *Modality* can be both explicit and implicit. The most common markers or modality are *modal verbs*. There are 'Nine **central modal** auxiliary verbs' that 'are used to express modality: *can*, *could*, *may*, *might*, *shall*, *should*, *will*, *would*, *must*', used as auxiliaries, also in negation preceding the negative particle, and followed by a bare infinitive (Biber et al., 1999, p.483, original emphasis). These can also be used to make 'time distinctions', 'such as the modals *will* and *shall* and the semi-modal *going to*' which 'can be used to refer to future time' (Biber et al., 1999, p.484, original emphasis).

Biber et al. (1999, p.485) group modal and semi-modal verbs into three categories 'according to their main meanings (excluding *used to*, which relates to past time)':

- permission/possibility/ability: *can*, *could*, *may*, *might*,
- obligation/necessity: *must*, *should*, (had) better, *have (got) to*, *need to*, *ought to*, *be supposed to*,
- volition/prediction: *will*, *would*, *shall*, *be going to*.

These can then be further ‘labelled’ as intrinsic and extrinsic (also referred to as ‘deontic’ and ‘epistemic’ meanings). Modal verbs are taken into consideration in the examination of the social actors’ roles in chapter 7.

5. Van Leeuwen’s representations of social actors

Besides Fairclough’s work on CDA, and Halliday’s SFG, this thesis’s linguistic analysis benefits from the work of van Leeuwen on the representation of social actors. Van Leeuwen also considers the relationship between language and society vital. He notes that ‘all texts, all representations of the world and what is going on in it, however abstract, should be interpreted as representations of social practices’ (2008, p.5). Social practices ‘are socially regulated ways of doing things’, or as further explained, they are ‘one of the ways in which social coordination can be achieved’ (van Leeuwen, 2005, pp.6-7). Some examples of ‘regulated’ social practices include ‘strict prescription’, ‘traditions’, ‘the influence of experts and charismatic role models’, or ‘constraints of technological resources used’ (van Leeuwen, 2005, p.7). The social practice examined in this thesis is the act of guidance and support provided to students by careers ‘experts’ within the UK HE system. For van Leeuwen, the *Actors*, or the *Participants*, of such social practices in general, take the roles of instigators, agents, affected, or beneficiaries (*ibid*). It is thus important to know ‘who is represented as “agent” (“actor”) or ‘who as the “patient” (“goal”) with respect to a given action’ (van Leeuwen, 2005, p.32). However, van Leeuwen makes a vital comment about these roles:

This question remains important, for there need not be congruence between the roles that social actors actually play in social practices and the grammatical roles they are given in texts. Representations can reallocate roles or rearrange the social relations between the participants. (2008, p.32)

Such an example will be presented in more detail in the analytical part (Chapter 7). Van Leeuwen’s work is useful for the examination of the CSs’ role(s) as he identifies several variables that explain the linguistic choices in the representation of social actors. Those that are relevant to the representation of CSs as social actors examined in chapter 7 include the concepts of ‘individualisation’ and ‘assimilation’, in addition to ‘personalisation’ and ‘impersonalisation’.

In particular, he distinguishes the representation of social actors when these are referred to as individuals ('individualisation'), or as groups ('assimilation'). 'Assimilation' is further divided into two main categories, namely 'aggregation' and 'collectivisation' (van Leeuwen, 2008, p.37). In the examples provided by van Leeuwen, the third person pronoun 'we' and the noun 'experts' is described as 'collectivisation' of the social actors, while the noun 'the government' is an 'individualised' social actor and further described as 'the leader as a strong individual, the people as a homogenous, consensual group' (2008, p.38). Similarly, it can be noted that within HEIs, the careers services as a group of people or professionals can be represented as a collective force with the use of the terms 'we', 'careers advisers', and 'careers experts', or individually, for example, with the noun phrase 'the careers service', as a unity or a collective force.

The next distinction made by van Leeuwen explains in more detail the difference between these two groups. He talks about 'personalised' and 'impersonalised' social actors. The concept of 'personalisation' represents social actors as 'human beings, as realized by personal and possessive pronouns, proper names and nouns' (2008, p.46). 'Impersonalised' social actors, represented by 'abstract nouns or by concrete nouns' give meanings that 'do not include the semantic feature of "human"' (*ibid*). Specifically,

impersonalization can have one or more of the following effects: it can background the identity and/or role of social actors; it can lend impersonal authority or force to an action or quality of a social actor; and it can add positive or negative connotations to an action or utterance of a social actor. (van Leeuwen, 2008, p.47)

The same point is also made by Mulderig (2011a, p.565) in her study of UK education policy discourse where she notes that 'the choice of the term "the government" impersonalises the representation through "institutionalisation" (abstractly representing a group of people by means of their institutional belonging)', while on the other hand, 'the personal pronoun "we" personalises it, foregrounding human semantic properties'. This distinction, as explained in chapter 7, is also one of the reasons that the analysis continues with the examination of the pronoun 'we' as used for the representation of careers services in the institutional setting.

6. Presuppositions and assumptions

In addition to van Leeuwen's representation of social actors, I will be looking at instances of *presuppositions* and *assumptions*. All types of communication, for example visual, spoken or written, depend on some form of 'common ground' or 'common knowledge' shared by participants. In written discourse 'Implicitness is a pervasive property of texts, and a property of considerable social importance' (Fairclough, 2003, p.55). There are, however, attempts to 'exercise social power, domination and hegemony' where powerful groups or participants act in order to 'shape to some significant degree the nature and content' of 'common knowledge' and this 'makes implicitness and assumptions an important issue with respect to ideology' (*ibid*). As Smith notes, 'the text producer has the power to determine what presuppositions are used' (2013, p.26). Thus, CSs in universities may be able to determine presuppositions through the texts they publish on their websites, although it could be argued that these services reproduce such presuppositions rather than 'determining' or 'creating' them.

Presuppositions, as assumptions are called in pragmatics, can be 'cued in texts' by a range of linguistic features, such as wh-questions and lexicogrammatical choices, such as verbs, adverbs, and adjectives (Fairclough, 2015, p.164). Presuppositions can be '*sincere or manipulative*', but they can also have 'ideological functions when what they assume has the character of "common sense in the service of power"' (*ibid*, original italics). The significance of 'ideology' when it comes to the examination of assumptions is demonstrated by Fairclough who presents an example of the discourse of neoliberalism and the assumptions disseminated. In the discourse of neoliberalism, any action that enhances "efficiency and adaptability" is desirable', texts can present an 'unquestioned and unavoidable reality' such as the idea of a 'global economy' and a competitive marketplace or that 'globalisation is a reality' and one of 'economic progress' (Fairclough, 2003, p.58). This kind of 'assumed meaning' is ideologically significant as it could be argued that 'relations of power are best served by meanings which are widely taken as given' (*ibid*). Examples of ideologically important assumptions are provided in the analytical part (Chapters 6-8).

7. Metaphors

Another linguistic technique examined in the analytical part (Chapter 6) is the services' use of metaphors. A metaphor is often considered, especially in CDA, a 'rhetorical device' (Talbot, Atkinson and Atkinson, 2008, p.18). When it comes to the examination of metaphors and their meaning, metaphors transfer the meaning from the "source domain" to the "target domain" and they generally belong to 'a class of expressions referred to as *figures of speech*, or *tropes*', as they are 'not meant to be understood literally' (Mautner, 2016, p.89, original italics). As Partington and Taylor (2018, p.129) note, 'The power of metaphor (and its danger) is that the grounds are implicit, not stated openly'.

Mautner distinguishes between two types of metaphors the 'live' and 'dead' ones. The 'live' ones are those whose meaning is not to be taken as literal while the 'dead' metaphors are so commonly used that have become 'literal terms' and may also be found as entries in dictionaries (*ibid*). Examples of such metaphors are further discussed in chapter 6. Besides looking at metaphor as a 'stylistic tool, making texts more appealing', aiming to surprise and persuade readers, Mautner notes that metaphors do 'a great deal more' (2016, p.90). According to the Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT) – which is an approach that has been extensively used in the production of academic research in recent years (see, for example, Koller, 2004; Deignan, 2005; Semino, 2008; Cameron and Maslen 2010) – a metaphor 'emerges as a device that frames perceptions and perspectives, and in doing so contributes to shaping them more' (Mautner, 2016, p.90). This theory has influenced linguistics and in particular critical discourse studies which also argue for the ideological significance of metaphors. As Koller argues:

Given this ideologically vested nature of discourse as it manifests itself in texts of particular genres and their (linguistic) features, the agenda of Critical Linguistics has been defined as 'defamiliarisation or consciousness-raising' (Fowler, 1987, p. 5). Accordingly, any critical research into metaphor seeks to convey how dominant metaphors come into being, how they are reified (made abstract or concrete) in discourse, and what agendas are met by using them. (2004, p.21)

In chapter 6, for example, I will be looking at the metaphors used by careers services in the 'job market', 'employability' and 'skills' context.

The final section of this chapter looks at the criticisms of CDA and some of the responses provided by its advocates.

8. Criticisms of CDA

Critical linguistics and later CDA have been under academic scrutiny especially from what is called ‘mainstream linguists’. Hodge and Kress (1993, cited in Mautner, 2016, p.35) describe the reviews to the first edition of *Language as Ideology* (1979) as ‘vitriolic’. One of CDA’s first critics, Widdowson (1995), discusses the vagueness of the term ‘discourse’ and ‘the lack of a clear demarcation between text and discourse’, but most notably criticises CDA’s approach as ‘an ideological interpretation and therefore not an analysis’ (Titscher et al., 2000, p.163). Widdowson, amongst many others, believes that critical discourse analysts offer ‘a biased interpretation: in the first place it is prejudiced on the bases of some ideological commitment, and then it selects for analysis such texts as will support the preferred interpretation’ (Titscher et al., 2000, pp.163–164). Fairclough’s reply defends CDA’s ‘open-endedness of results’ (*ibid*) and also highlights the fact that critical discourse analysts are always open about their position. Specifically, Fairclough (1996, p.52) notes:

Practitioners of CDA are indeed generally characterised by explicit political commitments. They are people who see things wrong with their societies, see language as involved in what is wrong, and are committed to making changes through forms of intervention involving language – e.g. by working on critical language awareness programmes for schools, which can point learners towards the possibility of self-conscious language change as a form of social change.

What is very distinct about CDA is that its practitioners are very open to the way they see the world and the topics they choose to examine. Besides aiming to raise ‘critical language awareness’, and turn people’s attention to the changes in language use, CDA researchers aim to change problematic social phenomena. This brings us to another criticism of CDA that describes it as ‘political’ or ‘unscientific’ (Widdowson, 2004). In response to this criticism, KhosraviNik defends CDA as ‘a scholarly principle’ and also notes that ‘CDA is political in the sense that it concentrates on power relations as its central theme and, thus falls into the broad definition of political analysis’ (2015, p.50). He also notes that CDA can also be viewed as ‘political in terms of its commitment, and contribution to struggles against inequalities and suffering’ (*ibid*), which also agrees with Fairclough’s comment cited above.

One point under discussion here would be whether critical discourse analysts have the means and the power that would support their claims of changing societies for the better. Is social ‘praxis’ by critical discourse analysts an achievable goal? As Fairclough explains ‘critical analysts can only contribute through dialogue with social actors engaged in the real situations of social life who are capable of such action, though again this may be indirect dialogue’ (2015, p.11). ‘Praxis’ and ‘change’, as mentioned in the discussion of ‘critique’, is the ultimate goal of critical discourse analysts. It is, however, one of these ideas that are easier said than done. A discussion on this matter when it comes to careers services in HEIs and their practices follows after the presentation of this thesis’s linguistic findings in the conclusions chapter (Chapter 9). One example of direct dialogue which led to ‘praxis’, mentioned in Simpson and Mayr (2010, p.53), was van Dijk’s ‘discovery of potentially racist language in Dutch schoolbooks [which] led directly to the production of new teaching materials’.

Moreover, these criticisms, namely that the interpretation of the data is subjective and the data cherry-picked, continue to exist today. However, as Mautner (2016, pp.36–37) points out,

when critical linguistics is accused of ideological bias it often seems to be claimed or implied that its traditional, mainstream counterpart is, by contrast, neutral and objective. [...] Mainstream linguists may have as much an axe to grind as their critical brethren, but they get away with it more easily because they usually do not wear their ideological commitment on their sleeve.

A similar view is expressed by Baker when he quotes Burr who argues that ‘objectivity is impossible as we all encounter the world from some perspective (the “objective” stance is still a stance)’ (2006, p.10). He also proposes, as already stressed in the introduction of this thesis (Chapter 1), that ‘Instead researchers need to acknowledge their own involvement in their research and reflect on the role it plays in the results that are produced’ (*ibid*). There is no doubt about CDA’s significant contribution to important contemporary socio-political and economic issues, such as migration, racism, feminism, government policy, the language used by the media, etc. Still, it must be noted that CDA’s complex and elegant methodology is often limited to the analysis of a small number of texts. This is also another criticism expressed by Widdowson who ‘warned that “cherry-

picking” could be used to prove a preconceived point while swathes of inconvenient data might be overlooked’ (Baker and McEnery, 2015, p.5).

Although there are many cases where a couple of texts are more than enough to examine ideologies, or dominant representations of ‘realities’, or capture and examine discursive practices that may act in the reproduction of unequal power relations; in recent years, linguists have the opportunity to examine a large number of texts with the use of CL methods. It is a fact that CL methods help ‘the analysis tackle research questions in ways that other methods cannot’ (Mautner, 2009, p.44). For example, the analysis of 58 university web pages would have been impossible without using CL software and methods.

9. Corpus linguistics

Although CDA methodology has been (and is still) used by scholars for the examination of discursive practices in various areas of social life, for this research project, corpus linguistic methods and tools are of vital importance. As Baker and McEnery (2015, p.1) state, ‘Corpus linguistics is a powerful methodology – a way of using computers to assist the analysis of language so that regularities among many millions of words can be quickly and accurately identified’. In addition, Partington, Duguid and Taylor (2013, p.5), note that CL ‘is a form of text linguistics and as such is evidence-based’. So far, and during the examination of CDA literature, the source of data under examination was referred to as ‘text(s)’. In corpus linguistics, the dataset under examination is called a ‘corpus’ (or corpora in the plural), and consist of bodies of electronically encoded texts in the form of computer files.

CL tools are mainly used for the analysis of data/corpora that have a significant size which would otherwise be impossible to analyse manually within a reasonable timeframe. The set of tools that CL offer, allows users to search through large datasets quickly and reliably. As McEnery and Hardie (2012, p.26) note, ‘for the majority of researchers in linguistics, corpora are an indispensable source of evidence, and the tools that extract data from corpora are a substantial and transformative source of support’. A description of these tools, namely frequency, dispersion plot, concordance list, collocations, n-grams, and keywords and their possibilities is provided in chapter 5.3.

10. Criticisms of CL

As all relatively ‘new’ methodological approaches, corpus linguistics applications to language was and still is, a target for criticism. One of these criticisms is that CL methods ‘are too broad’ and cannot assist in the texts’ close analysis. As Baker (2006, p.7) notes, an answer could be that such a view

is akin to complaining that a telescope only lets us looks at faraway phenomena, rather than allowing us to look at things close-up, like a microscope (Partington 1998: 144). Kenny (2001) argues that in fact, the corpus-based approach is more like a kaleidoscope, allowing us to see textual patterns come into focus and recede again as others take their place.

It is thus essential to understand what each methodology can or cannot offer and be able to assess when CL methods can be fruitfully applied in order for research questions to be answered in the best possible way.

Another criticism comes from Widdowson (2000, cited in Baker, 2006, p.7), who ‘questions the validity of analysts’ interpretations of corpus data and raises questions about the methodological processes they choose to use’, while at the same time ‘suggesting that the ones which computers find easier to carry out will be chosen in preference to more complex forms of analysis’. This criticism cannot stand today as the development of corpus software and tools have progressed in such ways that allow the creation of very complex searches which can then be analysed and interpreted by the corpus linguist. In addition, Baldry (2000, p.36) claims that CL methods separate texts from their context. This may be true, but then again it is in the hands of the researcher to bring the results of the analysis back into the context by using corpus tools and techniques, such as closely examining concordance lines.

All criticisms have been carefully considered and addressed by scholars who use CL methods for the analysis of different social phenomena, such as Baker et al. (2008), Mautner (2009), McEnery and Hardie (2012), Partington (2014), and Baker and McEnery (2015).

11. CDA and CL synergy

It is a fact that these criticisms have directed linguists towards some of CDA and CL’s weaknesses which were then used to strengthen the methods and also

create a robust and constructive synergy between the two approaches. This is one of the points made by Baker et al. (2008, p.283): ‘although CL and CDA can both be seen to have strengths and weaknesses, it is hoped that a combination of the two would help to exploit their strong points while eliminating potential problems’.

In recent years, many scholars have used corpus linguistics approaches to (critical) discourse analysis (for example, Mautner, 2005a, 2005b, 2007; Pearce, 2005, 2014; Baker, 2006, 2010; Baker et al., 2008; Marchi and Taylor, 2009; Partington, Duguid and Taylor, 2013; Taylor and Marchi, 2018). There are also different approaches to corpus linguistics used in (critical) discourse analysis. For example, as Baker and McEnery note, their work is ‘influenced by Fairclough’s approach’ to CDA, and the corpus-based research coming out from Lancaster University has ‘tended to be more closely connected to schools of critical discourse analysis’ (Baker and McEnery, 2015, p.7). At the same time, one of these approaches, called Corpus-Assisted Discourse Studies (CADS), was developed at the University of Bologna by Alan Partington. As Partington, Duguid and Taylor note, the term CADS was coined to show that ‘corpus techniques were only one sort amongst others and that CADS analysts employ as many as required to obtain the most satisfying and complete results, hence “corpus-assisted”’ (2013, p.10). For a discussion on the aims of CADS see Partington, Duguid and Taylor (2013, pp.10-14). The methodological approach that I follow in this thesis is described in detail in the next chapter (Chapter 5.6).

The next section discusses previous research on the marketisation of HE by linguists who use (critical) discourse analysis and/or corpus-based approaches. As the literature review shows, so far, not many researchers have used corpus-based/assisted approaches to discourse analysis when it comes to the investigation of the language used by universities.

12. Previous research on the marketisation of HE and employability

Over the last three decades, there has been a growing body of research highlighting the use of marketised and managerial discourse by HEIs around the world. The impact of the market on HE has been a key focus in the field of

linguistics especially by researchers who adopt a critical point of view. Various data sources have been examined when it comes to the marketisation of (higher) education such as, policy documents (Mulderrig, 2011, 2012; Wodak and Fairclough, 2010), election manifestos (Pearce, 2004), online corpora (Mautner, 2005, 2010), ‘About us’ statements (Giannoni, 2016), prospectuses (Fairclough, 1993; Askehave, 2007; Teo, 2007), university strategy documents (Mayr, 2008), websites (Mayr, 2008; Zhang and O’Halloran, 2013; Giannoni, 2016), memos, presentations and interview data (Trowler, 2001), and job advertisements (Fairclough, 1993, Xiong, 2012, Kheovichai, 2014). Similar to the methodology chosen for this thesis, some of these studies use CDA (Fairclough, 1993; Pearce, 2004; Askehave, 2007 (with genre theory); Zhang and O’Halloran, 2013 (with critical ‘hypermodal approach’)), and corpus-based CDA (Mautner, 2005, 2010; Mulderrig, 2011, 2012; Kheovichai, 2014). The majority of these studies apply ‘critique’ when it comes to the explanation and evaluation of their findings (see, for example, Fairclough, 1993; Trowler, 2001; Pearce, 2004; Mautner, 2005, 2010; Mulderrig, 2011, 2012; Askehave, 2007; Teo, 2007; Mayr, 2008; Xiong, 2012; Kheovichai, 2014; Zhang and O’Halloran, 2013). On the other hand, as will be discussed below, Giannoni’s paper argues for an acceptance of marketised ‘values’ followed by HEIs in the ‘competitive international environment’ (2016, p.17). What follows is a brief presentation of linguistic studies that focus on the marketisation of HE.

The ‘marketization of public discourse’, with particular reference to HEIs in contemporary Britain, was first explored by Norman Fairclough in 1993. In his influential paper, Fairclough talks about the ‘marketization of the discursive practices of universities’ and their operation ‘as if they were ordinary businesses competing to sell their products to customers’ (1993, p.143). This was the result of ‘government pressure’ (*ibid*). The paper explores Fairclough’s version of CDA, the three-dimensional analytical framework, and presents four examples of marketised discourse used in the HE setting. These examples include advertisements for academic posts, programme materials for an academic conference, an academic CV, and entries from undergraduate prospectuses. In general, the analysis shows a shift in ‘authority relations’ and the institutions’ ‘self-identity’ (Fairclough, 1993, p.157). Besides the decline of HEIs’ ‘authoritative’ tone when addressing staff, prospective students and applicants, Fairclough also

notes the ‘reconstruction of professional identities of academics on a more entrepreneurial (self-promotional) basis’ (*ibid*). This process, however, expands to include a general trend at the institutional level. In other words, Fairclough notes a ‘decline in stable institutional identities’ and an ‘effort into the construction of more entrepreneurial institutional identities’ (*ibid*).

In the same manner, Trowler’s paper discusses the discourse of ‘new higher education’ in the UK and ‘identifies the factors which condition their ability to displace, negotiate, reconstruct and create alternative discourses’ (2001, p.183). The two research questions addressed in this paper deal with the extent to which HE academic staff are “captured” by discourses that involve managerialist approaches within the HE context and also aims to ‘identify the factors which condition their ability to displace, negotiate, reconstruct and create alternative discourses’ (Trowler, 2001, p.196). His analysis draws on data from universities in England and Canada. Trowler’s findings focus on the importance of ‘active resistance to what is becoming an increasingly hegemonic discourse located in managerialist structural roots’ (2001, p.197).

In addition, Webster discusses the trend of European HE towards the adoption of a ‘free-market or corporate-business perspective’ (2003, p.85). He too notes the discourse changes in HEIs from the ‘old academic discourse’ to the ‘new corporate-business discourse’ and states that this development was already predicted by critical philosophers in the 1980s which saw the ‘penetration of a free market discourse into virtually every cultural domain, including the intellectual’ (Jameson, 1984, cited in Webster, 2003, p.85). What is ‘surprising and alarming’ according to Webster is ‘how very little these trends have been contested within higher education, especially within schools of education themselves’ (*ibid*).

In the first paper that applied a corpus-based approach to the examination of marketised discourse in HEIs, Mautner highlights the absurdity of the term ‘entrepreneurial university’ and explores the ‘changing relationship between academia and business’ and the collaboration between the two (2005a, p.96). The relationship between business and academia, she notes, is ‘constantly being established’ and ‘strengthened’, and as a result these ‘exchanges’ lead ‘to new social and discursive practices, such as “selling”, “advertising”, or “managing”’ (*ibid*). Mautner explains that such business-like ‘processes’ have entered the

academic domain, previously ‘characterised by non-utilitarian knowledge creation and consultative, committee-based governance’, to a ‘quite unprecedented’ extent (*ibid*). The paper thus examines ‘the discursive territory around a set of keywords that have come to play a central role in higher education’, namely ‘entrepreneurial’, ‘entrepreneurship’, ‘entrepreneur(s)’, ‘enterprise’ and ‘enterprising’ (Mautner, 2005a, p.96).

Like Fairclough, Mautner highlights the ‘institutional discourse of self-promotion’ that ‘supports academic entrepreneurship’ (2005a, p.111). One of the findings in this paper, which is also relevant to this thesis’s findings (see chapter 6), highlights the fact that university websites ‘flaunt entrepreneurial initiatives as particularly palpable evidence [...] of the ‘real world’ relevance of their teaching and research’ (*ibid*). In addition, she notes that the transition to entrepreneurialism is not merely an act of ‘commercialisation’. It is rather ‘conceptualised as a pervasive institutional transformation targeting staff and students, and aiming to achieve in them not just behavioural, but also cognitive and “emotional” changes’ (Mautner, 2005a, p.106). For example, ‘being entrepreneurial’ is an ‘attitude’, ‘a state of mind’, and a ‘mental approach’ (Mautner, 2005a, p.107).

Furthermore, in her book *Language and the Market Society*, Mautner (2010) continues the exploration of the ‘entrepreneurial university’. The analysis shows that the ‘entrepreneurial university is still presented as a new concept’, used around lexical items that have positive *semantic prosody* (Mautner, 2016, p.91, original italics). In addition, the concordance analysis shows that academic entrepreneurialism is not only about organisational structure, but it is a “culture” that ‘instils market values and embeds entrepreneurship principles in every school, institute, department, and division’ (*ibid*). The same point is also made in this thesis (Chapter 9), in relation to the market values ‘instilled’ in young people who are looking for employment while at university and after graduation.

In the HE prospectus genre, Askehave uses CDA, SFL, and text-driven genre analysis to compare four examples of international student prospectuses from Finland, Scotland, Australia and Japan, looking for ‘similarities in content and rhetorical moves’, and then she focuses on a prospectus from Stirling University and its textual and visual features, to see how the two main participants (potential students and the university) are represented (2007, p.725). Askehave

notes that international student prospectuses resemble ‘the rhetoric of advertising’ (Askehave, 2007, p.739). The ‘rhetorical choices’ of the University of Stirling, for instance, construct an image of both participants that ‘corresponds [...] well with the new trend in higher education – namely that of offering innovative products to “demanding clients” on the look-out for the best possible university “experience”’ (*ibid*). Thus, the university’s role is seen as that of ‘a service-minded, supportive, and in many cases, a customer-driven organisation whose main purpose is to offer an interesting and challenging university “experience” in order to ‘meet the needs of the picky student’ (*ibid*). As a final remark, the author notes that even though the genre of academic prospectuses can be seen as ‘a rather “harmless” genre’ when compared to other genres related to the marketisation of HE, if we take into consideration the dialectical relationship between language and social practice, such ‘linguistic representations’ could ‘be adapted to other university genres that were originally of less promotional nature’ and thus affect the social and professional role of HEIs (Askehave, 2007, p.140). The same can be argued for the careers services’ genre. Even though it might seem like a ‘harmless genre’, the language used and the ideas promoted can be passed on to other academic genres, such as annual course/programme reports, that affect the academics and HEIs’ professional role (for an account of such an effect on the academic profession see Chertkovskaya and Watt, 2017).

Similarly, Teo (2007) is interested in the discourses surrounding the marketisation of HE and uses CDA to analyse prospectuses from two universities in Singapore. The analysis shows the shift of the universities’ discursive practices towards marketisation. The comparison between the two universities shows that although one university ‘maintains a relatively university-centred and authoritative voice’, the other ‘adopts a more student-centred stance and assumes a more egalitarian relationship between students and the university’ (Teo, 2007, p.95). Both universities, however, ‘succumb to the pressures of “globalisation” and “marketisation”’ (*ibid*).

Furthermore, Xiong (2012) explores the marketised discourse of HE in China and particularly in the genre of advertisements for academic posts. He concludes that ‘China is no exception in the following of the global trend of marketization in higher education’ (Xiong, 2012, p.331). In addition, Kheovichai

(2014) uses corpus-based CDA to compare, synchronically and diachronically, 240 academic and business job advertisements. His findings support Fairclough's realisation that HEIs discourse is 'gradually "colonized" by business discourse' and also highlight that there have been changes in the work universities perform, 'from "teaching" to "offering services" or even "serving customers" (Kheovichai, 2014, p.387).

Zhang and O'Halloran's (2013) paper examines the website of the National University of Singapore (NUS) over a period of 14 years. They adopt a 'critical "hypermodal approach" informed by social semiotics' to look at the changes in the NUS website, 'an institution taking steps to brand itself as an "entrepreneurial world-class university"' (Zhang and O'Halloran, 2013, p.469). The authors state that by adopting a critical approach to discourse analysis they can 'explore the social norms and structures which underpin how homepages are constructed, and the role of homepage discourse in reinforcing those norms and structures' (Zhang and O'Halloran, 2013, pp.471–472). Thus, critique is applied both to the reading dimension – 'colour, image, language, typography, layout' – (Zhang and O'Halloran, 2013, pp.476–478), and the navigational dimension – navigational content and styles (Zhang and O'Halloran, 2013, pp.479–481). The analysis shows that promotional discourse dominates the reading and navigational dimensions of the website 'when the university constructs an identity of knowledge enterprise in the global education market' (Zhang and O'Halloran, 2013, p.483). The promotional and marketing strategy shifts from publicising 'university education as concrete products and services to a type of lifestyle and experience' (*ibid*).

The final paper examined in this section comes from Giannoni (2016) who compares two small corpora of academic and corporate "About us" website texts (11,726 and 11,302 tokens respectively). The focus of this study is the creation of 'semantic categories representative of the most prominent evaluative parameters embedded' in the 'About Us' statements (Giannoni, 2016, p.7). The findings show 'a substantial degree of convergence between academic and corporate texts' (Giannoni, 2016, pp.16–17). However, Giannoni's interpretation of the findings is quite different from the other critical approaches to the universities' use of marketised discourse. For example, he suggests that:

Rather than a case of ideological (mis)appropriation of corporate values on the part of universities, it may be argued that the latter - like corporations - are driven by the values pursued by any major concern asserting its online presence in a competitive international environment'. (Giannoni, 2016, p.17)

In other words, this suggests the acceptance of marketised discourse and neoliberal ideology in academic settings. Giannoni further notes that

Treating corporate and academic organizations as potential equals, rather than social actors engaged in a damaging relationship, may be a step in the direction advocated by 'Cornelissen et al. (2007: S11), who argue that "identity research needs to bridge between social, organisational and corporate domains". (ibid)

The following section reviews previous studies on the concept of 'employability' and careers services.

As shown above, the marketisation of HE has been a point of interest in many linguistic studies over the last three decades. However, when it comes to the notion of employability and the discourse of careers services in universities, linguistic research is scarce. There are some examples of linguistic analysis integrated into the work of discourse analysts such as Fairclough (2015), Mulderrig (2011, 2012), and Mautner (2010) that mention 'employability' and 'skills' but none of these studies provide a complete analysis of these notions. What is more, to my knowledge, the language of careers services in the HE setting has not been analysed before. In her book *Language and the Market Society*, Mautner briefly includes an example of the discourse used by *Jobcentre Plus* in the UK (2010, pp.125–126). It should be noted, however, that the notion of 'employability' and 'skills' has been a key theme for research in Education (see, for example, Holmes, 2001; Doyle, 2003; Moreau and Leathwood, 2006; Boden and Nedeva, 2010; Williams, 2005, 2013; Fejes, 2010, 2014) and it has also been addressed in Critical Management Studies (CMS) (see, for example, Chertkovskaya et al., 2013; Chertkovskaya and Watt, 2017). What follows is a review of the linguistic studies mentioned above starting with the work of Fairclough.

In the general context of language use in the era of 'new capitalism', Fairclough provides examples of the discourse of 'flexibility' (1999). He notes that the discourse of 'flexibility', is a "strong discourse", which means that it 'is a discourse which is backed by the strength of all the economic and social forces'

(Fairclough, 1999, p.72). Fairclough also touches upon the idea of ‘skills’, which is a key theme in the employability discourse, and notes that ‘The concept of “skill” is important and pervasive in the new capitalism’ (Fairclough, 2001, p.35). He also highlights that there are hidden agendas between notions such as ‘skills development’: ‘inadequacies in social practice can be overcome by training people to draw upon these skills’ (Fairclough, 2015, p.213). Fairclough contributes to placing the development of ‘skills’ in the general neoliberal agenda and describing the effects of ‘skills-training’ as a result of the ‘new capitalism’. He does not, however, provide a linguistic analysis of ‘skills’.

On the other hand, Mulderrig’s work (2011, 2012), captures the discourse of ‘skills’ and ‘employability’ in her corpus-based analysis of UK education policy. Her corpus analysis finds some examples of the term employability (2008, p. 166; 2012, p. 713), and notes that ‘Rather than full employment, full employability becomes the only realistic policy objective for national governments. The feverish accumulation of skills is presented as a solution’ (Mulderrig, 2012, p.718). In addition, Mulderrig stresses the governments’ role as ‘Facilitator’ ‘enabling neoliberal change’. In particular, her corpus findings show that the ‘government supports a variety of actors to’ ‘upgrade’, ‘acquire’, ‘develop’, and ‘renew’ a number of ‘skills’ (Mulderrig, 2011b, p.61).

In the HE setting, Mayr (2008) examines a text taken from an *Employability Policy and Strategy* document for the years 2005-2008 from the University of Salford. Mayr notes the university’s use of ‘business-related’ lexical items, such as ‘competitive’ and ‘employability’, and ‘new capitalism’ buzzwords, such as ‘creativity and confidence’, ‘adaptable’, and ‘flexible’ (Mayr, 2008, p.34). Thus, here we see a direct link of the notion of employability with the business world. She also observes, when it comes to the idea of ‘global economic change’, that the ‘hegemonic aspirations of neo-liberal business-speak become apparent’, as it is presented as an ‘inevitable process’ and a ‘taken for granted background against which university graduates (and employees in general) must compete for jobs in the global market place’ (Mayr, 2008, p.35). The inevitability of competition in this constantly changing, ‘tough’, ‘fierce’, and ‘stiff’ job market is one of the key themes promoted by the CSs extensively discussed in chapter 6 of this thesis.

13. Summary

This chapter introduces Critical Realism and the two main ideas that view language as a ‘dominant symbolic resource’ but also ‘a form of action’. Critical Realism highlights the dialogicality between reality and discourse, a position also adopted by CDA. In other words, this type of research argues that social worlds are socially constructed and exist ‘independently of our knowledge about’ them (Fairclough, 2005, p.922). It is thus necessary to evaluate whether the ‘representations’ of realities, which are being expressed by different linguistic mechanisms, use world knowledge at its best.

The importance of language in the construction of realities that could assist in the dissemination of ideologies that promote social injustices is particularly highlighted in CDA, which has been chosen, in combination with CL tools, as the main theoretical and methodological model for this thesis. This section makes a clear link between the notions of power, hegemony, ideology, social critique and the use of language or discourse. In particular, discourse and its importance in the development of ‘different versions of “reality”’ (Mautner, 2016, p.12), was discussed. A point that was particularly highlighted in this section was that some discourse analysts are interested in exploring the relationship between discourse and reality. These linguists are interested in the ‘critical’ component of discourse. ‘Critique’ is also a key element for the examination of the CSs’ discourse in this thesis.

For this reason, the chapter examined the notion of ‘critique’ when it is applied in discourse analyses. After an exploration of the term ‘critical’ and its meaning, it is made clear that critique is directly associated with the idea of social change when it comes to problematic social situations. A critical approach to research examines not only the reality presented but other possibilities that could be obscured. One of the aims of critical research is to examine the ‘social structures underpinning capitalist societies’ (Mautner, 2016, p.30), as there is a common assumption that such societies are the reason for various social injustices. Thus, one of the main points in this section of the chapter is that there is a need to ‘denaturalise’ the discourse used by powerful social constructions, such as institutions, in order to raise awareness of the ideologies disseminated.

The ‘denaturalisation’ of discourses can thus counteract ‘the effects of ideology and normalization’ (Alvesson and Deetz, 2006, cited in Mautner, 2016, p.31).

What followed was the introduction of the analytical frameworks and systems that structure the analytical part of this thesis. As discussed in section 3.2, Fairclough’s three-stage analytical framework takes into consideration ‘text’, ‘discourse practice’, and ‘social practice’. Due to this model’s focus on critique, the relations between power, ideologies and social institutions and its combination of ‘critique of discourse’, ‘explanation’, and ‘action’ or ‘praxis’, it is considered ideal for the critical examination of the discourse used by careers services. Due to their successful application in a range of CDA studies, the analytical part is also informed by Halliday’s SFG and van Leeuwen’s representation of social actors in addition to the notions of ‘technologisation of discourse’, ‘presuppositions and assumptions’, and ‘metaphors’. The application of these frameworks and systems in the corpus-based analysis of the careers services’ discourse is further described in chapter 7.

The chapter continues with a brief examination of CDA’s criticisms and some responses provided by scholars. One of these criticisms is that researchers who chose to use CDA can only analyse a limited amount of texts at the same time. This problematic area has been addressed by many (critical) discourse analysts who make use of computer software and the tools of CL. The analytical part of the thesis depends on CL methods and its tools for the examination of the huge amount of linguistic data deriving from the careers services’ websites. Therefore, section 9 started with an introduction on the various corpus tools used for the analysis of texts collected from the CSs’ websites (as will be discussed in chapter 5). There was also a discussion on some of the criticisms directed at CL research.

As presented in this chapter, the marketisation of HE has been a key point of interest for linguists who use CDA and CL methods. Various sources and material have been examined over the last three decades in order to understand the language used by contemporary HEIs. The majority of these studies hold a critical stance to the colonisation of academia by the market. There are, however, examples of linguistic research that welcome such a shift in the discourse used by universities (see, for instance, Giannoni, 2016). The gradual colonisation of business discourse by universities (Kheovichai, 2014) and their efforts towards

'branding' themselves (Zhang and O'Halloran, 2013) is not only a phenomenon noticed in the UK. Universities around the world succumb to the 'pressures of globalisation'.

The main findings highlighted in these studies include the shift in the language used by universities from the 'old' and 'authoritative' tone to an 'entrepreneurial', 'self-promotional', 'new-corporate-business', 'selling', 'advertising', 'managing' discourse which is usually associated with positive meaning (positive semantic prosody). Equally important is the shift in universities' role from pursuing 'non-utilitarian knowledge creation' (Mautner, 2005, p.96) and 'teaching' to a 'supportive', 'customer-driven' organisation with a purpose of 'offering services' and 'a challenging university "experience"' (Askehave, 2007, Kheovichai, 2014, Zhang and O'Halloran, 2013).

Besides the idea of a colonised by the market university, Mautner talks about the collaboration between academia and corporations. She notes that there is a 'changing relationship' between the two which leads to the creation of 'new social and discursive practices', such as 'selling' or 'managing' (2005, p.96). Most importantly, however, such practices do not stop at the act of the 'commercialisation' of HEIs but also aim to penetrate and shape the individuals' 'behavioural', 'cognitive', and 'emotional' understanding (Mautner, 2005, p.106). 'Academic entrepreneurialism' does not only involve changes in the organisational structure but is also a "culture" that 'instils market values' (Mautner, 2016, p.91).

As shown in this chapter, there have been many discourse studies that have focused on the marketisation of HE and its effect on the universities' structure and management. Other disciplines, such as Education or Critical Management Studies, have studied the concept of employability. However, so far, the language used by CSs in UK universities and the notion of employability and skills, have not been examined extensively. As mentioned in the introduction (Chapter 1), this study comes to fill in this gap.

The next chapter focuses on the data selection and the construction of the corpus, and it also introduces the CL methods and tools used and explains the general methodology followed in the analytical part of this thesis.

Chapter 5. Data and methodology

1. Introduction

Chapter 4 introduced CDA, CL, and the methodological synergy between them. There was also an examination of previous linguistic research on the marketisation of HE and employability. This chapter presents the CL tools used in this thesis, focuses on the construction of the CEW15 corpus and explains the methodology followed in the analytical part of this thesis. Thus, the chapter begins with an introduction of some general background of the available types of corpora, displaying the differences between general and specialised corpora. It then continues with an overview of CL tools and moves to the CSs' websites genre which includes an example of the link between official statistical data and university careers websites. The aim of selecting university websites, and in particular Russell Group and post-1992 universities, as the main dataset for this thesis is clearly explained. In addition, the first part of this chapter contains information about the procedure followed for the preparation of data, starting with their identification, the corpus design and the decisions involved in the planning and selection of the data. The final composition of the corpora is presented in section 5.

The second part includes a discussion on the methodological synergy between CDA and CL and its application in the analysis of the careers services discourse. Baker and McEnery's (2015) four-stage methodological framework is introduced and discussed. The final section presents the analytical framework for chapters 6, 7, and 8.

2. General and specialised corpora

Thousands of corpora have been created over the last couple of decades around the world, many of them for specific research projects (McEnery, Xiao and Tono, 2006, p.59). Researchers interested in applying corpus methods have the option of two types of corpora, that is, the *general* and the *specialised* corpora. A general corpus consists of 'millions of words collected from a wide range of sources representing many language contexts (written, spoken, electronic, public, private, fiction, non-fiction)' (Baker, 2010, p.12). Examples of such corpora include the

British National Corpus (BNC) (100 million words), representing a wide range of modern British English, *the Brigham Young University Corpus of Contemporary American English* (450 million words in 2015), and the *Bank of English* corpus (650 million words in 2015). In addition, some corpora have broken the ‘1-billion-word mark’ (Baker, 2010, p.12) such as, the *Cambridge English Corpus* described as a ‘multi-million corpus’ in its website (www.cambridge.org), the *Oxford English Corpus* which ‘contains nearly 2.5 billion words of real 21st century English, with new text being continually collected’ (www.oxforddictionaries.com), or the ukWaC, which is described as ‘a very large (>2 billion words) corpus of English’, built by web crawling (Ferraresi et al., 2008).

Furthermore, in the Brigham Young University website (<https://corpus.byu.edu>), more examples are given by Mark Davies such as the *Wikipedia Corpus* and the *Global Web-Based English* (GloWbE), each consisted of 1.9 billion words at the time of writing. More recently, the NOW corpus (*Newspapers on the Web*) was released by the Brigham Young University, which is ‘composed of more than 4.3 billion words of data from newspapers’ adding each day new texts to the corpus (Davies, 2017). Thus, there are two categories of general corpora, those that are constant in size (‘sample’ corpora), and those that are constantly expanding and increasing in size (‘monitor’ corpora). All of the above-mentioned corpora are monitor corpora besides the BNC which is a sample corpus.

Contemporary corpus construction began in the 1960s with the Brown family corpora and has been developing and expanding ever since. Besides the general corpora mentioned earlier, an even larger corpus of written language can be easily accessed by anyone with a computer and an internet connection. The World Wide Web and its numerous websites is considered ‘a type of reference corpus’ (Baker, 2010, p.12), estimated to contain ‘trillions of words’ (McCarthy and O’Keeffe, 2010, p.6). However, the web should not be viewed ‘as an ideal reference corpus’ mostly because it is not balanced or representative of all types of language use (Baker, 2010, p.13). Still, although there have been some concerns about the ‘Web as a Corpus’ approach, it is safe to say that ‘the web does undoubtedly provide a substantial volume of data which can be selected and prepared to produce corpora available for a wide variety of purposes’ (McEnery and Hardie, 2012, p.8).

As discussed earlier, general corpora include many different types of texts which are ‘representative of a specific language variety’ (Baker, 2006, p.30). On the other hand, a specialised corpus ‘can be domain or genre specific and is designed to represent a sub-language’ (McEnery, Xiao and Tono, 2006, p.60). At the same time, a specialised corpus is ‘the most important type of corpus in terms of discourse analysis’ as it is designed to include texts that belong to a particular type of language, and compiled to be used ‘in order to study aspects of a particular variety or genre of language’ (Baker, 2006, p.26). There are hundreds of specialised corpora compiled all over the world some of which are mentioned at David Lee’s website, now handed over to Martin Weisser (Weisser and Lee, 2016). For example, the *Michigan Corpus of Academic Spoken English* (MICASE) is ‘a 1.8 million-word corpus of recorded and transcribed spoken American academic English collected at the University of Michigan 1997-2002’; *The International Corpus of Learner English* (ICLE), consists of a number of sub-corpora of about 200,000 words of written English produced by learners of English in different countries (Lindquist, 2009, p.18), *The Blog Authorship Corpus* which includes ‘collected posts of 19,320 bloggers gathered from blogger.com in August 2004’; *The Corpus of Written English Creole* (CWBC) by Mark Sebba, and *The Translational English Corpus* (TEC) made of ‘written texts translated into English from a variety of source languages’ (Weisser and Lee, 2016).

Although so many corpora, general or specialised, have already been compiled with some of them even available for public use, ‘the research dictates the type of resource that we need to consult’ (Adolphs, 2006, p.17), which means that if the existing corpora cannot meet the needs of the research questions and goals, building a specialised corpus from scratch is the next step to consider.

3. Corpus linguistics tools and methods

The description of CL tools used in the analytical part of this thesis starts with frequency. Frequency refers to the number of times something occurs in a corpus and is the ‘bedrock of corpus linguistics’ (Baker, 2010, p.19). The terms under examination can be single lexical items or multi-word units such as lexical phrases, multi-word sequences, clusters, chunks or patterns. A corpus analysis usually starts with the production of a word list or frequency list. These lists can

be raw or standardised (when comparing corpora of different sizes), and include every lexical item within the corpus either in alphabetic order or by frequency.

As Baker notes, such lists ‘can be helpful in determining the focus of a text, but care must be taken not to make presuppositions about the ways that words are actually used within it’ (2006, p.71). They can help the analyst get a first idea of the writer(s)’ lexical and grammatical choices in the corpus. The most frequent words in a corpus are usually grammatical/function words, such as pronouns, prepositions, conjunctions, etc. Although these items are important (especially in the case of pronoun usage), to get a better idea of the discourse used within the corpus we need to turn our attention to the most frequent lexical words, such as nouns, verbs, adjectives, etc. However, even though frequency lists can be useful, they are only the first step of the analysis. In other words, ‘their functionality is limited’ (Baker, 2006, p.68).

Besides frequency, consistency is also of interest when analysing a corpus. It could be useful to know where in the text or the corpus, the terms under investigation are placed, or whether they are evenly distributed throughout the corpus. As Baker (2006, p.49) notes, ‘It may be useful to ascertain whether its occurrences are all clumped together in one small section of the corpus, or whether the word is a constant feature, cropping up every now and again with regularity’. Thus, a dispersion plot provides a visual representation of the search term within the corpus. In this thesis, I use the dispersion plot tool regularly to show the number of universities that use the words, phrases/patterns under examination. For example, as we can see in Figure 5, the key term ‘employability’ is used by all 58 careers services. The frequency for each university is shown on the right (No. of Hits).



Figure 5 - Concordance plot of 'employability' in CEW15

The next tool introduced is considered the corpus linguists' strongest weapon, or as Hardie (2017) notes in his plenary talk in CL2017: 'The concordance is... our weapon of first and last resort, the place where quantification and interpretation meet'. The concordance tool is one of the most effective techniques as it allows researchers to combine quantitative and qualitative analysis and carry out a close examination of corpora. A concordance is a 'list of all the occurrences of a particular search term in a corpus, presented within the context that they occur in; usually a few words to the left and right of the search term' (Baker, 2006, p.71). It is also referred to as Key Word In Context (KWIC). Concordances can be used when searching for patterns of language use that are created through repetition within the corpus. These patterns can shed light on the discourses that characterise a corpus. Such a result can be achieved more easily with the use of the 'sorting' function provided by the software which allows its users to scan all

items in the concordance list sorted alphabetically either to the left and/or the right-hand sides of the search term(s). This function aims to ‘group together incidences of a word that occur in similar contexts so interpretations can be more easily made’ (Baker and McEnery, 2015, p.3). By using this tool, researchers can locate similarities or patterns in the use of language that need to be closely examined. In AntConc (Anthony, 2017), which is the software I will be using, the concordance list is also linked with the File View tool that gives direct access to the text examined in its context. As this thesis combines quantitative and qualitative analysis, the concordance tool is regularly used in all analytical chapters (Chapters 6-8).

However, when dealing with large corpora, it is often the case that the patterns noticed produce concordances that may consist of hundreds or thousands of lines that need to be closely examined. This can be very time-consuming and troublesome. Collocations can ‘summarize the most significant relationships’, or assist in the location of mainstream discourses (Baker, 2010, p.118), and guide the analyst to focus on those patterns that stand out. These would then have to be examined in the concordance level to look closely at the context. According to Hunston (2002, pp.68, 118-119), in CL, collocation is operationalised as words that appear near each other statistically significantly more often than would be expected by chance.

Idioms, compound nouns, or lexical bundles are considered different types of collocations (Baker, 2010, p.24). As Baker (*ibid*) notes, ‘The simplest way is to count the number of times that word x occurs near word y, specifying a span such as five words left of x to five words right of x’. Besides quickly providing information about the context of a search word/term when doing discourse analysis, collocations can provide information about a word’s ‘subtle meanings and connotations [...], which are rarely explained in dictionaries’ (Baker, 2010, p.25). Stubbs (1996, cited in Baker and McEnery, 2015, p.2) notes that collocates are also interesting from an ideological point of view if, for example, ‘two words are repetitiously associated with each other, then their relationship can become reified and unquestioned’. This tool can be particularly helpful when looking for patterns in the CEW15 corpus. For example, the lexical and grammatical items surrounding the key term ‘employability’ in the CEW15 corpus (Chapter 6), can quickly provide information about the ideological stances that precede this term,

such as the possessive determiner ‘your’ used 368 times as a premodifier in the corpus (‘your employability’).

In addition, and relevant to the collocation tool, the n-grams, or clusters tool, identifies multiple word units that occur next to each other in the corpus under examination. More specifically, as McEnery and Hardie (2012, p.123) note, an n-gram is ‘a sequence of n elements (usually words) that occur directly one after another in a corpus, where n is two or more’. The examination of n-grams, which are also called multi-word units, clusters, or lexical bundles, ‘is one way to operationalise the analysis of collocation’ (*ibid*). In the analysis of the careers services’ discourse, the clusters (or n-grams) tool is regularly used as it can assist in the detection of the most commonly used phrases in the CEW15 corpus (Chapter 6-7) and its two sub-corpora (Chapter 8).

Also, this tool also calculates the Range of clusters. For example, Figure 6 shows that the phrase ‘we can help’ is used by 52 of the 58 careers services (Range: 52).

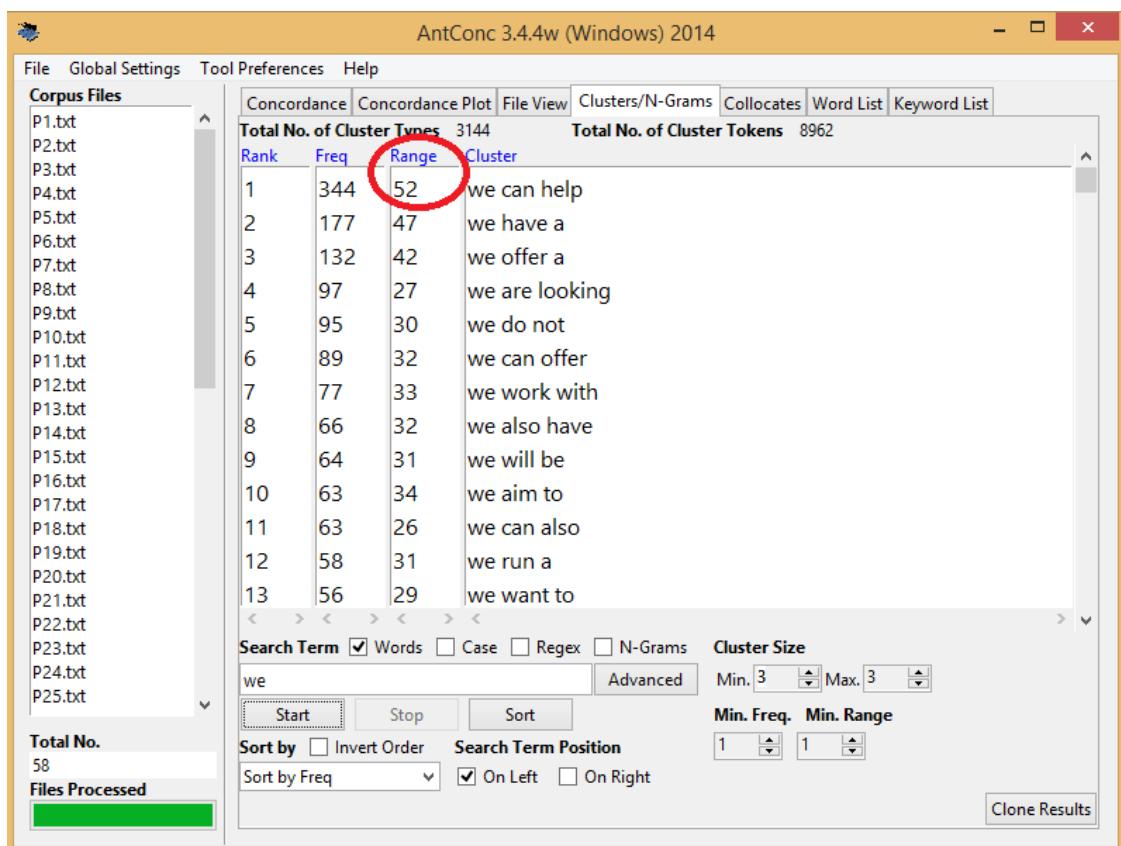


Figure 6 - CEW15: 'we' 3-grams

This information is regularly used in the examination of the language used by the CSs in chapters 6, 7, and 8.

Finally, keywords are lexical items that highlight lexical saliency as they appear in a corpus significantly more (or less) often than in a reference corpus. A reference corpus is usually ‘representative of a notional “standard language”’ (Baker and McEnery, 2015, p.2). Those words that ‘occur statistically more frequently in one corpus than in a second corpus are identified as ‘key’ (Baker, 2010, p.26). They indicate ‘the aboutness and the style’ of that corpus (Scott and Tribble, 2006, p.83), and can also ‘be useful signposts in that they identify the lexical focus or preoccupations of a corpus’ (Baker, 2010, p.26).

As with frequency lists and collocations, keywords can identify items that are recommended for further examination. This is because ‘keywords can reveal a great deal about frequencies in texts which is unlikely to be matched by researcher intuition’ (Baker, 2006, p.148). This tool can be of particular use when comparing the two university groups (Chapter 8). The comparison of these two corpora’s (Russell Group (RG) and post-1992 (P92)) keyword lists could reveal unexpected similarities and differences in the language used by the CSs.

4. The universities’ careers websites as a genre/domain of interest

As the aim of this thesis is to examine the discourse of careers services in UK university websites, the source of data collection is rather straightforward. The selected texts derive from the universities’ careers (and employability) web pages. These texts represent a sector inside academia which aims to guide and support students (undergraduate, postgraduate, research). University websites were found to be the ideal data source for the exploration of the language used by careers services. These websites have become huge databases of information and are designed to attract and inform prospective and current users. As Saichae notes, ‘websites are essential to the marketing practices of admissions and recruitment offices’ at universities (2011, p.35).

With the rise of the internet usage over the last years, websites have become the most popular means of information gathering especially for prospective HE students (home, EU or international), who are in the process of choosing a university (Saichae, 2011). Most universities spend a considerable amount of time and resources for the creation of well-organised, easily

accessible, highly-informed and well-designed websites as it is acknowledged that these websites contribute to the students' opinion about a university or maybe add some points to their final decision. Thus, their content is of great importance. The World Wide Web is so influential that governments use this valuable resource, (as mentioned in chapter 2), to give prospective students information about HEIs that would affect their 'choices'. Before we move on to the aim and construction of the corpus, the following section displays an example of the links between a government funded website, official statistical data, and university (careers) websites.

4.1 Careers services and the provision of information

The provision of adequate and relevant 'information' is presented by HE policy as strategically important for universities that aim to attract students (Chapter 2). Providers for such information which aim to assist in the comparison between HEIs, include *The National Student Survey*, the *Destination of Leavers from Higher Education* (DLHE) survey, the *Unistats* website, and HE league tables. The DLHE survey is directly relevant to student employability. The results of this survey are used to inform the entries for each university course in the 'Employment and Accreditation' section of the *Unistats* website. In this section, we can find pie charts that present the results and below each chart 'there is a link to information about what support the university or college offers to students in terms of employability and transition into employment' (Unistats, 2017). For example, Figure 7 shows part of the 'Employment and Accreditation' section of the BA (Hons) Linguistics course at the University of Cambridge.

75%

Go on to work and/or study

This is what students are doing six months after finishing the course.

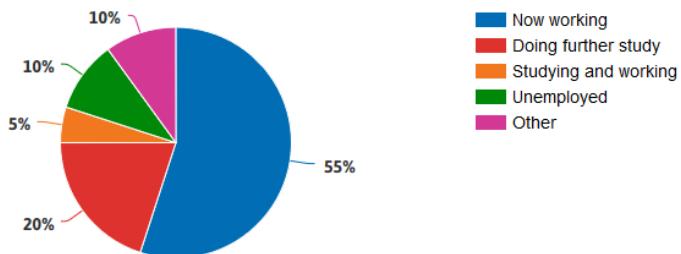


Chart labels explained

 Preparation for future employment: University Of Cambridge [↗](#)

Figure 7 - Unistats: An example of the University of Cambridge

The information provided display the students' answers as to what they 'are doing six months after finishing the course'. At the bottom of the image we see that there is a link that directs students to the University of Cambridge website and in particular at a web page that discusses prospective careers in the field of linguistics (Figure 8):

The screenshot shows the University of Cambridge Careers Service homepage. The top navigation bar includes links for 'Home', 'Exploring your future', 'Jobs & work experience', 'Applications & interviews', 'What's on', 'Appointments', and social media links for 'For students', 'For postdocs', 'For recruitment', and 'For alumni'. Below the navigation is a search bar. The main content area features a sidebar titled 'What do Cambridge Graduates do?' with links to 'Cambridge University Skills Portal', 'Postgraduate study or research', 'GradLink (alumni contact)', 'Employability Statement', 'Undergraduate Prospectus', 'Unistats - official course data', 'Prospects - What can I do with my degree?', and 'Back to list of degree subjects'. The main content area is titled 'Linguistics Tripos and your career' and discusses the range of professions available to linguistics graduates, transferable skills, and specific vocational training fields like speech therapy, teaching, law, and translation. It also mentions the Prospects website, the Diplomatic Service, and the Linguist List website.

Figure 8 - Unistats link to University of Cambridge careers web page

Figure 8 includes a text entitled 'Linguistics Tripos and your career'. This text emphasises the development of skills that employers are looking for: 'Linguistics graduates have transferable skills that are greatly sought after by employers', and also provides examples of 'vocational training' ('speech therapy', 'teaching', 'law', 'translation') (University of Cambridge Careers Service, 2017). Moreover, further links direct prospective students to internal and external web pages about careers, such as the Careers Using Languages, the Cambridge Skills Portal, the

Linguist List (Careers in Linguistics), Prospects (Options with a Linguistics degree), and the main careers service web page of the University of Cambridge. On the left of the snapshot, more links are provided where students are directed to more general careers information, such as Postgraduate study or research, GradLink (alumni contact), Employability Statement, and Unistats – official course data (University of Cambridge Careers Service, 2017).

Thus, the provision of careers information is of great importance to universities as it can inform or influence student choice. The example above displayed that CSs in UK universities are directly linked with official websites, such as Unistats, which is ‘funded and owned by the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE), the Higher Education Funding Council for Wales, the Scottish Funding Council and the Department for Employment and Learning, Northern Ireland’ (HEFCE, 2017).

The aim for selecting the careers services’ websites and building multiple corpora is mainly to understand the language used by these services in UK universities and to answer the three research questions presented in the introduction (Chapter 1). Using the wide variety of texts that are available in the careers and employability pages of UK university websites, I have built the Careers and Employability Corpus (CEW15), which is comprised of 58 sub-corpora (one for each university) and can also be divided into two sub-corpora representing the Russell Group (24 RG) and post-1992 (34 P92) universities. The importance of this distinction is explained in section 4.2

4.2 Data selection: Russell Group and post-1992 universities

In the UK there are 165 HE institutions of which 115 are universities (Brown and Carasso, 2013, p.6). Following McEnery and Hardie’s (2012, p.12) suggestion, namely that ‘a researcher must at times be guided by pragmatism’, I have chosen to collect texts from 58 universities. The rationale behind this decision is explained later in this section. This population of UK universities can provide (considering that this project is the work of a sole trainee-researcher), a satisfactory and suitable dataset that would justifiably give the space to make general claims about the data (McEnery and Hardie, 2012, p.6). This matter is of great importance as corpus methods can be used in very small corpora but ‘the

extent to which our findings could be generalised with any confidence to a wider population' (Baker, 2010, p.7), should be carefully considered and presented.

The Russell Group was created in 1994 after a meeting of the 'old' universities' Vice-Chancellors and is comprised of 24 universities. These universities are regularly described in the literature as 'elite' and 'research-led'. Some examples of such characterisations are: 'elite research-led universities', (Molesworth, Nixon and Scullion, 2011, p.31), 'major research-intensive' universities (Hemsley-Brown, 2012, p.1009; Brown, 2011, p.75), 'research-dominated old' universities (Tomlinson, 2005, p.65), or the equivalent to the Ivy League universities in the USA (Foskett and Maringe, 2010, p.20). In the Russell Group website (Russell Group, 2017), we can find the following statement in the 'About' section:

The Russell Group represents 24 leading UK universities which are committed to maintaining the very best research, an outstanding teaching and learning experience and unrivalled links with business and the public sector.

Our research-intensive, world-class universities play an important part in the intellectual life of the UK and have huge social, economic and cultural impacts locally, across the UK and around the globe.

Thus, Russell Group universities are represented, both by the group itself and others, as research-focused. The above statement emphasises the group's commitment to 'maintaining' – which means that they are already in possession of – 'the very best' research, teaching and learning 'experience' and 'unrivalled' – leaving no room for competition against them – connections with the businesses and the public sector. It also stresses the group's impact on the nations' social, economic and cultural strands which also expands globally.

On the other hand, the former polytechnics were created in the 1960s to 'address the nation's needs for higher-level technical and vocational education' (Tight, 2009, p.103), and also to offer access to HE to mature and part-time students. The White Paper *A Plan for Polytechnics and Other Colleges*, published in 1966, recommended the designation of colleges as regional polytechnics that would be able to offer full-time, part-time and sandwich courses of technical and vocational HE. In the literature, these universities are described mainly as post-1992 universities, or former and ex-polytechnics (Hemsley-Brown, 2012; Molesworth, Nixon and Scullion, 2011; Deem and Brehony, 2005; Moreau and

Leathwood, 2006; Shattock, 2003). There are also examples where post-1992 universities are described as ‘new’ (Wilton, 2011, p.90), or ‘less prestigious’ (Boden and Nedeva, 2010, p.48).

As far as official university groups are concerned, there are two main groups comprised of ‘newer’ universities including former polytechnics, namely the *MillionPlus* and the *University Alliance*. As explained in these group’s websites, the *MillionPlus* group (2017) consist of 20 universities and the *University Alliance* includes 18 universities (2017). Besides former polytechnics, these groups include former technical institutions and colleges that gained university status with the 2004 Higher Education Act (for example, Bath Spa, and Canterbury Christ Church in the *MillionPlus* group), others that became universities in 1967 with the Robbins Report (University of Salford in the *University Alliance*), or ‘newer’ universities such as the University of South Wales (formed in 2013). Thus, including any one of these groups was rejected due to these universities’ different background.

In chapter 2, emphasis was given to the importance of the *Further and Higher Education Act* (1992) and the abolition of the binary line. This Act is usually referred to in the literature when comparing HEIs in the UK. In particular, it is the post-1992 universities that are usually compared with the ‘old’ universities and in particular with those that belong to the Russell Group. Thus, I decided to include in the corpus, data from the ‘prestigious’ Russell Group universities and the ‘less prestigious’ post-1992 universities mainly for two reasons. First, these two groups can be seen as a sufficient representation of the HEIs scene in the UK. A linguistic analysis of 58 CSs’ websites has the potential to offer a very satisfactory overview of the services’ use of language. Second, it would be interesting to compare the two ‘groups’ and see if there are any similarities and differences in the language used by the ‘old’ and ‘newer’ careers services.

Initially, the data selection plan was to include the same number of RG and P92 websites, that is 24 RG and 24 ex-polytechnics. The collection of the 24 RG careers web pages resulted in a corpus of approximately 1.7 million words. When I started collecting the post-1992 careers websites, I quickly realised that if I included 24 ex-polytechnics, the size of the post-1992 corpus would turn out to be considerably smaller than the RG corpus. Thus, for reasons of balance, I decided to include more post-1992 websites for the construction of the CEW15

corpus. A full list of those ex-polytechnics that gained university status in 1992 can be found in Tight (2009).

Both the Russell Group and post-1992 universities represent many different areas in the UK (Ireland, Scotland, Wales, and England) and this fact adds to the qualitative part of the corpus creation since this project claims to examine the language of UK university websites. Figure 9 displays a visualisation of those HEIs included in this study in the British map:

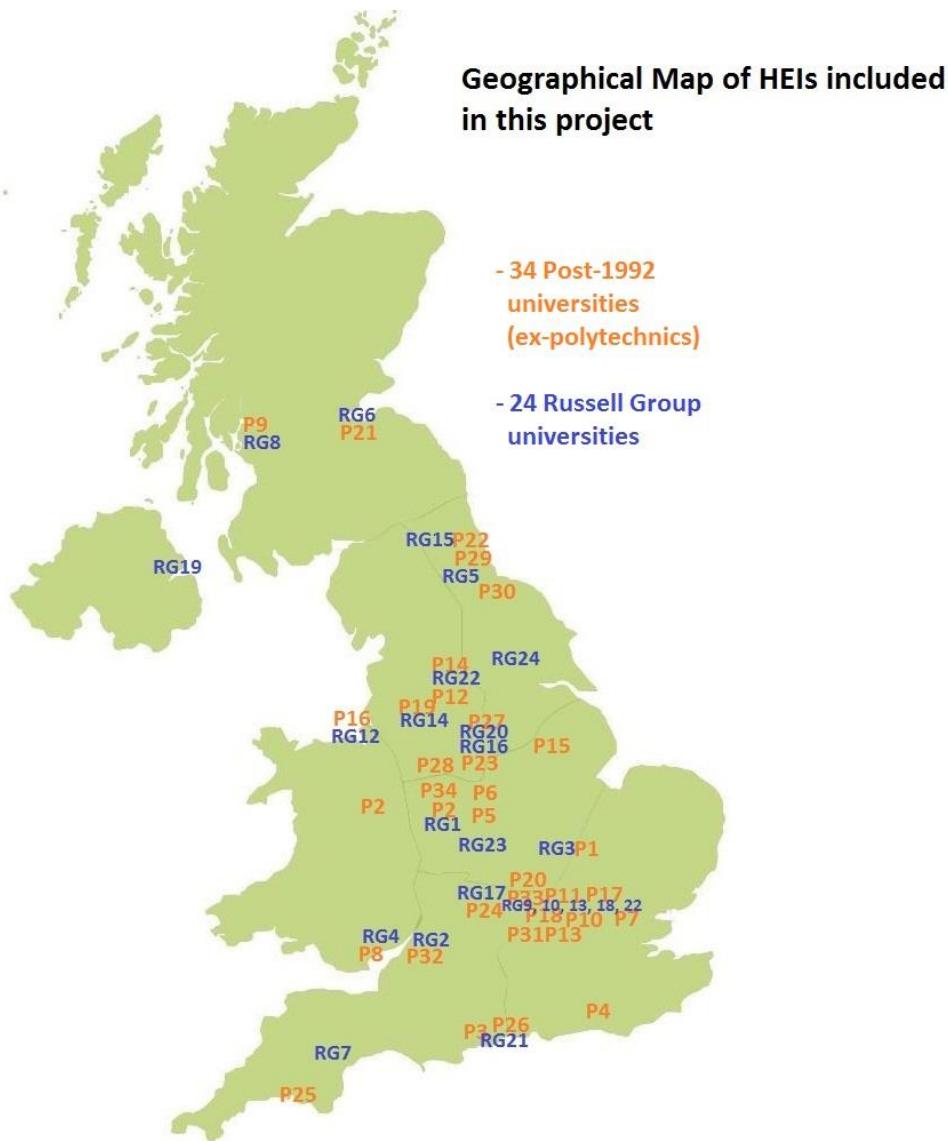


Figure 9 - Geographical map of HEIs included in this project

Although the primary focus of this thesis is to understand the CSs' representation of 'reality', the notion of employability and the careers advisers' professional role, the reason for deciding to take advantage of this established dichotomy is mainly because it would be interesting to compare the language used by these two

university groups and confirm, or reject, the notion (as described later on), that one group is more employability or careers-focused than the other.

4.3 Corpus design, construction, and methodological issues

The majority of UK university websites have a separate page for their careers services, and the content of these web pages is, on many occasions, massive. In most cases, the information is separated into categories presented by various navigational menus and each category is divided into sub-categories which can also contain further sub-categories. While navigating on each sub-link, I found a plethora of informational material, such as internal and external hyperlinks, texts files, pdf, videos, images, and podcasts. As an everyday user of the internet, this came as no surprise as the complexity of websites has developed gradually over time. This gives users the time to get accustomed to the changes as a natural development which, most of the time, is not even observed. But as a research student whose purpose was to analyse the discourse in these websites, the task seemed complicated and the idea of a systematic plan which would capture the complexity of the website design proved justifiable. The fact that web pages are not comprised of ‘regular’ texts (in comparison with texts found in newspapers, books, or articles), adds to the importance of a systematic data collection plan. As a solution, the first step was to map the targeted web pages and keep a log of their contents.

4.3.1 The mapping of the careers websites

The mapping of the data started with the 24 RG web pages. After visiting their careers sections, I created a map for each web page. Each map is an index to the web page’s content. Figure 10 presents an example of one of the universities’ careers web pages (Imperial College London), that was used for the creation of the RG careers corpus.

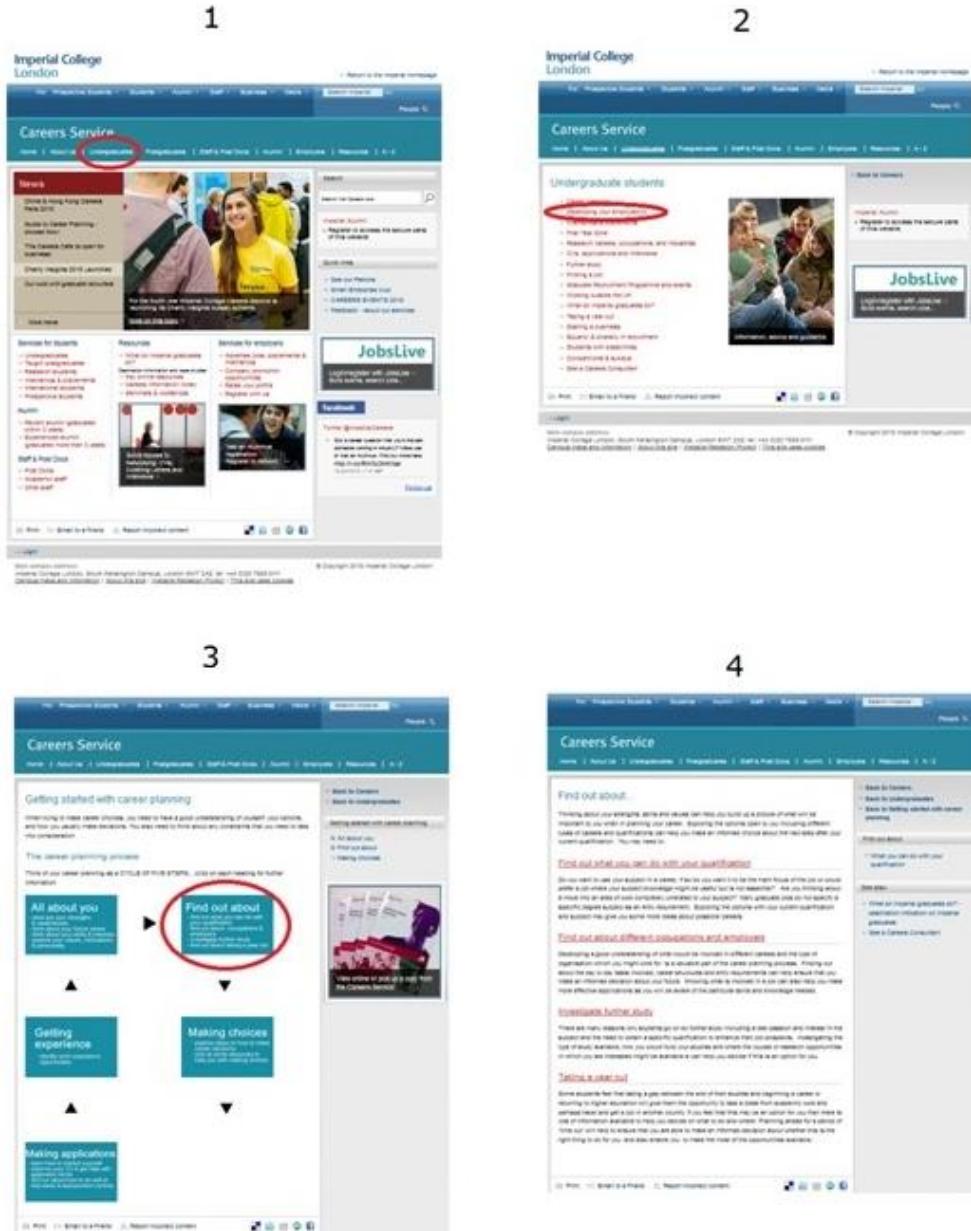


Figure 10 - Snapshots of Imperial College London CS web page

I have circled, using red colour, the hyperlinks, and their virtual route: ‘Undergraduate’ → ‘Career Planning’ → ‘Find out about’, to give an example of the procedure followed for the creation of each map. Some websites have available sitemaps for the content of their pages but only the main categories are presented. Since I had to produce these maps for each university, I decided to create my own by visiting all pages and their sub-links. Figure 11 shows the CSs’ map for the same university. The highlighted yellow frames indicate the four images presented in Figure 10.



Figure 11 - Map of CS website contents: Imperial College London

The main categories ('about us', 'undergraduate students', 'postgraduate students', 'staff & post docs', 'alumni', 'services for employers', 'key online resources'), are easily distinguished and below each of them there is a list of the sub-categories with active hyperlinks (as shown in the second column), which gives easy access to each page. This kind of data mapping is useful to keep a record of each web page, make some notes (coloured notes in Figure 11), for example, about the pages that need a password to access or which pages contain pdf files, videos, podcasts, or other resources. The Imperial College London map is three A4 pages long and it is considered an average example in terms of the amount of data available from the RG CSs web pages. Some universities have more complex websites while others have simpler structure.

In general, these websites have individual sections for their users ('Prospective/postgraduate students', 'alumni', 'employers', 'staff'), the careers staff ('About us'), advice and resources ('Advice', 'Planning', 'Guidance', 'Applications', 'CVs', 'mentoring', 'support', 'networking'), events ('Fairs and events'), 'further study', 'jobs', 'self-employment', and 'employability skills'. Mapping the data is useful for keeping track of each web page's content, avoiding repetitions, and also for making comparisons between them. As far as

'repetitions' is concerned, as pointed out by Baker (2006, p.36), collecting data from the web can result in adding the same texts especially when the design of these websites is complex. It was found that some web pages were linked with other categories on the same website thus every effort has been made to avoid such repetitions that would 'skew a corpus analysis by affording higher repetitions to certain words or phrases' (*ibid*).

4.3.2 Criteria for data selection.

According to Meyer (2002, p.30), 'if the corpus is intended to permit the study of discourse features, then it will have to contain complete texts'. The content of the corpora consists of texts that are available in the web pages. The meaning of 'text' in web pages can be different than the one we might have in mind when we talk, for example, about books or academic and journalistic articles. The size of web texts can vary from a number of A4 pages to a couple of sentences. For the creation of my corpora, I have used every available 'text' presented in these web pages irrespective of size. An example is presented in Figure 12 which shows that following the 'n-click rule' (with n=3) would result in leaving out texts that could contribute to the overall analysis.

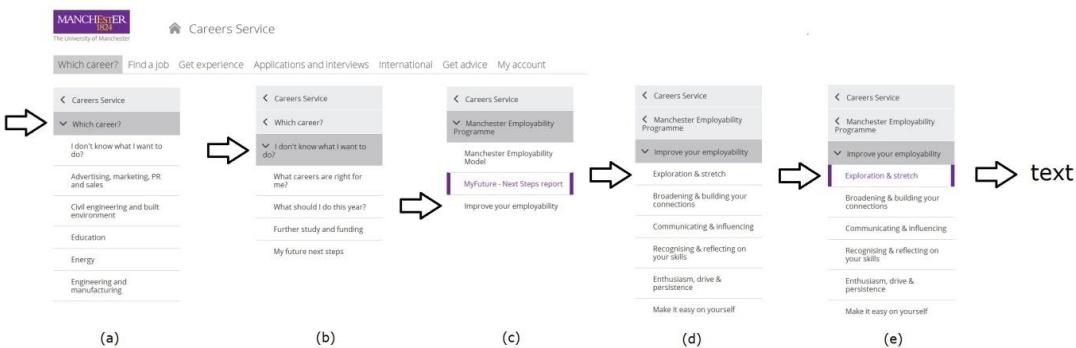


Figure 12 - Examples from Manchester University careers website

The route shown in this picture gives a text of possible interest after five 'clicks': 'Which career?' → 'I don't know what I want to do?' → 'My future next steps' → 'Improve your employability' → 'Exploration & stretch' → 'text' of interest. Since every website has its own design and organisation, although the task seemed daunting, this systematic and organised collection of data can add to the overall balance and representation of the corpus but also grant a form of security for any future doubts about the data collection methodology. With the assistance of the

maps created, the decision was to include all available texts provided in the selected web pages. On the other hand, I decided to exclude all external links, including university careers and employability blogs, text files, pdf, and any other internally or externally linked data.

After mapping and deciding the criteria for data selection, the texts were copied and pasted into plain text files. Suggestions for saving data from web pages, for example ‘saving the web pages as text files’ or using a website copier, such as HTTrack (Baker, 2006, p.34), were considered but deemed unuseful for this project. Baker (2006, p.33) explains that it can be quicker ‘to simply copy and paste the relevant parts of the website directly into a Notepad’ and saving it afterwards; a technique that is preferred by web pages corpus builders because it can be much more time-consuming to ‘end up with unwanted text such as menus, titles or links to other pages’ and having to ‘clean’ them (*ibid*). The final composition of the CEW15 corpus, divided into two sub-corpora (RG and P92), is presented in the next section.

5. The CEW15 corpus

Tables 1 and 2 present the two sub-corpora, namely the RG and P92 corpora, with each university’s code (P1-34 and RG1-24) and the size (words). When these two corpora are joined, the CEW15 corpus is created which consists of more than 2.6 million words (2,629,961 words).

	Post-1992 universities (ex-polytechnics)	Code	Words
1	Anglia Ruskin University	P1	21,242
2	Birmingham City University	P2	13,252
3	Bournemouth University	P3	14,261
4	University of Brighton	P4	79,627
5	Coventry University	P5	26,735
6	De Montfort University	P6	28,321
7	University of East London	P7	29,798
8	University of South Wales	P8	32,222
9	Glasgow Caledonian University	P9	35,533
10	University of Greenwich	P10	16,767

11	University of Hertfordshire	P11	5,564
12	University of Huddersfield	P12	39,985
13	Kingston University London	P13	13,400
14	Leeds Beckett University	P14	11,422
15	University of Lincoln	P15	8,844
16	Liverpool John Moores University	P16	18,049
17	London Metropolitan University	P17	42,600
18	London South Bank University	P18	21,516
19	Manchester Metropolitan University	P19	18,283
20	Middlesex University London	P20	6,337
21	Edinburgh Napier University	P21	42,641
22	Northumbria University	P22	31,427
23	Nottingham Trent University	P23	29,281
24	Oxford Brookes University	P24	25,606
25	Plymouth University	P25	10,138
26	University of Portsmouth	P26	57,606
27	Sheffield Hallam University	P27	50,158
28	Staffordshire University	P28	14,896
29	University of Sunderland	P29	20,180
30	Teesside University	P30	20,997
31	University of West London	P31	24,949
32	University of the West of England	P32	29,507
33	University of Westminster	P33	19,819
34	University of Wolverhampton	P34	46,030
		SUM	906,993

Table 1 - The post-1992 careers services corpus

	Russell Group universities	Code	Words
1	University of Birmingham	RG1	64,305
2	University of Bristol	RG2	30,048
3	University of Cambridge	RG3	28,191

4	Cardiff University	RG4	25,686
5	Durham University	RG5	73,190
6	University of Edinburgh	RG6	151,517
7	University of Exeter	RG7	127,789
8	University of Glasgow	RG8	55,075
9	Imperial College London	RG9	42,283
10	King's College London	RG10	15,133
11	University of Leeds	RG11	58,771
12	University of Liverpool	RG12	23,190
13	London School of Econ. & Pol. Science	RG13	254,695
14	University of Manchester	RG14	103,419
15	Newcastle University	RG15	76,209
16	University of Nottingham	RG16	59,013
17	University of Oxford	RG17	200,908
18	Queen Mary University of London	RG18	20,939
19	Queen's University Belfast	RG19	40,405
20	University of Sheffield	RG20	80,434
21	University of Southampton	RG21	54,684
22	University College London	RG22	45,739
23	University of Warwick	RG23	36,547
24	University of York	RG24	54,798
		SUM	1,722,968

Table 2 - The Russell Group careers services corpus

As shown in the tables, the 24 RG universities' websites produced a corpus of approximately 1.7 million words, whereas the texts collected from the 34 ex-polytechnics' websites formed a corpus of 0.9 million words. Figure 13 presents a visual representation of the data and their use in answering the three main research questions:

RQs 1 & 2 - Chapters 6 & 7

RQ 3 - Chapter 8

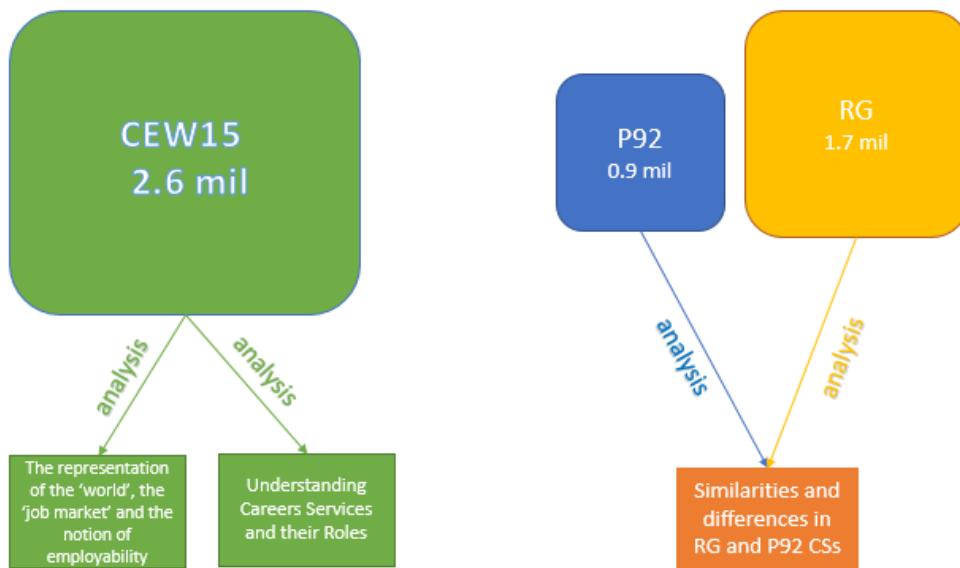


Figure 13 - Visual representation of the corpora

As already mentioned in the introduction (Chapter 1), the general aim of this thesis is to examine and understand the ‘reality’ presented by the careers services, the notion of employability and skills, and the careers services and advisers’ professional roles. Thus, for the biggest part of the analysis (Chapters 6 and 7), I will be using the CEW15 corpus ($RG + 92 = CEW15$ corpus). In the final analytical chapter (Chapter 8), I will compare the RG and P92 sub-corpora. The methodology that I follow in this thesis and the analytical framework for chapters 6, 7 and 8, are further discussed in the next sections.

6. Methodology

Chapter 4 presented the methodological background that will be followed in this thesis. Emphasis is given to Fairclough’s ‘three dimensions of discourse’, that is ‘text’, ‘discourse practice’, and ‘social practice’ (Fairclough, 2015, p.58). This framework is particularly useful for understanding the language used by the CSs not only for the identification and analysis of linguistic features but also due to the connections it creates between the data (CSs websites), the social actors that produce (discourse technologists), reproduce and encourage them (recruiters, interviewers, the media, universities, CSs), the targeted audience (prospective/current students and graduates) and their Member Resources, and

the social, political and economic circumstances that surround them (neoliberalism and the marketisation of HE).

At the textual and discourse practice level, the analysis focuses on the identification of linguistic features and the production and interpretation of ‘texts’ and their features within the larger social context. At the ‘social practice’ level, the results are linked to issues such as ‘power relations’ and ‘struggle’. Fairclough also focuses on the importance of ‘praxis’. ‘Critique’ of discourse and its explanation of how it works within society in addition to its contribution in the creation, representation, and reproduction of ‘reality’, is not where the work of the critical discourse analysts ends. ‘Action’ is a vital part of the CDA process, whether that is in the form of awareness-raising or providing suggestions that would aim to end inequalities or create more balanced power relations between participants. More will be said on ‘praxis’ and its applications in chapter 9.

The analytical part of this thesis evolves around Fairclough’s (2015) CDA model and Baker and McEnery’s corpus-based (critical) discourse analysis analytical suggestion (Baker and McEnery, 2015, pp.2-3). These two approaches to discourse analysis follow a similar analytical plan. What changes is the dataset, instead of one or a small number of texts the analysis deals with large corpora, and the tools that become available when using CL software. Following the discussion of the ‘three dimensions of discourse’, Fairclough presents the three stages of CDA, namely ‘description’, ‘interpretation’, and ‘explanation’ (2015, pp.58-59). In brief, ‘description’ ‘is concerned with formal properties of the text’, ‘interpretation’ ‘is concerned with the relationship between text and interaction’ (seeing text as a ‘resource’ and a ‘product’), and ‘explanation’ ‘is concerned with the relationship between interaction and social context’ (*ibid*).

In addition, Baker and McEnery (2015, pp.2–3) present the four stages of the analysis when using corpus linguistics tools for (critical) discourse analysis. These are: ‘identification’, ‘interpretation’, ‘explanation’, and ‘evaluation’. Table 3 presents the two frameworks:

Stages	CDA model (Fairclough, 2015)	Corpus-based (critical) discourse analysis (Baker and McEnery, 2015)
1	Description	Identification
2	Interpretation	Interpretation

3	Explanation	Explanation
4	(Critique)	(Evaluation)

Table 3 - Analytical stages for CDA and corpus-based (C)DA

As shown in the table, Baker and McEnery's suggestion incorporates the main analytical stages proposed by Fairclough for CDA and usefully transforms these to analytical stages that utilise CL methods and tools. Thus, in the early analytical stages of both CDA and corpus-based (C)DA, researchers are trying to identify the linguistic features of texts or corpora. Since my thesis deals with a large corpus and not a single text (or a few texts), I will continue this section using Baker and McEnery's methodological suggestion.

The first analytical steps are considered quantitative and the techniques used include frequency lists, keywords or collocates. However, as Baker and McEnery (2015, p.2) note, 'in order to give the research a focus, as a research project progresses, the analysis gradually becomes more qualitative and context-led, relying less on computer software'. Once the linguistic patterns are identified, the next step is to provide an interpretation 'where the software acts as an aid to the researcher by allowing the linguistic data to be quickly surveyed' (*ibid*). This is, for example, where a concordance list can be of use as it allows the researcher to examine the patterns' surrounding context. This stage can assist the analyst in focusing on particularly interesting patterns that require a closer look.

The third stage, 'explanation', 'involves positioning our descriptive and interpretative findings within a wider social context' (Baker and McEnery, 2015, p.3). This is where the theoretical, historical and social contexts inform the analysis. Finally, the fourth stage is 'more evaluative, pointing out the consequences of such uses of language' (*ibid*). This stage reflects Fairclough's 'essence' of CDA, namely the use of *critique*, and its connection with 'other elements of the existing reality' (Fairclough, 2015, p.6), and the concept of 'praxis' (Chapter 3). For CDA, this stage is an integral part of the analysis. In corpus analysis, it is not necessary to critically evaluate the analytical findings as many studies are 'curiosity-based' instead of 'action-based' (Baker and McEnery, 2015, p.3). This also explains the use or the dismissal of the word 'critical' in corpus-based/assisted (critical) discourse studies/analysis. As shown in the title of my thesis, this project follows the 'critical' methodological path. This is because I aim to raise questions that follow a critical perspective – the 'why' component in

discourse analysis (van Dijk, 1997, p.2) – in the discourse used by the CSs in HEIs. For example, in addition to the central research questions raised in the introduction (Chapter 1), this thesis aims to ask questions such as *why* do careers services use such linguistic devices/techniques? What kind of messages are promoted and which groups (powerful/powerless) benefit from such practices? Are the solutions offered to students helpful?

7. Analytical framework

There are two main parts in the first analytical chapter (Chapter 6). The first part looks at the CSs' representation of 'reality' when it comes to finding a (graduate) job. The analysis starts with the examination of the noun 'world'. As we have seen in chapter 2.3.4, there are examples in HE policy where the world is represented as 'fast-changing' and 'increasingly competitive'. Thus, looking at the noun 'world' and the lexical items that surround it, can help us to understand the worldview, the 'reality' projected to students by the careers services in their web pages. The second part examines the discourse of employability and skills used by the services. Based on the socio-economic background presented in chapter 2 and the theoretical framework presented in chapter 3, the analysis focuses on the representation of the job-searching 'reality' that students find themselves in while at university and after graduation. Some of the main linguistic strategies discussed in this chapter include metaphors, evaluative statements, and presuppositions/assumptions that are presented as 'common knowledge' or as 'common sense'. The 'naturalisation' of neoliberal thought and ideology is also highlighted in this analytical part. To produce the results for this analytical part, I use AntConc's clusters, concordance and KWIC, and collocates tools.

In the second analytical chapter (Chapter 7), I aim to examine and understand the CSs' role in UK universities through their use of language. Thus, it is necessary to locate and use those key search words or terms that will bring to the surface the different strands of the careers' occupation, and enable the researcher to look closely at the actions performed by the CSs as these are communicated through their web pages.

In principle, the CSs are expected to play an active role in the students' development. It is assumed that their role is to 'help', 'support', and 'guide'

students through their transition to employment. This means that they have the knowledge and the power to do so. Their role is thus active. In linguistic terms, if we consider the CSs representation in an active clause they would usually hold the subject position. Therefore, looking at the services as the *Actors* of clauses (Chapter 4) can help us to understand the kind of processes the CSs allocate to themselves (as the texts were written by people who work at the CSs), and then examine the circumstances that have led them to such actions.

The foundations of this chapter's analytical framework are based on the *Transitivity* system that looks at *participants*, *processes*, and *circumstances*. When it comes to understanding the CSs' actions, besides Halliday's *Transitivity* system, I take into consideration the 'Major Semantic domains of single-word verbs' created by Biber et al. (1999) in *The Longman Grammar of Spoken and Written English*. As far as 'circumstances' is concerned, after looking closely at the results of the corpus searches, a table is created to show the grammatical patterns which are then 'translated' into semantic patterns. The 'transition' from grammatical to semantic, aims to assist in the location of the major themes to be analysed, but also in the interpretation of the CSs' linguistic choices. Van Leeuwen's work (1999) on 'managing action' is also used for the interpretation of a key semantic pattern ('we are here to help you...'), which plays a vital role in our understanding of the services' 'helping' nature. The main themes examined in this chapter include: professionalism and expertise, services offered to students, the helping nature of the CSs, therapeutic culture, and CSs talking to employers.

The third and final analytical chapter aims to examine the similarities and differences in the language used by Russell Group and post-1992 careers services (RG and P92 sub-corpora). As mentioned in section 3.3, for the construction of the CEW15 corpus, I chose to include data from these two university 'groups' to add a comparative angle to the analysis (RG + P92 = CEW15). The reasons for this decision are also explained in chapter 8.

The CL methods used for the comparison of the RG and P92 sub-corpora include keyword, n-grams, and concordances. The analysis starts with an exploration of the main phrases that were closely examined in chapters 6-7. The next step is the extraction of the keyword lists of both sub-corpora and the comparison of their top 50 keywords (sorted by Keyness). Ten of these commonly

used keywords are then selected to examine whether the differences in their frequencies are statistically important. The final method used in this chapter involves a search for similarities and differences in the phrases regularly used by the majority of the two ‘groups’. In particular, I compare the 2-7-grams (sorted by Range). The historical background and the development of HE in the UK (Chapter 2) inform the analysis and explanation of the results.

For the identification of lexical items and patterns that would assist in answering my research questions, I use statistical test that are incorporated in the corpus-linguistics software (AntConc). To identify collocates, I use the statistical measure Mutual Information (MI). MI shows the strength of the link between two words that are close to each other. In chapter 6.3, for example, I look closely at the collocates of ‘employability’ within a span of -3 and +3. MI ‘takes into account the relative positions of two words across the whole corpus’, and if they are usually found close together ‘and rarely occur apart then they receive a high score’ (Baker, 2010, pp.24–25). For example, a collocational pair with a MI score of over 3 is believed to be statistically significant at the 5 percent level.

In addition, in chapter 8 I compare the keywords of the two sub-corpora, that is the RG and P92 corpora. Each sub-corpus is measured against the wordlist of a reference corpus. The statistical measure I use for the identification of keywords is log-likelihood (LL). LL is used to ‘compare frequencies in two corpora, taking into account the sizes of both corpora as well as the actual frequencies of the phenomena being investigated’ (Baker, 2010, pp.62–63). For those keywords that score above 6.63, there is a 1 percent chance that the difference is not accidental, but rather ‘reflects an actual difference in the language use of the two populations being examined’ (Baker, 2010, p.63).

As previously discussed, it is very common for a corpus-based/assisted analysis to start with the production of a frequency or a keyword list. A frequency list can indicate the ‘aboutness’ of the corpus (Scott and Tribble, 2006, p.83), and keywords ‘can be useful “signposts” in that they identify the lexical focus or preoccupation of a corpus’ (Baker, 2010, p.26). Even though these tools can be valuable in corpus-based/assisted discourse analysis, the research questions (Chapter 1.3) that I aim to answer in this study are very specific. Thus, my analysis focuses on the exploration of specific lexical/grammatical items and

clusters/phrases which, when closely examined, will be able to answer the three main research questions. It has to be noted, however, that RQ3, includes a comparison of the two sub-corpora keyword lists. For reasons of convenience, I have added the frequency and keyword lists of the CEW15 corpus in Appendix 2. The focus corpus (CEW15) is measured against the written component of the BNC corpus. It must be noted that the majority of the items investigated in the analytical chapters are also keywords. Table 2 in Appendix 2 shows a list of these items, their frequencies, and statistical measures.

8. Summary

In this chapter, we have seen that linguists who make use of corpus methods and tools can work with general and specialised corpora. As the theme of this thesis is the discourse of CSs in UK universities, to answer my research questions, it was deemed necessary to build a specialised corpus that would be representative of this genre. University websites are valuable and influential sources of information for prospective and current HE students. They can affect student 'choice' and strengthen the institutions' reputation. As discussed in chapter 2, the provision of information is particularly stressed in HE policy. One of the most powerful means used for the dissemination of information is the world wide web.

The data selected for the construction of the CEW15 corpus derive from 58 HEIs, that is 24 Russell Group and 34 post-1992 universities. These universities are representatives of the HE scene in the UK but they also represent two diverse groups that are characterised in the literature as 'elite', 'prestigious' and 'research-led' on the one hand, and as 'less prestigious', 'post-1992' or 'ex-polytechnics' on the other hand. Thus, while the primary focus of this thesis is understanding the language used by CSs and advisers in general, this dichotomy between academic institutions is also taken into consideration. After a detailed description of the procedures followed for the corpus design (the mapping of careers websites, and the criteria for data selection), the two tables (RG and P92 corpora) are presented with a word count for each sub-corpus. The data collection has resulted in a specialised corpus of more than 2.6 million words.

This chapter also highlighted the importance of CDA and Fairclough's 'three dimensions of discourse', and its synergy with CL tools and methods. One of the

ways (C)DA and CL can be combined is described by Baker and McEnery (2015) and their four-stage methodological plan. These stages illustrate how we start the analysis with a focus on quantitative techniques, such as frequency lists and keywords, before we move on to more qualitative tools, for example looking closely at concordance lines. Emphasis is given to the researcher's role in the analytical procedure, explanation, and interpretation of the findings. This is when the social, political, economic, and historical context is taken into consideration which could lead to a broader understanding on the topic under examination, in this case, the careers services' use of language, and the possible consequences of such uses.

In the final part, an overview of each analytical chapter was provided. Specifically, there was a discussion on the methodology, linguistic theory, and CL tools that are used to answer the three research questions. The analytical part thus begins with the next chapter that looks at the representation of the 'world', the 'job market', and the notion of 'employability'.

Chapter 6. The representation of the ‘world’, the ‘job market’ and the notion of ‘employability’

1. Introduction

We have seen in chapter 4 that language is a ‘dominant symbolic resource’ capable of constructing ‘social reality’. As ‘reality’ and ‘discourse’ are linked dialectically in CDA, this chapter aims to examine the language used by careers services in the construction of the job-searching reality or worldview. As part of the job-searching reality, the concept of employability (Chapter 2) is presented as beneficial for the individual because it enhances the chances of finding employment. The analysis thus begins by looking at the noun ‘world’ and its n-grams and continues with an examination of the ‘discourse of competition’ in the ‘job market’. There is a discussion about the necessary steps and actions that need to be taken by students who would like to be employed after graduation.

The second part of this chapter examines the discourse of employability and skills. The analysis starts by reviewing the definitions of the notion of employability as found in the CSs’ web pages. The results demonstrate that employability is not only important to students. This notion has also managed to become particularly important to universities. The analysis then moves on to explore the idea of ‘employability skills’. The development of ‘skills’ is an area that the services markedly stress. Besides taking up the assistance offered by the services, students are encouraged to take action and ‘develop’ their own skills or ‘make [themselves] employable’ as this is what ‘potential’ employers will be looking for from prospective employees.

2. Representation of the ‘world’ and the ‘job market’

In chapter 3, there was a discussion on the notion of ‘power’ exercised mainly by dominant groups in society and the construction or representation of ‘reality’. It was mentioned that locating a ‘reliable knowledge about reality’ (Fairclough, 2005, p.922) is just as difficult a task as determining which of these representations of the world provide the best possible world knowledge. Another idea that was discussed in chapter 3 involved the ‘critical realist-based analysis’ and its focus on powerful institutional mechanisms which have the ability to create

or reproduce and disseminate ideas or ideologies that could result in the creation or maintenance of social injustices. The linguistic choices of social actors or groups can form different versions of realities. As this chapter is interested in the representation of the job-searching reality and the careers services' 'world knowledge', the analysis begins with the examination of the noun 'world'.

2.1 Identifying the context of the services' 'world'

As explained in the Analytical Framework (Chapter 5.7), the examination of the noun 'world' aims to capture the worldview conveyed to students by the CSs in their websites. Table 4 shows the top 2 and 3-grams, both on the left and right, of the noun 'world', sorted by Range. The results show that there are two main semantic categories that describe the 'world' discussed in the CSs' web pages, that is the 'real world' and the 'world of employment'. Most of the 2/3-grams represent the 'working' element of life.

2-grams 'world' (right)	Freq	Range	3-grams 'world' (left)	Freq	Range
real world	68	33	world of work	266	41
working world	29	19	world of employment	8	8
business world	36	15	world of business	5	5
real-world	26	15	world of graduate employment	5	4
commercial world	11	7	world of opportunities	2	2
competitive world	8	5	world of professional work	1	1

Table 4 - 2 and 3-grams of 'world'

The lexical items that premodify the noun 'world' include the words 'real', 'working', 'business', 'commercial', and 'competitive'. If we look at the 3-grams when the node is placed on the left, we see that one of these semantic categories is 'employment': 'world of work', 'world of employment', 'world of business', 'world of graduate employment', and 'world of professional work'. The phrase that stands out from the table is 'world of work' which is mentioned 266 times by 41 universities. The clusters tool reveals that one of these universities (P16), uses very frequently the phrases 'world of work careers centre' (58 times), 'world of work certificate' (23 times), 'world of work programme' (9 times) and 'world of work skills certificate' (8 times) (Appendix 3-1). Thus, the phrase 'world of work' is used by this university as a premodifier of its services' title and programmes

offered. These examples will be excluded from the following close analysis of the concordance lines.

2.1.1 The ‘world of work’ n-grams

In general, the close analysis of the concordance lines shows that students are asked to ‘Be knowledgeable’ and ‘develop’ or ‘gain’ an understanding of the ‘commercial world’ or the ‘business world’ (Appendix 3-2). The services offer a number of ‘awards’, ‘work placements’, or ‘schemes’, and the ability to ‘speak with specially chosen experts’ in order to ‘shed some light’ on the business world and help students become successful in the ‘working world’ (Appendix 3-3). Work experience and internships are presented as ‘invaluable’ and necessary for ‘understanding the working world’ (Appendix 3-4). As one of the universities emphasises:

Employers want to recruit graduates who have some knowledge of the working world and there is a strong link between having work experience and getting a graduate level job. P8

There are several examples in the corpus, discussed in different parts in this chapter (Sections 1.2.1, 1.2.3, 2.2, 2.3), where the CSs talk about what is important to employers or what ‘employers want’ from recent graduates. Students are encouraged to ‘sign up’ for mentoring schemes offered by universities as these are designed to help them develop an ‘understanding of the world of work’, develop key employability skills, and **prepare** them for the world of work’ (Appendix 3-5). Gaining a ‘real’, ‘realistic’, ‘valuable insight’ into the ‘world of work’, or getting a ‘taste’ and a ‘sneak peek’ is highly stressed by the CSs (Appendix 3-6).

Preparation for the ‘world of work’ is a key theme when closely analysing the concordance lines (Appendix 3-7). Preparing students is described as ‘vital’ and universities aim to ‘equip’ students for ‘a successful start in the world of work’:

At Birmingham, we understand that preparing for your future in the world of work during your time here is vital. RG1

our students are equipped not only with fantastic academic credentials but they develop a wide range of skills and experiences to equip them for a successful start in the world of work. RG21

The students’ preparation for the ‘world of work’ is further marked by the CSs with the use of language that aims to describe ‘movement’ towards a direction that

leads from one world to another. While at university, students ‘Develop a range of skills to take forward into the world of work’, they ‘acquire [...] confidence and skills to go out into the world of work’. More examples are displayed below and in Appendix 3-8:

We are committed to **supporting you as you enter the world of employment**, whether you need to talk through your options, practice for interviews, or find the job that's right for you. RG1

Despite scoring top grades throughout her Health and Social Care degree, Michelle Drinkald recognised she still lacked confidence and **needed support to navigate the world of work**. P29

A specific opportunity as part of the programme is to acquire new skills and experiences that will enhance your employability **as you enter the increasingly global world of work** P5

Working in an SME could be **a great first step in to the world of employment** for many reasons. RG21

Purple Door Recruitment Consultancy is the University of Portsmouth's very own on-campus graduate **team here to help you take those first steps from student life into the world of graduate employment**. P26

In particular, the services support and guide students towards ‘starting out’, ‘entering’ or ‘navigating’ the ‘world of employment’ and enhancing their ‘employability as [they] enter the increasingly global world of work’. As will be further discussed in section 4.1, ‘forward movement’ is a commonly used metaphor found in the universities’ linguistic choices (Ng, 2014).

In addition, HE students find themselves between two ‘worlds’ that is, the ‘world of education’ and the ‘world of work’. As one of the universities states, ‘students develop skills, approaches and attitudes for life after university’. There are examples in the corpus where students are asked to ‘make decisions’, ‘think about’, ‘plan’ and ‘prepare’ ‘for life after university’, or ‘life after graduation’ (Appendix 3-9). Thus, HE is considered a turning point in the students’ lives and their movement from one ‘world’ to another is described in the CEW15 corpus as a ‘transition’ or a ‘journey’:

to develop their skills, approaches and attitudes **for life after university**, not least in the world of work. RG6

“Recent graduates reflect on their **journey from university into the world of work**. RG14

We are committed to ensuring that all students **make a successful transition into the world of work** or further study. P27

the aim of helping them to **make a successful transition from university to the world of work** or further study. RG14

The CSs clearly state their commitment ‘to ensuring’ that all of their students ‘make a successful transition into the world of work’ and also assist them in preparing themselves for this transition.

The change or ‘transition’ between the student and professional life is also described as a ‘journey’ in the CEW15 corpus (Section 4.1). The CSs aim to assist students ‘plan’ and ‘prepare’ for their journey, ‘compete’ with other students and ‘achieve the graduate job of their choice’ (Appendix 3-10). The ‘journey’ metaphor is also reinforced with other phrases, such as ‘starting point[s]’, ‘Graduate Passport[s]’, or ‘graduate destination[s]’ (Appendix 3-11). One example even resembles a touristic setting when the services wish students: ‘Good luck and enjoy the journey!’ (RG13).

Moreover, the clusters analysis shows that there are different types of ‘journeys’:

Types of 'journeys'
career journey
leadership development journey
educational journey
enterprise journey
entrepreneurial journey
work experience journey
graduate journey
PhD journey
placement journey
student journey
volunteering journey

Table 5 - Types of 'journeys'

The noun phrase ‘career journey’ is regularly used in the corpus (Frequency: 20, Range: 19/58). A ‘career journey’ can have ‘different points’ or ‘stages’ and the CSs offer assistance to students ‘at all stages’ or ‘every step of’ their journeys in order to ‘move on to the next step’ or ‘make the most of [their] career journey’ (Appendix 3-12). The idea of ‘different stages’ in the students’ career planning and the CSs’ role in it, is extensively examined in chapter 7.

As expected and regularly explained by the CSs, the ‘journey’ or the ‘transition’ from university life and the ‘real world of work’ is not straightforward. There is a ‘gap’ between the two worlds and the students are asked to follow the services’ advice and guidance in order to ‘bridge’ it:

enterprise and entrepreneurial skills help to close the **daunting gap between university and the real world of work** RG4

It is designed to increase your employability, and **to bridge the gap between graduating university, and entering the world of work**. P12

practical experience **to bridge the gap between your studies and the world of work** and we'll design what you'd be doing over the summer based on your interests. RG1

Volunteering can be intrinsically rewarding in and of itself, but it can also help you **bridge the gap between education and the world of work**. RG13

The examples above present some of the ‘solutions’ provided by the services to students that aim to ‘bridge the gap between university and the world of work’. These include: ‘enterprise and entrepreneurial skills’, ‘graduate programmes’, ‘mentoring schemes’, ‘practical’ or ‘work experience’, and ‘volunteering’. Notice that in the first example the ‘gap’ is described as ‘daunting’. The expression ‘bridge/ing the gap’ is used by 11 universities. ‘Volunteering’, ‘work experience’, ‘placements’, and ‘mentoring schemes’ are considered ideal for ‘bridging the gap between’: ‘graduating university, and entering the world of work’; ‘university and the world of work’, ‘education and the world of work’ (Appendix 3-13).

The adjective ‘real’ is also present in the following concordance lines that refer to the ‘world of work’:

the opportunity to engage in **real world projects** or go on placements and apply their skills in the context of the world of work. P16

Learn about **the real world of work** by experiencing it. RG14

joining us on our Professional Placement scheme, will help you to experience **the real business world**. P23

When the ‘daunting gap’ discussed earlier is bridged, it is believed that students can enter the ‘real world of work’, or the ‘real business world’. As one of the universities mentioned above, it is believed that degree programmes must contain an ‘element of work-related learning’ that will allow students experience ‘real world projects’ and see how the ‘real business world’ works. The next section examines in more detail the idea of the ‘real(-)world’ as presented by the services.

2.1.2 The ‘real(-)world’ n-grams

As shown in Table 4, the adjective ‘real’ is the most frequently used premodifier of ‘world’. When it comes to understanding the meaning of adjectives that are part of noun phrases, Tognini-Bonelli, who adopted the ‘distinction posited by Sinclair (1992) between *focusing* and *selective* functions of adjectives’ (1993, p.194, original italics), examines the adjectival modifier ‘real’. She notes that the

adjective ‘real’ ‘may have either a selective or a focusing function’ which ‘entails a change in meaning’ (*ibid*). Its selective function ‘is strongly associated with a particular environment, typically preceding definite article or the possessive’ and it gives the adjective ‘real’ ‘inferential meaning’ (*ibid*). Her example presents the phrase ‘the real reason for the ban’ and she further states that this ‘real reason’ is ‘selected against “another alleged reason” which highlights a contrasting element in the meaning of the noun phrase ‘implicitly referred to as “not correct”’ (Tognini-Bonelli, 1993, p.195). Thus, as also highlighted by Orpin (2017) who uses Tognini-Bonelli’s work, the ‘selective function’ signals the ‘assumption’ that there is an additional factor that is likely to be negatively evaluated. On the other hand, the ‘focusing function of *real*/ [...]’ involves a delexicalization of the adjective to the point where it simply intensifies the noun’, and the example she provides is ‘they were causing real difficulties for some people’ (Tognini-Bonelli, 1993, p.196). This use of ‘real’ ‘reinforces the meaning already realised by the noun’ and ‘emphasises the “typicality” of the noun, i.e. the consensus-based view that the meaning of it is what we all expect it to be’ (*ibid*).

When examined together, ‘real(-)world’ is mentioned 94 times in the CEW15 corpus used by 37 universities. The table below shows that ‘real(-)world’ is directly related to the ‘business world’:

‘Real(-)world’ 1R				
1	real world business experience	real world experience(s)		real-world situations
2	real-world business problem	real world feedback		real-world skills
3	real-world businesses	real world impact		real-world solutions
4	real-world challenge(s)	real world implications		real world success
5	real-world clients	real-world issues		real-world experience opportunities
6	real-world employers	real-world placements		real world work related examples
7	real-world environment	real-world problems		
8	real world examples	real world projects		

Table 6 - ‘Real(-)world’ 1R

Table 6 also shows that ‘real’ is also used as a hyphenated compound adj + noun structure (‘real-world’). Biber et al. (1999, p.326) note that ‘there is no clear dividing line between compounds and free combinations’. Furthermore, ‘there is

a fuzzy borderline between some types of compound nouns [...] and structures with premodification of noun heads' (Biber et al., 1999, p.574). In the CEW15 corpus, the hyphenated compound structure 'real-world' is mentioned 26 times. In these examples, 'real-world' is used as a premodifier of nouns, such as: 'real-world business', 'real-world experience', 'real-world placements', and 'real-world skills'.

In general, the adjective 'real' has a 'selective role' in the context of university careers services. It can be claimed that the 'real-world' can be 'set against' "other [worlds]" which are implicitly labelled as less relevant and important' (Tognini-Bonelli, 1993, p.196). There is no doubt that the 'real(-)world' described by the CSs, as shown in Table 6, is associated with the 'world of employment' or the 'world of business'. The contrasting 'world' that is probably 'implicitly labelled' as irrelevant or less important for students is the 'academic world' or the 'educational world' which contains the knowledge or the theoretical 'world'.

Specifically, the 'real(-)world' is linked with 'business' or 'work': 'real world businesses', 'business problems', 'challenges', 'business experience', 'real world related examples', and 'real-world clients'. There are also 'real(-)world problems' and 'solutions', 'issues' and 'situations'. In addition, and more relevant to the CSs' setting, there are 'real-world placements', 'projects', 'experience opportunities', 'environment', 'employers', and 'skills'. Although some of these noun phrases do not seem directly relevant to the 'world of work', if we look closely at the concordance lines it becomes evident that all of these examples are focused on presenting employment as 'the real world'. There is only one concordance line that uses the term 'real world' in relation to the 'virtual world': 'Read our blog about how to use virtual connections for real world success' (RG16).

One of the reasons that CSs use the 'real(-)world' noun phrase is to stress the importance of 'real experiences':

We understand how **important** it is for students to benefit from real-world experiences.
P18

The **graduates themselves benefit** from gaining real world, high quality experience that enhances their CV. P6

A degree alone is not enough in today's jobs market, you also need real world skills and knowledge. P6

Graduates are expected ‘to benefit’ from ‘gaining real world’ experience while at university as a ‘degree alone’ is not considered ‘enough’ (as discussed further in this chapter).

Another interesting theme that emerges from the close analysis of concordance lines is the distinction between ‘theory’ and ‘practice’ and the links created between them. As one of the services mentions, ‘Optional and mandatory work-based placements are the perfect way of discovering how your studies relate to the real world’ (P6). The relation of ‘theoretical’ education to the ‘practical’ ‘world of work’ is one of the main themes discussed in these examples:

The case study requires students to apply their **theoretical learning** to resolve a real-world business problem; performing the role of strategic business consultants. RG6

The students use the **theoretical frameworks** that they study in class to achieve this goal. This enables students to obtain real world experience of **theoretical concepts** P26

apply your **theoretical knowledge** to real-world situations P4

‘Learning’ is considered ‘theoretical’ and the ‘real-world’ has real ‘business problems’ that need practical solutions. Students get ‘real-world experience’ by applying the ‘theoretical frameworks’ or ‘concepts’ to ‘local businesses’. Thus, as the ‘real’ world, which is considered the ‘business world’ in the careers’ context, is considered the ‘important’ ‘world’, this presupposes that the ‘other’ world – which in this case cannot be other than the ‘educational’ or the ‘academic’ world since the services refer to HE students – is less important or irrelevant.

2.2 Examination of the noun ‘job’

As shown above, the students’ preparation to enter the ‘world of work’ is described as a ‘journey’. The purpose of taking this ‘journey’ is to reach a certain destination. This destination, which is also considered the students’ goal, is employment. Students are expected to dedicate their time at university in order to get prepared for this final – in their role as ‘students’ – destination which is no other than getting a ‘job’. In many professions, such as engineering, finance, teaching, or medicine, a HE degree is considered necessary. The representation of ‘job’ by the CSs is of particular interest since helping students become employed is considered the services’ expertise (see also chapter 7). Thus, the analysis starts with an examination of the noun ‘job’ as a premodifier of nouns.

Table 7 shows that ‘job’ is used to describe the available vacancies (‘job market’, ‘job opportunities’, ‘job vacancies’), and the search for employment (‘job hunting’, ‘job search’). The phrase ‘job market’, which is most frequently used by most of the universities, will be further examined in the next part (Section 2.2.1).

	2-grams ‘job’ (left)	Freq	Range
1	job market	526	56
2	job hunting	355	53
3	job opportunities	235	53
4	job search	674	50
5	job vacancies	396	50

Table 7 - 2-grams ‘job’ (left)

Before, however, looking closely into the ‘job market’ it would be interesting to examine the phrases that describe the students’ effort in finding a job after graduation. ‘Job hunting’ and ‘job search’ are used as synonymous phrases by the CSs. This is not a surprise as, according to the Oxford English Dictionary (Oxford Dictionaries, 2017), one of the definitions of ‘hunting’ when used ‘in combination’ (such as ‘house-hunting’), is ‘the activity of searching for something’.

Using the clusters tool, we can see that ‘job hunting’ and ‘job search’ share common L1 and R1 lexical items. The phrases ‘job hunting’ or ‘job search’ are divided into different categories that represent the general ‘job market’ as will be discussed shortly. For example, there is ‘academic’, ‘graduate’, ‘global’ or ‘country-specific’ job-hunting (Table 8). A table with the sequences’ frequencies can also be found in Appendix 4.

Common L1	job hunting / job search	Common R1
academic		advice
creative		information
effective		methods
global		strategy / strategies
graduate		techniques
proactive		tips
country-specific		process
successful		skills
useful		handouts
		recourses
		sections
		links
		(web) pages / websites

Table 8 - Common L1 and R1 lexical items for ‘job hunting’ and ‘job search’

Moreover, it is particularly emphasised that ‘job search’ or ‘job hunting’ must be ‘effective’, ‘proactive’, ‘successful’, or ‘useful’. The CSs state that they ‘help’ students in order to ‘create effective job hunting strategies to have the best chance of success’ (Appendix 3-14).

As can be seen in Table 8, the CSs offer a variety of assistance to students such as ‘job hunting’: ‘advice’; ‘information’; ‘methods’; ‘strategies’; ‘techniques’; ‘tips’; ‘handouts’; ‘resources’, and more that will be further discussed in chapter 7. All these resources and techniques aim to ‘help’ students find a job.

Also, the adjective ‘creative’ is linked with what is called the ‘hidden job market’ that will also be discussed in the next section. Students are asked to ‘think about using creative job hunting techniques’ and perform ‘creative job search(s)’ (Appendix 3-15). The idea of ‘creativity’ when it comes to finding a job is associated with the acquisition of general ‘job hunting skills’ and specifically with ‘networking’, joining ‘relevant groups and connect[ing] with employers, other professionals, alumni and organisations’. The use of social media and the students’ online ‘profiles’ in virtual spaces, such as LinkedIn, is particularly promoted as very important (Appendix 3-16), and there are also some examples where ‘recruitment agencies and headhunters’ (‘headhunters’ frequency: 13, Range: 6) are presented as useful.

2.2.1 The ‘job market’

As shown in Table 7, the ‘job market’ is mentioned 528 times in the corpus by 56 of the 58 universities, which makes it a common phrase that is being used by universities when referring to the available job vacancies. In general, the CSs inform students that they need to ‘search’, ‘explore’, ‘understand’, ‘prepare for’, ‘tap into’, ‘get ahead’, ‘gain a competitive advantage/edge’ or ‘stand out from the crowd’ in the ‘job market’. Most of the phrases are further explored later in this chapter.

The most frequent lexical items that premodify the ‘job market’ with a minimum collocate frequency of 10 and sorted by their statistical strength, or Mutual Information (MI), are presented in Table 9. MI is a statistical measure that shows the strength of the link between two words. It ‘takes into account the relative positions of two words across the whole corpus’, and if they are usually found close together ‘and rarely occur apart then they receive a high score’

(Baker, 2010, pp.24–25). As Baker notes, ‘Any collocational pair with a mutual information score of over 3 is said to be statistically significant at the 5 percent level’ (2010, p.25). The L1 collocates of the search phrase are: ‘hidden’; ‘competitive’; ‘graduate’; ‘global’, and ‘current’. The collocates that stand out in this table, and which will be further examined in the next section, are the ones with the higher statistical scores (MI), namely the adjectives ‘competitive’ (MI=4.87>3), and ‘hidden’ (MI=6.24>3).

	Freq (L)	Range	MI	Collocates
1	31	19	6.24	hidden
2	50	24	4.87	competitive
3	91	32	1.58	graduate
4	13	3	1.16	global
5	12	9	1.12	current

Table 9 - Most frequently used premodifiers of ‘job market’

The ‘graduate job market’ is the most frequently used pattern as this is the market students are interested in when using the careers services. The general themes that the phrase ‘graduate job market’ is used refer to four main topics. These include: (a) the modules and workshops organised by the services in order to prepare students for ‘the graduate job market’; (b) the importance of ‘work placements’; (c) ‘understanding the graduate job market’, and (d) competition in ‘the graduate job market’ (Appendix 3-17).

Besides the collocates presented in Table 9, there are more premodifiers in the corpus that are less frequently used and these include: ‘academic’, ‘international’, ‘tough’, ‘changing’, ‘uncertain’, ‘unadvertised’, ‘crowded’ and ‘challenging’. As can be seen in the following concordance lines (more displayed in Appendix 3-18), the idea of competition is particularly stressed in these examples:

The graduate job market is **so competitive** that it is very easy for employers to say no
RG5

The current job market is **highly competitive**. P10

The current job market is **extremely competitive** P23

The graduate job market has **never been more competitive**, and places in postgraduate study are equally in demand. RG8

the academic job market is characterised by short-term contracts for those early in their career, and **intense competition** for permanent positions. RG17

Some of these instances are also modified with adverbs, such as ‘highly’, ‘extremely’, ‘particularly’ competitive. Graduates find themselves in the worst position when searching for jobs (‘has never been more competitive’), and the trend of ‘intense competition’ seems to be on the increase (‘the increasing competition’) (Appendix 3-19). In these concordance lines, we see that the CSs make a direct link between competition in the ‘job market’ and the ‘need to compete effectively’ in it.

2.2.2 The ‘hidden job market’

Before we move on to the analysis of the pattern ‘competitive job market’, this section presents the term ‘hidden job market’. The ‘hidden job market’ phrase is used to describe the vacancies that are not advertised but covered internally or from ‘a pool of speculative applications’. Some CSs provide further information and state that ‘it is estimated that 70% of jobs are not advertised’, ‘up to 65% of job vacancies’, ‘at least 50% of jobs are filled without ever being advertised’ (Appendix 3-20). Students are encouraged to ‘tap into’, ‘access’, ‘gain access’, ‘explore’, ‘understand’, and ‘discover’ the ‘hidden job market’ (Appendix 3-20-21).

Searching for ‘hidden’ job vacancies is advertised as ‘Creative Job Hunting’, and described as ‘a rich vein of opportunity’. Students are asked to ‘get creative with your job hunting’, or ‘get inspired and uncover the secrets of job-seeking success’ (Appendix 3-22). Although the ‘hidden job market’ is not competitive, it is difficult for students to locate these supposedly ‘hidden’ opportunities. For this reason, the CSs recommend networking as a solution. The importance of ‘networking’ is constantly highlighted in the CSs’ web pages and, as the following analytical part shows, it is considered one of the necessary elements of becoming employed whether that is in the ‘hidden’ or the ‘competitive’ job market.

2.2.3 The discourse of competition

The phrase ‘competitive job market’ is found 50 times in the CEW15 corpus used by 24 of the 58 universities. If we sort the concordance lines on the left, we will see that the ‘competitive job market’ is predominantly used within prepositional phrases (‘in a/the competitive job market’, ‘for the competitive job market’). In particular, 46 of the 50 occurrences are used in the following structure in the beginning and at the end of sentences:

publicly advertised?	In a competitive job market,	it's important to think
any student, and	in a competitive job market	students often need
from the crowd	in a competitive job market.	Through language
your employability	in a competitive job market.	ChatLive This is your
jobs in an extremely	competitive job market.	Benefits of the
your skills In a fiercely	competitive job market	it's your transferable
In a highly	competitive job market	a good degree is no
In an increasing	competitive job market,	employers need you to
In an increasingly	competitive job market.	the GLP Certificate will
employable in today's	competitive job market.	Whether you're looking
is vital in today's	competitive job market.	You can get experience
tool in the ever	competitive job market	And once you've got
in a crowded and	competitive job market	For more information v

Table 10 - 'In a competitive job market' concordance lines

As shown in Table 10, the 'competitive job market' is further described as 'extremely', 'fiercely', 'highly', 'increasing/ly', 'today's', 'ever' and 'crowded'. It should be noted here, as a brief parenthesis, that the same pattern occurs when examining the noun 'competition'. Table 11 shows that 'competition' is also described as 'fierce', 'tough', 'stiff', 'high', 'intense', 'strong', 'very strong', and 'increasing'. More examples of concordance lines can be found in Appendix 3-23.

two-year training contract	competition	at each stage is fierce and
so it's vital to apply early.	competition	can be fierce and you'll oft
part-time staff. However,	competition	can be tough – there are a
eighing supply. As such,	competition	for jobs can be stiff and
lemand from students and	competition	for placements is high .
to attend is just £95.00	competition	for places is fierce with on
ersity degrees, and so the	competition	for places is intense and y
NEEDED There is strong	competition	for trainee positions, and
are certain to face stiff	competition	from other well-qualified
in 80 countries. However	competition	is fierce . According to the
s appear infrequently and	competition	is high . In this situation
a 'good' application. The	competition	is very strong and should
m and the increasing	competition	from Europe, the US, Brazil

Table 11 - 'Competition' concordance lines

Expressions of quantifiers are also commonly used:

Expressions of quantifiers and 'competition'	
a fair amount of	
a huge amount of	
a great deal of	
a high level of	competition
the level of	
a lot of	
's lots of	
a range of	

Table 12 - Expressions of quantifiers and 'competition'

The idea of ‘competition’ in the context of employment is characterised by extreme difficulty. Besides highlighting the level of difficulty, ‘competition’ is also described in terms of its growing ‘size’ (‘increasing/increased’, ‘a fair/huge/large amount of’, ‘a great deal of’, ‘a lot of’), its borderless nature (‘global’), and its quality (‘high level of’, ‘the level of’). Thus, ‘competition’ and the ‘competitive job market’ is presented as a fact by the CSs, as something ‘normal’, as common knowledge we all share and accept. One of the universities expresses this common-sense notion of competition with the expression ‘we all know’, while another notes that students also share this opinion:

We all know it's a really tough job market out there and that these days it's **no longer enough just to have a degree**, even from a world-renowned institution like the University of Edinburgh. RG6

Students know that having **a degree is not enough** to secure them a great job when they graduate. P18

In the CEW15 corpus, it is quite common to find the characterisation of the HE degree as ‘no longer enough’ (Frequency: 10, Range: 7), or ‘not enough’ (Frequency: 16, Range: 11). There are some examples that stress what ‘employers are looking’ for besides a degree. Specifically, the CSs state that ‘a degree is no longer enough to impress employers’ and the ‘degree classification’ is characterised as ‘less important to employers’. Instead, ‘employers are looking for’: ‘employability skills’; ‘work experience’; ‘good communication skills, advanced digital literacy and strong team-working abilities’. The services linguistic choices include the phrasal verbs ‘need to’ and ‘make sure’, and the adjective ‘important’ to stress the necessity and importance of ‘standing out’, having ‘a variety of skills and experience’, or ‘real world skills’, ‘get[ting] involved in activities’, getting ‘a placement or internship’, and being ‘proactive’ (Appendix 3-24). An interesting observation when looking at these examples is that students are placed in the actor position of sentences when the phrasal verb ‘need to’ is used (‘students need to have a variety of skills’). This way readers understand that gaining ‘a variety of skills and experience’, or acquiring ‘employability skills’ are necessary components to the students’ development where in fact these are ‘skills’ and competencies that employers need for the benefit of their businesses. The following two examples can provide a clear idea of this distinction:

A degree is no longer enough and the reality is that students need to have a variety of skills and experience on top of their degree in order to remain competitive. RG2

In today's competitive job market **it is no longer enough to leave university with a good academic degree**. Gaining high quality work experience can help you stand out from the crowd, and show employers that you have the skills, knowledge and experience they need. RG24

Closing the 'degree is not enough' parenthesis and returning to the main pattern examined in this analytical part ('competitive job market'), we can see that the students' 'skills', 'achievements' and 'experiences' (amongst other competencies and actions discussed earlier), are seen as necessary for having a chance in being employed 'in a fiercely competitive job market':

In a fiercely competitive job market it's your transferable skills, your achievements and your experiences that give you the edge when it comes to applying for jobs. P4

The services use the 'competitive job market' pattern not only to emphasise the difficulty of the situation students are going to find themselves in when looking for employment but also to share their knowledge and give advice and tips on how to survive in this 'reality'. For example, students are asked to dedicate their 'time and effort', 'make sure [they] pay attention to the basics right from the start', 'think creatively and use a diverse range of strategies', and 'make an impact' when completing applications and CVs. The CV is presented as the students' 'prime marketing tool' and the goal is to 'get an interview':

Finding a job requires time and effort, particularly in a competitive job market. P6

In an increasing competitive job market, employers need you to **make an impact** P17

In a competitive job market, **your CV is your prime marketing tool**. RG16

In a competitive job market **you want to get an interview**. P27

Students also need to 'learn how to sell' themselves, 'differentiate' themselves, 'have an edge over the competition', or 'stand out from the crowd':

You also **learn how to sell yourself** in the competitive job market. P27

Differentiate yourself in a highly competitive job market RG22

In today's competitive job market, it's more important than ever that you **have an edge over the competition**. RG6

In a competitive job market you need to make sure that you **stand out from other applicants**. RG1

In particular, in Table 13 we can see that, 'sell' and 'selling yourself' is used by 29 universities, 'market' and 'marketing yourself' by 31, and the 'stand' or 'standing out from' pattern is used by 48 of the 58 universities:

Patterns	Frequency	Universities
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sell/selling yourself	53	29
market/marketing yourself	116	31
Stand/standing out from	156	48

Table 13 - 'Sell/ing', 'market/ing' yourself & 'Stand/ing out from' patterns

Selling oneself is presented as 'an opportunity' or 'a great opportunity' and 'a chance' (Appendix 3-25). Students are invited to 'sell' themselves: 'as a candidate'; 'as effectively as possible'; 'at interviews'; 'during the selection process'; 'effectively to employers/online'; 'in a CV'; 'in an interview'; 'in writing'; 'on paper'; 'to a future employer'; 'to potential employers', or 'to the big graduate recruiter'.

The 'market yourself' pattern is used similarly. Students are encouraged to 'market' themselves: 'effectively'; 'appropriately'; '(more) successfully'; 'positively', and 'well'. The reflexive pronoun 'yourself' is frequently used by the CSs to *talk* to students. More examples of such use of language that attempts to convince students on marketing themselves include the verbs: 'differentiate yourself', 'distinguish yourself', 'give yourself the (best chance)', 'present yourself', 'promote yourself', or 'showcase yourself'. Mautner observes that people who are unemployed and looking for a job in the UK are very likely to find expressions such as "sell yourself", or that the CV "sells you" (2010, p.125). As she performs a Google search of the phrases "sell/ing yourself", "market/ing yourself" and "brand/ing yourself", she notes that 'the "sell + reflexive pronoun" pattern is very much bound up with a normative discourse of advice-giving' (Mautner, 2010, p.126), an observation that is also pertinent in the context of careers services in universities. As presented above the careers experts use the pattern 'verb + reflexive pronoun' to advise students on taking promoting action for themselves ('sell', 'market', 'differentiate', 'distinguish', etc.). She also notes that there are examples of a 'comparison' between the 'self' and 'products' as will also be discussed in section 3.1.

In addition, the pattern 'stand out from' is found 143 times in the corpus and it is used by 46 of the 58 universities. A close examination of the concordance lines shows that the services highlight those key elements that can help students 'stand out from' their competitors. These competitors are described as: 'other applicants/candidates/graduates'; 'the competition'; 'the (job-hunting) crowd'; 'the

rest'; 'thousands'; 'your peers', and 'a much larger pool of prospective employees' (Table 14).

'Stand out from' clusters	Freq	Range
stand out from the crowd	97	38
stand out from the competition	10	9
stand out from other candidates	4	3
stand out from the job-hunting crowd	4	1
stand out from other applicants	3	3
stand out from other job applicants	3	3
stand out from the rest	3	2
stand out from others	3	3
stand out from other graduates	2	2
stand out from other students	2	2
stand out from the thousands	2	2
stand out from a much larger pool of employees	1	1
stand out from other jobs applicants	1	1
stand out from your competitors	1	1
stand out from your peers	1	1

Table 14 - 'Stand out from' clusters

A close examination of the concordance lines shows that the services point out those key elements that will 'help' students 'stand out'. Some examples can be found in Appendix 3-26. In general, if students would like to 'differentiate' themselves from the 'job-hunting crowd', they need to:

- 'improve', 'enhance', 'strengthen', 'boost', and 'build' their **CVs**,
- 'take action early'**,
- 'gain' **'work experience'**, get 'placements', or 'internships',
- get **'tips'** from employers,
- 'utilise', 'improve', 'develop', 'demonstrate', 'gain', 'evidence', 'be equipped with', or 'equip [themselves] with' the **'skills'** or 'competencies' that employers are looking for,
- 'improve', 'enhance', and 'invest' in their **'employability'**.

Particular emphasis is placed on strong CVs, work experience, communication with employers, focusing on job-searching early, the development of skills and improvement of employability. Another similar pattern used by the services, in the same manner, is: 'gain/ing a competitive advantage/edge':

another culture first-hand and	gain a competitive edge in the job market? We
consider continuing study is to	gain a competitive edge in the job market, but if
work experience needed to	gain a competitive edge once they have
legal skills - law students can	gain a competitive edge with potential employers

students of finance can and short term internships taken lightly: Pros and cons of employers and careers	gain a competitive edge with potential employers gain a competitive edge over other candidates Gain a competitive edge by learning about other Gaining a competitive advantage in the job
--	--

Table 15 - 'Gain/ing a competitive edge/advantage' concordance lines

The concordance lines provide examples of what can make students 'gain' that 'competitive advantage', such as: winning awards, attending fairs and pursuing postgraduate study (Appendix 3-27). These helping points highlight the need for students to 'enhance' and 'invest' in their 'employability'. Employability is thus considered an umbrella concept that covers the above elements (and much more) that will make students stand out from the 'job-hunting crowd'.

3. The discourse of employability: What is employability?

As already discussed in this chapter and chapter 2, 'employability' is a complicated concept that includes a multitude of elements, such as good CVs and cover letters, taking action early, making the necessary preparation, work experience, employer networking and acquiring/enhancing employability skills. The complexity of this concept is also illustrated in the CSs' web pages. There are some examples in the CEW15 corpus where the services ask the question 'What is employability?' before providing an insight into their concept of employability. The answers include a definition of 'employability' that is repeated by five universities:

Employability describes 'a set of achievements, skills, understandings and personal attributes' that make graduates more likely to gain employment and be successful in their chosen occupations; which benefits themselves, the workforce, the community and the economy'

According to Knight and Yorke (2006), employability is.....

"a set of achievements – skills, understandings and personal attributes - that make graduates more likely to gain employment and be successful in their chosen occupations, which benefits themselves, the workforce, the community and the economy."

Employability is a set of attributes, skills and knowledge that all labour market participants should possess to ensure they have the capability of being effective in the workplace - to the benefit of themselves, their employer and the wider economy. (Source: CBI)

So what is employability? The Cardiff University Employability and Enterprise Strategy defines it as:

"A set of skills, knowledge and personal attributes that make an individual more likely to secure and be successful in their chosen occupations to the benefit of themselves, the workforce, the community and the economy"

'a set of achievements – skills, understandings and personal attributes – that make graduates more likely to gain employment and be successful in their chosen occupations, which benefits themselves, the workforce, the community and the economy'

Professor Mantz Yorke (2004) 'Employability in Higher Education: what it is - what it is not', Higher Education Academy/ESECT

The definitions derive from the Higher Education Academy (HEA) (Knight and Yorke, 2006), the Cardiff University *Employability and Enterprise Strategy* and the CBI. It can be noticed that these definitions share the same features when describing the elements that constitute the concept of employability: 'a set of skills or achievements, understandings or knowledge, and personal attributes'. These elements can 'make graduates more likely to gain employment', or 'secure' employment, and 'be successful in their chosen occupations'. The definition provided by the CBI is slightly different as it states that 'all labour market participants should possess' these elements using the modal 'should', to highlight the necessity of the concept of employability. It also provides a different reason as to why these skills, understandings and personal attributes need to be acquired. Instead of pointing out that the goal is to 'gain', 'secure', and 'be successful in the chosen occupation', the CBI notes that participants need to 'ensure they have the capability of being effective in the workplace'. In addition, all definitions include those Actors that can 'benefit' from employable participants/graduates/individuals. These are the graduates 'themselves, the workforce, the community and the economy', except in the case of the CBI which states that employability is 'to the benefit of themselves [the students], their employer and the wider economy'. Thus, in the formal definitions of employability found in the CSs websites, only the one deriving from the CBI mentions that employers are also benefactors of the notion of employability. This is an interesting finding, considering the fact that employers regularly comment on the graduates' 'skills-gaps' and the importance of finding 'ready-to-work' or 'employable' HE graduates (as discussed in chapter 2.3.5).

Besides the definitions displayed above, there are examples in the corpus that explain the concept of employability as understood and practised by the

services themselves. The first example resembles the definition provided by the HEA:

The term “employability” is used to describe the <u>assets, attributes and achievements</u> that make individuals more likely to gain employment and achieve success in their chosen career.
In a nutshell, it is all about <u>developing and articulating the right skills and experiences</u> to get the job you want. It is a lifelong process and does not end when you secure that job.
Employability is a term used to describe <u>the range of experiences, skills and attitudes</u> that employers believe make you more likely to be successful in the workplace.
The following Prezi will take you through what employability is and <u>the skills, qualities and attributes</u> that employers look for.
Employability covers <u>a broad range of non-academic or softer skills and abilities</u> which are of value in the workplace.
What is employability and how do we help students understand its importance? Information for staff to help their students.

It is clear that there is a similar understanding of the concept of employability as with the definitions examined above. What is more, ‘employability’ is a ‘lifelong process’ that never ends even if a job is ‘secured’.

The notion of ‘employability’ and its importance can be further examined when researching the phrase ‘employability is’ in the corpus (Freq: 88, Range: 20). As expected, the notion of employability is presented as significant to students. Students are invited to ‘Find out more about why employability is important’, ‘what students should be doing each year to make [themselves] employable’, how it is ‘developed’, and how it can help students get the ‘right employment’ (Appendix 3-28). But besides students, there are some examples in the corpus that highlight the importance of employability to universities. As Table 16 shows, employability is presented as a key element:

Employability is	at the heart of everything we do	P8
	central to our academic approach	P1
	at the core of University business	RG6
	our priority	P27
	a long-standing strategic funding priority within the University.	RG8
	at the core of all courses.	P13
	at the forefront of our course design	P1
	built into your course	P27
	developed both within and outside the curriculum	RG6

	key to the success of our graduates.	RG21
	the responsibility of the University as a whole	RG11
	a sector-wide agenda that has gained significant momentum	RG6
	of strategic importance to the UK economy and in particular to the Scottish Government's skills agenda.	RG6

Table 16 - 'Employability is'...

The language used by universities when describing employability is very similar to the discourse of the 'entrepreneurial university' (Mautner, 2005 and 2010). As the literature review on previous linguistic studies in the marketisation of HE has shown (Chapter 4.12), the use of marketised language by contemporary HEIs in the UK is not unusual. What is interesting, however, is the expressed value of this notion to the universities' operation. In particular, employability is viewed as central to the universities' strategic aims, course design, and the students' success. The fact that some universities openly state that employability is 'at the heart of everything' they do, 'at the core of University business', or their 'priority', is problematic and alarming. This is because overt recognition of 'employability' by a powerful and influential institution legitimises this notion and the general neoliberal agenda it represents, and at the same time backgrounds other, in my opinion, more important and crucial for the society benefits, such as the dissemination of knowledge and the cultivation and betterment of individuals and the community.

The term 'employability' is found 4,024 times in the corpus used by all 58 universities. If we look at the first 10 collocates of 'employability' within a span of -3 +3 words we will see that the most frequent lexical collocates are: 'careers', 'skills', 'service', and 'team'.

	Freq	Freq(L)	Freq(R)	MI	Collocate
1	1593	863	730	3.48395	and
2	1504	1146	358	3.27564	the
3	984	916	68	5.53015	careers
4	683	473	210	2.31987	to
5	585	41	544	5.25245	skills
6	578	467	111	3.56048	your
7	426	290	136	2.25812	of
8	391	37	354	5.60622	service
9	349	34	315	6.19010	team
10	313	133	180	2.21464	in

Table 17 - Top 10 collocates of 'employability' within a span of -3 +3

The nouns ‘careers’, ‘service’ and ‘team’ collocate with employability mostly because in recent years, careers services in UK universities have integrated the term in the services’ titles and the advisers’ professional titles (Table 18), but also in the events they organise, and the resources used (Table 19).

Services’ titles	Professional titles
Careers and Employability Service	Careers and Employability Adviser
Careers and Employability Centre	Careers and Employability Consultant
Careers and Student Employability office	careers and employability specialists
Careers, Employability and Enterprise Centre	Careers and Employability staff
Careers and Employability department	careers and employability support
Careers, Employability and Skills Service	Careers and Employability team
Careers & Employability Centre	Careers and Student Employability experts
Careers & Employability Division	Careers & Employability Team
Careers, Employability & Enterprise Centre	
Careers & Employability Service	

Table 18 - ‘Employability’ in services’ titles and professional titles

Careers resources	Careers events
Careers and Employability Blog	careers and employability events
Careers and Employability library	careers and employability activities
careers and employability news	Careers and Employability Fair(s)
Careers and Employability web pages	careers and employability workshops
Careers and Student Employability Link	Careers & Employability workshops
Careers and Student Employability website	
Careers & Employability booklet	

Table 19 - ‘Employability’ in careers resources and careers events

The connection between employability and its other strong collocate, namely ‘skills’, is quite straightforward. ‘Employability skills’ is a popular phrase used to refer to a number of different skills that students are expected to gain or develop while studying at university.

verbs + ‘employability skills’	
acquire	
demonstrate	
develop	employability skills
gain	
identify	
promote	

Table 20 - Verbs + ‘employability skills’

Students are instructed to ‘develop’, ‘enhance’, ‘identify’, or even ‘sell’ a plethora of ‘employability skills’ (Table 20) to employers while studying at university. Section 3.1 discusses the different types of skills students should consider developing and their link with other notions such as ‘experience’ and ‘knowledge’.

3.1 Skills

'Employability skills' are one of the central themes discussed not only by the careers services but also generally in the media. Students are expected to develop their 'skills' while at university and also be able to present them to potential employers. The frequency of 'skills' in the CEW15 corpus is 10,030. It is also a keyword (Appendix 2), used by all 58 universities. To locate the main topics surrounding 'skills' and find patterns that could be analysed further, I use AntConc's clusters tool. The following table shows the 3-grams of 'skills' (left and right), sorted by Range.

	'skills' 3-grams (left)	Freq	Range	'skills' 3-grams (right)	Freq	Range
1	skills and experience	349	55	develop your skills	143	46
2	skills and knowledge	132	39	range of skills	153	42
3	skills such as	115	37	develop the skills	59	32
4	skills you have	100	32	your employability skills	65	32
5	skills, knowledge and	47	30	about the skills	61	31
6	skills and attributes	92	29	have the skills	57	31
7	skills and abilities	66	26	to develop skills	67	31
8	skills and experiences	62	25	knowledge and skills	58	29
9	skills and qualities	89	25	and the skills	48	27
10	skills that will	35	25	of the skills	83	27

Table 21 - 3-grams of 'skills' (right and left)

From the results, we see that when 'skills' is placed on the left, it is regularly followed by the co-ordinator 'and'. There is also one such example of 'skills' placed on the 'right' ('knowledge and skills'). Such phrases are called 'coordinated binomial phrases'. As Biber et al. (1999, pp.1030–1) note, 'Binomial phrases consist of two words from the same grammatical category, coordinated by *and* or *or*', and the 'most common kind of binomial phrase comprises two coordinated nouns'. It is interesting to note that according to Biber et al., noun and noun binomials are 'by far most common in academic prose' and, in particular, 'skills' was found to be one of the nouns that 'occur as the first member in over 40 different binomial phrases in academic prose' (1999, p.1033). Unfortunately, Biber et al. do not include a list of the binomials where 'skills' is the first member. They do, however, mention that 'knowledge and skills' is a

'recurrent noun and noun binomial phrase[...] in news and academic prose' (*ibid*). As can be seen in Table 21, the majority of careers services link 'skills' with 'experience', 'knowledge', 'attributes' and 'qualities'. A further search of clusters that begin with 'skills and' can reveal that there are plenty of noun and noun binomial phrases where 'skills' are placed in the first member position. Table 1 in Appendix 5 shows the first 30 binomials.

What this table of binomials shows is that 'experience', 'knowledge', 'qualifications', 'skills', and their combination is not enough. 'Knowledge' and 'qualifications' is what students are usually expected to gain when deciding to pursue HE studies. We have, however, seen in this thesis that according to the 'reality' presented by CSs in their websites, students are also expected to gain 'skills' and 'work experience' if they wish to be employed after graduation. However, Table 1 (Appendix 5) shows that 'skills' are combined with a number of personal attributes and qualities, such as 'abilities', 'qualities', 'interests', 'achievements', 'values', 'strengths', 'talents', 'ideas', 'motivations', 'attitudes', 'enthusiasm', or 'personality'. This means that employers are interested in more than just the students' 'qualifications', 'knowledge', 'experience', and 'skills' but also their successes, ability to be creative, values or mindset.

The results also show that the process 'develop' is regularly used in relation to 'skills' ('develop your skills', 'develop the skills', 'to develop skills'). In particular, the pattern 'develop your skills' is found 143 times used by 46 careers services. More importantly, however, this pattern makes a direct link with the idea of students being responsible for 'developing [their] skills':

Use the extensive range of seminars, employer-led events and careers resources available to prepare and develop your skills between sessions RG13

There are many things you can do . . . to enhance your career prospects and develop your skills. RG1

There's an opportunity for you no matter what your interest, giving you a chance to develop your skills P31

A work placement year is a great way to develop your skills and stand out to a graduate recruiter. RG11

Thus, instead of talking about developing *the* skills that students already possess, or *new* skills that could be acquired while studying, with the use of the possessive determiner 'your', the services emphasise that these skills belong to the students. This use of language can be further located in the CEW15 corpus, as the services highlight that students could or should for example: 'assess'; 'identify';

'demonstrate'; 'match'; 'articulate'; 'enhance'; 'improve'; 'sell'; 'market'; 'build', or 'present' 'your skills' (Appendix 5, Table 2). In order to explore the patterns of this table, that is 'verb + your + skills', I have uploaded a .txt file with a list of such phraseological patterns to AntConc's advanced search option. The concordance lines show that this pattern makes specific reference to 'employers':

gaining industry insight and you identify, understand and evidence of skills 3. Stand out - variety of employability skills work experience you can: for casual work. Always ort to take time to reflect and helped along by writing a blog, and qualifications The IET: Award enables you to employment and interests.	<u>showcasing your skills to a potential future employer.</u> <u>evidence your skills to a potential employer.</u> <u>articulate your skills to an employer</u> with a CV and e <u>Articulate your skills to employers</u> and be prepared for <u>demonstrate your skills to future employers</u> <u>match your skills to ones the employer requires.</u> <u>evidence your skills to possible future employers.</u> <u>demonstrating your skills to potential employers.</u> <u>Selling your skills to potential employers</u> <u>showcase your skills to prospective employers in</u> <u>Match your skills to skills employers want.</u>
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The fact that students are encouraged to 'develop', 'build', 'gain' or 'demonstrate', those 'skills that employers are looking for' or 'want' is evident in the CEW15 corpus. The cluster 'skills that employers' is found 51 times used by 24 of the 58 universities. Table 22 shows some examples of concordance lines:

Develop essential graduates to develop the key you an idea of the kinds of essential to develop a range of helping you develop the demonstrate that you have the an insight into the understanding of the gain the transferable	skills that employers skills that employers	want , such as communica regard as important and typically ask for . value via extra-curricular want . Volunteering are looking for regard as the most valuable require . Placements and are looking for .
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Table 22 - 'Skills that employers' concordance lines

When examining these concordance lines in their context, it can be noticed that there are a number of actions expected to be taken by students while at university in order to 'build' the profile that will satisfy the employers' expectations. For example, the CSs present 'work experience' as particularly important. At the same time, the CSs highlight that by taking 'skills modules', 'projects' or 'skills-based workshops', the students' profile will come closer to what employers 'want to see', 'are looking for', 'look for', or 'value' in a graduate (Appendix 3-29).

Although there is one example that mentions explicitly some of the skills that employers 'want' from a graduate ('Develop essential skills that employers want,

such as communication skills, problem solving and the ability to meet deadlines' - P2), the majority of these examples talk about the development of 'skills' in a general way. There are, however, some examples that can give readers an idea of the variety of skills that are 'available' for students to 'develop':

The following list is not meant to be exhaustive but it will give you an idea of the kinds of skills that employers typically ask for. P12

Besides a world recognised qualification, studying in Leeds has most definitely provided you with a range of skills that employers will truly appreciate. RG11

The other activities with which you are involved at College can also show that you have a variety of skills that employers seek. RG9

Although the noun 'skills' is used in its plural form in the CSs setting, these quantifiers stress the fact that there is a plethora ('kinds of', 'a range of', 'a variety of') of available skills. This is also evident in Table 21, where we can see that the 3-gram 'range of skills' is mentioned 153 times in the corpus used by 42 of the 58 universities. The use of quantifiers is particularly frequent in the corpus. Chapter 7.6.1 presents, in detail, the types of 'quantifiers' used by the services to promote and advertise the 'wide number of' resources and tools 'offered' to students. In the same manner, the CSs advertise and promote the plethora of available 'skills' students should develop while at university. If we search the corpus for the lexical items that precede the prepositional phrase 'of skills', we will find the phrases presented below:

Quantifiers 'of skills'	
a vast array	of skills
a good/the right combination	of skills
a handful	of skills
a list	of skills
a distinct/particular/the right mix	of skills
a number	of skills
a plethora	of skills
a range	of skills
a wide/broad/ broader/ extensive range	of skills
a series	of skills
a strong/unique/ useful set	of skills
a broad spectrum	of skills
a variety	of skills
a wide variety	of skills

Table 23 - Quantifiers 'of skills'

The most frequently used phrases are: 'a (wide) number of skills', 'a (wide/ broad/ broader/ extensive) range of skills', 'a (wide) variety of skills'. In particular, 'range of skills' is mentioned 153 times by 42 universities. Thus, given the fact that there

is such a ‘broad range of skills’ that students should develop, it would be useful to search for the variety of employability skills.

3.1.1 The variety of skills

As mentioned in chapter 2, the ‘development’ of skills has been greatly supported by governments in the UK which was then facilitated by its educational institutions. In her study on UK educational policy discourse, Mulderrig notes that ‘learners and young people are supported in developing’ a number of ‘skills’, such as ‘key’, ‘core’, ‘basic’, ‘advanced’, ‘professional’ and ‘work-related’ (2011b, p.61). To look at the different ‘skills’ presented by the CSs, I use AntConc’s n-grams tool. More specifically, I search for the premodification of ‘skills’, thus the search term is positioned on the right, and the cluster size is 2.

As can be seen in Table 3 (Appendix 5), there is a long list of employability skills mentioned in the CEW15 corpus. It has to be noted that this list is not exhaustive. The ‘skills’ mentioned in UK educational policies as found in Mulderrig’s study discussed above are also present in the CEW15 corpus. These skills can be described as ‘generic’ and their description is rather vague. The analysis shows that the CSs display their field of expertise as they talk about a huge number of specialised skills. Thus, the findings include what are considered to be ‘generic’ employability skills (Trought, 2012, p.83), such as ‘leadership’, ‘team(-)working’, ‘problem-solving’, ‘communication’, ‘numeracy’, ‘IT’ and ‘commercial awareness’. We can also distinguish enterprise specific skills, such as ‘business’, ‘enterprising’, ‘intrapreneurial’, and ‘marketing’. According to Collins online dictionary (2017), an ‘entrepreneur’ is ‘the owner or manager of a business enterprise who, by risk and initiative, attempts to make profits’, whereas an ‘intrapreneur’ is ‘a person in a corporation who is given the freedom and resources to initiate products, business ventures’.

In Table 3 (Appendix 5), we can also find skills that are divided into sub-categories, such as

- Soft skills: ‘self-reliance’, ‘people skills’, ‘general employment skills’, ‘specialist skills’, etc.
- Self-reliance skills: ‘self awareness’, ‘self-belief’, ‘motivations’, ‘adaptability’, ‘reliability’, ‘initiative’, ‘time management’, ‘proactivity’,

‘willingness to learn’, ‘self-promotion’, ‘networking’, ‘planning action’ (P8, P34)

- People skills: ‘team(-)working’, ‘interpersonal skills’, ‘oral communication’, ‘leadership’, ‘customer orientation’, ‘foreign language’ (P8)
- General employment skills: ‘problem solving’, ‘flexibility’, ‘business acumen’, ‘IT/computer literacy’, ‘numeracy’, ‘commitment’ (P8).

As previously mentioned in the definitions of ‘employability’, besides ‘skills’, students are asked to display their ‘personal attributes’. One of the services provides some examples of the students’ ‘attributes’ and notes that these ‘few key attributes [...] should help you throughout your career’. These are: ‘Curiosity’; ‘Optimism’; ‘Risk-taking’; ‘Flexibility’, and ‘Persistence’ (RG18). In addition to the students’ personal traits presented above, there are examples in the corpus where readers understand that some skills already exist (‘current’, ‘existing’, ‘extra’), and others must be developed (‘new’) (Appendix 5, Table 4). Some skills are described according to their level (‘basic’, ‘main’, ‘general’, ‘advanced’), or their necessity, importance, quality, and usefulness (‘key’, ‘required’, ‘valuable’, ‘essential’, ‘important’). Also, skills can be ‘life’, or ‘real-life’, ‘employable’, ‘employer-led’, ‘innovative’, or ‘hidden’. Students must also develop ‘diplomacy’ and ‘persuasion’ skills. Furthermore, the results show that the services promote personal and ‘survival’ skills, such as ‘own’, ‘individual’, ‘survival’, and ‘hunting’ skills. Skills are also described as ‘fantastic’, ‘great’, and ‘excellent’.

In addition, Table 24 shows that the possessive determiner ‘your’ is also a strong collocate used more frequently on the left of the node. The pattern ‘your employability’ can provide information about the ideological stances that follow this notion. The phrase ‘your employability’ indicates that employability is something that belongs to the students, something that they possess, or should possess. This becomes clearer if we look closely at the concordance lines where students are instructed to do ‘more’ with their employability.

verb +	‘your	employability’
boost	your	employability (skills)
build	your	employability
demonstrate	your	employability (skills)
develop	your	employability (skills)
enhance/ing	your	employability (skills)

improve/ing	your	employability (skills)
increase/ing	your	employability
market	your	employability
maximise	your	employability
support/ing	your	employability
shape	your	employability
show	your	employability
showcase	your	employability

Table 24 - Verbs + 'your employability'

If we look at the CSs' process choices used to describe the students' actions when it comes to their employability, we see that students are directed to 'boost', 'build', 'demonstrate', 'enhance', 'improve', 'increase', 'shape', and 'support' their employability. Although these verbs describe actions that refer to the students' employability in general, some verbs ('boost', 'demonstrate', 'develop', 'enhance', 'improve') also apply to their 'employability skills'. If we take into consideration the meaning of these verbs, it is apparent that the CSs promote the idea that employability and the relevant skills are already possessed by students but need to be improved. Verbs such as 'boost', 'build', 'enhance', 'improve', 'increase', 'maximise', and 'support' show that students need to work on and 'add' to their employability. Other verbs found in the table, such as 'demonstrate', 'market', 'show', and 'showcase' demonstrate that the development of employability and its results must be projected in order to achieve the desired outcome which is finding employment. This agrees with the idea of self-promotion discussed earlier ('sell' or 'market' yourself).

The CSs' verbal choices can also be linked with 'overwording' which refers to 'an unusually high degree of wording, often involving many words which are near synonyms' (Fairclough, 2015, p.133). The verbs 'boost', 'build', 'enhance', 'improve', 'increase', and 'maximise' share similar meaning and add to the idea of pursuing personal growth which, in this case, is considered desirable. As Fairclough further explains, 'Overwording shows preoccupation with some aspect of reality – which may indicate that it is a focus of ideological struggle' (*ibid*). In this case, it could be said that there is a 'preoccupation' with growth, enhancement, development, improvement, and self-promotion of the students' employability. As regularly mentioned throughout this chapter and analysed in the next one, the CSs' role is to assist students towards becoming employable during their 'journey' or their 'transition' from HE to employment. The next part presents

some examples where students are asked to become employable and also shows that this is one of the services' priority.

3.2 Examination of the adjective 'employable'

The examination of the adjective 'employable', which is found 157 times in the corpus, shows that the services highlight their helping role in making students become 'more/highly/globally employable graduates' (Appendix 3-30). Also, the services state that 'producing' employable graduates is their aim:

According to the latest official figures we have shown an increased employability indicator of over 93.6% which demonstrates that despite the recession we continue **to produce** highly employable graduates. P12

We have a longstanding reputation for **producing** highly employable graduates and Leeds continues to be one of the universities most targeted by graduate recruiters. P12

(Aim) To work in partnership with academic schools, the Students' Union and recruiters of our students **to produce** employable graduates of Cardiff University. RG4

In general, when examining the concordance lines, we see that students are asked to 'become', and 'be' employable and also to 'be seen' as, 'show' and 'prove' they are 'employable' to employers (Appendix 3-31). These examples show that students can benefit from the services' assistance and resources. These resources aim to 'help [students] reach [their] final destination – becoming an employable graduate'. In one of these examples, there is a clear link between the CSs' role and their involvement in the students' choice of their future occupations:

For a graduate to be seen as highly employable, **they must possess and be able to evidence a wide range of skills**. We see employability as the 'Golden Thread' which runs through all university activities; **helping** our students to acquire the skills, knowledge, understanding and personal attributes that enable them to choose and secure, satisfactory and successful occupations. P1

Gaining skills attributes and work experience, volunteering and meeting employers is once more highlighted:

to build the work experience and skills required to prove to employers that they are employable. P34

To be employable it is essential to keep learning and developing in order **to keep pace with the rate of change** experienced in the labour market. P2

Most importantly, to be employable **you need good communication skills and to have an enquiring mind**. RG7

Being employable is about **being able to confidently demonstrate that you have the skills that employers are looking for**. RG5

The other verb that regularly precedes the adjective ‘employable’ is ‘make’. Students are encouraged to ‘make the most of the opportunities’ offered to them (Appendix 3-32).

Although it is the CSs’ ‘ambitious vision’ to help students ‘become employable’, there are a good number of examples in the CEW15 corpus where students are asked to take action and make themselves employable. The following table shows some examples of the concordance lines.

orking abroad Make yourself employable and for employment opportuni	
Employability? Make Yourself employable Being employable is about bei	
for First Years Make Yourself employable Finding jobs and Work experie	
limate) Years Make Yourself Employable Guide for First Years Make You	
k experience. Make yourself Employable Guide for Final Student Emplo	
Volunteering Make yourself Employable Guide for First Years If you're	
nts relating to Make yourself employable Link to Employability skills. Get	
ir future. Our make yourself employable Making yourself employable is	
· Career Guide Make yourself employable Where to start Quick Guide:	
Networking Making Yourself employable whilst at university guide The	
s in the UK. Making yourself employable Work experience Working abrc	

Table 25 - 'Make yourself employable' concordance lines

The full list of examples can be found in Appendix 5, Table 5. As can be seen in these examples, the services offer ‘Make yourself employable’ ‘guides’, ‘links’, and ‘pages’. In addition, the ‘make yourself employable’ pattern is enriched with the comparative adjective ‘more’. The comparison could refer to the graduates themselves (when compared with their present state of employability which could be deemed unsatisfactory), or the competition, for example, other graduates. There are 12 concordance lines of this pattern used by 11 universities. Some examples are displayed below:

Work experience is a great way to gain some real life experience while you study and make yourself more employable. P19

Our Career Timeline tells you what you **should be doing** and when to plan your career and make yourself more employable while you're at university. RG7

It's important to gain and develop these key skills to make yourself more employable once you have graduated. P26

We can also see some examples of modality (Chapter 4.4.4), where the necessity of following a time plan ('timeline') and developing 'these key skills', is particularly stressed ('should be doing', 'it's important').

Looking at the 'make yourself * employable' pattern we can see that such an outcome is considered by the CSs desirable because that is what 'Today's

employers' are 'looking for' or 'potential employer will look at' in the future when in the process of hiring graduates (Appendix 3-33).

practical experience to make yourself more	employable
our Career Timeline to make yourself more	employable
tips on how to make yourself more	employable
while you study and make yourself more	employable
these key skills to make yourself more	employable
about your options and making yourself more	employable
Becoming more employable Make yourself more	employable
gain further skills to make yourself more	employable
Differentiate yourself and make yourself more	employable
plan your career and make yourself more	employable
you the opportunity to make yourself more	employable
plan your career and make yourself more	employable
work experience and making yourself more	employable
a great way to make yourself more	employable

Table 26 - 'Make yourself more employable' concordance lines

The CSs' collaborations with employers and organisations and their linguistics choices when it comes to their knowledge about what 'employers are looking for' is further examined in chapter 7.

4. The use of metaphors and evaluative language

In various parts of the analysis presented above, we have seen linguistic features that aim to evaluate the main ideas and concepts supported and promoted by the CSs, such as the development of skills and employability. For this reason, and in order to gather all these instances in one section, I have decided to include a separate section in this chapter to present the use of evaluative statements (Fairclough, 2003) by the careers experts. Another linguistic technique that was regularly found in this chapter is metaphors.

4.1 Metaphors

As already pointed out in chapter 4.7, the examination of metaphors is of particular interest to critical discourse studies as metaphors are considered an important 'rhetorical device' (Talbot, Atkinson and Atkinson, 2008, p.18). In this chapter, the corpus analysis has shown a number of instances where the services use metaphors when it comes to describing the job vacancies ('job market') that become available, the students' time at university (careers 'journey'), the act of

finding a job ('job-hunting'), and the students' roles as 'products' ('we produce graduates'; 'sell yourself').

First of all, the transition of young people from being HE students to their new role of employees/professionals is described as a journey ('career', 'enterprise', 'volunteer' journey). The corpus findings also show that the services use metaphors to highlight the travelling component of entering the 'work of employment'. There are 'starting point[s]', 'Graduate Passport[s]' and 'graduate destination[s]'. In his study of career metaphors, Inkson explains that the 'journey metaphor conceptualizes the career as *movement*, which may take place geographically, between jobs, between occupations, or between organizations' (2004, p.103). This metaphor is considered 'attractive' because it 'incorporates two key underlying facets of career: *movement between places*, and *time*' (*ibid*, original italics). The career 'journey' metaphor is also reinforced with the services' choices of verbs ('enter', 'navigate', 'start', 'step into' the 'world of employment'), that emphasise the students' entrance and navigation into the 'world of employment'.

The metaphors of 'forward movement' and 'journey' are a 'recurrent feature' for universities that 'involve the pursuit of certain courses of action and/or goals' (Ng, 2014, p.145). According to Ng, 'forward movement' metaphors 'leverage the source-path-goal scheme involving an actor moving along a connecting path from one point to another', while the actors involved are 'represented as dynamic and having the ability of self-propelled forward movement' (*ibid*). In this case, the dynamic *Actor* is the student who must do her/his best to find employment. Utilising Ng's use of the noun 'path' to describe the route and movement between two points, the CEW15 corpus shows that the noun phrase 'career path' is also frequently used by the majority of universities (Frequency: 223, Range: 47/58). However, as the analysis shows, the movement from point A (education) to point B (career) is not 'a connecting path from one point to another'. The data show that according to the services, there is a substantial or 'daunting gap' between the academic and working life that needs to be 'bridged'. Crossing that 'bridge' will bring graduates closer to the 'real' world which is, according to the CSs, the 'world of work'.

Another interesting metaphor, which is also linked to the above-mentioned career 'journey', is the 'hunting' metaphor. As already mentioned in chapter 4,

some metaphors are so commonly used that they are included in dictionaries and their use is considered ‘natural’. One of these metaphors is ‘job-hunting’ which can be found as an entry in most of the online dictionaries including the *Cambridge Dictionary* (‘job hunting’), *Longman Dictionary* (‘job-hunter’, ‘job-hunting’, ‘job-hunt’), the *Collins dictionary* (‘job hunting’) and the *Oxford dictionary* (‘job hunt’). As shown in the analysis, the phrase ‘job-hunting’ is used by the majority of the universities involved in this study (Range: 53/58). In addition, ‘job hunt’ is also mentioned by 18 of the careers services. In the *Oxford English Dictionary* (2009), one of the definitions of ‘hunting’ describes it as ‘The action of chasing, pursuing or searching’, either for ‘profit or sport’. What is interesting in the interpretation of this metaphor used in the careers’ context is the notion of ‘survival’. Students are represented as the ‘hunters’ and employment is their ‘prey’.

There are two points that I would like to raise here. ‘Hunting’ is a dynamic action, and the participant who does the hunting is considered the powerful actor. Such use of metaphors is associated with the ‘purpose’ of acquiring food (Johnson, 2008, p.42). Thus, capturing the prey is the result of the hunters’ skills and the generally favourable conditions. The fact that students are being ‘prepared’ while at university to develop ‘successful’ job-hunting ‘strategies’, ‘techniques’, and ‘practices’ (discussed in section 2.2), is presented by universities and their careers services as an act of ‘empowerment’. This idea, however, can be contested as highly ideologically significant. As Fairclough observes:

There seems to be a widespread delusion (or in some cases, at attempt to delude) that if more people were trained in getting jobs, there would be more jobs – or to put it differently, that people’s failure to get jobs is due to their own inadequacies, including for instance their inability to ‘interview well’, rather than to those of the social system. (2015, p.215)

Thus, although students are being ‘helped’, ‘trained’ or ‘prepared’ to find a job while at university, and are given a plethora of ‘resources’, ‘tools’ and ‘opportunities’ to become employable, the fact that the ‘job market’ is ‘fiercely’ competitive does not change. Failure or lack of ‘success’ in the job market follows the individual and shifts the responsibility from the state and its welfare systems.

Moreover, a hunter usually acts alone or as part of a small group and depending on her/his individual ‘skills’. The representation of students as ‘hunters’ in pursuit of their ‘prey’, inevitably separates students from the general social collective, isolates them from their peers and the general student body, encourages the feeling of competitiveness and rivalry between peers, and renders them responsible for their own survival. Interestingly, however, HE students are also represented as the ‘prey’. The analysis shows that there are also ‘headhunters’ searching for the most talented students. This double role that students are associated with is evident in the next metaphor that has also been located in the concordance lines in section 2.2.

As the analysis shows, HE students are represented as ‘products’. We have seen that HE institutions advertise that they ‘produce’ graduates (*‘we continue to produce* highly employable graduates’). The corpus findings show that there are some examples where the CSs, or universities in general, promote their role as producers of ‘graduates’, ‘(highly) employable graduates’, ‘exceptional graduates’, ‘more enterprising graduates’ and ‘world class graduates’. Mautner has also observed this collocation in her data and found it ‘interesting for two reasons’: (a) ‘because of its sheer frequency (142,500 results in a Google search of “produce/produces/producing graduates” in late 2008), and (b) ‘because of the blatant commodification of human beings that the metaphor implies’ (Mautner, 2010, p.78). The collocation of ‘produce’ with ‘students’, or ‘graduates’, is now considered a common-sense relation between these lexical items. The naturalisation and common-sense practice of students presented as ‘products’ ‘produced’, by universities, is also being projected to students themselves when they are asked to learn how to ‘sell’, ‘market’, and ‘differentiate’ themselves from the (job-hunting) crowd (or other ‘products’) (Section 2.2.3). As Mautner notes ‘telling job applicants that they should package and sell themselves means that they are implicitly linked to a product’ (2016, p.95).

The CV is presented as the students’ ‘prime marketing tool’, but this is not the only ‘marketing’ action they are asked to take. Students are also invited to ‘build’ and ‘develop’ their own ‘personal brand’. They are told to take advantage of professional online platforms, such as *LinkedIn*, to promote themselves and their brand and build networks. As one of the CSs notes: ‘The first thing almost any prospective employer will do is Google you’, thus ‘personal branding is

considered important. When Mautner examined the promotion of the marketised self in general (and not students in particular), she found that ‘experts’ also recommend ‘carrying out a “SWOT analysis”, which is a ‘common tool used in strategic management to uncover firms’ Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats’ (2010, p.138). The corpus shows (‘SWOT’ frequency: 22, Range 9) that the same is recommended to students by the careers services (Appendix 3-34). Thus, the student-as-product metaphor is not only used by universities when they present their students to prospective employers but it is also projected to the students themselves who are asked, in many different ways, to see themselves as a ‘product’ that needs to be assessed according to its ‘Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats’, and also sold, marketed, differentiated, networked, and branded. Mautner sees this development as a ‘key link’ between ‘universities’ orientation towards the market, and the ideology underlying the concept of personal branding’ (2010, pp.78–79).

What is also interesting is that the view of HE students as customers is generally accepted. The “student-as-customer” metaphor (Mautner, 2010, p.77), was also found in the results of the corpus analysis:

These services and events have been designed with **our customers** in mind and offer a variety of platforms to promote the great range **of career options available to students RG4**

Webinars (online seminars) enable greater access to our learning resources as many of **our customers RG21**

The student-client association is extensively discussed in the next chapter that examines the careers services’ expert roles inside academia, and the variety and types of services and resources offered to their clients.

4.2 Evaluation

The examination of the ‘world of work’ and the close analysis of the notion of employability and its skills reveals that the services use ‘evaluative’ language. Instead of pointing out the examples of evaluative language employed by the CSs as the analysis moves on, it was deemed more useful to gather all instances and present a well-rounded image of such use of language. Evaluative language is the ‘Language which expresses the opinion, attitude and point of view of a speaker or a writer’ (Partington and Taylor, 2018, p.18). In this case, the CSs

express their judgement on various matters related to the job-seeking ‘reality’, the problem, and the solutions.

‘Evaluative statements’ usually express ‘desirability or undesirability’ (Fairclough, 2003, p.172) with some of the words showing it rather explicitly ('good', 'bad', etc.). However, evaluative statements can also ‘evaluate in terms of importance, usefulness and so forth [...], where desirability is assumed’. (Such evaluative statements are: this is an important book, this is a useful book, and this can imply that the book is desirable or undesirable.)

‘Evaluation’ can be realised in a number of linguistic features, such as relational processes and its attributive element, or particular verb phrases ('need to'). Statements of deontic modalities which express obligation ‘are also linked with evaluation’ ('must', 'should', 'have to') as they can imply something that is desirable (Fairclough, 2003, p.173). In addition, an evaluative element can also be realised with the use of adjectives and adverbs ('fantastic', 'successfully'), and exclamation marks ('A degree is not enough!'). There are also specific expressions that can ‘trigger positive evaluations’, such as ‘make sure’ (Fairclough, 2003, p.172). The following paragraphs provide some examples of evaluative adjectives, adverbs and verbs, relational processes, the inclusive pronoun ‘we’, statements of deontic modality, and exclamation marks.

4.2.1 The ‘reality’, the problem and the solutions.

One of the linguistic techniques used by the services comes in the form of ‘relational processes’ where the ‘evaluative element is in the attribute’ (Fairclough, 2003, p.172). The services state what the ‘job market **is**’:

The job market **is** tough

The job market **is** a rapidly changing landscape

the graduate job market **is** particularly competitive

The current job market **is** highly competitive

More evaluative adjectives of the job market include ‘crowded’, and ‘uncertain’. Evaluative adverbs are also used to describe the ‘competitive job market’ ('highly', 'extremely', 'particularly' competitive). In the same manner, the CSs describe the general idea of ‘competition’ which is communicated with the use of evaluative adjectives, such as ‘fierce’, ‘tough’, ‘stiff’, ‘high’, ‘intense’, ‘strong’, ‘very strong’, and ‘increasing’.

Besides the evaluative statements that concern the ‘job market’, the services use evaluative ‘relational processes’ to clearly state that the HE degree is ‘not enough’ or ‘no longer enough’ (‘a degree **is not enough** to secure them a great job’, ‘a degree **is no longer enough** to impress employers’), and exclamations (‘A degree **is not enough!**’). Exclamations are considered an ‘alternative to evaluative statements’ (Fairclough, 2003, p.172), in this case, it aims to highlight the ongoing argument of the HE degree as inadequate for succeeding in finding a job after graduation.

Because a HE degree is no longer considered ‘enough’ students are asked to ‘make sure’ they get involved in activities (‘A degree is not enough **Make sure** that you get involved in activities’). For the same reason, they ‘**need to** acquire the relevant employability skills’ and ‘**need** real world skills and knowledge’. These ‘statements of deontic (obligational) modalities’ (*ibid*), which include the verbs and phrasal verbs ‘make sure’ or ‘need to’, are linked to evaluation as they imply that participating in activities and acquiring employability skills, is the desirable thing to do in order to be employed.

Obligational modalities are also present in their usual form of modal verbs as the services ask students to learn what they ‘should be doing’ to make themselves employable (‘Find out what ‘employability’ is all about and what you **should** be doing each year to make yourself employable’). Employability is considered the main solution to the problem of competitiveness in the ‘job market’. This solution consists of different steps that aim to make students ‘employable’.

To start with, from the corpus findings presented in this chapter, we have seen that students need to ‘develop’ ‘job hunting strategies’ and ‘techniques’ and ‘practices’. These are evaluated as ‘effective’, ‘creative’, and ‘successful’ (‘**effective** job hunting techniques; **successful** interview practices’, ‘Think about using **creative** job hunting techniques’, ‘develop an **effective** job search strategy’). In fact, positively evaluated adjectives are regularly used in the corpus when it comes to describing the students’ effort in finding a job. The adjective ‘effective’, found 750 times in the corpus used by 55 universities, generally premodifies nouns, such as: ‘applications’, ‘career’, ‘communication’, ‘CV’, ‘decision making’, ‘interview’, ‘job-hunting strategy/ies’ and ‘techniques’, ‘LinkedIn profile’, ‘networking’, ‘personal statement’, and ‘plan’. Similarly, the

adjective ‘successful’ precedes nouns, such as ‘applicants’, ‘applications’, ‘candidates’, ‘career(s)’, ‘graduate’, ‘networking’, ‘interviews’, ‘CVs’ and more.

Networking, which is one of the suggested ‘strategies’, is considered ‘a **good** way of tapping into the hidden job market’, ‘a **useful** tool’ and one that ‘**should** play a role in your job search strategy’. The analysis has shown that an important part of the students’ ‘development’ is learning how to ‘sell’, ‘market’, and ‘differentiate’ oneself. In particular, ‘selling yourself’ is presented as an ‘opportunity’ (Appendix 3-25), and ‘standing out from the crowd’ is also considered necessary for successfully competing amongst other graduates. Thus, these actions are evaluated as desirable as they will bring students closer to their goal, that is being employed.

There are a plethora of evaluative statements using relational processes when it comes to describing the ‘benefits’ of internships, work experience, placements, and volunteering which are all presented as desirable ‘job-hunting’ practices. Some examples are shown in Appendix 3-35. Placements are considered ‘**a great opportunity**’, internships ‘provide **high quality**, paid experience’, volunteering work ‘can be a **useful way**’ to ‘bridge the gap’, work experience is presented as ‘increasingly **important** in the graduate job market’. As Fairclough notes, besides ‘desirability’ and ‘undesirability’, evaluative statements can ‘also ‘evaluate in terms of importance, usefulness and so forth [...], where desirability is assumed’ (2003, p.172). Thus, when the services state that ‘In today’s competitive job market, it’s **more important than ever** that you have an edge over the competition’, then the desirability of becoming competitive ‘is assumed’, it becomes a presupposition. The same goes with other statements that include the adjective ‘important’ presented in Appendix 3-36. ‘Real-world experiences’, ‘internships’, ‘understanding the graduate job market’, ‘job-hunting’, showing ‘how “employable” you are’, being ‘proactive’, developing ‘key skills’ that employers are looking for and ‘networking effectively’, to name a few, are deemed ‘important’, and thus assumed as useful and desirable actions that students should pursue while at university. This is also the case when the services present the ‘value’ of employability and the numerous skills students need to develop.

We have seen numerous examples where the notion of ‘employability’ is presented as ‘important’, ‘a priority’, ‘key to the success of graduates’, and ‘of value in the workplace’. Skills are described as ‘fantastic’ (‘will help equip you

with some fantastic skills for employment after you graduate'), and according to their 'necessity, importance, quality and usefulness' ('valuable', 'necessary', 'useful', 'essential', 'crucial'). Personal attributes such as 'risk-taking' (as shown in section 3.1), 'flexibility' and 'optimism' are promoted as desirable and necessary as they '**should help** you throughout your career'.

4.2.2 A comparison of 'evaluative adjectives' in CEW15, COCA, and NOW

As we have seen above, the careers services use evaluative statements when it comes to the 'reality' of what is considered to be the 'job market'. The job market is described as 'competitive', 'rapidly changing', 'tough', 'uncertain', and 'crowded' (Appendix 3-37). These evaluative adjectives aim to describe the difficult situation of this intangible place which students are supposed to 'enter' 'effectively' and 'successfully' after graduation. Is the representation of the 'job market', however, effectively and accurately represented in the careers services websites?

Taking into consideration the plethora of positive evaluative language used by the services to describe what is 'desirable' and 'useful' when it comes to the notions and ideas they promote and represent (including work experience, networking, selling and marketing students, developing and enhancing employability and skills), the choice of vocabulary, although meant to present an 'undesirable' reality – which, in a way, it does – seems somehow lenient or restrained. To examine my intuition, I need to see how the 'world of employment' is represented in a more general context. Thus, I decided to search the vocabulary used in the COCA and NOW corpora. The texts included in the COCA corpus derive from spoken, fiction, magazines, newspapers, and academic texts, while the NOW corpus 'contains 5.1 billion words of data from web-based newspapers and magazines from 2010 to the present time' (Davies, 2016). Thus, the two online corpora can provide a mixture of sources and more than enough linguistic data to examine. My search focused on lexical items that describe the 'job market' as 'undesirable'. Specifically, I searched for the adjectives that directly describe the 'job market' using an evaluative statement in the form of relational process ('job market is _j*'). The results are shown in Table 27.

	'job market is' + ADJ
COCA	tough, bad, worse, unjust, terrible, lousy, dire
NOW	tough, tight, rougher, terrible, bad, grim, incapable, weak, worrying, turbulent, unrepaired, struggling, slim, shrinking, poor, pitiless, piteous, non-existent, hyper-competitive, horrible, hard, buzzing, flat, fiercer, dismal, barren, awash

Table 27 - 'Job market is' + ADJ in COCA and NOW

Also, there are expressions in the COCA and NOW corpora where the 'job market is' negatively described (Table 28).

	'job market is'...
COCA	still struggling, still so weak, hurting the youngest workers most, isn't ideal, still in poor shape, so weak, bad or very bad, getting worse, real low, moribund, a real stunner to the current generation, increasingly difficult, just gruesome.
NOW	desperately overcrowded, going through disruption, saturated, not very good for students right now, not easy for young men and women, incapable of offering sufficient opportunities, flooded with more and more graduates each year, arguably more precarious than ever, significantly harder to crack than 30 years ago, shrinking fast, ultimately a helpless and anxiety-ridden endeavor, or just getting tighter.

Table 28 - Negatively evaluated expressions of the 'job market' in COCA and NOW

As the results show, the negative evaluative language in the NOW and COCA corpora when it comes to portraying the 'job market', is very rich. The tables show that there is a variety of lexical words used for the description of the job market in the online corpora. Besides the adjectives that describe the 'job market' in a negative but vague way ('tough', 'bad', 'terrible', 'lousy', 'dire', 'grim', 'piteous', 'pitiless'), there are evaluative adjectives that aim to present the seriousness of the situation in the contemporary 'job market', such as 'unjust', 'incapable', 'worrying', 'turbulent', 'unrepaired', 'struggling', 'shrinking', 'poor', and 'non-existent'.

In addition, Table 28 presents some expressions found in the same corpora that explain the seriousness of the job market situation which 'is still so weak', 'struggling' and 'still in poor shape', probably referring to the 2008 global economic crisis, and 'is getting worse', or 'is just getting tighter'. It is also described as 'arguably more precarious than ever', 'moribund', 'just gruesome', and 'ultimately a helpless and anxiety-ridden endeavor'. The results highlight the idea of competition but in a different way than the careers services. The 'job

market' is depicted as 'desperately overcrowded', 'saturated', and 'flooded with more and more graduates each year'. Most importantly, however, the findings present examples of the consequences on young people who are looking for employment. For example, 'the job market is' 'hurting the youngest workers most', 'a real stunner to the current generation', 'not very good for students right now'.

Thus, the findings show the plethora of negative evaluation or description of the 'job market' as found in the online corpora COCA and NOW. If we compare these examples with the CEW15 corpus findings ('job market is': 'competitive', 'rapidly changing', 'tough', 'uncertain', and 'crowded'), it could be claimed that the CSs 'go easy' on the evaluation of the 'job market' circumstances and the consequences on young people and graduates.

It would, however, be fair to mention that in the COCA and NOW corpora there are positive representations/evaluations of the 'job market' as it is also presented to be 'strong', 'good', 'booming', 'healthy', 'solid', 'robust', 'better', 'improving', 'stronger', or 'super'. This shows that, as in any aspect of life and academic enquiry, there are, at least, two sides of the coin. The reality presented always depends on the people or the group that is producing the discourse. In the CSs' discourse, however, there are no signs of critique of the social problem of unemployment and competitiveness in the job market. The current situation is rather taken as a natural phenomenon, a common-sense situation that students have no power over controlling or changing. Instead they must comply and survive by accepting and conforming to the notion of employability.

5. Summary

As mentioned in the introduction, one of the main focuses of this chapter was the examination of the job-search 'reality' presented by the services. The analysis thus starts with an exploration of the noun 'world' and its clusters. The results show that the services, as expected, are interested in and discuss the 'working' reality. Their lexical choices include phrases that highlight the 'business world' and the 'world of work'. Students are encouraged to explore and 'understand' the 'world of work' and for this reason they are given a number of resources that will help them become successful in the 'business world'. Work experience is presented as particularly important in the 'world of work'. Internships, placements,

part-time jobs, mentoring schemes, summer jobs, or volunteering are highly recommended. The students' preparation for the 'world of work' is considered 'vital'. The analysis of concordance lines shows that when it comes to representing students and their actions in the 'world of work', the services' choose verbs that describe 'forward movement'. Such use of metaphoric language is commonly employed by universities as these imply movement towards a goal.

In addition, HE is described by the services as a 'journey', or a 'transition' from the world of education to the 'world of work'. The services state that there is a 'gap' that needs to be bridged which will eventually lead students to the 'real-world'. The adjective 'real' is the most frequently used premodifier of 'world'. When the CSs talk about the 'real-world', it presupposes that there is an 'unreal', a 'fake' world, or a less important world. This notion is further highlighted when the services talk about 'theoretical' education and the 'practical' 'world of work'. As a result, there is a clear distinction between the 'world of education' and the 'world of work' in which the latter is considered to be 'real' and important.

In addition, the collocation analysis of the 'job market' shows that the idea of competition is underlined by the CSs. Competition is presented as a major problem that students will need to face when applying for jobs after graduation. Which is why, HE students are encouraged by universities and their CSs to learn how to 'sell', 'market', and 'differentiate' themselves if they wish to succeed 'in a fiercely competitive job market'. In particular, the commonly used pattern 'stand out from' aims to point out those key elements that will make students 'get ahead of the competition', or the 'job-hunting crowd'. The examination of concordance lines shows that these key elements highlight the notion of employability as a solution to the problematic 'reality' reproduced by the CSs in their web pages.

The analysis of the discourse of employability starts with an exploration of the formal and informal definitions provided by the services. What followed was the identification of the most frequently used lexical collocates of 'employability' which show that it has been integrated into the CSs' titles, the advisers' professional titles, the events organised, and resources used. Employability 'skills' is another collocate that is closely examined in this section to show the plethora of skills students are called to 'develop' and 'enhance'. One of the most interesting collocates, in terms of its ideological significance, is the possessive determiner 'your'. The concordance lines of 'your employability' show that

employability is something that students possess, or should possess, in order to become employed. The services state their ‘aim’, and ‘ambitious vision’ to ‘help’ students ‘become employable’. However, a further exploration of the adjective ‘employable’ shows that students are asked to take action and ‘make [themselves] employable’, or ‘more’ employable. The reason presented by the CSs for the necessity of the students’ active role is because this is what ‘today’s’, or ‘prospective’, employers are/will be looking for. The analysis has shown that the employers’ requirements and desires are emphasised in the CSs’ web pages. Thus, it could be claimed that their use of discourse is, on many occasions, employer-centric.

In general, the analysis has shown that the services use *evaluative* language regularly when they refer to the ‘graduate job market’, the HE degree, the activities students should get involved in, the career ‘strategies’ or ‘techniques’ they must ‘develop’ while at university, and the notion of employability and skills. We have also seen that *metaphors* are used by the services to convey a number of messages that are considered ideologically significant. The services talk about the career ‘journey’ and represent students as ‘moving forward’ towards their goal. In addition, they frequently use the ‘job-hunting’ metaphor which aims to convey a pseudo-feeling of ‘empowerment’. Students are also represented as ‘products’ and ‘customers’ at the same time. They are encouraged to ‘sell’ and ‘market’ themselves, but they are also ‘customers’ of the CSs and the universities in general.

So, in chapter 6 we saw some examples of the CSs’ representation of the job-searching ‘reality’, the ‘world of work’, ‘employability’ and the students’ role. The next chapter examines in detail the CSs and advisers’ role within the UK HE system.

Chapter 7. Understanding careers services and their roles

1. Introduction

This chapter aims to analyse and interpret the self-representation of careers services in UK universities' websites as a social actor. In particular, drawing on the theoretical background of 'professionalism' and 'expertise' (Chapter 3), I will be looking at the services' professional role(s). One of the definitions on the OED (2009) describes a 'role' as

The behaviour that an individual feels it appropriate to assume in adapting to any form of social interaction; the behaviour considered appropriate to the interaction demanded by a particular kind of work or social position.

Therefore, this chapter seeks to examine and understand the 'behaviour considered appropriate' by the CSs for their professional interaction with their clientele. Van Leeuwen's work on the representation of social actors (2008) and 'managing action' (1999), and Fairclough's (2003, 2015) insight on 'expertise', the 'empowerment' of 'dominated social groups', and 'therapeutic discourse', are deemed particularly useful for the interpretation of the corpus findings.

The analytical part begins with an examination of the CSs as a professional field within the UK HE system. It then continues with an exploration of the top 20 most frequently used processes that follow the pronoun 'we'. The majority of the findings express the CSs' efforts in promoting their services to the student-users. Hence, the centre of attention for this analytical part is mainly the CSs' consulting role aimed at students. The linguistic analysis focuses on four main topics, namely the careers services' professional role(s), the services, resources and tools offered to students, the CSs' 'helping' nature, and the promotion of a therapeutic culture and discourse.

2. Careers services and their role.

The analysis begins with the examination of the key word 'careers' as a premodifier of other nouns. As explained in the analytical framework (Chapter 5), the analysis for this research question focuses on the participants' actions

following the socio-semantic structure of the *Transitivity* system. However, before moving on to the identification of the patterns, it is necessary to get a general idea of the CSs as a professional field inside UK academia. This can be achieved when considering the collocates of the keyword ‘careers’, which is the most salient keyword (Keyness 88,376.913) in the CEW15 corpus (Appendix 2).

There are 13,917 occurrences of ‘careers’ in the CEW15 corpus. These instances can help us to understand the CSs’ structure and examine its professional practice. Thus, the noun ‘careers’ is examined as a premodifier. The software produces a list of 1,030 R1 collocates. The top 10 collocates of careers sorted by frequency are shown in Table 29 below.

	Collocate	Frequency	Stat
1	service	2020	6.18519
2	and	849	0.78589
3	adviser	699	6.78358
4	in	692	1.56910
5	centre	489	5.10021
6	information	473	3.08457
7	employability	438	4.36242
8	consultant	438	6.65209
9	advice	359	3.76016
10	fairs	308	5.85299

Table 29 - ‘Careers’ 1R collocates

The table shows that ‘careers’ collocates more frequently with lexical items that describe the careers occupation and the service (‘service’, ‘adviser’, ‘advice’, ‘centre’, ‘consultant’), ‘employability’ and ‘fairs’. To be more specific, I went through more than half of these collocates manually and categorised the findings into three main topics. There is a good number of noun phrases relevant to ‘careers’ that can assist in the location of the topics that are of importance to the careers occupation. The three main categories that stand out from the results of the collocation analysis are:

- (a) Careers services as a professional body – which is then divided into two sections as they are represented both as a group and as individual professionals,
- (b) The places or spaces in which they act, and
- (c) Careers education.

Tables 30, 31 and 32 present the findings including the frequency for each noun phrase in the CEW15 corpus and the range of use by the 58 universities.

2.1 Careers services as a professional body (Group and individuals)

From the results presented in Table 30, we can see that the careers services are represented as a highly professional, organised, multifaceted, growing organisation. It is a very well structured and established occupation. There are many examples of ‘assimilation’, and in particular ‘collectivisation’ (Chapter 4.5), that display the CSs’ organisation as a collective force, such as ‘careers advisers’ and ‘careers experts’.

	Noun Phrase (Group)	Freq	Range		Noun Phrase (Individual)	Freq	Range
careers	service	2020	45	careers	adviser	699	40
	services	120	34		advisers	245	29
	centre	489	23		advisor	25	15
	centres	19	3		advisors	6	5
	network	241	8		manager	3	2
	group	124	17		consultant	438	24
	team	87	30		consultants	148	22
	sector	8	8		staff	62	23
	department	7	7		counsellor	21	1
	management	20	9		counsellors	7	1
	panel	1	1		coach	6	3
	profession	1	1		coaches	2	2

Table 30 - Careers services as a professional body

It can be noticed that the careers staff professional title extends from the generally acknowledged professional title of ‘careers advisers’ (as they are referred to, for example, in HE policy DfES, 2003; CPTF, 2010; BIS, 2011), to more specialised descriptions. As we can see from the table, they are also described as ‘consultants’, ‘counsellors’, ‘coaches’, ‘professionals’, ‘practitioners’, ‘specialists’, ‘experts’, and ‘officers’. So, besides the claims of professional expertise (Chapter 3), there is a therapeutic element attached to this profession. This is further explored in section 8 of this chapter.

In addition, Table 30 shows instances of ‘individualisation’ (Chapter 4.5). With the use of terms such as the ‘careers service’, ‘network’, ‘group’, ‘team’,

'sector', 'department', 'panel', or 'profession', the CS is represented as a unity or as a collective force. As van Leeuwen notes, 'representational choices which *personalise* social actors represent them as human beings', and such representations are 'realized by personal or possessive pronouns, proper names, or nouns [...] whose meanings include the feature of "human"' (van Leeuwen, 2008, p.46). These are the 'collectivised' noun phrases presented above, such as 'careers advisers'. The other 'personalised' *representation* that will be examined in more detail in this analytical part is the use of the pronoun 'we' (Section 3.1 in this chapter). Also, the 'impersonalised' representation of social actors is realised in the form of 'abstract nouns or concrete nouns whose meanings do not include the semantic feature of "human"' (*ibid*), such as 'the careers service' or 'centre', 'network', 'panel'. The social actors involved in the CSs practices are represented both 'personally' and 'impersonally'. The most frequently used noun phrase in the table is 'careers service', which is an impersonal representation. However, as is explained later in the analysis, the services highlight the 'human' semantic properties by frequently representing themselves with the pronoun 'we'.

2.2 The places/spaces in which careers staff act

Besides the centres or services occupied by careers staff within universities, there are also careers 'zones', 'gateways', 'clubs', 'lounges', and 'stands (Table 31)'.

	Noun Phrase	Freq	Range		Noun Phrase	Freq	Range
careers	fair(s)	574	53	careers	website(s)	160	36
	event(s)	320	52		blog(s)	39	13
	zone(s)	101	6		news	27	11
	gateway	83	3		article(s)	15	7
	talks	40	19		forum(s)	14	5
	session(s)	40	6		facebook	13	6
	clinic	32	1		video(s)	13	6
	conference	13	4		portal(s)	11	7
	club	9	1		web	9	6
	festival	9	1		magazine(s)	6	2
	bootcamp	4	2		newsletter	2	2
	lounge	3	3		twitter	2	2
	convention	2	1		podcasts	2	1
	briefings	2	2		newspaper	1	1
	stand	1	1		eMentoring	1	1
					youtube	1	1

Table 31 - The places/spaces in which careers staff act

In one instance, a university advertises its ‘careers clinic’ while another promotes a ‘careers bootcamp for final year students’ and ‘for Disabled Students’. In addition, the CSs organise careers: ‘fairs’; ‘events’; ‘talks’; ‘festivals’; ‘conferences’, and ‘briefings’. One of the universities advertises a ‘European Union Careers Convention’.

The services also publish ‘careers news’. There are ‘careers magazines’, ‘newspapers’, and ‘newsletters’. Moreover, careers services have a strong online presence. They ‘act’ in ‘careers websites’, ‘blogs’, ‘forums’, ‘videos’, ‘portals’, ‘podcasts’, ‘facebook’ pages, ‘twitter’ pages, and ‘YouTube’ channels. They can also provide mentoring services through their ‘eMentoring’ schemes. Thus, the CSs’ operate between several tangible and intangible spaces. In addition, their extensive online presence shows their interest in being ‘connected’ with the students especially through the use of social media. Some of these resources are used for online training which also highlights the services’ involvement in the students’ pedagogy. The services educational role is further explained below.

2.3 Careers education

As the results show (Table 32), this field is now considered part of the educational system. The noun phrase ‘careers education’ is mentioned 48 times in the corpus by 17 of the 58 universities.

	Noun phrase	Fr	R		Noun phrase	Fr	R
careers	workshop(s)	59	23	careers	resource(s)	117	28
	education	48	17		library/ies	81	13
	seminar(s)	31	6		books	7	4
	module(s)	19	6		brochure(s)	5	4
	learning	6	3		terminology	5	1
	timetable	4	2		handout(s)	4	1
	training	2	2		tools	3	3
	course(s)	2	2		test	3	2
	tutor	2	2		booklet	1	1
	calendar	1	1		jargon	2	1

Table 32 - Careers education

In one of the examples, the University states:

Many programmes across the University are now integrating careers education into the curriculum. The delivery of effective Careers Education is now part of the University’s Employability Strategy P23

Table 32 shows that there are ‘careers courses’, ‘workshops’, ‘seminars’, ‘modules’ taught by careers advisers or ‘careers tutor[s]’. Students should follow

specific ‘careers timetable[s]’ and ‘careers calendar[s]’, which is a common practice in all educational processes. ‘Careers learning’ is an established concept as one of the universities (RG6) mentions:

Careers learning is an intrinsic and important part of a student’s overall development while at University, not simply an add-on.

This particular model provides an intensive day of activity allowing the students to focus on careers learning through a mixture of lectures delivered by a careers adviser and interactive group-work facilitated by academic staff, careers advisers and employers.

Moreover, several ‘careers resources’ and ‘tools’ are offered to students, such as ‘(online) careers libraries’, ‘books’, ‘booklets’, ‘brochures’, and ‘handouts’. We can also find examples where the services make use of specialised careers language, such as ‘careers terminology’ and ‘EU Careers jargon buster’ which is further explained as ‘a handy guide to the key terminology and abbreviations used by EU Careers’ (P26).

Thus, with the examination of the key word ‘careers’ as a premodifier of nouns, we have located three main categories of CSs that can be considered of particular importance to this professional field. First of all, the services use a multitude of titles to describe their roles both as a group and at the individual level. As far as the places and spaces where their ‘expertise’ is practised, we see that there is a wealth of facilities within the institutional setting (or the material world) and in the World Wide Web (or the online world). The CSs organise a variety of events and distribute their field’s news on the print and online press. Finally, we see that the careers’ field has expanded from the counselling sphere to the educational sphere. The next section moves on to the examination of the CSs’ role in more detail starting with the identification of the representation of the services as social actors.

3. Careers services as the Actor of clauses

As shown in Table 30, the CSs are represented in the corpus in a number of different ways. The most commonly used ‘personalised’ and ‘impersonalised’ terms representing the CSs as social actors, including the pronoun ‘we’, are shown below (Table 33):

The services' self-representation	Frequency	Range
we	8,962	58
the careers service	1,388	32
the service	212	47
careers adviser(s)	947	42
careers advisor(s)	115	39

Table 33 - The services' self-representation

It can quickly be noticed that the pronoun ‘we’ is used more frequently in the corpus than the impersonal ‘the careers service’. This frequent use is expected from university websites, as the use of ‘personalised’ language – or language that highlights ‘human’ semantic features instead of focusing on institutional features – is considered more ‘user’ (or ‘client’) friendly. Personalised language can often be realised through personal pronouns (van Leeuwen, 2008, p.46). There is, however, another parameter that needs to be considered. Careers services use many self-representation titles as a group (Table 34).

Careers services' titles	Frequency	Range
careers centre	489	23
careers and employability service	146	13
careers advisory service	14	8
careers & employability service	111	7
careers office	8	7
careers and employment service	32	6
careers and employability centre	48	5
careers advice service	3	2
careers resource centre	11	2
careers & employability centre	14	2
careers & enterprise centre	8	2
careers and student employment service	6	1
careers, employability & enterprise centre	4	1
careers, employment and enterprise service	10	1
careers network division	2	1

Table 34 - Careers services' titles

Since universities use a variety of impersonal self-representation terms for their careers services, the lower frequency of the commonly used term ‘the careers service’ when compared to the pronoun ‘we’, can be explained. This also provides a sound reason for using the first-person pronoun ‘we’ as the *Actor* of clauses. ‘We’ is used by all 58 universities and can thus provide a good number of examples for close analysis. What follows in the next analytical section is a discussion on the CSs’ (‘we’) verbal choices.

3.1 The first-person plural pronoun ‘we’

The examination of the CSs’ role(s) begins with the identification of the processes that follow the pronoun ‘we’ (‘we’+1R verbs). As Fairclough notes, ‘When one wishes to represent textually some real or imaginary action, event, state of affairs or relationship, there is often a choice between different grammatical process and participant types, and the selection that is made can be ideologically significant’ (2015, p.137). So, what kind of ‘actions’ are performed by the CS and are these choices ideologically significant? For reasons that were explained in section 3, the clauses are designed to begin with the pronoun ‘we’. Thus, the grammatical pattern under examination is ‘we + process + circumstances’. By searching this grammatical pattern, it is certain that the CSs are given an ‘activated’ grammatical role (Fairclough, 2003, p.145) within the *Transitivity* system (Chapter 4.4.1).

‘We’ is found 8,962 times in the corpus. Its frequent use by all 58 universities can provide a good number of examples for the identification of the different types of actions performed by the CSs. As Baker notes, we use CL software tools and processes, ‘in order to uncover linguistic patterns which can enable us to make sense of the ways language is used in the construction of discourses’ (2006, p.1). One of the processes that can assist in narrowing down these instances and find possible patterns that can explain the CSs’ role(s) and their use and construction of discourses is the identification of collocations.

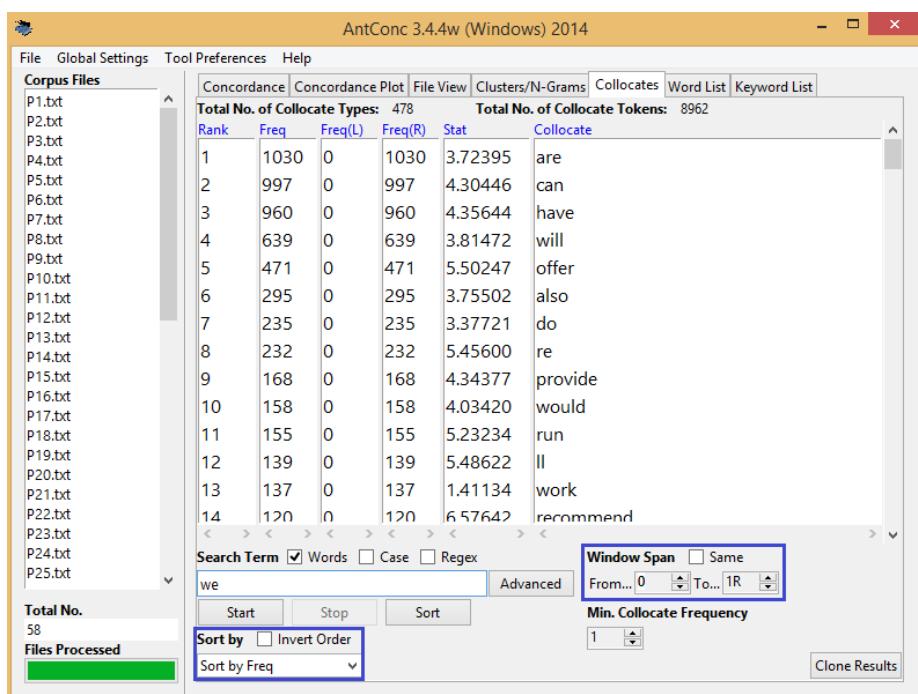


Figure 14 - 1R collocations of the pronoun 'we'

The Window Span used for this search is from 0 to 1R and the occurrences are sorted by frequency in order to get as many examples of the examined grammatical pattern as possible. Table 35 below shows that the top 20 most frequently used ‘we + 1R processes’ are: primary verbs (‘are’, ‘have’, ‘do’); lexical verbs (‘offer’, ‘provide’, ‘run’, ‘work’, ‘recommend’, ‘want’, ‘advertise’, ‘know’, ‘look’, ‘aim’, ‘organise’, ‘help’), and modal verbs (‘can’, ‘will’, ‘would’, ‘may’, ‘cannot’).

	‘we’ + 1R verbs in CEW15	Freq	Range
1	we are	1,030	58
2	we can	997	57
3	we have	959	58
4	we will	639	56
5	we offer	470	57
6	we do	235	52
7	we provide	168	49
8	we would	158	48
9	we run	155	40
10	we work	137	45
11	we recommend	120	43
12	we want	88	34
13	we advertise	81	34
14	we know	68	29
15	we may	66	31
16	we cannot	66	28
17	we look	65	23
18	we aim	63	34
19	we organise	60	21
20	we help	56	23

Table 35 - Top 20 verbs that follow ‘we’

It has to be noted here that the contractions ‘we ’re’, ‘we ’ll’, and ‘we ’ve’, and the past tense of the verb ‘be’ (‘we were’), were not considered for close examination due to the fact that these verbs’ basic form is already included in the top 20 list (‘we are’, ‘we will’, ‘we have’). This decision allowed the inclusion of more lexical verbs to be closely examined, such as ‘we aim’, ‘we organise’, and ‘we help’. What follows is the classification of the findings into the semantic domains.

4. Classification of ‘We +1R’ verbs into semantic domains

As mentioned in chapter 4.4.1, Halliday notes that what we perceive as ‘reality’ is constructed by processes and participants. The most frequently used processes that are mainly performed by the CSs involve both dimensions

discussed by Halliday (1994, p.106), namely the ‘external’ and ‘internal’ world. Therefore, the services’ present both their *Mental* (‘we want’ and ‘we know’) and *Material* actions (‘we do’, ‘we provide’, ‘we run’, ‘we work’, ‘we advertise’, ‘we aim’, ‘we organise’). The most frequently used verbs in this table are, however, *Relational* actions (‘we are’ and ‘we have’). So, the application of Halliday’s processes types in the corpus findings shows that there is use of the three main types of process in the English *Transitivity* system.

In addition, the use of Biber et al.’s classification of lexical verbs into semantic categories is a useful way of categorising these processes. This is mainly because there are more semantic categories provided. In addition, Biber et al. give many examples for each domain from their corpus findings. The following table shows the semantic classification of process types:

Classification of verbs into semantic domains (Biber et al. 1999)	
A. Activity verbs	do, provide, offer, run, work, advertise, look (at, for)
C. Mental verbs	want, know, aim, recommend, look (forward to)
D. Verbs of facilitation or causation	help
F. Verbs of existence or relationship	are, have

Table 36 - Classification of verbs into semantic domains (Biber et al., 1999)

As Biber et al. (1999, p.365) note, ‘The range of verbs found across semantic domains reflects the kinds of topics that speakers and writers most commonly discuss’. The table above shows that most of the top 20 ‘we + 1R’ verbs are *Activity* verbs that denote the social actors’ actions and events in the CSs setting. These verbs can describe what it is that the services’ ‘do’ or ‘do not do’, ‘provide’, ‘offer’, ‘run’, ‘advertise’, etc. We can also see an example of a verb that can belong to more than one semantic categories (‘look at’, ‘look forward to’). The verb ‘look’ can refer either to an activity: ‘Here we look at how to enhance your employability and effectively market your skills’ (P12), or a *Mental* activity: ‘We look forward to hearing from you!’ (RG18).

Mental verbs are also frequently used in the CEW15 corpus. These types of verbs can express ‘cognitive meaning’ (‘we know’, ‘we recommend’), or ‘emotional meaning’ (‘we want’, ‘we look forward to’). In addition, *verbs of existence or relationship*, such as the primary verbs ‘be’, and ‘have’ (‘we are’, ‘we have’), can describe the CSs’ different kinds of state. The current copular verb ‘be’ ‘can identify attributes that are in a continuing state of existence’ (Biber et al.,

1999, p.436), such as 'we are able'. As Halliday further notes about the use of *Relational* processes, there are actions that ascribe some type of 'quality' to the services ('we are here', 'we are able', 'we are committed'), and others that describe the resources and tools that they possess ('we have a range of services') (Halliday, 1994, pp.118, 132).

The final semantic category that is present in Table 36 is *verbs of facilitation or causation*. This domain is represented by the causative verb 'help' which describes the CSs' action that causes something to happen to another participant ('we help you make connections' (RG13). As we will see later in section 7, the verb 'help' plays a key role in the CSs' discourse.

4.1 Overview of the most frequently used 'we + 1R' primary, lexical and modal verbs

The following paragraphs provide a brief overview of the most frequently used primary ('we are', 'we have', 'we do'), lexical and modal verbs. This will give us an idea of the possible patterns following these verbal choices (which is presented in section 4.4).

4.1.1 'We are'

Starting with the most frequently used verb following 'we', Table 37 shows the four-word clusters of the sequence 'we are', which ascribe 'quality' (Halliday, 1994, pp.118, 132) to the services offered. I have included the top ten clusters as I am interested in those that are most frequently used by a good number of the universities (shown in the Range column). The verb 'be' is used both as an auxiliary verb in the present progressive aspect and as a main verb followed by adjectives and adverbs.

	'We are' 4-grams	Freq	Range
1	we are looking for	80	21
2	we are here to	54	27
3	we are unable to	45	22
4	we are able to	32	21
5	we are happy to	29	19
6	we are keen to	26	16
7	we are committed to	24	21
8	we are not able (to)	15	8

9	we are always happy (to)	11	8
10	we are always looking	11	8

Table 37 - 'We are' 4-grams

Most of the patterns show that the verb 'be' is used as a main verb. From the two adverbs that follow the 'we are' phrase ('here' and 'always'), 'here' is used as an adverbial in the clause and 'always' is used as a premodifier for the adjective 'happy' and the verb phrase 'are always looking'. Most of the sequences include grammatical patterns where adjectives follow the phrase 'we are' ('we are unable', 'we are happy', 'we are keen', 'we are committed', 'we are not able'). These adjectives, as Biber et al. (1999, p.505) note, have *predicative syntactic roles*, namely 'they characterize a noun phrase [in this case the pronoun 'we'] that is a separate clause element' and 'occur principally as subject predicatives following a copular verb' (*ibid*).

Looking at the *semantic grouping of adjectives* discussed in Biber et al. (1999, pp.508–509), we can further distinguish the adjectives 'able', 'unable', 'happy', 'keen', and 'committed' as they belong to the semantic group of 'descriptors' that 'are prototypical adjectives denoting such features as colour, size and weight, chronology and age, emotion', and many other characteristics. These adverbs are 'evaluative/emotive' adjectives that indicate 'judgements, affect, [and] emphasis' (Biber et al., 1999, p.509).

4.1.2 'We have'

The verb 'have' is more frequently used as a main transitive verb which is 'as common as the most frequent lexical verbs in English' (Biber et al., 1999, p.429). These 4-grams describe, the resources and tools the CSs possess (Halliday, 1994, pp.118, 132).

	'we have' 4-grams	Freq	Range
1	we have a number	30	18
2	we have links with	29	4
3	we have a range	24	17
4	we have lots of	12	5
5	we have a dedicated	11	7
6	we have a wide	11	8
7	we have a large	8	5
8	we have a strong	8	7

Table 38 - 'We have' 4-grams

In Table 38, we see that there are examples of ‘Physical Possession’: ‘we have a number’; ‘we have a range’; ‘we have lots of’; ‘we have a wide’; ‘we have a large’, and examples of ‘Linking a person’ or, in our case, the services, ‘to some abstract quality’ (*ibid*): ‘we have links with’; ‘we have a dedicated’, ‘we have a strong’. These two main uses of the primary verb ‘have’ are further examined in section 6 that explores the resources and tools that are available by the CSs to HE students.

4.1.3 ‘We do’

The primary verb ‘do’ can be used in a number of functions. For example, as Biber et al. (1999, p.430) explain, it can be a ‘pro-verb’ that substitutes a lexical verb (*ibid*) (‘we do this’, ‘we do it’), an ‘emphatic verb’ (‘we do have’), or an ‘auxiliary verb in negative [...] constructions’ (‘we do not’).

	‘we do’ 3-grams	Freq	Range
1	we do not	95	30
2	we do this	15	13
3	we do have	9	8
4	we do and	7	5
5	we do it	6	6

Table 39 - 'We do' 3-grams

If we search further the corpus, we see that the ‘we do this’ pattern is predominantly used at the beginning of sentences to link the new sentence with the topic of the previous one:

Our focus is to help you unlock and develop your professional potential and identity. We do this by delivering employability training sessions P10

The occurrences in the corpus where ‘do’ is used to emphasise the services’ actions, is most frequently used with the verb ‘have’, which is the most common combination in all registers (Biber et al., 1999, p.433). The ‘we do’ phrase, however, is mostly used in the CEW15 corpus to express what the services ‘do not’ do. This is an interesting observation that will be analysed in section 6.2.

4.2 Lexical verbs

Lexical verbs ‘comprise an open class of words that function only as main verbs’ (Biber et al., 1999, p.358). As Table 40 shows, the most frequently used lexical verb that follows the pronoun ‘we’ in the CEW15 corpus is the verb ‘offer’.

Specifically, 57 of the 58 universities use this sequence ('we offer') to describe or promote the services, resources, or tools offered by the CSs. Similarly, the second most frequently used lexical verb is 'provide' used by 49 of the 58 careers services. Other lexical verbs include: 'run', 'work', 'recommend', 'want', 'advertise', 'know', 'look', 'aim', 'organise', and 'help', which are, in most cases, used by most universities. If we look at these lexical verbs' meaning, we can get an idea of the main topics discussed by the services. For example, the CSs talk about their goals, purposes, intentions ('we aim'), and services ('we offer', 'we provide', 'we run', 'we organise'). They also express their opinions and knowledge ('we recommend', 'we know'), and communicate their requests or needs directly ('we want'). Finally, the CSs explicitly state their counselling or helping direction ('we help').

	'we' + 1R Lexical verbs in CEW15	Freq	Range
1	we offer	470	57
2	we provide	168	49
3	we run	155	40
4	we work	137	45
5	we recommend	120	43
6	we want	88	34
7	we advertise	81	34
8	we know	68	29
9	we look	65	23
10	we aim	63	34
11	we organise	60	21
12	we help	56	23

Table 40 - Most frequently used lexical verbs

4.3 Modal verbs

The modal verbs that follow the pronoun 'we', show that the CSs express 'ability' and 'possibility' ('we can' and 'we may'), but also 'prediction' and 'volition' ('we will' and 'we would') (Biber et al., 1999, p.485). There is also an example of negation ('we cannot'), which will be interesting to examine in section 6, as it can shed light on what the services claim they are unable to do or provide. All but one of the universities express their ability to do something or perform actions for those who use the services. A closer look into this university's (P20) corpus, shows that they only use the modal 'can' to discuss what their resources or tools can do (for example, 'our programmes scholarships can') or the students' ability

(‘you can’). They do use, however, the modal ‘will’ (‘we will continue to give you the world class learning experience’). ‘Ability’ or ‘will’ can also be expressed with the modal verb ‘will’ in addition to its general use in making ‘predictions’ or talking about the future. ‘Will’ is also used by most of the universities (56 of the 58). There are also a good number of examples that express ‘volition’ by 48 of the 58 universities and ‘possibility’ (31 of the 58 universities).

	‘we’ + modals	Freq	Range
1	we can	997	57
2	we will	639	56
3	we would	158	48
4	we may	66	31
5	we cannot	66	28

Table 41 - ‘we’ + modal verbs

In chapter 4, the element of *Mood* was briefly introduced. As discussed in that section, the ‘finite verbal operator’ can be distinguished by the systems of *Polarity* and *Modality*. As Halliday and Matthiessen (2014, p.172) note, *polarity* is ‘a choice between yes and no’, but there are a number of in-between stages amongst these two opposites that are known as *modality*. These ‘in-between’ stages are expressed both by modal verbs and mood adjuncts, such as ‘usually’, ‘always’, ‘probably’, ‘supposed to’, ‘willing to’. As can be noticed in Table 41, there is an example of polarity that presents the two ‘extremes’ or ‘opposites’ of the services’ ability to perform actions (positive: ‘we can’, and negative: ‘we cannot’). The majority of these examples, however, express ability (997 occurrences) rather than ‘inability’ (66 occurrences).

4.4 Making sense of the data

The grammatical (primary, lexical, and modal verbs) and semantic (material, mental, relational or activity, communication, mental etc.) categories described can present useful information about the findings. Their real meaning, however, can only be captured when closely analysed which will lead to the interpretation and evaluation of the findings. These domains can, however, assist in the ‘identification’ of key ‘themes’ that will, in turn, guide the analysis and assist in the ‘interpretation’, ‘explanation’, and ‘evaluation’ of the findings (Baker and McEnery, 2015).

If we add together the results of Table 35, the number of concordance lines that would have to be closely examined is 5,681. This is an impossible number of concordance lines to be closely examined by a sole researcher. In addition, these concordance lines must also be considered in their surrounding context. For this reason, on upcoming occasions, I have expanded the analysis with the use of AntConc's File View tool, to include full sentences, previous or/and next sentences, and sometimes whole paragraphs. AntConc's clusters tool can be useful in narrowing down the instances that will be manually examined. Appendix 6 consists of tables of n-grams for each 'we + 1R' phrases that were closely or manually examined for this research question.

After looking closely at the results presented in Appendix 6, I created a table with the main topics that will be examined in the following sections. Below are presented the topics that will be analysed in more detail and the n-grams that were taken into consideration for each topic.

	Main topics	Grammatical patterns ('we' + 1R verbs n-grams)
1	Expert/professional discourse Professionalism and expertise	we know (that)
2	The careers' services resources, and tools	we offer we provide we have we run we advertise we organise we help
	Emphasis on quantity	we have a we offer a we provide a we run a we advertise a we organise a we help
	What is not on offer	we are unable we do not we will not we cannot
3	The nature of the careers services role	we offer/provide – the reasons provided
4	Therapeutic discourse	we are here to help

		we can help we will help
--	--	-----------------------------

Table 42 - Main topics for analysis & 'we + 1R' verbs grammatical patterns

Thus, the main points that will be discussed next explore the CSs' 'expert knowledge' and their collaborations with external organisations and businesses, the resources and tools they offer or do not offer, the nature of the services' role, and some examples of therapeutic discourse.

5. Professionalism and expertise

In section 2.1 of this chapter, we have seen that the careers advisers are given several professional titles, such as: 'careers consultants', 'careers coaches', 'careers professionals', 'careers specialist', and 'careers experts'. The terms 'expert' and 'experts' can be found 208 (mentioned by 46/58 universities) and 207 (50/58 universities) times, respectively, in the corpus. To understand these items' use, we can look at the noun 'expert' as a premodifier of other nouns:

‘Expert’ as a premodifier of nouns	
	adviser(s)
	career and information advisers
	careers consultants
expert	staff
	team
	help
	guidance
	careers support and guidance
	mentoring
	careers coaching
	assessment
	careers information
	resources
	advice
	CV advice
	confidential advice
	opinion

Table 43 - 'Expert' as a premodifier of nouns

Thus, as already discussed, the characterisation 'expert' can be used to describe the careers professionals but it can also premodify nouns that refer to the services' actions (represented by other nouns), such as 'help', 'guidance', 'mentoring', 'coaching', 'assessment', and 'advice'. In addition, the services offer 'expert career information', and 'resources', as well as their 'expert opinion'.

Moreover, the services advertise their ‘expertise’ and invite students to ‘benefit from expert careers support and guidance’. In particular, the services invite students to:

See an expert

Speak to an expert

come in and speak to one of our expert careers advisers.

talk to one of our expert recruitment consultants

Check out our expert advice

Meet an expert

Ask for expert advice

Get some expert tips and hints

Get expert 1:1 guidance and support

Get expert advice direct on your newsfeed

Pick up tips and advice from experts

The careers ‘experts’ can assist students with CVs, cover letters and applications and employability skills: ‘Have your application reviewed by an expert’, ‘Get an expert assessment of your current employability skills’ (Appendix 3-38). Seeing an ‘expert’ is presented as an ‘opportunity’ that will benefit the student (‘We want our expertise to be your advantage’), not just with applications and CVs but with their general future plans (‘Whatever options you are considering, we have expertise that will help you successfully plan your future’).

There are also many occasions where the services state their professional status. The careers staff are presented as ‘qualified and experienced consultants’, ‘qualified, expert careers consultants’, ‘professional, qualified staff’, ‘professionally qualified advisers’, and ‘professionally qualified careers advisors’ (Appendix 3-39). For example, they state:

We are professionally qualified in what we do, have extensive professional networks, and are members of a range of professional institutes and associations. P21

Our careers service offers a dedicated team of qualified advisors who work closely with Schools across the University P15

Our qualified career consultants are available to support you on a one-to-one P5

There are some examples (Appendix 3-40) that can provide more information about the uses of such ‘expertise’. The CSs ‘provide expert advice’ for students who would like to start their own businesses, ‘to help with career planning and

making the most of your time whilst studying', or 'to offer tailored support for you'. This use of language aims to establish the CSs as part of a professionally qualified occupation, legitimise its practices, and build trust between them and their users.

As we have seen in chapter 3, 'expertise and professionalism' can only exist and be established when professionals (or experts) claim that they are in possession of their occupation's 'exclusive knowledge' which also gives them the ability, or the power, to practice their occupation, or provide guidance and give recommendations to those who seek 'help'. With this in mind, and the fact that the corpus can become 'a gate' into the careers services' claimed 'expert knowledge', the next part aims to reveal and understand the CSs' 'expert knowledge'. This can be achieved when closely examining the phrase 'we know' as found in the CEW15 corpus.

5.1 The careers services claimed 'expert' knowledge

One of the 20 most frequently used verbs that follow the pronoun 'we' (Table 35), is the verb 'know'. This phrase is repeated 68 times in the corpus, used by 22 of the 58 universities. The following table shows the three and four-word clusters of 'we know'.

	'we know' 3-grams	Freq	Range	'We know' 4-grams	Freq	Range
1	we know that	37	15	we know that you	5	2
2	we know it	5	5	we know that students	4	1
3	we know you	4	4	we know that graduate	3	2
4	we know how	3	3	we know from experience	2	1
5	we know from	2	1	we know it is	2	2

Table 44 - 'We know' 3 and 4-grams

There are many occurrences of 'we know' followed by a complement clause. Complement clauses, as Biber et al. (1999, p.658) note, 'are a type of dependent clause used to complete the meaning relationship of an associated verb or adjective in a higher clause'. In this case, the complement clause has the structure of the 'that-clause' (*ibid*) that is controlled by a lexical verb that belongs to the category of 'mental verbs' or 'cognitive verbs' ('we know'). These clauses 'are commonly used to report the speech, thoughts, attitudes, or emotions of

humans' and can 'occur with or without a *that* complementizer' (Biber et al., 1999, p.658), such as the cluster 'we know (that) you' from the above table. *That*-clauses are commonly used to 'clearly report people's mental states and processes' (Biber et al., 1999, p.666). Biber et al. (*ibid*) note that 'Mental verbs with that-clauses are an important device used to express stance' and in particular, the verb 'know' is used to 'convey a definite sense of certainty'. In addition, and according to the *Oxford Dictionaries* website (2017), one of the meanings of the verb 'know' is:

1. Be aware of through observation, inquiry, or information
 - 1.1 Have knowledge or information concerning
 - 1.2 Be absolutely certain or sure about something

Thus, a close examination of the 68 'we know' occurrences can demonstrate the CSs 'knowledge' of affairs that can be expressed with certainty. It could also be claimed that these viewpoints can be presented as 'facts'. As presented in the next paragraphs, the analysis of the concordance lines, show that the services claim to have knowledge of:

- (a) the students'/graduates' actions and future plans,
- (b) what students do and do not do,
- (c) what students are going through and how they feel,
- (d) what employers want.

5.1.1 'We know': Knowledge of the students'/graduates' actions and future plans

In the first examples to be presented, the CSs claim to know the students/graduates' 'busy lives' and future plans. They express an understanding of the ways students act 'after graduation' or during their studies especially in terms of their busy schedules.

We know MMU graduates **embark on a range of activities** after graduation.
P19

we know that many of **you are looking to work or travel internationally** after graduation. RG13

We know people are **already busy with their studies**, part-time work, social & personal commitments etc. RG6

We know that being a student at LSE can often mean that **you don't have lots of spare time**. RG13

5.1.2 ‘We know’: Knowledge of what students do

The services also highlight the students’ already established commitment to ‘developing’ skills and becoming employable. They presuppose student engagement or ‘obedience’ with volunteering activities alongside their studies or during their vacations.

We know lots of people are already involved in activities alongside their studies, e.g. **volunteering**, part-time work, and getting involved in the University community. RG6

We also know that many students are looking for **flexible volunteering** opportunities that can make a real difference. Let us introduce you to **micro volunteering**. RG13

We know that you will be busy working or **volunteering** over your vacation RG6

We know that many of you are already involved in work, **volunteering** or community activities which give you these skills and qualities. P34

In particular, the CSs state their knowledge of the general career-relevant activities undertaken by students, including (part-time) work. They focus, however, on ‘volunteering’. It is heavily presupposed that students engage in volunteering activities alongside their studies or even during their vacations. This claim presents students as ‘disciplined’ and focused on developing skills and becoming employable while studying at university.

According to Scott (2001, pp.93–94), discipline ‘is the control that is exercised over people through systems of rules that are not simply imposed on them but are instilled in them’. In modern times, disciplinary power was practised in a number of public areas, such as colleges, schools, hospitals, and the military amongst many others (Scott, 2001, p.94). In the contemporary university setting, where CSs and the concept of employability are now an integral part of its agenda, students are being ‘taught’ that focusing on ‘developing’ themselves and their employability skills will bring the desirable outcome, that is, being employed. As previously discussed (Chapters 1 and 6), over the last decade or so, students are being told by powerful groups, such as governments, business organisations, employers, HE institutions, and the media, that ‘a degree is not enough’. HE students need to invest their time in getting ‘more employable’. Thus, working ‘over [their] vacation’ is presented as a necessary development that will bring them closer to the goal of being employed. This kind of ‘disciplinary power’ is also being exercised by the CSs in the HE institutional setting.

A central concept of ‘disciplinary power’ is the ‘docile body’, which according to Foucault, ‘may be subjected, used, transformed and improved’ (1977, p.136). As a consequence, individuals act in specific predetermined ways ‘voluntarily as a result of training and the self-monitoring of thoughts and actions’ (Scott, 2001, p.95). In this case, students are ‘working over [their] vacation’ or offering their spare time on ‘volunteering’.

Also, as shown in the next example, students are encouraged to participate in competitions. The example of the competition activity presented below, ‘is a fast paced and fun competition [...] with help from business experts and top graduate employers’ (RG15). Although students will ‘be put under pressure’ in this ‘intense but fun activity’, the service express its certainty (‘we know you’ll find’) that they will ‘find it challenging and rewarding’ because it is for their own ‘good’: it will ‘improve [their] employability’; make connections with recruiters, they might ‘even be talent-spotted’:

Split over two days, FLUX is an intense but fun activity. You'll be put under pressure, but we know you'll find it challenging and rewarding! Taking part is a great way to improve your employability, meet our panel of graduate recruiters or even be talent-spotted. RG15

Putting one’s self into a stressful and intense competition ‘activity’ for their own ‘good’ correlates with Foucault’s (1988) notion of the ‘techniques of the self’. In modern societies, the ‘systems of discursive knowledge’ – or ‘networks of discipline’, such as the justice, welfare, health, and educational systems (Scott, 2001, p.97) – became interested in the establishment of ‘human beings as ‘subjects’, as free but disciplined agents’ (Scott, 2001, p.99). As Scott (*ibid*) continues:

Practitioners of pastoral power draw on these forms of discourse in an attempt to persuade their subjects to participate in their own subjection. [...] Such practices of pastoral power are central to the **expertise of the counselor, the therapist, the social worker, the personnel manager, and other in the caring and curing professions** as they work to inculcate the ‘techniques of the self’ on which modern regimes of government increasingly depend. (emphasis added)

Thus, in the case of the CSs, there are obvious examples like the ones presented above, where they use their professional ‘knowledge’ and status as ‘expert’ counsellors in their attempt ‘to persuade’ students towards participating ‘in their own subjection’.

5.1.3 ‘We know’: Knowledge of what students do not do

There are, however, two examples from the same university that note the students’ ‘disobedience’. ‘Many students’ do not make use of the ‘many development opportunities’, or the ‘myriad opportunities’ that are open to them, or ‘fail to recognise the value of activities they are already engaged in’:

We know that there are a great many development opportunities open to students while at University, but also that many students too often overlook them or do not recognise their value. RG6

One of the many answers to this question is **the myriad opportunities** open to them at the University to develop themselves alongside their academic studies. ... However, we also know that too often many students overlook these opportunities or fail to recognise the value of activities they are already engaged in. RG6

The first observation when reading these passages from the University of Edinburgh careers and employability web page is that unlike most of the examples presented above (and below), these examples do not refer directly to the students with the second person pronoun ‘you’ or the possessive determiner ‘your’. Instead, they are represented by the noun ‘students’ or ‘many students’, and the object pronoun ‘them’. Thus, these examples are not directed to HE students, but to other ‘actors’ in the HE context that have access to them. The context of these two passages explains that the second example is an introduction to the presentation of a ‘new’ online database ‘which provides information in what opportunities are out there’ that could be used to benefit the university’s students. Staff are invited to contribute to this database. What is important to note at this point is that these examples show an instance of ‘resistance’ from the HE students’ perspective.

There is, however, another explanation. It could be the case that students are not interested in what is presented here as ‘development opportunities’ or ‘a vast array of co-curricular and extra-curricular opportunities’. It could be the case that they do not ‘fail to recognise the value of activities they are already engaged in’ but have a different idea or interpretation of what ‘value’ is. When one decides to participate in an activity; personal ‘value’ is automatically attributed to this activity. The students’ decision not to participate in such highly-promoted events would be an interesting area to explore in the future.

5.1.4 ‘We know’: Knowledge of what students are going through and how they feel

As shown below, there are a number of examples where careers advisers aim to build a trusting relationship with the students and possible users of the services. In particular, the CSs claim to have knowledge of the difficulties faced by the students.

It can be **tough** figuring out how to make your ideas happen. We know that. So, that's why we offer loads of support such as funding, coaching and workshops for students RG20

While we know it's **difficult** to build your portfolio when you haven't yet entered the industry, there are a number of other ways to fill your portfolio P26

We know that studying in a foreign language can be very **difficult**. P15

We know you have all worked **hard** to get to where you are today. P26

They also claim to have knowledge of the students' feelings. There is regular use of negative vocabulary describing the students' feelings, anxiety, and stress. 'Figuring out how to make your ideas happen' can be 'tough', building a portfolio or studying a foreign language is 'difficult', and students 'work hard' in order to 'get to where [they] are today' when referring to students who have graduated. The services are also drawing on the students' insecurities, which shows effort in establishing a trusting relationship that will eventually lead to students making use of the resources and tools available to them.

We know that planning for your future after graduation can be **daunting**. RG12

We know that sometimes it's **hard** to know where to start, so **don't be afraid** to say that, but remember our job is to help facilitate your career planning and development and help. P32

We know how **disheartening** this can be, especially given the time it takes to complete application forms. Remember, the market is **very competitive** at the moment so it is **harder** to be successful at the application stage. RG11

We know that interviews **can be unnerving** so we provide the opportunity for you to practice before the big day. RG12

We know that making career decisions **can be confusing** and we are 100% committed to helping you with these **difficult** decisions. P34

Try to relax and smile! We know this video interview can be a little **intimidating**, but we hope you manage to feel comfortable enough to enjoy it as well. RG6

Planning for the future is described as 'daunting', it is 'hard to know where to start' and making decisions 'can be confusing'. Being faced with 'unsuccessful applications' is presented as 'disheartening', interviews 'can be unnerving' and 'a little intimidating'. Students are presented as being 'confused' and the career

services ‘are 100% committed to helping’ them with ‘difficult decisions’. The services also remind students that ‘the market is very competitive’ and ‘it is harder to be successful at the application stage’. The use of the verb ‘remember’ presupposes that students are already aware that ‘success’ is difficult to achieve due to the competitive job market.

5.1.5 ‘We know’: Knowledge of what employers want

The services’, however, ‘specialist’ or ‘expert’ knowledge (Chapter 3), is knowing how the ‘job market’ works and what employers are looking for from prospective employees. The ‘labour/job market’ is presented again as ‘competitive’. Students must face the challenge of ‘establish[ing] [themselves] in the labour market’. Having ‘experience’ (which can be gained through volunteering) is presented as ‘vital to stand out in today’s competitive job market’:

We know that establishing **yourself** in the labour market **can be challenging**.
P2

We know that experience is **vital to stand out in today’s competitive job market**. P34

The career services, however, claim to have knowledge of what employers are looking for and describe the ideal candidate. For example, besides having experience, employers are looking for ‘evidence’ of ‘skills and abilities’, ‘individuals who have a global mind-set’, they ‘like students to have experience beyond their courses’ and ‘value students who can demonstrate self awareness’:

However accepting this important role [as a graduate representative] can also really help you in developing those key **employability skills** that we know employers look for. P13

We know from experience that employers will be looking for evidence that you have **skills and abilities** too. P12

We know that graduate employers are looking for individuals who have a **global mind-set** P3

At Careers and Employability we know that employers like students to have **experience beyond their courses** P12

We know that graduate recruiters value students who can demonstrate **self awareness** P12

In general, the analysis of the phrase ‘we know’, shows that the services’ claim good knowledge of their students and familiarity with their state of being. As stated in one of the examples in the CEW15 corpus where the services refer directly to their student-users in great confidence: ‘You know us and we know

you' (P20). In particular, the services are aware and certain of the students' actions and future plans, their feelings and insecurities, and how they spent their time. There is also an example that presents students as missing 'the myriads of opportunities' being offered by universities and CSs. Their 'expert knowledge', however, and the one that makes their services unique to the universities and their clients, is knowledge of the ways the 'job market' works and, in particular, the employers' preferences when it comes to the selection of their future employees. The following part discusses in more detail this aspect of the CSs' professional knowledge.

5.2 'Employers are looking for'

Looking at the n-grams following the noun 'employers' is another way of searching the career services' demonstration of their 'expert knowledge'. Table 45 shows some of the sequences that are used by the careers services to present what employers are looking for.

'Employers' n-grams		Freq	Range
employers	are looking for	170	46
	want	104	34
	look for	88	37
	value	45	29
	will be	44	28
	expect	34	21
	think	30	18
	need	20	11
	like	18	10
	target	14	9
	seek	13	12
	ask	13	11
	require	12	11
	prefer	12	11
	looking for	11	7
	love to	6	2
	tell us	6	5
	recognise	5	4
	select	4	4
	tend to look for	3	3
	would employ	3	2
	place emphasis	1	1

Table 45 - 'Employers' n-grams

The most frequently used n-gram ('employers are looking for') is repeated 170 times by 46 of the 58 universities. Other processes that express familiarity with

the employers' preferences include: employers 'want', 'value', 'like', 'target', 'seek', 'prefer', and 'love to'. Also, there are processes that show a deeper understanding of the employers' customs, needs, expectations, and thoughts ('expect', 'think', 'need', 'ask', 'require', 'place emphasis'). The services also make predictions, using the future aspect, about what 'employers will be': 'assessing', 'aware of', 'expecting', 'impressed (by)', 'interested in', 'looking for', 'more likely to choose' or 'more attracted by'.

Such predictions are considered an essential part of 'expertise'. Fairclough asks in his discussion about 'experts': *who has the socially ratified power of prediction?* (2003, p.167). He notes that the 'power of futurological prediction is a significant one because injunctions about what people must do or not do now can be legitimized in terms of such predictions about the future'. Thus, the careers services can exert their 'power of futurological prediction' by using their 'expert knowledge' and professional experience to make projections about what the future brings in the 'employment market'. Such 'predictions' have the power to influence the students' understanding of the 'world of work' but also their choices and actions. Futurological predictions about the 'job market', do indeed result from 'expert knowledge' and professional experience, but can also be reinforced with collaborations, partnerships, and links with professional bodies and employers.

Moreover, there are several adverbs, such as 'actively', 'increasingly', 'likely', 'specifically', 'typically', 'usually' that follow the noun 'careers' which can confirm the services' breadth of 'knowledge' when it comes to the employers' customs, routines, or preferences. These adverbs modify the employers' actions when looking for prospective employees ('employers actively seek', 'are increasingly looking', 'often look for', 'sometimes sponsor', 'specifically target', 'typically/usually look for'). Most of the adverbs used to premodify the employers' actions, are adverbs 'formed by suffixing -ly to the base form of an adjective' (Biber et al., 1999, p.539), such as 'actively', 'increasingly', 'likely', 'specifically', 'typically', 'usually'. There are also some examples of 'simple adverbs', such as 'often look for', and compound adverbs ('sometimes sponsor'). In addition, 'many adverbs express information about how an action is performed' and they are 'taking their meanings from the adjectives from which they derive' (Biber et al., 1999, p.553), such as 'actively', 'increasingly', 'likely', 'specifically'. Semantically,

the use of such adverbs shows that the services are well aware of the employers' customs when in search of their next employees.

6. Services, resources, and tools offered to students

As we can see in Appendix 6, the 4-word clusters of the phrases 'we offer' and 'we provide' reveal that the CSs highlight the quantity and variety of services, resources, and tools offered to students. The emphasis on quantity will be examined in detail shortly. The cluster analysis also shows several characterisations of the services, guidance, and support offered to its users. For example, Table 46 shows instances of the CSs' 'support', 'advice', and 'guidance':

'we offer/provide + service'	'we offer/provide + support'
We offer a consultancy service	we offer all year round support
We offer a daily drop-in service	We offer both face-to-face and online support
We offer a friendly, professional service	we offer extensive support
We offer a high quality service	We offer innovative and effective support
We offer an email advice service	We offer one to one support
We offer specialist services	We offer practical support
we provide a truly unique service	We provide careers support
We provide an independent service	We provide advice and support
	We provide expert support
'we provide + advice/guidance'	'we provide guidance and support'
We provide careers advice	we provide tailored support
We provide expert advice	
We provide impartial advice	
We provide careers guidance,	
We provide specialist one-to-one advice	

Table 46 - Services, support, advice, and guidance offered by the CSs

In particular, some examples describe the services' professionalism ('friendly', 'professional', 'high quality', 'specialist', 'independent'), uniqueness ('truly unique'), and flexibility and availability of serving their users ('daily drop-in', 'email'). The 'support' offered to students is described as 'year round', 'both face to face and online', 'extensive', 'innovative and effective', 'practical', 'expert', 'extensive', and 'tailored'. The advice and guidance are also presented as 'expert', 'impartial', 'specialist one-to-one'.

In addition, students get access to appointments ('bookable', 'guidance', 'different types of', and 'careers appointments'), workshops ('assessment centre',

'different levels of', 'interview', and 'enterprise workshops'), sessions ('early evening', 'training sessions'), and review of their professional online profiles ('LinkedIn reviews') (Appendix 3-41). Some of the 'opportunities', 'courses', and 'programmes' are further characterised as 'excellent', 'fantastic', and 'exceptional':

We offer excellent opportunities for students P18

We offer many excellent courses RG7

We offer fantastic opportunities P27

We offer exceptional graduate training programmes RG8

Although it is clear that the CSs offer a wide range of services, support, advice, guidance, and resources, such as appointments, workshops, sessions and courses, which are also presented as 'excellent' or 'fantastic', the claimed magnitude of these services' support, resources, and tools can be understood when looking at the word sequences that highlight quantity, variety and frequency.

6.1 Quantity, variety, and frequency

As already stated, a cluster analysis of the following phrases: 'we have', 'we offer', 'we provide', 'we run', 'we advertise', 'we organise', shows that the CSs place particular emphasis on 'quantity' (Appendix 6). In these word sequences, we find regular use of *quantifiers* that specify large, ('we have/we offer/we organise many', 'we have/we organise lots of'), or moderate quantity ('we offer/we run/we advertise/we organise a number of', 'we run several') (Biber et al., 1999, p.278). There are also examples of *quantifying determiners* ('we have plenty of resources', 'we advertise lots of part time jobs', 'we organise lots of visits from employers').

Some noun phrases are premodified with *attributive adjectives* (Biber et al., 1999, p.510) for extra emphasis on the amount and size of the resources offered: 'we have/we offer/we advertise/we organise a wide range of'; 'we have/offer a huge number of'; 'we offer a broad range of', 'we organise a large variety of'. Other adjectives are used to highlight the variety and regularity of the events organised ('we run regular drop-in sessions', 'we organise various careers activities'). In addition, we find a number of *plural numerals* such as: 'we run hundreds of events', 'we advertise hundreds of internships'. *Plural numbers*, as

Biber et al. (1999, p.253) note, ‘may be used very loosely as vague expressions for large numbers’. Even when specific numbers are provided such as: ‘We advertise more than 2,500 vacancies’/‘over 5000 vacancies’, ‘we organise over 300 employer presentations’, these are given as the minimum amount of events organised ('more than', 'over') which, again, aims to underline the plethora of resources offered to students.

The most notable structural pattern of these phrases, as presented in Table 47, is ‘Personal Pronoun + (Primary or lexical) Verb + Noun Phrase + Prepositional Phrase’:

'We' + verb + NP + PP		Freq	Range
we have	a range of	24	17
	a wide range of	11	8
	a large number of	6	3
	a wealth of	5	4
	a huge number of	1	1
	a huge proportion of	1	1
	a huge database of	1	1
	a huge range of	1	1
	a variety of	1	1
	a large pool of	1	1
we offer	a range of	51	25
	a variety of	14	8
	a wide range of	12	9
	a number of	5	4
	a comprehensive range of	2	2
	a huge number of	1	1
	a broad range of	1	1
we provide	a range of	14	7
	access to a range of	3	2
	a wide range of	2	2
	a series of	1	1
we run	a number of	17	12
	a series of	8	6
	a range of	5	4
	a variety of	5	5
we advertise	a range of	5	3
	a wide range of	5	4
	a number of	3	2
	a wide variety of	2	2

we organise	a wide range of	7	3
	a range of	4	4
	a number of	4	2
	a series of	3	2
	a large variety of	1	1
	a complete range of	1	1
	a wide variety of	1	1

Table 47 - Pattern of quantity and variety: 'We' + verb + NP + PP

The most frequently used cluster that is used by all of the word sequences presented in the table ('a range of') stresses the variety, the breadth of resources, tools and events offered to students by the CSs. The following table presents a summary of the CSs' resources mentioned in these concordances:

Services	Business development services Face to face services One to one advice services	courses, modules	Excellent courses Part-time courses Career development modules
resources	Careers resources and opportunities Information resources Resources and activities	Online	Online presentations and webinars Online learning tutorials
workshops	Employer led career skills workshops Interview skills workshops Enterprise workshops Skills workshops skills development workshops Interactive and dynamic workshops	Presentations	Training workshops and presentations company presentations
Events	Employment fairs and employer-led events Career-related events Networking events Specialist events Careers-related events Employer events skills events	Vacancies and volunteering	International volunteering projects Diverse part-time jobs Termly volunteering opportunities
sessions	Skills training sessions Drop-in sessions Aptitude tests sessions Employer-led skills sessions Training sessions Careers talks and skills sessions Drop-in sessions	Internships and placements	Opportunities for placements Placement opportunities in different sectors

fairs	Bespoke and sector specific fairs High profile fairs Industry-specific career fairs Sector specific careers fairs	general	employer mock interviews employer visits careers evenings experiential learning activities awards
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Table 48 - Summary of the careers services' resources

Besides the general examples of the variety of ‘advice’, ‘support’, and ‘information’ offered to students, which was also discussed at the beginning of this analytical part, this table presents the main resources and services offered to students. These include workshops, events, sessions, fairs, courses and modules, (online) presentations, mock interviews, visits, activities, and awards. As expected, these resources and events are careers-focused (‘careers resources and opportunities’, ‘career-related events’), and skills development oriented resources (‘interview skills workshops’, ‘skills workshops’, ‘skills development workshops’, ‘skills events’). In addition, the services advertise the variety of specialised events provided (‘specialist events’, ‘bespoke and sector specific fairs’, ‘industry-specific career fairs’, and ‘sector specific careers fairs’).

Furthermore, these concordance lines display the variety and quantity of careers-focused ‘training’, ‘workshops’, ‘courses’, ‘modules’, ‘tutorials’, ‘webinars’, and ‘sessions’. The CSs involvement in the students’ pedagogy was already introduced in section 2 of this chapter, where the noun ‘careers’ was examined as a premodifier of main nouns and showed that one of the semantic fields associated with ‘careers’ is ‘careers education’. Here, we can find specific examples of the CSs’ involvement in the students’ ‘careers education’, such as: ‘career development modules’; ‘employer led career skills workshops’, ‘training workshops and presentations’. Interestingly, we see that the employers’ role in the resources and events offered and organised by the CSs is particularly highlighted: ‘employer led career skills’; ‘employer-led events’; ‘employer-led skills sessions’, and ‘employer mock interviews’.

To further examine this finding, I searched the corpus for examples where the employers’ participation in ‘courses’ or ‘modules’ is evident:

What we offer you: Employability talks, workshops and courses and coaching sessions, **delivered by employers** and Careers Consultants. RG10

As many of our courses are delivered, or supported, by employers they also give you an opportunity to find out more about the work of that business or sector. RG24

Our courses are designed in consultation with employers, and a number are accredited by professional bodies. P1

All our courses involve employers in design and often in delivery P2

Talk to **employers** and find out which courses they particularly recommend.

These modules offer an ideal opportunity for **employer involvement** through either running skills sessions or sponsorship of teaching materials. RG1

The above concordance lines show that besides talks, workshops, or skills sessions, employers are actively involved in the ‘design’ and ‘delivery’ of university courses and modules. Students are also encouraged to ‘talk to’ employers who can ‘recommend’ specific courses. It has to be noted that the above examples do not refer only to employability or careers courses, but also to general academic courses at different levels. For example, one of the concordance lines presented mentions that employers are involved in ‘all our courses’. This example comes from the university’s ‘Employability Statement’:

All our courses involve employers in design and often in delivery; more than 120 courses are recognised by professional bodies P2

There are, however, instances of the careers services’ reluctance of providing specific services or assistance to students. The next section examines the clusters from Table 42 that include negation.

6.2 Services that are not provided/offered

The concordance lines that were taken into consideration for this section derive from the clusters ‘we are unable’, ‘we do not’, ‘we will not’, and ‘we cannot’. A close examination of these concordance lines shows that careers services claim inability to ‘offer’ or ‘provide’ specific services to students. Some of these issues are relevant to the careers profession while others are irrelevant to the CSs’ ‘job description’.

6.2.1 Issues relevant to careers services

For example, the career services express their inability to ‘accept’, ‘late’ and incomplete applications or accept any changes in applications. They cannot ‘provide advice’ on applications or ‘general CVs’ that do not refer to specific

employers as the content varies ‘based on particular recruiter’s requirement’ (Appendix 3-42). They also explain the ways the services arrange or handle appointments. For example, they note that they ‘cannot offer additional appointments’, ‘confirm availability of slots’ or ‘guarantee entry to events’ when students have not booked in advance. Some services also clearly state they ‘do not offer mock interviews’ or that they are ‘unable to simulate group, panel, technical or research based interviews’. In addition, there are many examples (Appendix 3-43) where the services express their inability to review CVs or applications by email. This shows that the CSs expect students to visit their spaces in person.

Another topic that is further discussed by the services using ‘negation’ is that they claim inability to ‘guarantee the quality’ of external web pages. Many, if not all, of these web pages, refer their users to external websites that advertise vacancies or discuss careers-related matters. As a consequence, the CSs state their inability ‘to verify details in their entries and cannot guarantee their accuracy’. In addition, they ‘cannot accept responsibility for the contents of external websites’ or ‘for pages that are maintained by external providers’ (Appendix 3-44). The fact that the CSs recommend a large number of external links which they cannot guarantee their quality leads to question the reasons external websites are suggested in the first place. A possible explanation could be, as already discussed in the previous section, that the services place great emphasis on giving students a variety of tools and resources. Thus, they focus on quantity of resources instead of quality.

When it comes to the universities’ alumni, and the time they are given to make use of the CSs after graduation, some universities state that they ‘are unable to offer appointments to those who graduated more than two years ago’. This, however, is not the case for all universities. Some universities offer their services to students who have graduated in the last year while others extend the use of their services to three years after graduation (Appendix 3-45).

Furthermore, and most importantly, the services clarify that they have no intention in making careers decisions for the students: ‘we will not make any decisions for you’; ‘we will not tell you what to do’; ‘we cannot tell you what career path you should follow’, ‘we cannot guarantee that you will find work’. They can, however, give them ‘objective guidance’ about their options. They can also ‘help’

them search for jobs, ‘discover areas of interest’ or make decisions for themselves (Appendix 3-46). The reasons that lead some of the CSs to make such statements of inability to take (and not just ‘help’ with) career decisions for the students could be that they are asked to do so. If careers advisers are asked by students to make ‘careers decisions’ for them, the reasons for such requests should be examined. This is a topic that would be interesting for further examination possibly in an extension of this research project.

6.2.2 Issues irrelevant to career services

In addition, there is a variety of occurrences in the careers websites that are irrelevant to the careers advisers’ field or ‘expertise’. For example, the services clearly state that they ‘do not offer advice on admissions criteria or course content’, they ‘are unable to offer legal advice on contracts or job offers’, they ‘cannot advise on the suitability of the opportunities’ offered by agencies or private organisations, ‘they cannot be held responsible for the job opportunities’ offered to students’ (Appendix 3-47).

Moreover, there are many examples where the services specifically address international students when they announce that they ‘are unable to give visa advice’, ‘offer visa guidance’, or ‘give individual guidance to students about their right to work in the UK after graduation’. International students are also informed that the services ‘are not a placement agency’. They ‘cannot find [them] a job or ‘cannot be global employment experts’ (Appendix 3-48):

Of course, we cannot be global employment experts, but discussing your plans will help you to organise your job search RG6

We cannot find you a job – UK careers services do not operate in this way – but we can help you with your job hunting and applications. P19

We are not a placement agency. We can support you with meeting and applying to companies and help you to stand out from the crowd but we cannot place you into employment or make applications on your behalf. RG1

One service clearly states that they ‘are unable to offer’: ‘immigration advice’; ‘list of companies employing international students’; ‘proof reading CVs and applications forms for accuracy in the English language’, and ‘employment placement service’. There are many examples in the CEW15 where the CSs highlight that they ‘do not provide’, ‘do not offer’, and ‘cannot offer’, ‘cannot provide’ proofreading services for spelling and grammar, ‘proof read your

English', and 'offer' printing services and 'word processing' services (Appendix 3-49).

In general, the language used by the CSs displays high confidence in their ability to offer and provide a good variety and quantity of services, resources, and tools to their student-users. This part also presented some examples where the services use negation to talk about the themes they cannot advise or assist students with. These are, however, predominantly less when compared to the ones they can offer. With this in mind, the next section presents the reasons for providing careers services to students.

7. The 'helping' nature of the careers services' role

In Table 47, we saw the structural pattern of clauses that focus on quantity, such as 'we offer a range of services'. The semantic pattern for this clause is: Actor ('we') + Process ('offer') + Goal ('a range of services'). What follows the 'Goal' can express the reasons for offering this abundance of resources to students:

Actor	Process	Goal	Reason
we	offer	a range of information and services	to help.
We	offer	a range of services	to help you.
We	provide	access to a range of resources	that will help you write your CV and put together applications.

Table 49 – Grammatical pattern for 'reasons' for offering a variety of resources

There are many examples in the corpus where the phrases 'we offer', 'we provide', 'we organise', and 'we run' describe the reasons for providing these services (Appendix 3-50). The following table presents some examples of these reasons:

Reasons		
to help	you	with your career planning and decision making
to help	you	with a range of career issues and job hunting.
to help	you	decide for yourself if you've got what it takes to be a successful entrepreneur.
to assist	you	with your career planning
to help	you	improve your employability and articulate the skills you have in applications and interviews.
to help guide	you	and develop your entrepreneurial skills and knowledge.
that can help	you	develop survival skills for this competitive and fast-moving environment

to help	you	improve your employability and articulate the skills you have in applications and interviews.
to help	you	explore your career options, develop your skills, job search and what to do next
to help	you	succeed in taking steps towards choosing and planning your desired future
to help	you	realise your potential

Table 50 – ‘Reasons’ for offering a variety of resources

Thus, the main reason provided by the services for offering such a variety of resources to students is to ‘help’ or ‘assist’ them.

As we can see in Appendix 3-50, there are a few examples that mention some of the main actions of assistance, such as help with CVs and applications, but the majority of examples that indicate the reasons these resources are offered, raise complex topics such as:

- Exploring their career options (‘explore your career options’ and ‘what to do next’),
- Making career plans and decisions (‘career planning and decision making’, ‘assist with career planning and management’, ‘decide for yourself’, ‘decide, plan and compete’),
- Planning their career and ‘future’ (‘succeed in taking steps towards choosing and planning your desired future’),
- Meeting their ‘needs’ (‘Meet your student and recruitment needs’, ‘meet your career needs’, ‘meet your career development needs’),
- Realising their ‘potential’,
- Developing and improving their employability and skills (‘improve’ their employability, ‘develop’ their (‘entrepreneurial’, ‘survival’, ‘employability’) skills and knowledge),
- Presenting themselves to employers (‘articulate’ their skills to future employers),
- Finding a job and becoming competitive (‘job hunting’ or ‘job search’, ‘secure your dream job’, ‘give you the competitive edge’).

It is thus evident that the CSs deal with a variety of topics when it comes to guiding students towards employment which is presented as their final ‘goal’. Students are supposed to explore their options, make plans and decisions about their future and career, understand their abilities and ‘potential’, work towards the development of their employability, learn to promote themselves and become competitive. It is thus made very clear that the CSs’ central aim is to ‘help’ their users handle the complicated processes of getting employment.

The services focus on ‘helping’ users can be traced in some of the top most frequently used patterns presented in Table 51. More specifically, the 2-5grams that include the verb ‘help’, which can also be found in Appendix 6, are:

	2-5grams with ‘help’	Freq	Range
1	we can help	344	52
2	we help	56	32
3	we are here to help	38	22
4	we will help	26	22
5	we aim to help	3	3

Table 51 - 2-5grams with ‘help’

The use of the modals ‘can’ and ‘will’ shows the services’ volition and confidence in their ability to ‘help’. What is also common in these word sequences is that all are followed by the second person pronoun ‘you’:

	‘We * help you’ n-grams	Freq	Range
1	we can help you	215	44
2	we help you	17	9
3	we are here to help you	18	12
4	we will help you	25	21
5	we aim to help you	2	2

Table 52 - ‘We * help you’ n-grams

This structure places the services’ users in the *Beneficiary* position of clauses. In a clause, the *Beneficiary* is ‘the one to whom or for whom the process is said to take place’ (Halliday, 1994, p.144). In the CEW15 corpus, there are many examples where the students are presented as the ones who benefit from the CSs’ ‘helping’ actions. The pattern that provides the most examples for further examination, the ‘we can help you’ pattern, presents the main categories of ‘help’ offered to students. In addition, the ‘we are here to help you’ sequence, which will be examined in more detail shortly, can help us to understand the nature of the services’ ‘helping’ role. The content of the other word sequences shown in the table is similar to the ‘we can help you’ pattern.

7.1 ‘We can help you’: Categories of assistance offered to students

After closely analysing the concordance lines, we can distinguish main categories of assistance offered to students who are in search of employment while studying

and/or after graduation is presented below. The careers services ‘can help’ students:

1. with their ‘career plans’,
2. to develop career strategies and network with employers,
3. to build employability skills,
4. to search for jobs and prepare applications and CVs,
5. to prepare for an interview, assessment centre, test,
6. to find work experience or volunteering ‘opportunities’,
7. to become competitive, make ‘well-informed decisions about the future’ and ‘turn [their] dream into a reality’.

They express their ability to ‘help’ students: ‘explore their options’; ‘explore and realise your career goals’; ‘set targets and devise a plan of action’, and ‘weigh up different option’ in order to ‘make sure’ students have ‘accessed accurate information’ that will help them ‘make an informed **decision**’ (Appendix 3-51). In addition, students are offered help to develop career strategies or ‘skill development strateg[ies]’ in order to: ‘become successful’; ‘make sure you get the most of your time at university’, or ‘give you that competitive edge’. They can also ‘help’ students ‘connect’ with other alumni or employers (Appendix 3-52).

Skills are particularly emphasised, as seen on several occasions in the analysis. The CSs express their certainty that they ‘can help’ students ‘practice’, ‘develop’, ‘enhance’, evaluate’, ‘improve’, ‘gain’, ‘boost’ their skills or even ‘learn to sell them effectively’ to employers. Some of the concordance lines display the variety of targeted skills: ‘presentation skills’; ‘survival skills’; ‘communication skills’; ‘key skills’, and ‘learning skills’. As one of the services states, ‘The good news is that whatever sector you want in, all employers look for the same key skills’ (Appendix 3-53).

Moreover, the services ‘can help’ students ‘organise’ and ‘develop the tools to adapt’ their CVs and applications, and they can also assist in preparation for interviews, ‘aptitude tests’, ‘group assessment’ and ‘psychometric testing’ (Appendix 3-54). The services ‘can help’ students ‘find’ ‘work experience’ and ‘placements’. Getting work experience or volunteering ‘opportunities’, ‘placements’, and finding out about employers’, is another area of the CSs’ expertise (Appendix 3-55).

Students are also being helped in order to become competitive, make ‘well-informed decisions about the future’ and ‘turn [their] dream into a reality’. The services ‘can help’ them: ‘become competitive’; ‘get a head start’, ‘get streets ahead of the competition – fast’. In addition, students are offered help with their ‘plans’ and ‘decisions’ (‘make well-informed decisions about your future’), and also ‘land your dream graduate job’, ‘make the jump and make your dreams a reality’, or ‘turn your dream into a reality’ (Appendix 3-56).

The above list and the concordance lines displayed in Appendix 3-51-56, show the breadth of subjects and ‘helping’ actions the CSs are able to take in order to bring students a step closer to the employment ‘goal’. When combined with the ‘reasons’ provided by the CSs on the abundance of resources and tools offered to students, in addition to the general corpus findings, we can distinguish some of the basic steps, or the ‘job-hunting’ stages proposed to students:

The ‘job-hunting’ stages

- Understanding career options.
- Making decisions - choosing a career.
- Preparing and planning.
 - Plan: create a plan of action (a career plan) and develop career strategies.
 - Prepare: build skills, make connections, become competitive.
- Searching for jobs (including work experience and volunteering ‘opportunities’).
- Preparing and applying (tailoring) CVs, cover letters, applications.
- Attending interviews, assessment centres, or online tests.
 - If successful: ‘Goal’ achieved,
 - If not: re-evaluate (gain more skills, become more employable/competitive).

Thus, the ‘we can help you’ pattern shows that there is more to careers services in UK universities than helping students with their CVs, applications, finding placements, or preparing for interviews, as mentioned in the introduction. There is a series of ‘actions’, such as ‘understanding’, ‘making decisions’, ‘choosing careers’, ‘preparing and planning’, ‘developing’ strategies and skills, ‘networking’, and ‘competing’, to name a few. The linguistic analysis of patterns shows that careers advisers are actively involved in these processes. This pattern, together with the ‘we are here to help (you)’ pattern, is also one of the key phrases that reveal another important aspect of the careers services’ ‘helping’ role, which is

associated with the neoliberal way of thinking and the notion of ‘employability’, where individuals are responsible for their own well-being and development (Chertkovskaya et al., 2013, p.701) that will lead to employment (also noted in chapters 1 and 2). The following section begins with the ‘we are here to’ sequence where each step of the analysis brings us closer to the location of an important socio-semantic pattern that sheds light in the careers services’ ‘enabling’ role.

7.2 ‘We are here to’: The ‘helping’ and ‘supporting’ nature of the careers services

As previously introduced, one of the most interesting patterns in this part of the analysis is the ‘we are here to’ pattern which is used 54 times by 27 of the 58 universities. The verb ‘be’ is used in this pattern as a main verb followed by the adverb ‘here’. The adverb ‘here’ is considered a ‘circumstance adverbial’, which is used to ‘add information about the action or state that is described in the clause, giving details about factors such as time, manner, and place’ (Biber et al., 1999, p.549). In the ‘we are here to’ pattern, the use of ‘here’ is figurative and aims to promote the services’ availability and presence, but also to emphasise that they are of constant value to users who need assistance. The following paragraphs present and discuss the content of some of the examples where the CSs signal their ‘helping’ presence.

Looking at the verbal choices that follow the ‘we are here to’ pattern, we see that the services are here to ‘help’, ‘support’, ‘give’, ‘offer’, ‘change’, ‘encourage’, ‘guide’, and ‘provide’:

‘We are here to’ clusters		Freq	Range
We are here to	help	38	22
	support	8	8
	give	2	1
	offer	2	2
	encourage	1	1
	provide	1	1

Table 53 - ‘We are here to’ clusters

These concordance lines show that the services ‘are here to help’ and ‘support’ students ‘at all stages’ or ‘throughout’ their ‘subsequent careers’. In addition, the services display their ‘supporting’ and ‘impartial’ role:

Moving on from University is an exciting and sometimes challenging time and, **we are here to support you** whatever your situation. RG6

We are here to support you at all stages of your career journey during and after your time at UCL. RG22

We are here to support you in getting on to the next stage of your career path! P26

We are impartial. We genuinely don't mind what your career ideas are, if any. This is a safe place to come and be honest about what really matters to you. **We are here to help, not to judge.** RG6

The services described in the above examples offer an absolute and unconditional professional supporting network, promoted as 'a safe place' for students to 'be honest' made available to them 'whatever [their] situation'. Students are encouraged to ask questions: '**We are here to help** you - whatever you need to know, just ask.', 'Just call in and ask - **we are here to help!**'. This representation of the CSs is further discussed in section 8 that links such uses of language with the therapeutic field.

The language used by the CSs in some of these examples present students as 'unsure' ('not sure', 'no idea', 'do not know what you want to do') or 'confused' ('just plain confused') about their options, their 'career plans', or what they generally 'want to do':

Whether you're looking for your first graduate role, a part-time job to fit around your studies, applying for a postgraduate course **or just plain confused about what you want to do in the future,** **we are here to help.** P33

You may have firm career plans **or no idea.** Whatever it is that brings you to a discussion with a Careers Consultant, **we are here to encourage and support you.** RG6

Still not sure what you want to do? Get careers advice. Book an appointment with an adviser Remember, **we are here to help you.** P30

"**I'm not sure what I want to do!" or "How do I find a part-time job?"** **we are here to offer you** advice and guidance. RG7

Do I have to know what I want to do? No! **We are here to help you** whether you want to stay in academia, want to leave academia, or **do not know what you want to do.** RG3

Interestingly, the last two examples are presented as questions, while there is also a statement followed by an exclamation mark, expressed directly by students. The use of 'quotation marks' displays what Fairclough (1992, p.105) calls a 'discourse representation', which in this case represents an instance of conversation between a student and a careers adviser. Although the question in the last example is not presented as direct speech, readers understand that the

'speaker' is a student. These two instances of conversation display students as disoriented or uncertain about their future actions. The last example provides an answer ('No!'), which also includes an exclamation mark for added emphasis. The use of 'discourse representation' in the CSs' web pages mainly aims to establish a 'realistic' representation of a meeting between a student and an adviser. It shows that CSs deal with questions of this nature on a regular basis and it is 'normal' for students to feel confused. It also encourages students who might experience the same uncertainty to visit the services as they 'are here to help'. Thus, students are encouraged to 'have a discussion with a Careers Consultant' or 'Book an appointment with an adviser' to get an idea about what to do next.

This kind of 'help' or 'support' offered to students, which also relates to the first of the 'job-hunting stages', highlights the importance of 'decisions'. In particular, the CSs stress the fact that they 'are here to help' students 'to explore [their] ideas' and 'make sense of [their] options' in order to be able to make 'decisions':

We are here to help you to explore your ideas, we provide you with the advice, guidance and information so that you can make **informed decisions** about the path you want to take. P22

We are here to help you make sense of your options, **decide** whether further study is right for you and help you RG11

we are here to help you **make sense of your options and decide** whether postgraduate study or research is right for you. RG12

As we can see from the above examples, the services' 'advice, guidance, and information' is not limited to careers-focused decisions, also described here as a 'path' (see chapter 6. 4.1), to show the variety of possibilities available, but it also involves general advice about the students' education ('further study'). There are more examples of this pattern presented in Appendix 3-57, where the services also provide advice about 'leaving or changing courses' – a fact that further supports the services' involvement in the students' educational process.

Hence, we could say that the 'we are here to' pattern is used by the CSs to express their unlimited and 'impartial' support to students during all their career-related 'stages'. It also highlights the perception that students are 'confused' and disoriented. Moreover, it is used to stress that the services can 'help' students make 'informed decisions' and explore their career and educational options.

Thus, the adverb ‘here’ is used to show the services’ stable nature and to emphasise that they are of constant value to those users who are in need of assistance. The services display an ultimate intention to support young people who are ‘confused’, and this creates a feeling of stability and security, at the same time as presupposing (Chapter 4.6) instability and insecurity.

In addition, the verbs that follow the pattern ‘we are here to’ seem to be associated with positive meanings. As Pearce (2014, p.39) notes ‘some meanings are more or less explicit’, (‘help’, ‘support’, ‘encourage’), ‘or present as a consequence of a positive semantic prosody’ (‘offer’, ‘provide’). Stubbs has particularly noticed that the ‘typical collocates of PROVIDE are from the semantic fields of care, food, help, money, and shelter’ (1996, p.174). In the case of the career services in UK universities, these verbs (‘help’, ‘support’, ‘encourage’, ‘offer’, ‘provide’), belong to the semantic fields of ‘help’, ‘support’, and ‘guidance’. The CSs’ helping and supporting role, however, takes another dimension when looking closely at the phraseological pattern which is then converted, as explained below, to a socio-semantic pattern.

7.2.1 ‘We are here to help you’: CSs as the enablers of student action

In the following table, we can see the CSs in the *Actor* position, highlighting their presence which aims to ‘help’, ‘encourage’, ‘support’, and ‘offer’ their services to students who are presented as the beneficiaries of the services’ actions.

‘We are here to + VERB + you’ pattern			
‘Actor’ + process + attribute	processes	Beneficiary	Circumstances or Goals
We are here	to encourage and support	you.	
we are here	to help	you.	
We are here	to help and support	you	at this difficult time
We are here	to offer	you	advice and guidance
we are here	to support	you	with these decisions
We are here	to support	you	in getting on to the next stage of your career path
We are here	to help	you	develop these skills

Table 54 - ‘We are here to + VERB + you’ pattern

These examples express the services' aim to assist students by providing 'support', 'advice and guidance' 'at this difficult time' and with their 'decisions', to get on 'to the next stage of [their] career path' or 'develop these skills'. The verb 'help' – and here we can also add the verbs 'support', 'offer', or 'encourage' which are also found in this pattern – plays a key role in this discourse. As Fairclough (2003, p.56) notes, the verb 'help' can act as a trigger of 'value assumptions' (Fairclough, 2003, p.56). 'Value assumptions' are 'assumptions about what is good or desirable', thus 'whatever follows "help to" is likely to be positively evaluated' (Fairclough, 2003, p.173). For instance, Table 55 presents some concordance lines where the services 'are here to help' students 'make sense of [their] options' or 'enhance [their] self awareness'. This use of language naturalises such actions and at the same time presents them as desirable, as actions that should be accepted and pursued by HE students.

Another observation about this phraseological structure is that we can distinguish between two sets of actions: (a) actions that are made by the careers services, and (b) actions expected to be made by the students.

Actions made by the careers services			Actions made by the students		
we	are here to help	you	to explore	your	ideas – P22
we	are here to help	you	investigate	your	careers options – P34
we	are here to help	you	make sense of	your	options – RG11&RG12
we	are here to help	you	enhance	your	self awareness – RG24

Table 55 - Two sets of 'actions'

The careers services 'are here to help' students but the students are supposed, in turn, to 'enhance [their] self awareness', 'investigate [their] career options' or 'make sense of [their] options'. This use of language is compatible with what van Leeuwen (1999) calls 'managing action'.

According to van Leeuwen, who looks at the 'distribution of agency' amongst participants, there needs to be a differentiation between two kinds of agents, 'the agents of the actual activities [...] and the instigators of such actions' (1999, p.95). In Halliday's terms, such 'actions' are called 'causative'. However, van Leeuwen notes that there is a need for 'a more sociological connotation' and introduces the notion of 'managed action' (van Leeuwen, 1999, p.95). These 'types of managing

actions and their linguistic realisations', 'compel', 'cajole', 'motivate', encourage, and so on, people to act (van Leeuwen, 1999, p.96). Accordingly, the other agent, the 'managed agent', is the one who is being 'compelled, cajoled, helped, motivated, incentivized, etc., to do things, and thereby somehow constructed as not being able to do things on his or her own' (van Leeuwen, 1999, p.96). Thus, the careers service, in this case, is the managing agent that instigates action by 'compelling' and 'persuading' students to act and the students are the managed agents who need to be motivated and helped.

The next table presents this semantic pattern clearly. I have named the grammatical components of the sentences with the following semantic categories: 'expert actor', 'supporting/enabling action', 'client/patient', 'empowering action', 'beneficiary of action', and 'desired outcome'.

expert actor	enabling action	patient-client	'empowering' action	beneficiary of action	desired outcome
we	are here to help	you	to explore	your	ideas – P22
we	are here to help	you	investigate	your	careers options – P34
we	are here to help	you	make sense of	your	options – RG11&RG12
we	are here to help	you	enhance	your	self awareness – RG24

Table 56 - 'We are here to help you' semantic pattern

The careers services 'help' students 'explore', 'enhance', 'investigate', 'make sense of', their 'ideas', '(careers) options', 'employability skills', and 'self awareness'. Specifically, the expert actors perform a supporting or helping action that will not only benefit the 'client' or 'patient' but will also enable them to perform a 'self-empowering' action that will get them closer to the desired outcome. Or, in other words, the careers services become the enablers of students' self-beneficiary action. The same semantic pattern can be found in the 'we can help you' sequence. In Appendix 7, I have created five tables with examples of the same pattern that expresses the services' ability ('we can/will help you') to help students with their ('your'): (a) applications, CVs, cover letters; (b) skills; (c) plans, ideas, goals, options, future; (d) job, role, and (e) career.

Furthermore, we can see that this is a common semantic pattern (Table 57) in the CEW15 corpus as the services claim they can provide a variety of

supporting or enabling action that can benefit students and empower them to become their own beneficiaries.

expert actor	supporting/ enabling action	patient/ client	'empowering' action	beneficiary of action	desired outcome
we	're here to help	you	achieve	your	ambitions
we	can help	you	boost	your	skills
we	can support	you	to develop	your	career
we	will help	you	to devise	your	own career action plan
we	'll help	you	find	your	perfect role
we	'll teach	you	to present	your	skills
we	'd help	you	form	your	plans
we	are keen to help	you	to build	your	contacts
we	aim to help	you	enhance	your	employability

Table 57 - More examples of the semantic pattern

Notice here the use of the possessive determiner 'your'. It is made clear that the 'ideas', 'ambitions', 'skills', 'employability', 'ideal job', 'future', or 'goal(s)', to name a few, belong to the individual student. These 'desired outcomes' are thus presented as the students' ('your') responsibility, and the careers services' role is to 'encourage', 'train', or 'enable' the students towards their accomplishment. Note also that I use quotation marks when I discuss the students' 'empowerment' by the CSs' managing or enabling actions. This is because the idea of 'empowering' dominated social groups through the use of 'training' (Fairclough, 2015) is a rather complicated issue. In his discussion about 'job-getting skills' offered to unemployed people by the Department of Employment, Fairclough notes that 'training of this sort may constitute [...] empowerment', or, in other words, 'developing people's capacity to explore the full range of what is possible within the given order of discourse, without actually changing it' (2015, p.215). Thus, this form of 'empowerment' is being offered to dominated groups, such as students or unemployed people in general, in order to build their confidence and

'help' them realise their potential (Fairclough, 2015, p.216). In essence, it shifts responsibility for a problematic social phenomenon, such as unemployment, from the state to the individual and their competencies, while at the same time creating the delusion of 'empowerment' which will eventually lead to success. As further discussed in the next section, such use of language is linked to therapeutic discourse.

8. Therapeutic culture and discourse

As every individual who decides to visit a service, whether that is public or private, HE students visit career services in universities because they believe they do not have the 'expert knowledge' that would help them find a solution to a problematic situation. In chapter 3, there was a discussion about 'expertise and professionalism' and the fact that the possession of 'expert knowledge' assists in the creation of a trusting relationship between the professional and the 'subaltern', in this case, the student. The careers services' 'expert knowledge' was identified as understanding the way the employment apparatus works. The services 'know' what employers are looking for from prospective employees and claim that they can 'help' students to be successful with their job search. They also act as the 'enablers' of student action. Thus, it could be said that due to their 'professional training' and 'possession of esoteric ways of understanding', careers 'specialists' can apply their 'expert knowledge' to make a 'diagnosis' and provide 'solution(s)' that will lead to a possible 'treatment' (Scott, 2001, p.101).

8.1 Therapy and careers services

It has already been mentioned that therapeutic discourse has spread in our everyday lives (Chapter 4). In particular, it has become one of the discourses that have colonised academia with examples of 'pastoral care' offered to HE students (Talbot, 2010, p.77). In the previous analytical section, we have seen some examples where the careers advisers' role can be claimed to be presented as 'therapeutic' (Section 7.2.1). This development, in addition to the services' educational role discussed in section 2, features CSs as a field that is involved in different social practices. Van Leeuwen names this representation of social actors as 'Overdetermination'.

'Overdetermination occurs when social actors are represented as participating, at the same time, in more than one social practice' (van Leeuwen, 2008, p.47). One of the forms of 'overdetermination' that is relevant to our discussion on professions and 'expertise', is 'distillation' which 'realises overdetermination through a combination of generalization and abstraction' (van Leeuwen, 2008, p.49). Van Leeuwen talks about professions that could be considered as 'true hyponyms of "therapists"', such as "psychiatrists" or "guidance counsellors". However, he also notes that other professions such as 'schoolteachers', 'ministers', or 'job counsellors', which 'are not usually classified as therapists', due to the fact that therapy is not central to their activities, 'may adopt some of the values and manners of therapists' (*ibid*). The 'distillation taxonomy' is shown in Figure 15, (van Leeuwen, 2008, p.50) where 'job counsellors' are included in the types of 'Professionals who offer therapy':



Figure 15 - Distillation taxonomy (van Leeuwen, 2008)

Besides van Leeuwen's observation about the 'several social practices' of professionals, such as 'job counselors', who also 'offer therapy', this linguistic analysis has also linked careers advisers and services with the therapeutic field. Moreover, we have already discussed that the role of careers advisers has expanded to other fields such as the educational field. CSs now offer seminars, courses, and sessions in addition to formal meetings and online guidance. If we look at Figure 15, we will notice that the professionals mentioned by van Leeuwen are separated into those who work 'with captive audiences' and those who do not. The CSs in HE institutions, work with both audiences. For example, they work with 'captive audiences' when delivering careers courses, or group sessions, which, in some cases, can be compulsory, but in general their audience

includes the whole student body (undergraduates, graduates, research students), which is invited to use the services offered to them by universities.

8.2 The problem students face

It is important to understand the reasons that have lead universities to turn to a ‘therapeutic culture’. Why is there a need for therapeutic culture and discourse? As discussed in chapter 2, one of the social problems that universities are asked for assistance is youth unemployment. The problematic contemporary economy has deeply affected people and the way they experience ‘reality’. As Fairclough notes, the people’s reaction was to seek ‘individual solutions to their disorientation, loss of identity, and so forth, in various forms of therapy, counselling, and ‘helping’ services’ (2015, p.225). However, there are many factors that have led citizens to such a reaction. One of the main, and most important, reasons is the governments’ efforts to shift responsibility for the well-being of citizens to the individual citizens themselves. This is a development that best describes the neoliberal way of thinking.

8.3 Specialists who offer help

In the HE context, students are given the opportunity to get ‘help’ from a number of services offered to them by universities. The CSs offer professional help to students who are trying to find a job while at university or after graduation. Assistance can be delivered in the form of group sessions or one-to-one meetings. As mentioned in chapter 3, ‘expertise’ can only exist when there is a ‘claim’ of ‘specialized knowledge’ but also ‘acceptance’ by the non-experts (Scott, 2001, p.104). In the case of scheduled private meetings, where students seek professional assistance, the careers advisers’ ‘expertise’ is acknowledged, and ‘agreement’ is automatically established. ‘Trust’ is a deciding factor in the non-experts’ acceptance of professional knowledge and expertise. In most cases, trust is not established by an ‘informed acceptance of the evidence basis for the body of knowledge’, but because of the ‘knowledge-gap’ (Scott, 2001, p.104). Thus, those who make use of ‘expert’ or professional services accept the experts’ claimed knowledge because they believe that they do not have the skills or knowledge to find solutions to their problems. For example, HE students visit the

careers services because they believe they need assistance in understanding the employment market and making successful applications.

As expected, careers services advertise their ‘expertise’ in various ways, but also make sure that students feel ‘safe’ or comfortable visiting their spaces. There are many occasions in the corpus where the careers services highlight their ‘confidential’ (141 instances in 40 from the 58 universities) and ‘impartial’ (96/39) nature. For instance, they offer ‘confidential’ and ‘impartial’ ‘advice’, ‘appointments’, ‘careers guidance’, ‘discussions’, ‘coaching sessions’, and ‘services’. Some examples are shown below and in Appendix 3-58:

We are here to provide impartial guidance to help students and graduates achieve job satisfaction RG10

We are impartial. We genuinely don’t mind what your career ideas are, if any. This is a safe place to come and be honest about what really matters to you. **We are here to help, not to judge.** RG6

You may benefit from attending one of our tailored, confidential coaching sessions. RG15

Totally confidential and tailored to you, our development officers can help you clarify your aims, plan your next steps and work towards achieving your goals. RG15

We can provide 1-1 impartial guidance as an opportunity to discuss the problems they are having and look at their options. RG6

Often just sitting down and talking through with someone impartial is all it takes to bring some clarity to your thinking. Try friends and family, your tutor or a Careers Adviser. RG17

The careers services are presented as ‘totally confidential’ or ‘entirely impartial’. Sessions are ‘tailored’ to meet the students’ ‘individual needs’. Students are offered ‘a safe place’ where they can ‘be honest’ and are also informed that the careers services ‘are here to help, not to judge’. This use of language strongly correlates with the construction of a therapeutic setting where the services’ users are asked to relax and are free to make a ‘confession’ about their career worries. There are many occasions in the corpus where students are presented as ‘confused’ or ‘unsure’ about their options (as discussed in section 5), and where the services offer help (‘just call in and ask – we are here to help’). If students are persuaded to visit the careers services, then the process of ‘diagnosis’ can begin.

8.4 Career counselling and ‘diagnosis’

Fairclough (2015, p.222) provides a definition of counselling which describes it as:

a person-to-person form of communication marked by the development of a subtle emotional understanding often described technically as “rapport” or “empathy”; that is centred upon one or more problems of the client; and that is free from authoritarian judgements and coercive pressures by the counsellor.

As we have seen, the CSs make clear to their users that they ‘are free from authoritarian judgements’, they ‘are here to help, not to judge’. Counselling services, and by extension careers counselling services, use their ‘expertise’ or ‘special knowledge’ to provide their clients with a ‘diagnosis’ of the problem and a possible solution or ‘treatment’. These cannot be achieved without person-to-person communication. The development of ‘emotional understanding’ is also vital for the process of counselling. Advisers express their sympathy to the problems students are dealing with and this can assist in the creation of a trusting zone where students would feel comfortable in sharing their background, experiences, and worries.

As previously examined in section 6, the CSs have developed a variety of resources and tools that aim to ‘help’ HE students. However, it is made clear that students need to visit the services to get proper guidance. The availability of one-to-one appointments are particularly highlighted in the CEW15 corpus: ‘One-to-one’ or ‘one to one’ is mentioned 472 times by 57 of the 58 universities, and ‘1-1’ is found 96 times in the corpus used by 21 universities. If we look at ‘one-to-one’, ‘1-1’, ‘1:1’ in the corpus as a premodifier, we see that there is a broad description of such meetings:

‘One-to-one’ advice	
one-to-one / one to one / 1-1 / 1:1	advice appointment(s) career coaching career consultations career advice career guidance chat coaching consultations confidential consultancy constructive advice

	contact with a professional discussions drop-in sessions guidance and advice impartial guidance help long discussion mentoring sessions specialist advice support
--	---

Table 58 - 'One-to-one', 'one to one', '1-1', '1:1'

Face-to-face meetings with careers counsellors can be described as formal consultations ('careers coaching', 'careers consultations', 'careers guidance', 'confidential consultancy', 'specialist advice'), or as informal meetings ('chat', 'discussions', 'long discussion'). Either way, this possibility is highly promoted and preferred by the services. Although there are examples in the corpus where students are offered 'group sessions', 'events', 'discussions', 'exercises', the CSs promote their professional status and 'expertise' when they urge students to visit their services: 'see an expert', 'talk to one of our expert recruitment consultants', 'get expert 1:1 guidance and support'. This preference has also been noted in section 6, where some CSs state that they 'do not offer' advice by email or over the telephone. This shows that physical presence is important for the CSs' delivery of assistance, support or guidance.

As far as 'empathy' is concerned, in section 5 we have seen examples of the CSs' efforts to express their awareness of the difficulties and challenges students experience while trying to be employed. They sympathise with the students' efforts to figure out their next steps ('It can sometimes be difficult to figure out what you want to do for your career' P26), 'build their portfolio' and also give them credit for their 'hard work ('We know you have all worked **hard** to get to where you are today' P26). Also, the services express 'knowledge' of the difficult situation students find themselves in when searching for employment with the use of negative vocabulary, such as 'daunting', 'hard', 'disheartening', 'unnerving', 'difficult', and 'intimidating'. Thus, understandably, students are presented as 'confused'. The representation of students as confused individuals who need assistance is, in my opinion, realistic. Students are expected to 'succeed' in what is presented as a 'highly competitive' job market, with complicated procedures shaped by an even more complicated apparatus

controlled by powerful groups, or the ‘principals’ (Chapter 3). Furthermore, CSs are in regular contact with individuals who are trying to find a job, so these services truly experience the difficulties faced by students. As discussed in section 8.5, what cannot be considered realistic, however, is the origin of the students’ problems.

8.5 ‘Treatment’ offered by the CSs

Fairclough notes that where counselling is involved, the origin of such problems is presented as ‘internal rather than external’ and the general ‘aim is to deal with [them] by achieving behavioural changes’ where the client is guided to understand things about themselves which they have not been realised yet (2015, p.222). The linguistic analysis in section 7, has already presented the socio-semantic pattern where the services act as the enablers of student action. Here, we also see another way of articulating such an ideology where the services claim that they can ‘help’ students ‘realise’ their ‘potential’:

we offer a range of support to help you realise your potential while you are studying - RG15.

A 45 minute appointment to discuss any issues relating to your future career plans: [...] how to realise your full potential P27

Our expert Student + Graduate Enterprise team is here to provide the tools and methods for success, inspire confidence and help you realise your goals. P26

The Global Awareness competency offers students the opportunity to [...] Realise your own competencies to focus in the right direction P5

Creating an action plan will help you to prioritise the tasks you need to do to gain the skills and experience to realise your vision. RG12

The CSs can ‘help’ students ‘achieve’, ‘demonstrate’, ‘develop’, ‘discover’, ‘expand’, ‘fulfil’, ‘highlight’, ‘maximise’, ‘realise’, and ‘unlock’ their ‘potential’. Besides providing ‘tools and methods for success’, the services also ‘inspire confidence’, help students ‘prioritise [...] tasks’, and ‘gain skills’ which will help them ‘realise their vision’, ‘goals’, ‘competencies’, and ‘potential’. Other examples further display the different ‘potential’ students can possess. The services urge students to ‘enhance your leadership potential’, or ‘unlock your marketing potential’. Other types of suggested ‘potential’ include: ‘commercial’, ‘employability’, ‘enterprising’, ‘entrepreneurial’, ‘innovation’, ‘leadership’, or ‘professional’ potential.

Students are invited to ‘increase’, ‘enhance’ or ‘improve’ their ‘employability potential’ in various ways, but they are also asked to achieve ‘behavioural changes’ such as becoming ‘confident’, ‘adaptable’, ‘more aware’, ‘more self-aware’, ‘motivated’, or ‘flexible’:

Whether you have an idea for a business or have few employability skills and want to improve, they help you to become a confident person with the ability to become employed or to start your own venture. RG4

Some employers even look for particular values in potential employees, so it's helpful to become more aware of what drives you and gets you out of bed in the morning. P27

Interests and values questionnaires are useful to help you become more self-aware RG16

You may have to be flexible with regards to location and working hours. RG6

As well as looking for the ability to generate possible solutions, they would also expect candidates to be flexible and resilient, i.e. to respond positively to setbacks. P17

From the surrounding context of these examples (more in Appendix 3-59), it can be noticed that ‘behavioural changes’ are achieved by enhancing ‘employability skills’, taking ‘questionnaires’ and ‘courses’, ‘engaging with’ the Personal Development Plan (PDP), or through ‘volunteering’. Most importantly, however, students are asked to make these changes because these behavioural attributes are sought after by employers. One of the examples mentions that employers ‘look for particular values’, thus students need to become ‘more aware’, or gain a better understanding of themselves. ‘Empowering’ and ‘enabling’ HE students and helping them to ‘unlock’, or ‘realise’ their ‘potential’ is part of the wider ‘therapy’ offered by the careers services, which will eventually make students more employable – a result that is described as very desirable by employers. This kind of therapeutic discourse reproduces and promotes neoliberal ideology which has managed, with the support of dominant groups, to become established as a naturally occurring phenomenon within academia.

9. Summary

Chapter 7 began with an examination of the key word ‘careers’ as a premodifier. The first analytical part aimed to provide a general idea of the CSs as a professional field and its practice within the UK HE system. The collocation analysis showed that there are three prominent categories associated with

'careers'. These are: (a) careers services as a professional body (group and individual), (b) the places or spaces in which the CSs act, and (c) careers education.

The analysis continued with a discussion of the most frequently used 'personalised' and 'impersonalised' terms (van Leeuwen, 2008), that represent the CSs as social actors. The services emphasise their 'human' semantic properties by frequently representing themselves with the first-person pronoun 'we'. Thus, the key grammatical pattern that was examined in the rest of the chapter ('we' + process + circumstances) gives CSs an 'activated' grammatical role (Fairclough, 2003) within the *Transitivity* system (Halliday, 1994). This pattern allows the detection of the services' grammatical choices and the exploration of any ideologically significant meaning. The analytical stages of 'interpretation' and 'explanation' (Baker and McEnery, 2015), were divided into four main sections.

In section 5, 'Professionalism and expertise', we have seen that the services advertise their 'expertise' and encourage students to take advantage of their professional guidance. The CSs claim 'knowledge' of the students' actions and future plans, activities and habits, emotions and feelings. Their 'expert knowledge', however, seems to be an in-depth understanding of the employers' preferences and the 'job market' customs and practices. The services display their communication, links, and partnerships with employers and businesses.

The corpus analysis also revealed the CSs' strong emphasis on the plethora of services, resources, and tools offered to their student-users. In particular, they promote the quantity, and variety of services, events, and tools on offer to students. Furthermore, the examination of the main categories of 'help' offered to students leads to a further understanding of the proposed 'job-hunting stages'. Most importantly, however, the word sequences 'we can/will help you' and 'we are here to help you' brought to light a commonly used semantic pattern where the services act as the enablers of the students' self-beneficiary actions.

This use of language links the CSs profession to the therapeutic profession. Section 7 explained the reasons that might lead HE students to use the CSs and further analyses the idea that 'expert knowledge' is used by professionals to make a 'diagnosis' and provide 'solutions' that will result in a possible 'treatment'. In

addition, there was a discussion of the findings informed by Fairclough's (2015) observations on therapeutic discourse.

Thus, in the previous analytical chapters, general claims were made about the language used by the careers services and their representation of the 'world of work', the students' role in the 'competitive' graduate job market, and their own role as actors or 'enablers' of student action. As previously stated, however, HEIs in the UK are not a homogenous group. For this reason, the next, and final analytical chapter provides a comparison of the language used by CSs from Russell Group and post-1992 universities.

Chapter 8. Similarities and differences in the language used by post-1992 and Russell Group universities.

1. Introduction

As mentioned in chapter 5, the *Further and Higher Education Act* published in 1992 is considered a pivotal point in the history of UK universities. Instead of uniting HEIs, the abolition of the binary line created a clear division between these institutions. This thesis examines the discourse of careers services in UK universities in general. However, it must be noted that HEIs in the UK are not a unified and homogenous group. On the contrary, as discussed in chapter 2, they are ‘highly differentiated by origin, status, mission, resources, research activity and income, educational provision and student characteristics’ (William, 2011, p.75). We have seen some instances of this differentiation in HE policy (Chapter 2.3), where universities are described as ‘good’, ‘relevant’, or ‘winners’, while those that are not considered to be in the higher league should ‘raise their game’ if they wish to remain in the competition.

This last analytical chapter aims to identify similarities and differences in the language used by Russell Group (RG) and post-1992 (P92) universities. It starts by creating a link between the social background discussed in chapter 2 and the representation of students as customers whose choices have the power to shape the HE scene. As HE is expected to bring a return, usually in the form of (highly-paid) employment, competition between universities, whether these are ‘new’ or ‘old’, has risen since the introduction of tuition fees and the establishment of neoliberal ideas and agendas, such as the notion of employability. The analysis thus begins with a comparison of the RG and P92 sub-corpora (Chapter 5). This chapter adds a comparative angle and re-visits the main topics discussed in the previous analytical chapters (Chapters 6-7). What follows is a comparison of the top 50 keywords from each sub-corpus. Then, I perform a statistical test on 10 of the main and commonly used keywords to determine whether the differences in frequencies are statistically significant. The analysis then focuses on three main topics, namely ‘employability’, ‘placements, internships, and work experience’, and ‘help and support’. These sections (3.3-3.5) look at the keywords’ 2-grams and their concordance lines in order to describe and explain any similarities or

differences observed in the two sub-corpora. The final analytical part compares the n-grams (2-7-grams) used by RG and P92 careers services for the same reason.

2. Student ‘choice’, university groups, and competition

With the introduction and rise of undergraduate tuition fees, students came to be represented as the main ‘contributors’ towards ‘their own’ education (Browne, 2010), and the idea of student ‘choice’ came to the foreground. As a result, a HE degree is presented as an ‘investment’ that should provide ‘value for money’ (Browne, 2010). Students who enter HE expect a ‘return’ from their investment, such as good career prospects that will lead to a ‘highly-paid’ graduate job. At the same time, students are presented as ‘powerful’ customers whose ‘choice’ affects the amount of public funding HEIs receive (the ‘money will follow the student’ (Browne, 2010, p.4)). Thus, universities are ‘forced’ into a competitive mode trying to attract customers and persuade students that their programmes and services will get them closer to their desired goal.

As pointed out in chapter 5, besides the regular characterisation of ‘old’ and ‘new(er)’, Russell Group and post-1992 universities are usually described as ‘prestigious’ or ‘elite’, and ‘less prestigious’ or ‘former polytechnics’. Even when these ‘groups’ are not directly compared to each other, such characterisations entail a comparative angle. In the field of CDA, the ‘old’/‘new’ or ‘prestigious’/‘less prestigious’ differentiation between universities was picked up by scholars, such as Fairclough (1993), Mautner (2005), and Mayr (2008). In particular, Fairclough notes that the examples of university marketisation he focuses on in his paper,

appeared in a period of transition between announcement of the abolition of the binary divide between polytechnics (referred to as the “newer” universities above) and (older) universities, and its full implementation. For example, there have been particularly strong links between the newer universities and business, and polytechnics were in conception more vocationally oriented than universities (1993, p.149).

It is interesting to observe that in 1993, the ‘newer’ universities were considered to have ‘particularly strong links’ with businesses which would automatically make students more enterprise-oriented and thus more easily adjustable to the ‘new’ at the time, global and neoliberal era. This, however, has proved not to be the case. In an example of a statement on the website of the University of Oxford, Mayr

(2008, p.30) notes that the language used ‘shows how firmly embedded the spirit of enterprise is in current university discourse and practice’. She also adds that

One might think that it is the ‘post 1992’ ‘new’ universities, which started out as Polytechnics and have been traditionally more vocationally oriented that are more ‘entrepreneurial’ than the older and more prestigious universities. However, ... it is often the older universities which, because of their status, are in a better position to pursue their entrepreneurial aspirations. (*ibid*)

The ‘older’, ‘traditional’, ‘elite’, and ‘prestigious’ universities have managed to keep up with the former polytechnics in this field and, on most occasions, lead the way towards entrepreneurialism. As Mautner states when contrasting post-1992 and ‘prestigious’ universities, ‘If anything, the oldest and most prestigious universities are more actively engaged in and, because of their prestige, infinitely better placed to pursue entrepreneurial activities’ (2005a, p.109). It would thus be interesting to examine whether the same tensions apply in the field of careers and graduate employment and the notion of employability. The post-1992 universities’ ‘higher-level technical and vocational education’ background (Tight, 2009, p.103) and the Russell Group universities’ ‘research-led’ characterisation usually lead people to believe that there are differences in the way these university ‘groups’ approach the idea of employability. Thus, what follows is a comparison of the P92 and RG career services web pages and an exploration of similarities and differences in the language used by these two ‘groups’.

It must be noted here that when it comes to comparing linguistic data, there is a tendency to ‘view similarity as a “non-finding” or a less important finding than a study which uncovers differences’ (Baker, 2010, p.83). However, as Taylor notes, a corpus comparison ‘does not exclusively entail the analysis of difference’; the analysis can also include similarity ‘into the framework’ (2013, p.81). In fact, when the analytical framework is structured to include an analysis of both similarities and differences then we are ‘aiming for a 360-degree perspective of our data’, rather than ‘a 180-degree visualisation’ (Taylor, 2013, p.83). Thus, what I aim to do in this chapter is start with a comparison of the main phrases examined in the previous analytical chapters (Chapters 6-7). Then, I compare the top 50 keywords of the P92 and RG sub-corpora. What follows is a closer look at those keywords that are directly relevant to the notion of employability and the services offered by careers advisers. Finally, I examine

each CSs' group n-grams (3-7-grams) to identify the most commonly used phrases or expressions.

3. RG and P92 sub-corpora comparison

Although the comparison of the two groups was organised from the beginning of this research project, I have deliberately left the examination of this research question at the end of this study to get as much familiarised with the content of the CEW15 corpus as possible. Having written the analytical chapters about the 'world of work', 'employability', 'skills' (Chapter 6), and the CSs' professional roles (Chapter 7), I believe that I have manipulated, using both corpora techniques and CDA, a fairly good amount of the texts included in the CEW15 corpus. My general impression of the corpus and the analytical findings is that the CSs of both RG and post-1992 universities place great emphasis on the notion of employability, skills, work experience, volunteering, competition and the CSs' 'helping' and 'supporting' role, to name a few of the topics discussed in previous chapters. In general, and because I have included each university's code (RG1-24 and P1-34), in every example taken into consideration in the analytical part, during the analysis I have not noticed any patterns that are used more regularly or exclusively by any one of the two groups. There is only one exception which, for reasons of space, I could not include earlier in the analysis but will be mentioned later in this chapter (Section 3.6). This example presents the fact that RG universities regularly charge employers for a number of services, such as fairs, presentations, etc.

Thus, although I have a general idea from my analytical experience in this project, in this chapter, I would like to utilise CL tools and techniques to strengthen this observation. Such tools can provide linguistic evidence as to whether the language used in the two sub-corpora (RG and P92), is similar or different ('Identification' and 'interpretation' stages). Then, the findings can be discussed taking into consideration the wider historical, and social context and any consequences of such uses of language ('Explanation' and 'evaluation' stages).

3.1 Considering previous corpus findings

Before moving on to the comparison of the two sub-corpora keywords, it would be interesting to compare the main topics discussed in chapters 6-7. In Table 59 we see ten of the main phrases and patterns closely examined in the previous analytical chapters. The table presents the frequency numbers and the number of universities using these phrases (Range). Range is also used to calculate the percentage of each university group (P92 or RG) that uses these phrases. For example, the ‘world of work’ phrase is used by 74 percent of the post-1992 universities and 71 percent of RG universities.

Phrases and patterns	P92 (34 HEIs)			RG (24 HEIs)		
	Freq	Range	%	Freq	Range	%
world of work	199	25	74	69	17	71
job market	226	32	94	302	24	100
competitive job market	21	10	29	29	14	58
a degree (alone) is not enough	4	3	9	9	5	21
stand out from	68	27	79	75	19	79
career journey	7	5	15	13	8	33
job(-)hunt/ing	173	31	91	272	24	100
employability skills	225	30	88	232	22	92
we can help you	83	24	71	133	20	83
employers are looking for	66	24	71	100	23	96

Table 59 - Phrases and patterns discussed in Chapters 6 and 7

When comparing the P92 and RG sub-corpora, we see that the majority of the CSs talk about the ‘world of work’, the ‘job market’, ‘job-hunting’, and ‘employability skills’. More RG careers services (58%), however, mention the phrase ‘competitive job market’ than P92 careers services (29%). In addition, although both groups mention that ‘a degree (alone) is not enough’, there are more mentions of this idea in the RG sub-corpus (9% of P92 and 21% of RG). The same goes for the metaphor ‘career journey’ (15% of P92 and 33% of RG). Students from both university groups are also told to ‘stand out from’ the crowd or the competition (79% of P92 and RG).

Moreover, both groups express their ability to ‘help’ their users and state their collaborations with ‘businesses’, ‘employers’, or ‘organisations’. When it comes to the employers’ requirements and personnel needs, almost all RG careers services (96%) display their knowledge about what ‘employers are looking for’ from students/graduates. As shown in the table, 71% of P92 careers services also discuss the employers’ personnel needs. More lexis and phrases

examined in chapters 6-7 will be discussed later in the analysis as part of the keywords comparison findings (for example, ‘employability’, ‘range’ of services and resources, ‘we are here to help’, ‘a wide range’). In general, Table 59 shows that the main themes discussed in the previous analytical chapters came to the surface due to linguistic evidence deriving from both RG and P92 careers services. A keyword analysis, however, can add to the objective comparison of the two sub-corpora.

3.2 Keywords

As already noted in chapter 4, a keyword analysis can be very helpful in identifying lexical items or bundles for closer examination. The identification of statistical keywords is ‘a well-established inductive procedure in CL’ (Pearce, 2014, p.26) that can provide a starting point for the linguistic analysis. In addition, keywords are considered the ‘principal tool for contrasting corpora’ (Partington, 2014, p.130). The table in Appendix 8 shows the top 50 keywords in the RG and P92 sub-corpora measured against the wordlist of the written component of the BNC corpus provided by Anthony (2017). The statistical measure shown in the table is log-likelihood. The log-likelihood test is a statistical test regularly used in CL to provide an indication of how significant the difference between the two corpora is. It is used to ‘compare frequencies in two corpora, taking into account the sizes of both corpora as well as the actual frequencies of the phenomena being investigated’ (Baker, 2010, pp.62–63). Baker notes that for those keywords that score above 6.63, there ‘is a 1 percent chance that the difference is not due to some sort of accidental sampling fluke, but rather reflects an actual difference in the language use of the two populations being examined’ (2010, p.63), in this case each focus corpus (RG and P92) is measured against the written component of the BNC corpus. I have chosen the BNC corpus as a reference corpus because it is a representative sample of written British English. A comparison of the two sub-corpora with the BNC corpus would undoubtedly bring to the surface careers-related vocabulary.

The top 50 keywords (sorted by Keyness) of RG and P92 CSs (Appendix 8) are almost identical with slight variation in the rankings. Common keywords include lexical items that belong in the fields of ‘careers’, ‘service’, ‘employment’, ‘job-searching’, ‘web’, ‘HE’, and ‘participants’:

Main topics	Common keywords in RG and P92 sub-corpora
careers	career(s), employability, skills, prospects.
service	information, advice, events, resources.
employment	job(s), work, employment, experience, volunteering.
job-searching	cv, volunteering, opportunities, recruitment, application, interview.
web	website, www, http, ac, online, email, pdf.
HE	university, campus, postgraduate.
participants	student(s), graduate(s), employer(s).

Table 60 - Main topics deriving from common keywords in the RG and P92 sub-corpora

Besides the noun keywords, there are also some examples of verbs and pronouns in the top 50 keywords list of both corpora. These are: ‘help’, ‘support’, or ‘find’, (although some instances can also be used as nouns), and ‘your’, ‘you’, ‘our’. As already discussed in chapter 7, ‘help’ and ‘support’ are mainly used by the services to describe their actions and professional roles. The verb ‘find’ is also expected to be a commonly used keyword as this is the students’ and graduates’ main goal, to ‘find’ employment. It is also the resulting action of the CSs’ ‘helping’ role (see chapter 7.7).

Moreover, we have seen in the previous analytical chapters that the pronoun ‘you’ and possessive determiner ‘your’ is regularly used by the CSs as they refer directly to their clients through their websites (Chapter 7.7, chapter 6.2.1, 2.2). The keyword ‘our’ is also regularly used by both groups to talk about their (‘our’): ‘students’ and ‘graduates’, ‘website’, ‘events’, ‘careers services’, ‘careers fairs’, to name a few. As far as the lexical items that are not included in both top 50 keyword lists, such as ‘employment’; ‘support’, ‘mentoring’, ‘www’ (present in the post-92 corpus), and ‘research’, ‘academic’, ‘alumni’, ‘sector’ (present in the RG corpus), these can be found not very far below in the keyword lists of each corpus.

Although the two keyword lists are rather similar, to better understand the results, and since the two sub-corpora have different sizes, it is necessary to perform statistical tests which would support any claims made about the language used by the two university groups. For example, the keyword ‘employability’ is found 2,198 in the P92 sub-corpus and 1,826 times in the RG sub-corpus. Is this difference statistically important and if yes, what does it mean? Why do post-1992 universities use the word ‘employability’ more frequently than Russell Group universities?

3.2.1 Statistically significant differences in keywords

To determine whether the differences in the frequencies of keywords is statistically significant, I use the log-likelihood (LL) downloadable spreadsheet provided by Rayson (2016). In CL, determining whether a quantitative result is of statistical significance is encouraged as it can show ‘if there is a low probability [...] that the figures extracted from the data are simply the result of random chance, and do not indicate what they seem to indicate’ (McEnery and Hardie, 2012, p.251). Rayson explains that the LL ‘must be above 3.84 for the difference to be significant at the $p < 0.05$ level’ (Rayson, 2016). We have also seen earlier that Baker uses the value 6.63 for a 1 percent chance ($p < 0.01$). As the content of the two sub-corpora is quite similar, I choose to use the 6.63 value to make sure the probability of randomness is very low (less than 1 percent). As expected, the higher the log-likelihood value, ‘the more significant the difference between the two frequency scores’ (Rayson, 2016).

Comparing the top 50 keywords of the P92 and RG sub-corpora would be very time-consuming, thus, due to my previous experience with the content of the CEW15 corpus, I have chosen 10 commonly used keywords for further statistical examination which are directly relevant to the careers services and their role and the notion of employability. Table 61 shows the keywords under examination, the frequency for each sub-corpus, their expected frequencies and an indication for their over (+) and under (-) use, while the final column shows the log-likelihood score.

	Selected keywords	Fr. P92	Fr. RG	expected frequencies		Over/under-use	LL score
1	employability	2198	1826	1387.75	2636.25	+	680.43
2	internship	501	2328	975.64	1853.36	-	393.78
3	support	2123	2401	1560.19	2963.81	+	296.61
4	volunteering	1412	1403	970.81	1844.19	+	290.73
5	placement	1318	1484	966.32	1835.68	+	186.93
6	employment	1398	1759	1088.75	2068.25	+	129.27
7	help	2712	4213	2388.22	4536.78	+	65.71
8	experience	2694	5675	2886.21	5482.79	-	19.76
9	vacancies	917	1980	999.09	1897.91	-	10.44

10	skills	3519	6511	3459.04	6570.96	+	1.58
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Table 61 - Statistical significance between keywords from the RG and P92 sub-corpora

The results show that most of the frequency differences found in these keywords are statistically significant. For example, the most statistically significant frequency differences are observed in the keywords ‘employability’, ‘internship’, ‘support’, and ‘volunteering’. On the other hand, the difference observed in the noun ‘skills’ is not significant ($LL < 6.63$). In particular, the keywords ‘employability’, ‘support’, ‘volunteering’, ‘placement’, ‘employment’, and ‘help’ is over (+) used in the post-1992 corpus. On the contrary, ‘internship’, ‘experience’ and ‘vacancies’ are under (-) used or more frequently used in the RG sub-corpus. This shows, that although the content of the two sub-corpora is quite similar, there are signs of difference in the two CSs’ language use when central careers notions, such as ‘employability’, are examined. The three main themes raised from the keywords presented in Table 61, concern the notion of employability, the placements, internships and work experience ‘offered’ to students, and the careers services’ ‘helping’ and ‘supporting’ role. These are further examined in sections 3.3-3.5 below.

3.3 Employability

As shown in Table 61, the word ‘employability’ displays the most statistically significant difference between the keywords extracted by the two sub-corpora with a log-likelihood score of 680.43 ($LL > 6.63$). For reasons explained in chapters 1 and 2, ‘employability’ is considered a central concept when it comes to careers guidance in HEIs. Since the two corpora are specialised in careers services discourse within the HE setting, such a huge difference in the use of this term by the two university groups necessitates further examination. As already mentioned in chapter 6, the term ‘employability’ is used by all 58 universities. It was found that in the CEW15 corpus, ‘employability’ is regularly used in the services’ titles (‘careers and employability service’), their professional titles (‘careers and employability adviser’), the careers resources offered (‘careers and employability library’) and the events organised (‘careers and employability fairs’) (Chapter 7.2).

Interestingly, when examining the 2-grams of ‘employability’ on the left sorted by Range, we see that the noun phrases ‘employability service’,

'employability team', 'employability centre', and 'employability adviser' are more commonly used in the post-1992 corpus than in the RG corpus:

2-grams	P92 (34 HEIs)			RG (24 HEIs)		
	Freq	Range	% of HEIs	Freq	Range	% of HEIs
employability service	276	14	41	66	4	17
employability team	226	13	38	72	4	17
employability centre	64	8	24	8	4	17
employability adviser	64	7	21	0	0	0

Table 62 - 2-grams of 'employability' on the left (P92 and RG)

Thus, Table 62 shows that post-1992 universities use the term 'employability' more often in the services' professional titles than RG universities. This can also be manually confirmed when looking at the 58 careers services websites that are taken into consideration for this study. Specifically, the term 'employability' is used by 18 of the 34 ex-polytechnics (53%) and seven of the 24 RG universities (29%). When it comes to professional titles, a search of the term 'employability adviser*' in both sub-corpora shows that there are 104 concordance hits (of which 57 derive from one university (P1)) in the P92 corpus (used by seven universities), and none in the RG corpus.

In chapter 6 we have seen that 'employability' is presented as a central theme to both RG and P92 universities. The fact that more post-1992 CSs display their focus on 'employability' in their services' titles could mean that these universities aim to project an employability-focused direction to its prospective and current students. This could also be the result of competition between universities for the attraction of students especially since student 'choice' is of great importance to the universities' future. On the other hand, as was discussed in the introduction of this chapter, and chapters 2.3 and 5.4, RG universities are described as 'elite' institutions and their reputation as 'old' and 'respectable' institutions influence student 'choice'. Thus, it could be claimed that although 'employability' is a central concept to all HEIs, it may not be necessary for RG universities to use this concept to differentiate themselves from the competition.

However, when it comes to placing the responsibility of finding a job and becoming employable to students, both groups regularly and commonly use the phrase 'your employability'. As observed in chapter 6 (Table 17), the possessive

determiner ‘your’ is a strong collocate of ‘employability’ (‘your employability’) in the CEW15 corpus and it usually follows verbs such as ‘boost’, ‘demonstrate’, ‘develop’, ‘improve’, or ‘support’. The 2-grams of ‘employability’ on the right, show that both groups commonly and frequently use the phrase ‘your employability’ (33 of the 34 P92 universities and 23 of the 24 RG universities) when followed by the verbs mentioned above. In addition, the adjective ‘employable’ is used by 21 P92 (62%) and 16 RG universities (67%). Students are asked to become ‘more employable’ (see also chapter 6) by almost half of the universities in each group (16 P92 and 12 RG).

3.4 Placements, internships, and work experience

When looking closely at the keywords presented in Table 61, we see that many of them represent the act of working through volunteering or by taking training-level positions such as placements, internships or work experience (‘internship’, ‘volunteering’, ‘placement’, ‘experience’). An examination of these keywords’ 2-grams in each sub-corpus shows that both post-92 and RG universities use common noun phrases to talk about placements, internships, volunteering, and work experience (Table 63).

2-grams	P92 (34 HEIs)			RG (24 HEIs)		
	Freq	Range	% of P92	Freq	Range	% of RG
graduate internships	54	14	41	67	15	63
summer internships	34	13	38	117	18	75
paid internships	27	10	29	50	18	75
internship programme	36	16	47	239	20	83
internship opportunities	43	14	41	102	21	88
work placements	114	28	82	126	20	83
work placement	79	21	62	151	20	83
placement opportunities	79	22	65	69	16	67
work experience	1022	34	100	2574	24	100
relevant experience	35	19	56	88	15	63
valuable experience	33	15	44	48	19	79
practical experience	31	15	44	51	13	54
volunteering opportunities	182	30	88	154	18	75
volunteering experience	22	13	38	19	8	33

Table 63 - 2-grams of ‘internship’, ‘volunteering’, ‘placement’, ‘experience’ (left and right) (P92 and RG)

We see that ‘work experience’ is discussed by all 58 universities. P92 universities explain that ‘work experience is’: ‘essential’; ‘invaluable’; ‘particularly important’,

and ‘very valuable’, while RG universities note that it is: ‘a key advantage’; ‘a vital factor’; ‘an excellent way to help you stand out from the crowd’; ‘crucial’; ‘extremely important’, and ‘highly valued’.

In addition, besides the commonly used noun phrases which describe internships ('graduate', 'summer'), and experience ('relevant', 'valuable', 'practical', 'volunteering'), if we search the concordance lines we see that both RG and P92 universities offer graduate internship schemes (Table 1, Appendix 9). However, it seems that more RG universities offer or advertise more of such schemes/programmes than P92 universities. This, again, could be explained if we take into consideration the 'reputation' factor discussed in chapter 2.3.3. The 'reputation' of HEIs is taken into consideration not only by students but also by employers and governments (Zemsky, 2005, cited in William, 2001, p. 80). Many employers 'are keen to recruit' students attending prestigious institutions (Ehrenberg, 2002, cited in Brown, 2011, p.28), the same could be claimed for offering placements, internships, or work experience in their organisations and businesses.

In section 3, I mentioned that for reasons of space, one of the observations that came from the corpus analysis could not be included. This was when I examined the symbol '£' in the CEW15 corpus with a focus on those concordance lines that include the amount of money followed by the Value Added Tax ('£X + VAT'). The results show that this structure is found 157 times in the corpus used by 18/58 universities (3 P92 and 15 RG). The analysis revealed that more RG universities (63% RG and 9% P92 universities), charge employers for various services, such as attending events, recruiting visits, sponsorship and exhibition at job fairs, advertisements, and targeted email to name a few (see also Appendix 10 for a full list on charges). Some 'offers' are even advertised as 'sold out' which means that employers do attend these events and pay what could be considered a good deal of money (prices vary from £50-£1,500 depending on the service/offer), in order to attract prospective candidates from these universities.

Another example of this observation comes when looking closely at the concordance lines from Table 63 presented above. Universities from both groups mention their collaboration with the bank Santander. According to Santander's official website, the bank has established a programme, the Santander

Universities programme, which aims to promote ‘a culture of enterprise and university innovation’ (Santander, 2017). In particular, the bank states:

Banco Santander is developing initiatives related to the promotion of a culture of enterprise and innovation, university digitalisation, internationalisation and employability. The objective is to help people and businesses prosper. (*ibid*)

Santander thus provides financial aid to universities which in turn fund companies in order to offer paid internships to their students. For example, an RG university explains:

The intern will work as an employee on a fixed term basis for a three month period, or part-time over approximately six months

Santander will provide match funding through the University of £1500 towards the project (approximately 50%) with the remaining cost to be met by the company RG6

It should be noted that according to the information provided in the Santander website, 23 of the 24 RG universities (96%), are included in this programme, while only 18 of the 34 post-1992 universities (53%) are able to offer such internships to their students.

Another interesting observation in the results presented in Table 63, is that ‘internships’ are described as ‘paid’. The noun phrase ‘paid internships’ is more commonly used by RG than P92 CSs (29% of P92 and 75% of RG). The fact that ‘internships’ or ‘work experience’ are premodified to indicate payment is an interesting finding on its own. In fact, both groups use ‘paid’ as a premodifier of ‘work’, ‘internship(s)’, ‘employment’, ‘placement’, ‘job(s)’, or ‘position’, to name a few. If we look at the noun phrase ‘paid internships’, both groups mention in their websites that they ‘offer’, ‘arrange’, or ‘advertise’ ‘paid internships’ (Appendix 3-60). One of the reasons for advertising ‘paid internships’ could be to differentiate these from voluntary work experience which is also frequently advertised by both groups. ‘Volunteering opportunities’ are regularly discussed by the majority of careers services (30 P92 and 18 RG), as these are considered a good way to get work experience that would enrich HE students’ CVs and thus provide more chances in being employed after graduation (‘volunteering’ is also discussed in chapters 6-7).

When looking closely at the concordance lines, however, in the RG sub-corpus there are examples where ‘paid internships’ are presented as an ‘award’:

TARGETjobs: Undergraduate of the Year - **annual competition to win a paid internship** with leading employers, trips abroad, and the chance to be recognised as the very best.... They offer a **range of prizes**, including money, a holiday and a **paid internship**. RG15

Each award is sponsored by a prominent graduate recruiter who provides a **fantastic prize** for the winner, including a **paid internship**, trips abroad and other exclusive opportunities RG16

Global Investment Banking Valuation Olympiad - annual investment banking competition. **The leader of the winning team** receives a one-month **paid internship** as well as a cash prize for the winning team. RG15

The Mayor's Low Carbon Entrepreneur 2015 is open for entries until 16 February 2015. Did you know, just by entering, **you could win** one of up to six **paid internships** with competition sponsors Siemens? RG13

(competition by Vodafone) After judging, **the team awarded first each win** an iPad and an eight week **paid internship** at our UK headquarters in Newbury, Berkshire. RG9

The examples displayed above show that some organisations, such as TARGETjobs or Vodafone, organise competitions which are reproduced by the CSs, that present employment as a prize next to 'trips', 'holidays', 'cash', or even 'iPad(s)'. And these are advertised by 'prestigious' HEIs that charge students more than £9,000 per year for their education. This fact highlights the importance and necessity of work experience (paid or unpaid) for HE students who are looking for employment after graduation.

3.5 Help and support

In addition to the keywords that refer to the notion of employability and work experience, Tables 2 and 3 (Appendix 9) show that the RG and P92 careers services regularly use the verbs 'help' and 'support' to refer to their clients ('help you', 'support you', 'support your'). For example, students are offered help to 'find': 'a (part-time) job', 'a placement'; 'opportunities'; 'work experience', etc. They are offered 'help' to 'develop' their 'skills' and 'employability', their 'business ideas', 'strategies', and 'techniques' or to 'identity' 'career paths/pathways', 'companies' and 'organisations', 'skills', and 'strengths'. Table 2 (Appendix 9) also shows that the verb 'support' is usually combined by both groups with other lexical items such as 'advice', 'guidance', 'help', and 'information'.

It was already mentioned in chapter 7 that the modal verbs that usually precede the verb 'help' are 'will' and 'can'. As shown in Table 2 (Appendix 9), this

is also the case for the verb ‘support’. This shows that almost all universities (24 RG and 33-34 P92) express certainty and their ability and willingness to ‘help’ their clients. Also, the majority of universities (16-17 P92 and 12-16 RG) state their ability to ‘support’ them. In addition, in chapter 7.7.2, there was a discussion about the pattern ‘we are here to help’, and here we can see that this pattern is used by 11 RG and 11 P92 CSs. This semantic pattern (‘we are here to help you * your *), is used by both university groups. Thus, the examination of the lexical items ‘help’ and ‘support’, which are particularly significant in the CSs’ discourse (as shown in chapter 7), are used quite similarly by both RG and P92 careers services.

3.6 N-grams

Moving on from the analysis of keywords, the comparison of the two groups’ n-grams aims to detect the most commonly used phrases in the two sub-corpora. Tables 4-8 (Appendix 9) present the 2-7-grams of the P92 and RG sub-corpora. As I have included the first 10 n-grams of each group sorted by Range, it might seem that some of these phrases are not used by both groups. I have, however, checked the corpora and all of these phrases are commonly used by both the RG and P92 careers services.

The results show that the 3-4-5-grams of each sub-corpus are quite similar. Both groups use phrases that focus on the ‘range’ and ‘number’ of services or resources offered (‘a wide range of’, ‘a number of’), the assistance offered (‘to help you’, ‘advice and guidance’), speculations on the users interests or wanted actions (‘if you would like to’, ‘if you are interested in’, ‘if you want to’). In particular, in Tables 5 and 6 in Appendix 9 (4 and 5-grams), we see that conditional *if* clauses are frequently used by the majority of the universities. In the CSs’ context, these clauses aim to refer users to more specialised and personalised sources of information, for example: ‘if you would like to book an appointment’; ‘if you would like to learn more’; ‘If you want to find out more’, or ‘if you have any further questions’.

Although the 3-4-5-grams show similarities in the phrases used by the two groups, Tables 7 and 8 (6 and 7-grams, Appendix 9), show that some expressions are used more commonly/regularly by P92 or RG careers services. For example, P92 universities seem to mention more often the *Destination of*

Leavers from Higher Education (DLHE) survey. In chapter 5.4.1, there was a brief discussion about the DLHE, its link to ‘employability’ and its importance to HEIs and their CSs. Even though P92 CSs use the full name of the survey more often than RG CSs, when performing a search on the acronym DLHE, we see that the majority of both groups mention the survey in their websites (P92: Frequency 147, Range 26 (76%), and RG: Frequency 115, Range 18 (75%). Some examples of this survey’s importance for both groups are displayed below:

This information is really useful to the University and also helps inform current and prospective students about potential career paths following their studies.
P22

Why do we do it? We have to, as all universities are legally required to provide the results of the survey, but also because we want to. The results of the survey are useful for the University when reviewing courses and developing our services. P1

Results of the survey also provide Key Information Set (KIS) and Labour Market Information (LMI) data, and contribute to Londonmet’s ratings in the **various league tables**. P17

The data is supplied to the Higher Education Statistics Agency and contributes to the **Key Information Statistics (KIS)** available on the **Unistats website**.
P22

The DLHE Survey is of great importance to the University as the outcomes help to secure both Durham’s position in **University League Tables** and our future funding. RG5

All UK universities must take part in the DLHE survey, and the results feed into a number of different places, including **university league tables** and the **Unistats websites**. RG13

This survey is called the Destinations of Leavers from Higher Education (DLHE) and helps to determine general employment and study outcomes from courses and influences **University league tables**. RG4

It is interesting to note that both groups mention the general impact of the DLHE survey in their course design or the students’ future careers choices, but also mention that this survey affects or ‘influences’ their position in the University League Tables and the data at the *Unistats* website (see chapter 5.4.1 for an example of the *Unistats* website).

Furthermore, it is interesting to note that in the 3-grams list of RG universities (Table 4, Appendix 9), there are 71 3-grams phrases used by all 24 RG universities (and 69 used by 23 universities), whereas in the P92 sub-corpus there are only nine 3-grams phrases used by all 34 universities (and 17 used by

33 universities). This shows that the RG universities' use of language is rather homogenous. It shows that these universities are part of a group which follows similar patterns of language. On the other hand, the post-1992 universities are not an 'official' group. Due to their commonly shared historical background (all 58 created as polytechnics in the 1960s and changed to university status in 1992), I created the post-1992 'group'. However, in reality, it must be noted that they do not belong to a single, official HE group. This could be an indication of this fact.

The similarities in the language found when examining the RG sub-corpus 3-grams, can raise the question of whether the RG careers services follow common, in-group guidelines that would justify such homogeneity in their linguistic choices. An indication of such collective action can be found in the RG website and its section entitled 'For business'. One of its subsections ('Recruiting our students and graduates'), includes a 'Useful links' list with all 24 RG universities' careers services' websites (Russell Group, 2017).

4. Summary

As explained at the beginning of this chapter, there was a general assumption that post-1992 universities are more entrepreneurial-focused than the 'old', 'research-led' universities. Since this thesis examines the language used by CSs in UK universities, it was deemed necessary to include a comparison between the 'old' and 'newer' universities' CSs. Thus, this final analytical part aims to search for similarities and differences in the language used by Russell Group and post-1992 universities.

The comparison starts with phrases/patterns that were already closely examined in chapters 6-7. First of all, phrases that represent the idea of a different working world ('world of work'), its market ('job market'), and the metaphor of 'job-hunting', are used by both 'groups'. Both 'groups' also ask their students to differentiate themselves from the competition. RG universities, however, place more emphasis on the idea of 'competition' in the 'job market'. Both university groups also display their 'helping role' and their collaborations with businesses and organisations while almost all RG CSs highlight in their websites what 'employers are looking for'. Furthermore, the extraction of the top 50 keywords lists from each sub-corpus shows that the use of key lexical and grammatical

items is almost identical. The top 50 keywords sorted by Keynes can be categorised into the following main topics: careers, services, employment, job-searching, web, HE, and participants.

The similarity in the keywords of the two sub-corpora was expected since these are both specialised corpora representing the CSs discourse. To look closely at the CSs linguistic choices, I decided to perform a statistical test in ten commonly used keywords that are directly relevant to the notion of employability, work experience, and the CSs' role. The examination of their 2-grams shows that P92 CSs use the word 'employability' in their professional titles more often than RG CSs. This could mean that the management of these universities considers the notion of employability as very important to the representation of their careers services. One that could also assist them in 'standing out' from the, supposedly, 'research-led' competition. On the other hand, it could be claimed that the characterisation of Russell Group universities as 'elite' and their 'prestigious' reputation, is enough to affect student 'choice' although we have seen that 'employability' is central to RG universities as well.

When it comes to 'placements, internships, and work experience', these are deemed 'essential', 'critical', and 'invaluable' by both 'groups'. However, RG universities advertise more internship/placement schemes. This could also be attributed to the 'reputation' factor and the belief that employers prefer recruiting from 'prestigious' universities. An example that supports this claim is the fact that more RG CSs advertise various charged recruiting services offered to employers, in addition to the evidence presented in this chapter about the participation of the majority of RG universities in the Santander programme (23 RG universities and 18 post-1992 universities). Interestingly, the analysis also shows that internships can be characterised as 'paid' by both 'groups', while RG universities also include some examples in their web pages of organisations that award 'paid internships' as a 'prize' next to 'holidays', 'cash', and 'iPad(s)'. This can be considered an alarming development as it can affect (if it has not already affected), the way young people perceive employment.

Also, the results of the n-grams analysis show that both P92 and RG CSs use quite a similar language. In particular, the comparison of 3-4-5-grams shows the groups' emphasis on the 'number' and 'variety' of services and assistance offered. In the 6 and 7-grams tables, we can identify some differences. For

example, the full title of the *Destination of Leavers from Higher Education* survey is mentioned more often by P92 universities. However, when searching for the acronym (DLHE), it can be noted that both universities highlight the importance of this service to their universities, their students' choices, and its effect in their position in the league tables. Finally, the results of the 3-grams list show that RG universities' use of language is rather homogenous. This can point us to the idea that RG universities might follow common in-group guidelines when it comes to the language used and practices followed by their CSs.

Chapter 9. Conclusion

1. Introduction

In the concluding chapter of this study, I revisit the main aims and research questions presented in chapter 1 and provide short answers before I move on to a summary of the main findings from the three analytical chapters (Chapters 6-8). In the final sections, I have included a discussion on denaturalisation and praxis, the contribution of this thesis, the implications of the findings, the limitations of the research, and some recommendations for future work.

2. Research questions and the main findings of this study

In the introduction (Chapter 1), I presented the overarching research question of this thesis: *How do the careers services use language to inform and ‘support’ their clients?* This question was divided into three sub-questions that aimed to capture the representation of the services’ main field of ‘expertise’, that is the job-seeking process. Hence, the first two research questions explored the ‘reality’ presented to students, the representation of the notion of ‘employability’, and the CSs’ role. Since universities in the UK are not a united and homogenous group, the third question explored the similarities and differences in the language used by two university groups in the UK, namely the post-1992, or ex-polytechnics, and the Russell Group. Thus, the research questions were formed as shown below:

RQ 1. What kind of job-seeking ‘reality’ is being presented by the careers services to their users?

RQ 2. What is the nature of the careers services’ professional role?

RQ 3. Are there similarities and differences in the language used by Russell Group and post-1992 universities’ careers services?

The main argument of this thesis is that the language used by careers services in UK universities reproduces and promotes neoliberal ideology. In essence, the ‘production’ of employable graduates does not create more employment opportunities. Thus, the notion of employability could be seen as a pseudo-solution, a pseudo-therapy to the ‘real’ social problem of (youth) unemployment

and fierce competition. If I was asked to provide a one or two-sentence answer for each of these research questions, I would conclude that:

- A1.** The job-seeking reality is presented as ('fiercely' or 'highly') 'competitive'. The notion of employability is promoted as the remedy to this problematic reality.
- A2.** The careers services stress their helpful and supportive role to (confused) students who are looking for employment. The analysis shows that careers advisers act as the 'enablers' of student action and besides their counselling role, they also hold educational and therapeutic roles.
- A3.** The language used by post-1992 and Russell Group careers services is quite similar. There are, however, some differences in the language that could be viewed as signs of competition between them and a preference of the job market towards a particular 'group' of graduates from 'elite' institutions.

The methodology chosen for the analysis of the CSs' discourse was corpus-based critical discourse analysis. Emphasis was given to Fairclough's 'three dimensions of discourse', as this framework was deemed particularly useful for understanding the discourse of CSs and due to its links between the data, the social actors that produce, reproduce and encourage such uses of discourses, the targeted audience, and the socio-political and economic circumstances involved. The CDA methodology alone, however, would not have been able to handle the volume of linguistic data aimed to be analysed in this project. Thus, the thesis focused on the powerful tools and methods of CL and followed the corpus-based critical discourse analysis analytical model comprised of four stages (identification, interpretation, explanation, evaluation) (Baker and McEnery, 2015, pp.2–3). The use of CL tools and methods allowed the examination of more than 2.6 million words deriving from 58 UK university careers websites. The selection of 58 CSs' websites, namely 24 RG and 34 P92, provided a suitable and satisfactory dataset which has given the space for general claims about the findings. The dataset was analysed as one large corpus (CEW15), and as two sub-corpora (RG and P92).

The broader social context of this thesis was discussed in chapters 1 and 2. The first chapter presented the general problem this thesis aims to address, namely the marketisation of HE. The promotion of the notion of employability by powerful groups, such as governments, HEIs and their careers services, has played a huge factor in my focus on the discourse of careers services. Employability is generally used as the solution to (youth) unemployment and the inaccessible and competitive ‘graduate job market’. Individuals are expected to develop, enhance, improve, or update their skills, become flexible and adaptable, in order to be employed and keep being employed. The individualisation of the students’ responsibility to promote, ‘market’ or ‘sell’ themselves to prospective employers is a topic that emerges in different parts of the corpus-based analysis. In chapter 2, I reviewed the key educational acts and policies produced in the UK since the 1980s. In particular, I focused on the abolition of the binary line, the introduction and rises of undergraduate tuition fees, competition between HEIs in the UK, the representation of a ‘competitive’ world reality, and the role of students as customers and ‘powerful’ actors. The following paragraphs aim to return the reader to the main broader context of the marketisation of HE and the individualisation of the students’ responsibility to enter the ‘graduate job market’ successfully.

The governments that produced the acts and policies reviewed in chapter 2 highlight change in society and the economy, the HE scene, and the changing role of HEIs, students and employers. The world is described as ‘fast-changing’ and ‘increasingly competitive’ (DfES, 2003). The role of HEIs is described as ‘critical’ to the country’s ‘national ability to master the process of change’ (DfES, 2003, p.2). Knowledge can be used by states, businesses, and individuals for ‘wealth creation’ (DfES, 2003, p.2) or ‘economic growth’ (BIS, 2009, p.7), which appears to be the ultimate goal of those attending HE. The changes in the HE scene – such as the increase of student numbers, the introduction of tuition fees, and the involvement of businesses and employers in the educational process – aimed to lead universities towards the ‘new’ marketized/entrepreneurial ‘reality’.

The corpus-based analysis shows that universities and careers services adopt similar representation of the employment ‘reality’. The graduate ‘job market’ is generally described as ‘extremely competitive’, ‘fiercely competitive’, or ‘highly competitive’. Competition in the graduate job market is highlighted in

terms of its growing size, its borderless nature, and quality. As pointed out in chapter 2, HEIs are expected to assist in the ‘process of change’ and the preparation of ‘people for the increasingly complex challenges of the modern workplace by teaching skills and instilling intellectual curiosity and self-confidence’ (BIS, 2009, p.7). HE policy also projects the employers’ opinion on the readiness of HE graduates for the ‘world of work’. Employers note ‘significant’ ‘skills-gaps’ in those who graduate and enter the job market and ask for ‘graduates whose skills are better fitted for work’ (DfES, 2003, p.17). Preparation for the ‘world of work’ emerges as a key theme from the close analysis of concordance lines in their context. The careers services inform students that preparation for the ‘world of employment’ while at university is ‘vital’. They also refer to it as a ‘transition’ or a ‘journey’ that has different steps and stages. This ‘journey’, however, is not easy or straightforward. According to the CSs, there is a ‘daunting’ ‘gap’ between the ‘real world’ – namely the world of employment – and the world of education. Volunteering, work placements, and internships are considered ideal for ‘bridging the gap’. Students are encouraged to ‘stand out from the crowd’ and to become ‘effective’ ‘job-hunters’. Individuals are thus expected to take action to find their own individual solution to the social problem of ‘fierce competition’ in the (graduate) job market.

In addition, UK governments highly recommended the involvement of employers in the development and delivery of HE courses and degrees (see, for example, DfES, 2003; Browne, 2010; BIS, 2011). Universities were urged to ‘look again at how they work with businesses across their teaching and research activity’ (BIS, 2011, p.6). This collaboration aims to ‘ensure that students gain the knowledge and skills they need to embark on rewarding careers’ (BIS, 2011, p.33). University careers services advertise that they offer a wide range of services, resources, workshops, events, and sessions. As expected, these events focus on the development of employability skills. I also pointed out some examples in the corpus where the services talk about ‘career development modules’ and ‘employer led career skills workshops’. Employers have an active role in the resources that are on offer and the events organised by some of the careers services (‘employer-led events’, ‘employer-led skills sessions’, ‘employer mock interviews’), but they are also actively involved in the ‘design’ and ‘delivery’ of university courses and modules. Moreover, students are encouraged to ‘talk’

to employers who can ‘recommend’ specific courses. Employers are thus encouraged by universities to provide input to their courses, degrees, career development modules and skills workshops but they are also invited to get involved in the students’ choices.

In the complex ‘modern workplace’, students are encouraged to become employable and acquire the skills employers want. HE policy highlights and at the same time legitimises the difficult and complex nature of the ‘modern workplace’ and offers a solution that depends on ‘individual’ effort. Governments promote the idea that the individual is responsible for their own development and well-being. This idea agrees with neoliberal thought and rhetoric. Individuals are being ‘persuaded’ that they are the ‘primary beneficiaries’ of HE (Browne, 2010). They are asked to take care of the ‘burden of HE’ and pay more than £9,000 per year for their degree. HE provides ‘choice’ to the student-customer, but it is the responsibility of the latter to use this provision ‘wisely’ and to meet their own individual ‘needs’. This is one of the key points promoted in these documents; the idea of HE as a ‘private good’ that mainly benefits the individual and less society (see, for example, Browne, 2010). The corpus-based analysis has shown that UK universities encourage students to become ‘employable’ and ‘differentiate’ themselves from the ‘crowd’. In other words, students are responsible to ‘sell’ and ‘market’ themselves effectively to employers.

Careers services are given the role of expert professionals who are there to support HE students towards this difficult time. They advertise that they ‘know’ what employers want from HE graduates. In brief, the careers services suggest that if HE students focus on ‘gaining’, ‘developing’, ‘enhancing’, ‘improving’ their skills while at university, they will become more employable and earn an advantage in ‘securing’ a job after graduation. The notion of employability is thus being promoted as the solution to the constantly changing global workplace and the competitive job market. Employability is commonly described as ‘a set of achievements [...] that make graduates more likely to gain employment and to be successful in their chosen occupations, which benefits themselves, the workplace, the community and the economy’ (Yorke, 2006, p.8). It is also defined as ‘the ability to keep the job one has or to get the job one desires’ (Rothwell and Arnold, 2007, p.25). Thus, like HE, employability is considered beneficial for the individual. As mentioned before, Universities have accepted their role as

institutions that prepare HE students for the world of work. As shown in chapter 6, some universities claim that ‘employability is’: ‘at the heart of everything we do’; ‘central to our academic approach’; ‘our priority’, or ‘at the core of all courses’.

Even though the notion of employability is generally promoted as a positive development for the students’ future, as pointed out in chapter 2, there is a critical interpretation of this notion. This interpretation perceives employability as a problematic concept that reinforces the ‘new’ social arrangement where the state and employers are not responsible for the citizen’s well-being and prosperity (Chertkovskaya et al., 2013). On the contrary, individuals are expected to develop, enhance, improve, or update their skills, become flexible, adaptable, and employable. It is thus used ‘as an explanation, and to some extent a legitimisation, of unemployment’ and this use of discourse ‘positions the citizen as responsible for her/his own employment, and less emphasis is placed on structural inequalities and problems in the labour market’ (Fejes, 2010, p.90). Universities and their careers services state that they are ‘here to help’ their students and guide them through this challenging ‘reality’. For example, they ‘help’ students: explore their careers options; make plans and decisions; meet their ‘needs’; realise their potential; market themselves to employers, and become competitive.

However, a close analysis of the language used in the careers services’ websites shows that although these services aim to assist students with their ‘journey’ from education to employment, students are expected to become responsible for their own success. The analysis highlights some examples of the careers services’ managing action (van Leeuwen, 1999), which means that besides their guiding and ‘helping’ role, careers advisers also act as the enablers of students’ self-beneficiary actions (‘we aim to help you enhance your employability’). Thus, HE students are represented as ‘powerful’ actors who can change their future. Universities and careers services represent this development as ‘empowerment’. As further discussed in sections 3 and 4 in this chapter, this representation is misleading.

The results of my corpus-based analysis show that it is possible that the language used by careers services can affect the students’ understanding of the workplace ‘reality’ and their own role in it. Sections 3–5 present in more detail the corpus findings and my interpretation and evaluation of the results. Section 6

also highlights the importance of the denaturalisation of the careers services' discourse.

3. Findings from chapter 6 (RQ1): The job-seeking ‘reality’ presented to students by the CSs

To answer the first research question, in chapter 6 the linguistic analysis was structured in two sections. The first section examined the job-searching reality and the second focused on the notion of employability and skills. First of all, the examination of the noun ‘world’ aimed to capture the ‘worldview’ or ‘reality’ presented to students by the CSs when it comes to finding employment while at university and/or after graduation. Most of the lexical items surrounding the noun ‘world’, focus on the ‘working’ and ‘commercial’ element of life. The CSs inform students that they need to develop an understanding of the business world through volunteering, internships, placements, and work experience.

Preparation for the ‘world of work’ emerges as a key theme from the close analysis of concordance lines in their context. In general, the CSs encourage HE students to prepare themselves for the ‘world of work’. This preparation is described as ‘vital’ and it is marked with the use of language that aims to describe ‘movement’ towards a ‘new’ reality of professional life, and, specifically, their entrance and navigation into the ‘world of employment’. In the corpus, the noun phrase ‘career path’ is regularly used by most of the universities (47 of 58). The movement, however, within this path is not continuous.

According to the careers services, there is a (‘daunting’) ‘gap’ between point A (higher education), and point B (employment) that needs to be bridged in order to bring HE students closer to the ‘real-world’. Following the services’ advice is supposed to prepare students who enter this new reality and unite the two points in their career ‘journey’. ‘Volunteering’, ‘work experience’, ‘placements’, and ‘mentoring schemes’ are considered ideal for bridging the ‘gap’ between graduating university and entering the world of work. It can be claimed that the ‘gap’, or the missing link, between HE and the world of employment, is a social construction created by powerful groups (or the ‘principals’, such as governments and employers). We have seen in some examples of HE policy presented in this thesis that governments take into consideration the employers’ opinion when it

comes to the graduates' 'readiness' for employment. Employers state that they need 'ready-to-work' graduates. Interestingly, instead of filling this 'gap' themselves by providing training to the new members of their teams, HEIs are expected to take this responsibility, train students and provide employable and ready-to-work graduates. In essence, it could be claimed that there is no 'gap' but a natural professional progression: gaining knowledge and putting it into practice. Thus, 'training' for the businesses' needs is, probably, what the services, employers, and governments see as a 'gap'. In general, there seems to be a confusion between 'educating' and 'training' HE students. It also seems that universities have accepted the responsibility for both, but proudly advertise their expertise in the second.

The transition from the world of HE to the world of employment and the difference between these two worlds is further indicated with the use of the adjective 'real' as a premodifier of the noun 'world'. 'Real', which in this case holds a 'selective' function (Tognini-Bonelli, 1993), is the most frequently used premodifier of 'world'. The world of employment is represented as the 'real-world' whereas the contrasting world, that is 'implicitly labelled' as irrelevant or less important, is the 'educational' or the 'theoretical' world.

When looking at 'job' as a premodifier of nouns, the analysis shows that it is mostly used to refer to the 'job market', which is an intangible space where young people are expected to search for employment. The 'job market' is described as 'hidden', 'competitive', 'graduate', or 'global'. In particular, the adjectives 'hidden' and 'competitive', which are the most statistically important collocates of the 'job market', show two different sides of this market. In the 'hidden job market', places are not advertised but covered internally. Responsibility for locating these 'hidden' job opportunities is placed on the individual student who must become 'creative' in order to participate in what is presented as a 'treasure hunt'. On the other hand, those jobs that are publicly advertised are 'highly', or 'fiercely' 'competitive'. Competition is stressed in terms of its quantity, growing size, borderless nature, and quality. The 'fiercely' competitive aspect of the employment market is presented by the CSs as a natural phenomenon; a fact that reinforces the services' emphasis on the students' planning and preparation for entering the 'world of work'.

The noun phrase ‘job hunting’ is frequently used by the majority of the CSs involved in this study. The analysis shows that the ‘job-hunting’ metaphor has become naturalised as it can be found in most of the prestigious online dictionaries. In the OED, it is described as the ‘action of chasing, pursuing, or searching’, either for ‘profit or sport’. Students are given the role of ‘hunter’ and ‘employment’ is presented as the ‘prey’. Being successful in hunting depends on the skills and competencies of the hunter and other general favourable conditions.

Students are being prepared to develop job-hunting strategies and techniques while at university and this is promoted as an act of ‘empowerment’. Taking into consideration the theoretical background of social power relations (Chapter 3), and the fact that students are being charged more than £9,000 per year for their education, their representation as powerful actors in the competitive job market is, at least, misleading. The job market will not stop being ‘competitive’ and ‘fierce’ if HE students become skilful ‘job hunters’. Such use of language supports the idea that failure or lack of ‘success’ in being employed follows the individual and shifts the responsibility from the state and its welfare systems. Another important aspect of this metaphor is that it adds to the isolation of young people, the separation from the general social collective, and the creation of a culture of competition and rivalry between peers. It also renders them responsible for their own ‘survival’.

What is more, ‘in a competitive job market’, young people are asked to ‘stand out from the crowd’, or the ‘competition’. The CSs also encourage students to ‘market’ or ‘sell’ themselves to prospective employers. Such use of language can lead to students accepting and internalising their representation as sellable products. This is, however, only one of the services’ suggestions that is guiding students towards the development of their employable selves.

The notion of employability is at the centre of the careers services’ efforts. As we have seen in the formal definitions of employability, students are presented as the main beneficiaries of this notion. This is an interesting finding considering the employers’ regular comments on the graduates’ skills-gaps, and their requests for ready-to-work, or employable, HE graduates. The suppression, or backgrounding, of employers as social actors (van Leeuwen, 2008) who benefit from the concept of employability is of ideological importance.

On the other hand, employability is generally described as important and central not only to HE students and their development but HEIs as well. The fact that universities proudly announce that employability is at the heart of everything they do, or their priority, is problematic and alarming. This is because, as powerful and influential institutions, universities have the power to assist in the acceptance and legitimation of ideologies, such as the neoliberal ideology that the notion of employability represents. At the same time, other significant benefits for the society are backgrounded, such as the dissemination of knowledge, and the cultivation and betterment of individuals and the community.

The analysis showed that the concept of employability has become integrated into the services and advisers' professional titles, the resources offered, and events organised. Students are encouraged to work towards becoming employable by developing, enhancing, or identifying, for example, their employability skills.

With the use of a multitude of binomial phrases that include the noun 'skills', we have seen, however, that the development of employability skills alone is not enough. These need to be combined with the graduates' personal attributes and qualities, such as 'experience', 'knowledge', 'attributes', 'qualities', 'interests', 'talents', etc. Thus, employers are interested in more than just the students' formal HE qualifications and their employability skills. They are also interested in their successes, their ability to become 'creative', their values, and their general mindset. This shows that the criteria for hiring graduates are very complicated. There are many occasions in the analysis where the CSs highlight what employers want from prospective employees. Thus, employer-centric discourse is often used by the services.

In particular, CSs highlight the skills or competencies employers are looking for, or value. The close analysis of the pattern 'skills that employers', revealed that students must act in order to 'build' the profile that will satisfy the employers' expectations. The analysis also showed that the discourse of CSs is preoccupied with the growth, enhancement, development, improvement, and self-promotion of the students' employability. These steps towards the acquisition of employment are generally characterised as desirable and necessary.

There are several instances of evaluative language when examining the job-searching reality and the concept of employability. Employability is promoted as

the main solution to the issue of competition in the ‘graduate job market’. The development of ‘job hunting strategies’, getting work experience, internships, placements, volunteering, networking, selling and marketing oneself, are surrounded with positively evaluated language and promoted as desirable actions for students who wish to enter the employment market successfully. These linguistic choices foreground the services’ positive evaluation of the solution offered to the problem of youth unemployment.

It was noticed, however, that the evaluative adjectives used to describe the problem, that is the difficulty graduates face when looking for a job, or the ‘undesirability’ of the ‘job market’, is rather lenient and restrained. When comparing the CSs’ linguistic choices (CEW15) against those extracted from the COCA and NOW online corpora, it was found that the negatively evaluated adjectives and expressions used in the online corpora are richer than those selected by the majority of the CSs in UK universities. There are adjectives that describe the job market in a negative but vague way, but also others that present the seriousness of the situation in contemporary job market, such as ‘unjust’, ‘worrying’, ‘struggling’, or ‘poor’. There are also expressions that explain the significance of the situation and highlight the idea of competition. Most importantly, some of these findings present examples of the consequences on young people who are looking for employment. When these instances are compared to the description of the ‘job market’ in the CEW15 corpus, it is clear that the careers services ‘go easy’ on the evaluation of the problematic graduate ‘job market’ and its effects on HE students.

An explanation could be that the services’ role is to motivate students and ‘help’ them compete in the ‘job market’. It should be noted, however, that such ‘help’ is not offered altruistically; universities also benefit from ‘producing’ employable graduates as such results ‘feed’ their reputation and inform the so-called ‘league tables’. Thus, it could be claimed that the success of their graduates is seen as an ‘investment’ in the institutions’ future and prestige. The use of negatively evaluated language, similar to that captured in the COCA and NOW corpora, could deter students from putting effort into building and developing the ‘necessary’ skills, or discourage them from ‘acting’ as the neoliberal system requires them to. However, it was also noted that the ‘job market’ is also positively evaluated in the online corpora. This shows that more

sides or opinions need to be acknowledged. Opinions also depend on the social actors that produce these texts. Nevertheless, the careers services present the ‘fiercely’ competitive ‘job market’ as a natural phenomenon, and there are no signs of critique on the social problem of unemployment and competitiveness in the job market.

4. Findings from chapter 7 (RQ2): The nature of the careers services’ professional role

The key point of interest in chapter 7 was understanding the careers services’ consulting role. The main themes examined included the careers services’ professional role(s), the services, resources and tools offered to students, their ‘helping’ nature, and the promotion of a therapeutic culture and discourse.

The analysis started by searching the collocates of the noun ‘careers’ in order to understand the structure of the CSs and their professional practice. From a large number of collocates, three major categories were distinguished: careers services as a professional body, the places and spaces in which careers advisers act, and careers education. The services are self-represented as a highly professional, organised, multifaceted, and growing organisation.

When it comes to the examination of professionalism and expertise, it was found that the term ‘expert(s)’ is used by the majority of careers services. The services advertise their ‘expertise’ and professional status and invite students to benefit from their ‘expert careers support and guidance’. They are presented as ‘qualified and experienced consultants’, ‘qualified, expert careers consultants, or ‘professionally qualified careers advisers’. The close analysis of concordance lines showed that the services’ use of language aims to establish their position as a professionally qualified occupation, legitimise its practices, and build trust between them and their users. In chapter 3, it was noted that ‘expertise and professionalism’ are established when ‘professionals’ claim possession of ‘exclusive knowledge’. This ‘knowledge’ allows ‘experts’ to provide support, help, guidance, to those who seek professional help.

To capture some instances of the CSs’ claimed ‘expert knowledge’ the clause ‘we know’ was closely analysed. The analysis demonstrated that the services’ ‘knowledge’ focuses on the students’ actions, future plans, and feelings,

and the employer's preferences when it comes to hiring new employees. An important finding deriving from this analytical part is the presupposition of the students' engagement or 'obedience' with volunteering activities alongside their studies and when on holidays. This 'knowledge' represents students as 'disciplined' individuals that aim to concentrate on the development of their employability and skills.

Most importantly, the careers services demonstrate 'exclusive' or 'specialist' knowledge on how the 'job market' works and what employers are looking for from prospective employees. The 'we know' pattern revealed that students need to 'establish' themselves in the 'labour market' and gain 'experience', which is presented as 'vital to stand out in today's competitive job market'. Besides experience, it was found that employers look for 'evidence' of the students' skills and abilities. They also 'value' candidates who 'can demonstrate self awareness'. A further exploration of the phrase 'employers are looking for', revealed that the services' verb choices express familiarity with the employers' preferences. Other processes displayed an understanding of the employers' customs, needs, expectations, and thoughts. General awareness of the employers' customs, routines, or preferences was also evident in the services' use of adverbs.

The second section of this chapter examined the services, resources, and tools offered to students. The 4-word clusters of primary and lexical verbs, which are regularly used by the majority of careers services, showed a great emphasis on the quantity and variety of services, resources, and tools. Moreover, *quantifiers*, (*attributed*) *adjectives*, *plural numerals*, and *numbers* were regularly found in the concordance lines under examination. These are used to underline the plethora of resources and services offered to students.

On the other hand, when looking at those sequences with negative polarity ('we are unable', 'we do not', 'we will not', and 'we cannot'), there were examples in the CEW15 corpus where the CSs claim inability to 'offer' or 'provide' services such as, legal advice on contracts, suitability of opportunities, visa advice, and proofreading or printing services. Also, the CSs state their inability to 'guarantee the quality' or 'accept responsibility for the contents of external websites that are linked to the CSs online spaces. This could be due to the focus on the *quantity* of resources offered which can sometimes make it difficult to assess the *quality* of sources. Most importantly, however, the services explain that they have no

intention of making careers decisions for students ('we cannot tell you what career path you should follow'). This is an important finding and one that could be further examined in a future project, as it shows that careers advisers may be asked by students to directly manage their careers or get involved in their life decisions.

The third section of this chapter examined the 'helping' nature of the careers services' role. To understand the reasons for offering such a great variety of services, resources, and tools to students who are looking for employment, I looked closely at the phraseological pattern *Actor + Process + Goal* (for example, 'we offer a range of services to help...'). The analysis showed that the services' main aim is 'to help', or 'to assist' their clients. Besides the usual actions of assistance expected by CSs, such as help with CVs and applications, the majority of these instances reveal a set of actions expected to be made by the students who wish to be employed.

The services' emphasis on 'helping' students was also found in some of the top most frequently used n-grams (Appendix 6). The use of modal verbs in these patterns ('we can/will help'), expresses the services' volition and confidence in their ability to 'help' HE students. Moreover, these word sequences are commonly followed by the second person pronoun 'you' ('we can help you'), which places students at the *Beneficiary* position of clauses (Halliday, 1994). Focusing on the 'we can help you' pattern, the close analysis of concordance lines indicated a list of the main categories of 'help' that are available to the CSs' clients.

Once again, the necessity of skills development is particularly emphasised. The services express with certainty their ability 'to help' students 'practice', 'develop', 'enhance', 'boost' their skills, and 'learn to sell them effectively' to employers. A combination of the services 'helping' role, their actions, and the reasons provided for the abundance of services and resources offered to students, in addition to the 'job-hunting' metaphor introduced in chapter 6, has led to the creation of an example of the 'job-hunting' stages that students are expected to follow while studying at university (Chapter 7.7.1). As shown by the close analysis of the corpus findings, the CSs promote and are involved in a series of actions that can affect the students' choices and general understanding of the workplace reality.

A closer analysis of the ‘we are here to help (you)’ sequence revealed a socio-semantic pattern, which brought to light the careers services’ ‘enabling’ role. In this pattern, the adverb ‘here’ is figurative, and its use aims to ensure clients that careers advisers are present and available. The services offer an unconditional supporting network, which is also described as a ‘safe place’ for students to ‘be honest’. The services use the ‘we are here to’ pattern to express their unlimited and ‘impartial’ support to their clients during all stages of their career ‘journey’.

In this phraseological pattern, the services take the actor position, highlighting their presence and availability and their general aim to ‘help’, ‘encourage’, and ‘support’ students who are presented as the beneficiaries of the services’ actions. The role of the verb ‘help’ is of particular importance in this pattern as it can act as a trigger of ‘value assumptions’ (Fairclough, 2003, p.56). As Fairclough notes, ‘whatever follows “help to” is likely to be positively evaluated’ (2003, p.173). For example, the sentence ‘we are here to help you: enhance your self awareness’, presupposes that such an action would be beneficial for students.

Furthermore, according to van Leeuwen’s work on ‘managing action’, agents of action could be distinguished in: ‘the agents of the actual activities’, and those who are the ‘instigators’ of actions (1999, p.95). Thus, the careers advisers were found to be the ‘managing agents’ who prompt action, and HE students were the ‘managed agents’ who need to be motivated and/or ‘helped’. This semantic pattern (see Table 56) showed that the ‘expert’ actors perform a supporting or helping action that will not only benefit the client, or patient, but will also enable them to perform a ‘self-empowering’ action that will get them closer to the desired outcome. In essence, the careers services become the enablers of students’ self-beneficiary action. A point that was taken into consideration when it comes to the interpretation of this pattern was the students’ supposed ‘empowerment’.

In chapter 7, it was stated that the provision of ‘job-getting skills’ to ‘dominated social groups’ who are looking for employment, is promoted as ‘empowerment’ (Fairclough, 2015, p.215). This form of ‘empowerment’ which aims to build the students’ confidence and ‘help’ them realise their full potential, was also found in the examination of the CSs discourse. This idea relates to the

general argument of this thesis, namely that such uses of language shift responsibility for a problematic social phenomenon from the state to the individual and their competencies, while at the same time creating the delusion of ‘empowerment’ which will eventually lead to success.

The notion of ‘empowerment’, when referring to ‘dominated social groups’, or the subalterns, is directly linked with the use of therapeutic discourse in various social situations in contemporary life. In fact, therapeutic discourse is one of the discourses that have colonised academia with examples of ‘pastoral care’ offered to HE students (Talbot, 2010, p.77). In addition to ‘job counselling’, the analysis has shown that careers advisers participate in several social practices (van Leeuwen, 2008, p.47). The services’ role is also presented as educational and therapeutic.

The contemporary problematic economy and crisis and its representation by powerful groups, has affected people and their perception of social problems, such as youth unemployment. This development has led citizens to seek ‘individual solutions’ in various forms of ‘therapy, counselling and “helping” services’ (Fairclough, 2015, p.225). This is once more connected with the promotion of the neoliberal way of thinking where individuals are responsible for their own well-being. As mentioned in chapter 3, ‘expertise’ can only exist when a professional claims possession of ‘specialised knowledge’ and this claim is accepted by the ‘subaltern’ (Scott, 2001, p.104). ‘Trust’ is also a necessary factor for the acceptance of professional expertise (*ibid*). HE student job-seekers believe they do not have the necessary skills or knowledge to manage the complicated procedure that will help them find a job. Because of the ‘knowledge-gap’, students place their ‘trust’ in the ‘expertise’ of CSs that will bring them closer to the desired goal.

Examples were presented from the corpus where the services advertised their ‘impartial’ and ‘confidential’ role. Students are offered a ‘safe place’ and are also informed that the CSs ‘are here to help, not to judge’. Such uses of language strongly correlate with the construction of a therapeutic setting where the services’ users are asked to relax, loosen up, and eventually feel free to make a ‘confession’ about their career worries. If students are convinced to use and visit the services, then the ‘diagnosis’ procedure can begin. In a consultation, a careers adviser’s work begins with a ‘diagnosis’ of the ‘problem’, and the aim is

to provide a possible solution, or ‘treatment’. ‘Emotional understanding’ (Fairclough, 2015, p.222) is vital to the consultation process and advisers usually express their sympathy to the problems faced by students which can assist in the creation of a ‘trusting’ space where clients can feel comfortable in sharing their experiences and worries. The CSs have developed a wide range of services, resources, events, and tools that aim to ‘help’ HE students. Still, in the corpus, it was clearly expressed that students need to visit the services in person in order to get proper guidance. In-person communication is described by the services in different ways. Face-to-face meetings, which are highly promoted, can be formal consultations (‘one-to-one confidential consultancy’), or informal meetings (‘one-to-one chat’). Group ‘sessions’, ‘events’, ‘exercises’ are also highly encouraged. This shows that physical presence is essential for the delivery of careers guidance.

The representation of students as ‘confused’ individuals who need assistance in understanding the complicated job-searching reality and the ‘job market’ apparatus is, possibly, realistic. Young people are expected to succeed in this stressful and competitive reality which is controlled by a complicated apparatus handled by powerful groups, or the ‘principals’. The CSs are also in regular contact with students who are looking for assistance. Thus, their representation of students as ‘confused’ must be based on their observations. The origin of the students’ problems, however, is not so accurately represented in the discourse used by the careers services.

This is because, in situations where counselling is involved, the origin of problems is usually presented as ‘internal rather than external’ and there is also a general intention to manage these problems with ‘behavioural changes’ (Fairclough, 2015, p.222). Clients, or patients, are guided towards better understanding themselves. This was also found in the corpus where careers advisers, which were previously described as the ‘enablers’ of student action, invite their clients to ‘realise’ their ‘(full) potential’. There were a number of verbs that described the advisers’ ‘enabling’ actions which aim to ‘help’ students ‘discover’, ‘fulfil’, ‘maximise’, ‘realise’, or ‘unlock’ their hidden ‘potential’. Students are encouraged to ‘increase’, ‘enhance’, ‘improve’ their ‘employability potential’, and to also proceed to ‘behavioural changes’, such as becoming ‘confident’, ‘adaptable’, ‘more self-aware’, or ‘flexible’. It is important to note that these

behavioural attributes are particularly highlighted because they are sought after by employers. When therapy and counselling promotes the idea that ‘social ills’ can be resolved by the ‘hidden potential of individuals’, then these can be considered as ‘ideological practices, which may be in competition with practices of political mobilization based upon the contrary assumption that social ills can be remedied only through social change’ (Fairclough, 2015, p.223). Working towards ‘developing’ skills and becoming ‘employable’ while at university is presented as the solution to the problematic reality faced by HE students and graduates who are looking for employment. As will be pointed out in section 6, this idea, however, needs to be ‘denaturalised’ and challenged more actively.

5. Findings from chapter 8 (RQ3): Similarities and differences in the discourse of P92 and RG CSs’ websites

The final analytical chapter aimed to look at the similarities and differences in the language used by the CSs in two university groups in the UK, namely the post-1992, or ex-polytechnics, and the Russell Group. Chapter 5 pointed out that besides the usual characterisation of ‘old’ and ‘new(er)’ universities, Russell Group and post-1992 universities are also described as ‘prestigious’, ‘traditional’, ‘elite’, or ‘research-led’ (for Russell Group), and ‘less prestigious’, ‘ex-polytechnics’, or ‘vocationally oriented’ (for post-1992). The comparison of the two groups and their practices is common in the academic literature. In the field of (critical) discourse analysis, such a comparison was mentioned, for example, by Fairclough (1993), Mautner (2005), and Mayr (2008). Even though Fairclough believed that the ‘newer’ universities had ‘particularly strong links’ with businesses and were ‘more vocationally oriented than universities’ (1993, p.149), later analyses from Mautner and Mayr have shown that due to their prestigious status, older universities are ‘more actively engaged’ and in fact ‘better placed to pursue entrepreneurial activities’ (Mautner, 2005a, p.109). In addition, due to the ex-polytechnics’ original mission when created in the 1960s, which was to offer ‘higher-level technical and vocational education’ (Tight, 2009, p.103), there is a general consensus that these institutions are more career-focused. Thus, the last analytical chapter of this thesis focused on the comparison of the language used by the CSs of these two university groups.

When comparing ten of the main phrases and patterns that were closely examined in chapters 6 and 7, it became clear that these surfaced due to linguistic evidence from both P92 and RG careers services. For example, the ‘world of work’, the ‘job market’, ‘employability skills’, the services’ helpful nature, the students’ need to ‘stand out’, and ‘what employers are looking for’, are topics that are equally mentioned by both ‘groups’. Competition in the ‘job market’ is also discussed by both groups. However, RG CSs use this phrase more often than P92 universities (58% and 29% respectively of each group). This shows that the idea of ‘competition’ is broadly conveyed to students who attend RG universities despite their ‘prestigious’ and ‘elite’ status, which would supposedly make them ‘stand out’ from the competition.

When it comes to the comparison of each sub-corpora keywords, the results showed that the top 50 keywords (sorted by Keynes) are almost identical with slight variation in the rankings. The main topics deriving from these commonly used noun keywords are ‘careers’, ‘service’, ‘employment’, ‘job-searching’, ‘the web’, ‘HE’, and ‘participants’. Although the two sub-corpora share similar keyword lists, due to their different sizes, it was deemed necessary to perform statistical tests to a sample of these keywords in order to examine whether the differences in frequencies were statistically important. Ten commonly used keywords were selected due to their relevancy to the CSs’ field of ‘expertise’, their role, and the notion of employability.

The results showed that most of the frequency differences found in these keywords were of statistical significance (‘employability’, ‘internship’, ‘support’, and ‘volunteering’). In addition, it was found that some keywords are ‘over’ and ‘under’ used by the two CSs ‘groups’. This shows that although the general content of the two ‘groups’ is quite similar, there are signs of difference in the language used by the RG and P92 CSs. For this reason, the analysis moved further to the examination of the three main themes raised from these keywords, namely ‘employability’, ‘internships, placements and work experience’ that are offered to students, and the CSs’ ‘helpful’ and ‘supportive’ role.

In particular, the word ‘employability’ displayed the most statistically significant difference between the keywords under examination with a log-likelihood score of 680.43 ($LL>6.63$). This was quite a significant difference between the two sub-corpora as both are specialised and representative of the

CSs' discourse. A closer look at the sub-corpora' 2-grams showed that the post-1992 CSs use the term 'employability' more often in their services' professional titles than the RG universities. This could be linked to the idea of student 'choice' and competition between universities for the attraction of more students/customers. However, as shown in this thesis, the notion of employability is key to both RG and P92 universities. Thus, this difference could simply mean that due to their 'prestigious' and 'elite' status, RG universities do not need to display a focus on their graduates' employability, when compared to post-1992 universities, to become competitive and attract more students.

When it comes to the representation of the act of working, the examination of the keywords' ('internship', 'volunteering', 'placement', and 'experience') 2-grams shows that both 'groups' use common noun phrases. For example, the noun phrase 'work experience' was mentioned by all 58 universities. 'Work experience' is presented by both P92 and RG universities as vital, and of key importance. Both 'groups' also offer graduate internship schemes although more RG universities seem to be advertising, or promoting, their schemes than P92 universities. A possible explanation for this could be the Russell Group's 'reputation' factor that was discussed in chapter 2. Not only students but employers and governments, take into account the 'reputation' of HE institutions (Zemsky, 2005, cited in William, 2001, p. 80). Employers 'are keen to recruit' graduates from 'prestigious institutions' (Ehrenberg, 2002, cited in Brown, 2011, p.28). Thus, it could be claimed that employers may also be more keen in offering placements, or internships, to RG graduates.

Evidence that could support this argument was found when looking closely at the '£ + VAT' structure and the collaboration of universities with the bank Santander. In particular, it was found that 63% of RG and 9% of P92 universities charge employers from £50-1,500 depending on the 'offer', for various recruitment events, such as recruiting visits, sponsorship and exhibitions at fairs, advertisements, or targeted emails. Thus, if employers are willing to pay in order to join recruitment fairs or advertise their business to graduates, then it can be assumed that they will employ graduates from their preferred universities, or 'group' of universities. Moreover, CSs advertise their collaboration with the bank Santander, which provides financial assistance to universities for internships. According to the bank's website, from the universities that were under

examination in this thesis, 96% of RG universities and 53% of ex-polytechnics receive financial help from the bank in order to offer internships to their students. This shows that more RG than P92 graduates can gain work experience (which is described as 'vital' by the careers services) and benefit from 'paid internships'.

Interestingly, both 'groups' mention that they 'offer' 'paid' employment or placements. The noun phrase, however, 'paid internships' was found to be more commonly used by RG CSs in their websites (29% of P92 and 75% of RG). Some services reproduce advertisements deriving from organisations, such as TARGETjobs and Vodafone, which present employment ('paid internship(s)'), as a prize placed next to other prizes, such as 'trips', 'holidays', 'cash', or even 'iPad(s)'. This is also an alarming development which stresses the importance of 'work experience' and its possible effects on the way students perceive the act of employment. Hence, projecting employment as a prize can be considered quite a problematic representation.

The third main theme deriving from the comparison of the RG and P92 keywords refers to the services' 'helpful' and 'supportive' role. The verbs 'help' and 'support', which are particularly significant in the CSs' discourse, are regularly used in similar ways by both 'groups'. Both RG and P92 careers services stress their ability to assist students in finding jobs/opportunities and also developing their employability, business ideas, strategies, or identifying 'career pathways', 'skills', and 'strengths'. In fact, almost all universities express their certainty and their ability by using the modals 'will' and 'can' to 'help' their clients. In addition, the semantic pattern ('we are here to help you * your *'), is used by both university groups.

Finally, this chapter examined the similarities and differences in the two sub-corpora n-grams. The results of the corpus analyses show that the 3-4-5-grams of each sub-corpus are quite similar. However, a closer look at the two sub-corpora 3-grams revealed that the RG universities' use of language is rather homogenous. This finding highlighted the fact that these universities are part of an officially established group. The similarities in the 3-grams of RG CSs could indicate that these services follow similar linguistic patterns deriving from specialised guidelines aimed at Russell Group universities' careers counselling.

6. Denaturalisation and praxis

As mentioned above the analysis showed that the role of careers advisers has stretched beyond the counselling sphere and entered the pedagogic and therapeutic fields. Specifically, we have seen that careers advisers act as the ‘enablers’ (or ‘managers’) of student action. In chapter 2, I have also presented a clear link between the UK government, the careers profession, and the notion of employability. We have seen that the UK government displayed its support for the careers profession. It could be claimed that this action contributed to their detachment from the citizens’ well-being and development. The career services see the preparation of HE students for the ‘world of work’ as their ‘obligation’. This idea, however, needs to be challenged. Universities, and by extension their careers services, have accepted the responsibility of ‘producing’ the ‘ready-to-work’ graduates that employers are looking for. Is this, however, an acceptable development?

The fact that ‘employability’ is presented as ‘important’, or proudly announced by some universities’ as a ‘priority’, is problematic and alarming. This is because higher education also contributes to culture (besides innovation and entrepreneurialism), the general education and development of people, and the creation and dissemination of knowledge (with or without practical, or ‘real world’, usage), which is truly beneficial to society, and not just the individual citizen. This side of HE is obscured and backgrounded whereas the neoliberal and marketised ideology is projected as a natural/common-sense development. Thus, universities have joined other influential institutions and organisations, such as the government and the media, in the promotion of ‘employability’ as an essential concept for the students’ development and success in the ‘competitive job market’.

Besides the ‘job-hunting stages’ presented in chapter 7, the corpus-based analysis has shown that students are informed by UK universities’ careers services that they need to:

- develop an understanding and prepare for the ‘world of work’ (volunteering, placements, internships, and gaining work experience while studying, are highly recommended),

- apply the knowledge and the skills gained while at university to the ‘real world’,
- become creative and network to locate ‘hidden’ job opportunities,
- ‘job-hunt’ for those vacancies that are advertised publicly (described as ‘highly’ competitive),
- stand out from the competition/crowd,
- market and sell themselves to prospective employers,
- establish themselves in the job market,
- develop a wide variety of skills and become (more) employable,
- act in order to build the profile employers need,
- unlock their potential and make behavioural changes.

Thus, the main solution/therapy offered to students for the job market dysfunction evolves around the idea that individuals need to ‘invest’ in their employability, develop the skills, unlock their potential, and make the behavioural changes employers are looking for. The fact that students are asked to adjust their educational knowledge, behavioural characteristics, and general focus to suit the employers’ needs, can be viewed as direct interference to their personal development. We have also seen examples where the language used by the CSs instructs young people to see their peers as ‘competition’, encourages them to adopt a ‘survival of the fittest’ culture, and also focus on their individual needs instead, for example, working together as a team for a truly beneficial solution to the problem of ‘high’ or ‘fierce’ competition in the graduate job market.

For the reasons highlighted above, this study encourages and supports the denaturalisation of the careers services’ discourse. The corpus-based discourse analysis and the interpretation, explanation, and evaluation of the results, pointed out that the representation of a ‘fiercely competitive job market’ as a natural phenomenon is problematic. The same can be claimed for the naturalisation of:

- the ‘gap’ between academia and the ‘world of work’,
- ‘job-hunting’,
- the students’ representation as marketable and sellable products, or as customers,
- instructing young people to see their peers as ‘competition’,
- the notion of employability as the only solution to finding employment,
- the universities’ aim to ‘produce’ employable graduates,

- employment described as ‘paid’, or represented as a ‘prize’,
- the employers’ preference over a group of students from ‘elite’ HEIs.

The comprehension of the CSs’ language use and by extension their professional roles and practices and the possible consequences to the HE students’ perception of ‘reality’ and choices, aims to raise awareness which, in turn, could encourage/stimulate social change.

The notion of employability has been presented by governments and other dominant groups as the main solution to (youth) unemployment and the competitive ‘job market’. The UK government’s renouncement of responsibility, when it comes to the economic crisis, the competitive nature of the job market, and the citizens’ well-being, needs to be challenged and addressed as this solution is most likely to serve the needs of dominant groups. In the analytical part, I have pointed out that the notion of employability is misleading. If HE students become more employable and skilful job-hunters, the job market will not stop being competitive and ‘fierce’, nor will this development lead to the creation of more (graduate) jobs. In essence, the notion of ‘employability’ promotes the idea that failure or lack of success follows the individual and not the economy, or the state and its mechanisms. When social problems are aimed to be treated in a ‘purely individual way’, this common-sense attitude sustains ‘unequal relations of power’ as it ‘helps deflect attention away from the idea which would lead to power relations being questioned and challenged’ (Fairclough, 2015, p.107). The ‘idea’ being mainly that ‘there are social causes, and social remedies, for social problems’ (*ibid*), instead of focusing on solutions that place responsibility for a problematic social phenomenon on the individual citizen.

In chapter 3, I pointed out that it is essential to examine whether HE students are offered ‘a range of choices’ when it comes to looking for employment or entering the ‘world of work’. This is because the ‘principals’ restriction – in this case, the ‘principals’ are governments, institutions, or employers – on the students’ choices is considered an ‘act of power’ (Scott, 2001, p.3). If becoming employable is the only available solution offered to students who would like to ‘succeed’ in the ‘competitive job market’ after graduation, then students (the ‘subalterns’) do not have the ‘autonomy in shaping their actions’ (Scott, 2001, p.2), oppose the principals’ interests, and resist. If the ‘freedom to resist’ – to dominant groups and their interests – is the ‘subalterns’ power (Scott, 2001, p.3)

then, for example, what happens to young people who are not willing to conform to the neoliberal or entrepreneurial way?

Besides the role of HEIs, careers services, and students, it should be noted that the role of academic staff is also important. During the last three years that I have been presenting the findings of my research project and discussing the discourse of careers services and the neoliberal ideology with academics who work in the UK and in different parts of the world, the majority of these people's reactions agrees with the general mood against the marketisation of HE. Most, however, also express a feeling of powerlessness against the market forces that have colonised academia, including the students' perception of the role of higher education and its staff. I have also experienced what Mautner calls 'discursive closure' (Deetz, 1992a, cited in Mautner, 2010, p.2), which is the result of 'naturalisation'. In particular,

what naturalisation has done is to make alternative, non-marketised views almost unsayable and, crucially, unthinkable. "That's just the way it is", "you've got to move with the times", or "we call our students customers because that's what they are" is the kind of stereotypical response that forestalls further debate. (Mautner, 2010, p.2)

'Discursive closure' quickly leads to "overfamiliarity and the unquestioned certainty and finally to ideological dogmatism" (Chia and Morgan, 1996, cited in Mautner, ibid), and is a 'perfect shield, and thus the enemy of social change' (ibid). So, what can be done against the powerful and dominant forces of the global market? Can a research project examining the discourse of careers services in university websites bring about social change?

The short answer would be: *By itself*, No. In chapter 4.8, I included a brief discussion on social change and praxis. It was noted that critical discourse analysis can 'inform action to change social life through dialogue with social actors who are in position to undertake such action' (Fairclough, 2015, p.15). Raising awareness on the nature of the careers services' practices, use of language, and its effect to the students' understanding of the job-searching reality and their role in it, is the first step towards a strenuous task. Transformative action and social change are easy to discuss but difficult to achieve. The CDA and CL literature review (Chapter 4.12) has shown that the marketisation of HE and the promotion of neoliberal discourse within academia has been (and still is) widely

criticised for, at least, the past 25 years and since Fairclough's 1993 seminal article. The 'active resistance' of universities and their staff to the 'increasingly hegemonic discourse located in managerialist structural roots' (Trowler, 2001, p.197), is important. The topic of 'active resistance' by academics in HEIs is regularly raised in studies that examine the colonisation of academia by market forces (for example, Trowler, 2001; Webster, 2003; Mautner, 2005 and 2010). Webster, in particular, notes that the universities' lack of resistance to market values is 'surprising' and 'alarming'.

Perhaps it is not as 'surprising' anymore considering the role of 'elite' HEIs and their 'leaders' when it comes to the marketisation of HE. As Eckel (2007, cited in Brown, 2011, p.194) points out, "those best positioned to lead [such] change are the very same institutions that are benefiting the most from the current system of competition". Thus, 'active resistance' and praxis are not expected from the 'leaders' of HEIs (the 'principals') but needs to be initiated and supported by the 'subalterns'. In this case, those academics that oppose the marketisation of HE are included in the category of 'subalterns', together with HE students, as their role, and 'power', has been greatly restricted by the managerial forces within HEIs.

It must be noted, however, that academic resistance towards the global market forces is not only 'theoretical'. A good example for such a claim can be found in the 'Degrowth movement' which is an 'academic association dedicated to research, training, awareness raising and events organisation around degrowth' (degrowth.org). (See Chertkovskaya and Watts (2017) for an example against academic complicity and the notion of employability). Resistance, and raising awareness of the ways 'principals' use language to affect the 'subalterns' lives, is the first step towards social change. To use the discourse of careers services, there is a real 'gap' between raising awareness and supporting/enabling social change for the benefit of the subalterns. This 'gap', however, can be 'bridged' with collective work and an academic association can use its 'expertise' and knowledge to play a key role towards social change.

7. Contribution of the thesis

The thesis explored the main issues around the practices of careers services and advisers in UK universities including the representation of the job-searching reality, competition in the ‘graduate job market’, the notion of ‘employability’, the focus on gaining work experience, developing ‘employability’ and ‘entrepreneurial’ skills, and the different roles held by careers advisers in HEIs. In general, this research project highlights some of the problematic, common-sense ideas that are being promoted by these services and encourages the denaturalisation of the careers services’ discourse. It is, to my knowledge, the first comprehensive examination of the language used by careers services and advisers located within HEIs. It could, therefore, be claimed that this study fills a knowledge-gap in the literature of linguistic studies. It also adds to our understanding of the careers services’ profession, their roles, practices, and the messages conveyed to HE students. In addition, the comparative analysis demonstrated that ex-polytechnics and Russell Group universities use, in general terms, similar careers-related language.

In the literature review of previous linguistic studies on the marketisation of HE (chapter 4), it was highlighted that the colonisation of academia by the market has been a central theme of some academic research over the last three decades. The majority of these studies take a critical stance towards the market forces that now seem to be embedded in the academic management and curricula around the world (for example, Fairclough, 1993; Trowler, 2001; Webster, 2003; Mautner, 2005 and 2010; Askehave, 2007; Zhang and O’Halloran, 2013). This thesis also supports and contributes to these studies. It also challenges (linguistic) studies that view the marketisation of HE education as a ‘natural’ and ‘common-sense’ phenomenon.

Some of the main findings of previous linguistic studies stress the shift in the language used by HEIs towards an ‘entrepreneurial’ and ‘self-promotional’ discourse usually associated with positive semantic prosody. Such entrepreneurial practices, however, are not only applied in institutions. It was noted that these practices also aim to penetrate and shape the individuals’ ‘behavioural’, ‘cognitive’, and ‘emotional’ understanding (Mautner, 2005a, p.106).

As shown in the analytical part, the study of the CSs' discourse offers linguistic evidence that support this claim.

8. Implications of findings

This thesis could be of interest to (critical) discourse analysts and corpus linguists who are interested in the combination of these two linguistic areas of study and its applications in contemporary social issues. The findings could also provide linguistic evidence to inform other academic fields, such as sociology, education, or critical management studies, which focus on the examination of careers services and their practices within academia, and the notion of employability and skills. The main reason for a close examination of the language used by the CSs in UK universities is to denaturalise such discourses and raise awareness of the implications of the language used by these services, and its practitioners, to the students' understanding of their role as job-seekers and employees.

It was already made clear that, in my opinion, these services reproduce and promote the ideology of neoliberalism. Notice here that I do not use the verb 'create'. This is because this ideology, presented as 'common sense', has already been established by powerful organisations and mechanisms that support notions such as privatisation, commodification, competition, and deregulation. Thus, this study could be of use to careers services and advisers who would be interested in learning about some of the trends and patterns discovered in the language used by a good number of such services in the UK. In addition, and hopefully, the findings of this study will be of use and benefit to HE students (the 'subalterns') who are open to an alternative point of view to the reality presented by powerful and influential groups (the 'principals'), such as governments, ministries, organisations, businesses, the media, or universities and their CSs.

9. Limitations of the research

As mentioned in this thesis, universities in the UK are not a homogenous group. There are different groups, such as Oxbridge and the 'ancient universities', the 'new civic', the 'campus' or 'plate glass', the former polytechnics, the Open University, and the 'new' and private universities. Although this study included a wide number of university websites for its data collection, it cannot claim that it is

representative of all universities in the UK. It does, however, offer examples from a good proportion of these universities.

In addition, this thesis focused on careers services, their representation of the job-seeking reality and their professional role(s). There are, however, more social actors involved in the practices of universities' careers services. These include academic staff, students, employers, and collaborators, such as private or public organisations and businesses. Since this is the first systematic and in length study of the CSs' discourse, and due to the word limit of this thesis, I decided to focus on the discourse of careers advisers when addressing HE students. The services, however, also address employers and teaching staff on the websites. Thus, although this project covers one part of the CSs' discourse, there are more areas, links, and discourses to be examined.

10. Recommendations for future work

As a result of my study, further research might well be conducted on more of the levels of social organisation (Figure 1). For example, future research on the meso-level of social institution, such as governmental institutions or the European Economic Area, could further our understanding of institutional research on employment policies, the tendencies or ideologies promoted, and the plans that can affect the lives of 'subalterns'. In addition, in the micro-level, future work could examine the language used by other social actors involved in the careers services' practices, such as employers or organisations, and academic staff. It would also be interesting to examine the discourse of students, or graduates, who are in search of employment. Adding a diachronic element to these studies would also assist in the location of linguistic change over time.

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Appendices

Appendix 1 for chapter 2 – Snapshots of eight UK universities’ careers websites

Figure 1. University of Durham

Statement of Service

Guidelines for Services Provided

Outline of Services Provided For Students and Graduates

- An extensive and relevant website inclusive of social media, that details the Careers, Employability and Enterprise Centre (careers centre) activities, including reference to relevant external organisations and online psychometric testing and assessment tools
- A programme of employability skills development workshops and presentations
- Access to employers via presentations, careers fairs/forums, skills events, and through vacancy, placement and internship opportunities
- Support and advice relating to enterprise activities and business start up
- A Student Employment Service assisting in accessing term time and vacation work
- Appointments with Careers Advisers via an online booking system for existing students and recent graduates inclusive of all academic disciplines and levels of study. Quick Queries appointments of 20 minutes duration bookable up to a week in advance at either Durham or Queen's Campus, Stockton and individually referred 45 minute Guidance Appointments. (NB. MBA students have dedicated provision within the Durham University Business School)
- A response to a query within five working days of initial contact with the Careers, Employability and Enterprise Centre.

Figure 2. University of Edinburgh

Our vision and mission

The Careers Service vision and mission and our Statement of Service

Vision

Our vision is to make a meaningful contribution to the experience of every University of Edinburgh student, inspiring and empowering them to be the best they can be, to fully develop their potential and to achieve satisfying and rewarding futures.

Mission

Our mission is to make the Careers Service an essential part of the wider student experience by offering world-class careers and personal development that is highly regarded and fully integrated within the University, and meaningful and relevant to every student, of every discipline, at every stage of their degree course.

We will work in close collaboration with our schools and support services, and with our employer partners and professional networks, making effective connections and keeping our finger on the pulse of graduate opportunities and choices.

We will be adaptable, responsible and innovative in our approach, consistently delivering initiatives and events that are appealing and accessible to students and relevant to the demands of the professional world, today and tomorrow.

We will provide students with the tools, resources and experiences they need to make informed choices about their futures, empowering them to reflect on their university experience, develop their skills and personal attributes, and understand how to market these and interact confidently in a working environment.

In everything we do, we will aim to open students' eyes to the wealth of possibilities ahead of them, while at university and after graduation, helping them to explore new avenues, tap into their talents and build upon their employability with confidence and enthusiasm.

Figure 3. University of Cambridge

Aims and objectives

Aims

- To help undergraduate, postgraduate students, junior research staff (postdocs) and alumni of the University of Cambridge and others entitled to use us to make well-informed choices about their future working lives and to translate these effectively into appropriate decisions and actions.
- To maintain and develop links with the range of organisations providing appropriate opportunities for graduates, including further study.
- To remain wholly independent, offering objective and impartial advice and information, free of any commercial relationship with employers.
- To assist in the provision and dissemination of information about the destinations of those who have completed their studies at Cambridge University to the University, Government and other interested parties.
- To continue to be the main provider of choice of careers education, information and guidance within the University.
- To help the [University of Cambridge achieve its mission](#).

Objectives

- To source and provide up-to-date information about occupations, fields of work, postgraduate courses and research opportunities, organisations and their vacation work and post-graduation vacancies.
- To help students and graduates understand and develop the necessary skills to equip them for whatever career path they choose.
- To provide opportunities for students and graduates to understand their competencies, aspirations and options through a variety of means, including personal discussion with professional advisers.
- To promote the exchange of ideas between members of the University and representatives of other organisations on matters affecting the employment of graduate members of the University, and to provide expert advice and information on career issues to organisations outside the University.
- To collaborate with the University, academic departments, colleges and relevant organisations in activities designed to further the aims of the Service.
- To provide our services impartially, confidentially, efficiently and free from discrimination, adhering to national codes of good practice and professional standards.
- To promote the Careers Service to all entitled users, allowing them to make a personal choice on when and how best to engage with the Careers Service.
- To recruit, train and develop staff at all levels, to enable these aims and objectives to be met.

Figure 4. University of Exeter

About us

Your careers service is part of Student Employability and Academic Success (SEAS) within Education and Student Experience, aiming to give students, staff and employers quality career guidance and support.

Our mission?

To be a nationally renowned and highly-valued team within the University, known for our expertise, professionalism and customer-focused approach, and for our ability to provide exceptional information, advice and guidance which gives our customers the best possible chance of fulfilling their career potential.

Our values?

These key values shape the service we offer for our students. Whilst of course we as a careers and employability service share and enact the brand values of the University, we also have some of our own:

- Be approachable and positive in all we do.
- Be a friendly, customer-focussed front desk service.
- Be able to handle a wide range of enquiries efficiently and with care.
- Deliver unbeatable career advice and opportunities.
- Work hard, communicate well, and deliver excellence as a team.

Our aim is to assist the university in delivering excellence to all students, employers and staff, to help build better futures!

Figure 5. University of Coventry

Careers and Employability Services

Like 35

Tweet

G+

The focus is on results, not just academically, but in students' career and entrepreneurial ambitions: In every faculty and school, the primary focus is on preparing you for your future career and giving you a competitive edge in the graduate job market. Driving this is an ambitious programme of employability, careers and enterprise initiatives:

- The Queen's Award for Enterprise (International Trade 2015)
- Last year an impressive 95% of Coventry graduates gained employment or continued onto further study
- Guardian Employability Award 2015



Preparing you for the future starts long before graduation: Securing a graduate level position, postgraduate course or professional training, or developing your own business are the returns you want for your investment in time and tuition fees. Preparing you for those outcomes is central to the design of the courses and support we provide.

Figure 6. Glasgow Caledonian University

The Careers Centre offers a full range of professional services to enhance your employability, and to support your personal skills and career development:

- We offer help and advice on how to maximise your time at GCU, helping you to understand what employers expect from graduates and how you can achieve your goals.
- We establish effective working partnerships with employers and external agencies from a variety of backgrounds and sectors.
- We work in partnership with academic departments to develop students' career management and employability skills.

Figure 7. Kingston University

About us

Our mission statement

We aim to provide innovative and inclusive support to Kingston students and recent graduates, supporting their transition from study to future opportunities. We are constantly developing and maintaining partnerships with a wide variety of employers and industry professionals to get the inside knowledge and to provide greater development opportunities.

Based on the Penrhyn Road campus, we have faculty-specific members of the **team** who work on each campus to ensure all our students are able to access the service. We run interactive events and training sessions, enabling us to provide an inclusive, comprehensive and accessible careers and employability support.

Figure 8. Manchester Metropolitan University

We provide a wide range of services to students, graduates, employers and university staff.

Our aim

We want to ensure that our students achieve their career goals and the positive graduate outcomes that they want.

We work with academics and faculty staff to ensure that our careers and employability offer is relevant to our students and makes a positive impact on the student experience and graduate outcomes.

This can best be achieved when careers education and employability is delivered as part of the curriculum.

We also:

- Work with **academics and university staff** to help meet the University's strategic objectives.
- Manage the **Futures Skills Award** programme.
- Facilitate **career mentoring** for our students.
- Organise careers and employer **events** on campus.
- Manage on-campus **student employment** through Jobs-4-Students.
- Offer employers a graduate recruitment service, **TALENTmatch**.
- Provide information and advice relating to the **graduate labour market**.
- Collect **careers data** relating to students' career readiness and graduate outcomes.
- Manage our **careers information** systems and digital services.
- Provide impartial careers advice and guidance to **students** and **graduates**.
- Collaborate with external partners to enhance our service.

Appendix 2 for chapter 5 – CEW15 Frequency and Keyword Lists

Table 1. Frequency list – CEW15

	Word	Frequency		Word	Frequency
1	the	101502	31	skills	10537
2	and	93054	32	about	10030
3	to	89405	33	if	9688
4	of	58202	34	what	9441
5	a	55232	35	graduate	9434
6	you	52114	36	uk	9020
7	in	44072	37	we	9000
8	for	40599	38	I	8962
9	your	32019	39	job	8914
10	on	22947	40	career	8853
11	are	22875	41	by	8660
12	is	22083	42	their	8566
13	with	19473	43	university	8498
14	or	18167	44	s	8493
15	be	16948	45	experience	8442
16	work	15115	46	more	8369
17	as	15012	47	how	7802
18	can	14807	48	time	7565
19	students	13930	49	help	6966
20	careers	13917	50	do	6925
21	have	13753	51	business	6637
22	that	13513	52	jobs	6567
23	an	13437	53	also	6537
24	will	13326	54	out	6412
25	it	12182	55	opportunities	6354
26	at	12154	56	student	6342
27	this	11485	57	employers	6330
28	our	10985	58	find	6323
29	from	10634	59	they	6295
30	information	10537	60	not	6115

Table 2. Keyword list – CEW15

	Word	Freq	Keyness
1	careers	13917	88376.913
2	your	32019	83242.315
3	you	52114	68489.150
4	students	13930	60413.411
5	graduate	9020	56264.067
6	skills	10030	45492.720
7	career	8660	39151.289
8	graduates	5232	31267.979
9	employers	6323	31216.121

10	uk	9000	30775.879
11	university	8493	29652.751
12	job	8853	29159.310
13	opportunities	6342	28780.256
14	work	15115	28194.157
15	employability	4024	27985.825
16	website	3799	26716.302
17	information	10537	26538.440
18	jobs	6537	26270.866
19	student	6330	26022.079
20	experience	8369	25821.528
21	cv	3756	24818.828
22	internship	2829	19821.730
23	recruitment	3631	19523.859
24	employer	4082	19405.085
25	internships	13917	19356.635
26	volunteering	2815	18985.489
27	online	3067	18426.400
28	vacancies	2897	18087.116
29	advice	5007	17102.459
30	placement	2802	16082.158
31	our	0985	15419.747
32	interview	3681	15193.754
33	email	2164	14789.195
34	postgraduate	2564	14537.751
35	help	6925	13806.760
36	www	1908	13386.603
37	ac	2427	13330.693
38	academic	3389	13036.739
39	business	6567	12876.736
40	application	4020	12520.883
41	placements	1989	12211.589
42	events	3964	11925.958
43	research	5552	11332.369
44	find	6295	11182.828
45	please	3685	10763.419
46	pdf	1540	10481.415
47	lse	1457	9676.120
48	service	5246	9501.820
49	study	4574	9398.218
50	can	14807	9380.259
51	sector	3166	9251.540
52	interviews	2145	9177.705
53	alumni	1432	9134.609
54	campus	1647	9094.750
55	organisations	2600	9039.411
56	resources	3283	8999.758
57	prospects	2069	8959.753
58	international	4426	8788.294
59	vacancy	1470	8734.384
60	applications	2711	8718.947

Appendix 3 for chapters 6, 7, and 8 – Concordances in context

1.

LJMU's World of Work Careers Centre offers a wide range of resources to help you plan your next step, both while you are at university and after you graduate. P16

LJMU has opened two new Careers Zones to allow students to access Careers provision at two further locations on top of the World of Work Careers Centre. P16

To book a practice interview session please call the World of Work Careers Centre P16

When is the World of Work Careers Centre open? P16

Check out this animation explaining the World of Work Programme. P16

In addition we manage LJMU's globally unique, employer-endorsed World of Work Skills Certificate P16

We would recommend that you download the World of Work Skills Certificate Process Handbooks from the World of Work Skills Certificate module on Blackboard. P16

How can I book an appointment for help with my World of Work Skills statement? P16

By using the Statement Submission Manager to book a slot when you can submit your next World of Work Skills statement P16

2.

Be knowledgeable about the business world in general and understand how one sector can affect another. RG11

Developing your Commercial Awareness: you need to **gain an understanding** of what is going on in the business world and to be aware of current affairs that may impact on that sector. P12

Alongside knowledge of the organisation, you also need **to develop understanding** of the sector and the wider business world. P27

You are also welcome to attend even if you don't yet have a business idea as the insights you will gain will **be invaluable to your understanding** of the commercial world. RG15

There is a growing buzz around the start-up community in Scotland. **But entrepreneurial skills are also very useful in the world of employment**. RG8

Keeping current with the latest issues in the world of business by reading business newspapers and websites. RG24

international students with good English language skills can go far, as speaking more than one language is becoming a **desirable skill to possess** in the world of business. RG4

The world of graduate employment is changing. Employers are more aware than ever of the business benefits of recruiting a diverse workforce as outlined in many of the sections of the Equality Matters site. P7

Who do you know? Who knows you? Being able to network effectively **is important in the competitive world of graduate employment**. It allows you to increase your chances of employment and to access the hidden jobs market. P21

3.

The Bristol PLUS Award equips already academically brilliant students with the essential skills required to be successful in the working world outside of their university course. RG2

Attending the Numbers for the World of Work York Award course to increase your confidence in numeracy RG24

You'll improve your job prospects by completing our World of Work Award P16

(The Warwick Work Experience Bursary (WWEB) Reflective Report) The **report** develops your awareness of the working world, improves the way you talk about your skills and experience ready for your next application or interview, and leaves you with a ready-written entry for your CV. RG23

They are designed to give current second year UK/EU students (third years on 4-year courses) a chance to gain first-hand experience of the working world without disrupting their course of study. P5

By taking part in our **schemes**, you will have a fantastic opportunity to develop these skills and expand your knowledge and experience of the working world. P33

Are you enjoying university life but wondering what to do after you graduate? Then why not come along and **speak with specially chosen experts** at one of our Career Panels to **shed some light on the possibilities of the working world**. RG21

The business world needs graduates with sound business skills and the ability to operate effectively outside their own countries. **Our programmes** are designed to meet this demand and provide students with a thorough understanding of the international context in which business operates. P10

We run a variety of **workshops**. For a list of workshops that will prepare you for the world of work, please click here P16

A series of **work masterclasses**, delivered by professionals from multi-national organisations, designed to **give students an insight into** the world of work in China as well as networking opportunities RG19

4.

And in the world of work, experience is invaluable. It's also something lots of other graduates lack. P16

Practical **experience in business** or industry gives you a real advantage when you start looking for jobs. We offer work placements both in the UK and overseas on almost all our programmes, giving you the opportunity **to develop those skills you'll need in the world of work**. P11

The more **work experience** and extra curricular activities you are involved with, the more opportunities you have to find out about your skills and interests, and also about the world of work. RG18

Internships are arranged initially on a six-month basis. This gives you enough time to understand the connection between academic study and how that can be applied to the world of work. P29

Internships are becoming an ever more important part of the student experience. They can provide a **practical introduction** to the world of work, enhance your CV, get you thinking about your career goals, and build your skills and confidence. RG17

The Study Abroad Plus programme gives study abroad students the opportunity **to experience the world-of-work** in the buzzing capital by taking an accredited internship

in the Liberal Arts and Cultural sector, as part of their studies at King's College London.
RG10

Students **learn about** the working world through our various **placement opportunities**
P18

Work experience includes a wide range of opportunities to help you develop your skills
and your understanding of the working world. RG23

Temping during your summer vacation might involve doing something fairly menial but
keep your eyes and ears open and you could learn a considerable amount about
the business world. RG13

As HR is such a competitive area it's important to gain **relevant experience** and provide
evidence for the skills needed for the role. **Knowledge of the business world** and
commercial awareness is often essential. RG13

5.

Our **mentors** are: [...] Committed to providing a unique mentoring relationship with
support and guidance on the world of work P23

Mentoring is designed to help students develop key employability skills and **prepare**
them for the world of work. P6

The aim is to utilise the skills, experience and knowledge of **industry professionals** to
help: **develop your key employability skills in preparation for the world of work** P6

Sign up for **Professional Mentoring Scheme**

Meet someone from the world of work, gain contacts and explore ideas P29

The Professional **Mentoring Scheme** matches you with a Mentor - a professional person
who can give you advice and guidance about the world of work. P29

This will be from someone already in the world of work, ideally in the career sector or
profession that you would like to eventually work in. The **Career Mentor** may be an
alumnus of the university, but will always be someone who is based in the region and
able to meet you to discuss your questions about your desired career destination. RG21

The **Professional Mentoring Scheme** doesn't count towards your degree. It is designed
to provide you with knowledge and experience of the world of work in a semi-professional
environment, which will enhance your Curriculum Vitae. P29

We also provide: [...] Access to **business mentors** to **develop your understanding** of
the world of work. P2

6.

Mentoring programmes are managed by Careers and by Business Works (for those in
the business faculty only). The programme provides **a great opportunity** for students
to **gain an insight** into the world of work and to develop awareness of effective
communication within a professional context. P17

The aim of the **Career Mentoring Programme** is to match business professionals with
undergraduate and postgraduate students. The programme provides **a great**
opportunity for students to **gain an insight into the world of work** from experienced
professionals, who pass on their knowledge and advice to help students get where they
want to be after their studies. P17

promote students' employability by **giving them insight into the world of work** and some of the options open to them with their degree; RG6

Benefits of a **Summer Placement** [...]

- Learn about the world of work and **gain insight into** a particular industry or role. RG20

Not only will this give you a real insight into the world of work and help you make decisions about what you want to do next, but it will also help you develop skills that are valued by employers. RG18

Part-time work is regarded as good experience by employers and is one way to develop employability. It can also give the student a **valuable insight** into the world of work and preferences they may have in a future career. RG6

A series of **work masterclasses**, delivered by professionals from multi-national organisations, designed to **give students an insight into** the world of work in China as well as networking opportunities RG19

Search for your department and read the case studies from recent graduates who describe their career path and provide a **realistic insight** into the world of work. RG20

This Graduate Case Studies section of the website provides a database of case studies from graduates (including doctoral graduates) offering a **realistic insight into the world of work**. RG20

Speaking with representatives from the world of work inspires our students and provides them with **insight and inspiration** to help develop their career RG24

To provide students with someone who will support them in improving their employability prospects, develop their graduate attributes and gain **insight into** the working world through the sharing of **mentor's knowledge** and experience. P23

Whether your idea is at a very early stage or is more developed, **you'll gain a useful insight into how the business world works**. RG15

Now in its third year, we are excited to offer computer science students the chance to get involved in a community project that will **give you a taste of** what you could be doing in the world of work once you graduate. RG16

If you want to **get a sneak peek into the world of work** or even think that starting a business might be for you but you need some inspiration, know-how, and support, then this programme will suit you down to the ground. RG19

7.

How does the University you are considering **prepare its students for the world of work**? RG14

Tom Davie, Head of Sunderland Futures and Careers & Employability Service, said: "We believe in ensuring our students have a life-changing experience. Part of that experience is our commitment to **prepare them for the world of work** and their future graduate careers. This is why we have introduced the Sunderland Professional Award which is an important part of the Sunderland Futures offer." P29

You must complete the following core elements to help you get started on the award, **prepare you for the world of work** and build your employability profile P23

Preparation for the world of work and develop your employer network P2

Get involved, get ahead. Use our dedicated portal **to get you ready for the world of work** P30

This is our programme of careers workshops and presentations, open to all students and recent graduates of the University, and covering a wide range of topics to help you plan your career and **prepare yourself for the world of work**. Login and place your reservations. For more information and a full schedule. P34

We run a variety of **workshops**. For a list of workshops that will **prepare you for the world of work**, please click here P16

Future fit: **preparing graduates for the world of work** - 2009 report outlining how employers define employability based on a survey of 581 organisations. P34

The module is aimed at developing and enhancing your enterprising traits and overall employability skills; in building and **preparing you for the world of employment**. RG4

An oral project summary is the kind of task that **prepares you for the world of employment**. RG20

8.

Our principles of excellence and equality see our students acquire a first-class education, as well as the confidence and skills **to go out into the world of work** and make a difference. RG24

Designed to fit the individual needs of the student, this programme:

[...] allows for feedback and guidance from a professional with experience **of breaking in to the world of work** P23

A specific opportunity as part of the programme is to acquire new skills and experiences that will enhance your employability **as you enter the increasingly global world of work** P5

•provide the graduate with a safe environment to talk about any apprehensions they may have **as they enter the world of work**—RG14

We are committed to **supporting you as you enter the world of employment**, whether you need to talk through your options, practice for interviews, or find the job that's right for you. RG1

We're offering opportunities for you to share your knowledge of the workplace, the sector you work in and understanding of what it's like **to enter the world of work** as a recent graduate from The University of Nottingham. RG16

Despite scoring top grades throughout her Health and Social Care degree, Michelle Drinkald recognised she still lacked confidence and **needed support to navigate the world of work**. P29

Getting involved with CEO isn't just about starting a business. It is also about developing enterprising skills that could help you stand out from the crowd when you are **starting out in the world of work**. P6

Gaining these skills can help you stand out from the crowd when **starting in the world of work**, irrespective of whether you will be working for yourself or an employer. RG7

9.

making decisions about life after UCL, e.g. choosing between work, further study or taking time out RG22

The programme is open to all students but will be of particular benefit to penultimate and final year students who are thinking seriously about life after graduation. RG21

Fairs are multi sector events and will be advertised to all students thinking about life after graduation. P24

Journey to Work (video) - follow eight students as they prepare for life after university. RG15

Our careers forums are another opportunity to share your knowledge and help our students prepare for life after graduation. P4

Every student is different in how they approach planning for life after university. RG6

10.

The Careers Centre is the hub of activity for students looking to make decisions, **plan a journey to their chosen career and compete with other graduates for their dream job or course**. RG11

The team can help you with **everything you need on your journey to your graduate destination**, providing CV, applications and interview support, as well as career ideas, advice and planning. P23

Advice to **get you started or moving on at any point in your university journey**. Become better prepared for whatever you decide to do after your course. RG12

Come and meet us to find out how we can help you in your journey from higher education to employment or further study. P31

301 supports your student journey by ensuring you have the skills to develop into a well-rounded graduate, **prepared for whatever the future holds** - be it further study or the start of your career. RG20

11.

EmployableME is often described as a journey, which implies that there's a **destination** and you're on your way to it. P12

The team can help you with everything you need on your journey to your graduate destination, providing CV, applications and interview support, as well as career ideas, advice and planning. P23

Your **starting point** - students can decide where they are in their career planning journey and get help with what to do next. RG11

One way or another all our professional services staff support the student journey from beginning to end and make sure that the student experience at LSE is second to none. RG13

Below is our tick list to ensure your **passport to success**. Make sure you tick everything - so that you are ready for your graduate journey. P23

Before you get started, you are welcome to attend a "Welcome to the **Graduate Passport**" session, but this is not obligatory. This will allow you to understand the scheme and have any questions answered, it will also allow you to begin your reflective journey on why you want to achieve the **Passport** and plan what activities you will undertake to reach your personal goals. RG21

A complete guide for all students at **whatever stage of the student journey** they are at. Information on job hunting, work experience opportunities, researching graduate schemes and applying for jobs. P30

We're here for you **whatever stage you're at** with your study or career plans. We want you to achieve your ambitions and will support your journey, helping you plan a route towards your goals. P22

12.

You can download our helpful personal tutor pack which gives you tools and resources to use with students **at different points in their career journey**. RG11

We offer a wide range of services to help students and graduates **at any stage of their career journey**. RG21

We are here to support you **at all stages of your career journey** during and after your time at UCL. RG22

Choose one of the statements below to find out how we can help you **move onto the next stage of your career journey**. RG11

Whether you're a student or graduate, UCL alumni can help you **make the most out of your career journey**. RG22

Learn more about our Employability Strategy, about the services we offer and how we can support you **every step of your career journey**. RG12

13.

It is designed to increase your employability, and to bridge the gap between **graduating university, and entering the world of work**. P12

Inspiring Talent is an exciting six month mentoring scheme aimed at developing final year students at Kingston, with a view to:[...] bridging the gap between **university and the world of work** P13

Volunteering can make a huge difference in your life. It can give you direction and provide focus to your career planning; it can help bridge the gap between **education and the world of work**; help develop your Graduate and World of Work skills; and it can help you to get a job. P16

Not only can work experience earn you money but it can help bridge the gap between **university and the world of work**. P22

[FOUR-WEEK PLACEMENT] it will offer you practical experience to bridge the gap between **your studies and the world of work** and we'll design what you'd be doing over the summer based on your interests. RG1

Volunteering can be intrinsically rewarding in and of itself, but it can also help you bridge the gap between **education and the world of work**. RG13

Bridging the gap from 'student' to 'worker' RG17

If you do not have any work experience at all then voluntary work can be a useful way to help you bridge this gap. P17

Finding your first full academic post can be tricky and here at LSE we try to help promising fledgling academics find roles that help them to 'bridge the gap' and develop the experience they need to find academic posts in future. RG13

14.

develop an effective job search strategy, including how to present yourself on paper and at interview

explore the variety of options open to you P22

We help postgraduates in The Business School get through tough recruitment and selection processes and create effective job hunting strategies to have the best chance of success. RG1

While we do not have country-specific expertise, our staff can offer advice on putting together an effective job-hunting strategy to seek work abroad. RG16

Get some valuable advice for personal development on topics such as CV writing; effective job hunting techniques; successful interview practices P1

15.

Think about using creative job hunting techniques including networking and speculative applications to unearth those graduate jobs which are never advertised. RG6

Our Creative job hunting resource sheet on InfoHub provides useful resources to help you build your networking and job hunting skills including: P32

Whether in the UK or returning home after graduation, many international graduates use creative job hunting, networks or related project work to get a foot in the door. RG14

(using LinkedIn) To make the most of what LinkedIn has to offer, you need to do more than just have a profile on the site. To use it effectively for networking and creative job hunting, you should join relevant groups and learn how to connect with employers, other professionals, alumni and organisations. RG14

Creative job search - access the hidden job market P17

Creative job search: Many jobs are never advertised. RG21

Make speculative applications for work in areas with few advertised vacancies. Consult the 'creative job search' section of our website and target your CV and cover letter. RG6

Many jobs are never advertised. You can locate/create opportunities that are not advertised by developing an effective and creative job search strategy. RG21

Recruitment agencies and headhunters can, in some instances, support your creative job search. They may 'take you onto their books' for future roles, or act for a particular employer or niche job type not normally visible in the advertised jobs market. RG6

Finding the job you want can require a bit of creativity. The Jobshop can help with tips on speculative applications, finding jobs through social media and other ways of finding work experience. The Jobshop and Careers Service have loads of resources to help and holds Creative Job Search workshops RG20

16.

Read our Using **social media** for job hunting leaflet and our LinkedIn Profile Checklist to make sure your profile works to your advantage. RG12

Read our quick guide to networking and guide on using **social media** for job hunting to find out more. P19

Read our How to network, Using **social media** for job hunting and Making speculative applications leaflets for tips and advice. RG12

Make your online **social media** presence professional. Read our Using social media in your job hunting leaflet and consult our LinkedIn Profile Checklist to make sure your profile works to your advantage RG12

A session that will help you to identify different ways to look for jobs including networking, use of **social media** and speculative job search. P1

Develop Your Personal brand – IdeasByBlog Article looking at **social media** in your job search. P8

Find out about using **social media** for job search and networking. RG14

17.

These **accredited modules** provide students on particular undergraduate degree programmes with an excellent insight and proficiency in the graduate job market and employability skills. RG14

The **module** gives you the chance to: [...] become familiar with how to approach the graduate job market, from writing CVs and covering letters to finding your own job hunting strategy RG15

Career Development and Planning Modules - For some time we have been running **accredited modules** which are integrated into students' degree courses and encourage them from day 1 to gain skills and experience to increase their employability and embed awareness of the graduate job market. RG11

Interactive, **employer-led workshops** to develop and practice the skills you need to **be successful** in the graduate job market. RG19

The World of Work Careers Centre is running a new series of **Career Essentials Webinars** over the summer which are a must for any students wanting **to succeed** in the graduate job market. P16

As a USW student Grad Edge enables you to access employability activities throughout your time at the University in order for you to **get the edge and increase your chances** in the graduate job market. P8

A 3 day course **to help you stand out from the crowd** in a competitive graduate job market. P34

Take a **work placement** year and find out more about the graduate job market direct from recruiters and Career Consultants. RG11

Work experience is becoming increasingly important in the graduate job market: many organisations recruit successful interns and some job sectors are becoming increasingly difficult to enter without relevant experience. RG5

Work experience is becoming more and more important when students look to enter the graduate job market. P6

18.

The United Kingdom is part of the global economic system and **the increasing competition** from Europe, the US, Brazil, China, Japan and other developing countries is exerting its pressures on British companies, the local labour market and the graduate job market in particular. P5

At a time when the graduate job market is **particularly competitive** we know we give our students the edge you demand. P18

The current job market is highly competitive. P10

The academic job market is **competitive** so it helps to give you a strong chance of getting a job if you are geographically fairly open RG13

Research productivity and quality is important for making you **competitive** on the academic job market. RG13

The UK is highly globalised and boasts the third-largest economy in Europe meaning the job market is competitive. RG4

19.

By volunteering students can engage with the wider world, support the environment and gain new skills to compete in a rapidly changing job market. RG13

gain invaluable international experience and ensure that you **stand out** in a crowded and competitive job market. RG19

our innovative two week programme running between 1st – 12th June 2015, designed to give you a head start in today's international competitive job market. RG22

How can you embrace digital technologies to give yourself a competitive edge in a crowded job market? RG11

foreign language skills will have a competitive advantage on the international job market and be more likely to achieve success in their career. P5

we have introduced even more initiatives to enhance the student experience and develop graduates who can stand out in an international job market RG4

By doing a placement you are not only **differentiating yourself** from other graduates in what is an extremely tough job market RG20

Future workshop topics will include networking and group-work skills, reflecting the demands of both the academic programmes and the need to compete effectively in a tough job market. RG6

This approach can be particularly suited to researchers who are operating in a competitive and uncertain job market. RG6

20.

Hidden job market Many jobs are never advertised as recruitment and selection is both expensive and time consuming. Companies may decide to recruit internally or select from a pool of speculative applications. **Networking** should play a role in your job search strategy. RG23

When job hunting, it is important to use all avenues available to you, including **networking**. It is estimated that 70% of jobs are not advertised, so networking is a good way of tapping into the hidden job market. P30

You can also tap into the 'hidden' job market in Great Britain and the Republic of Ireland (estimated as comprising up to 65% of job vacancies) through **networking** and making speculative applications with your CV to targeted employers/job sectors. RG19

the hidden job market (up to 70% of jobs are not formally advertised) RG24

At least 50% of jobs are filled without ever being advertised. Tap into this hidden job market. P4

tap into the hidden job market. P25

good way of **tapping into** the hidden job market. P30
tap into the 'hidden' job market in Great Britain RG19
advice is given on how to **access** the hidden job market P17
Access the hidden job market P28
Gain access to the hidden job market RG13
Careers Handout on **Accessing** the Hidden Job Market. P2
How to **explore** the 'hidden' job market P33
discover the hidden job market, use social media, and build a personal brand. P32
Discover the hidden job market with our advisers P16
professional networking, **a way into** the "hidden" job market P9

21.

Did you know that many jobs and opportunities are filled without ever being advertised? Find out where to look for advertised posts as well as how to **tap into** the hidden job market. P25
Stand out from the crowd, look for jobs in the hidden job market. RG23
Find out how to **understand** the hidden job market. RG23
(CAREERS HANDOUTS) Find out how to **understand** the hidden job market. P2
For further information, tips and advice, download our Careers Handout on Accessing the Hidden Job Market. P2
How to **explore** the 'hidden' job market P33
Get creative with your job hunting by learning how to network, **discover** the hidden job market, use social media, and build a personal brand. P32
By following these 5 steps you can **access** this hidden job market. (research, find contact names, make contact, the phone call, the follow up) P21
Discover the hidden job market with our advisers, and find the best places to look for graduate jobs P16

22.

This 'hidden job market' presents a rich vein of opportunity that can only be mined through very focused speculative application and **networking**. RG5
Get creative with your job hunting by learning how to **network**, **discover** the hidden job market, use social media, and build a personal brand. P32
Access the hidden job market, get inspired and uncover the secrets of job-seeking success. P28
If approached in the right way, **networking** can be both a fun and powerful career management tool. It can help you: [...] Gain access to the hidden job market RG13
In addition advice is given on how to access the hidden job market, including the use of **networking** and social networking to expand your industry contacts and occupational knowledge. P17

Short, snappy introduction about how LinkedIn can help with your graduate job search and **professional networking**, a way into the "hidden" job market. See LinkedIn video libraries for related topics. P9

Networking is often a useful tool in developing your career. Many jobs are not advertised so networking can put you in touch with this hidden job market. RG9

23.

There continues to be enormous competition for training contracts. RG7

With fierce competition for roles in the sector, a good CV is essential. RG22

due to the scarcity of them and the high competition you will need to consider other ways to gain relevant experience RG13

Due to high competition for graduate jobs and further study, the aim was to encourage students to start thinking about their future early during their time at University RG6

the increasing competition from Europe, the US, Brazil, China, Japan and other developing countries is exerting its pressures on British companies P5

increasing competition for roles has made relevant professional [...] plus substantial work experience, highly desirable. RG17

For graduate jobs, you face intense competition and you will not succeed if you do no preparation and attempt to answer questions "off the top of your head" RG19

There is a high level of competition for these job vacancies. P16

More people are choosing to study at university than ever before. Whether you stay with us for a PhD or jump in to the jobs market after you graduate, you are certain to face stiff competition from other well-qualified candidates. RG8

Your application needs to stand up against strong competition RG13

You then face very strong competition for a place in chambers. RG13

Working in TV and radio is still seen as a glamorous career and holds great appeal, despite the long hours, hard work required and tough competition for jobs. RG17

Nevertheless, there is still tough competition when trying to secure a job. RG1

Competition at each stage is fierce and you may also have to fund some or all of the training yourself. RG13

Competition can be fierce and you'll often need to apply directly to companies RG7

However, competition can be tough – there are around 65,000 students in the city and part-time work that fits in with a degree is highly desirable. RG8

Competition for funds can be fierce, but there are a number of options open to those looking to fund further study. RG15

competition for jobs can be stiff and graduates may benefit from networking, gaining work experience and making speculative applications as a way of securing work in this sector. RG6

Publishing books is a small industry in the UK but a popular one with graduates and therefore competition for jobs is high. RG7

There is no defined entry route, but those who succeed are highly qualified, motivated and determined. Competition for jobs is fierce, and the pay is often low. RG23

Competition for places is fierce with only 30 places available across Yorkshire. P14

Most positions are open to graduates with degrees in any subject but competition for places is intense RG14

Competition for positions is fierce in investment banking RG14

Oxfam also recruits into its internship scheme, though competition is fierce. RG17

Competition for funds can be fierce RG15

The competition is very strong and should you make a weak or ill-prepared application it is unlikely that you will succeed. RG17

24.

A degree is not enough! The Education and Skills Survey 2012 showed that your degree classification **is less important to employers than your employability skills and having work experience**. P28

A degree on its own is not enough to impress employers - get involved from the start and **boost your employability** with the suggestions below. RG6

Stand out from the crowd in an ever increasing competitive market. A good degree is essential, but is not enough. RG21

A degree is no longer enough to secure a job – **employers are looking for** graduates who can prove they have **good communication skills, advanced digital literacy and strong team-working abilities**, as well as **relevant work experience**. P1

Following dramatic increases in HE provision in the UK and fundamental shifts in the graduate recruitment market, a degree is no longer enough to guarantee a graduate a satisfying future career RG6

Employers are looking for candidates who have developed their **skills, abilities and ambitions**. A degree is no longer enough to get you the job you want. RG7

In a highly competitive job market a good degree is no longer enough to guarantee you a graduate job. **You need to** do all you can to give you the edge and stand out. The **skills** you learn through PDP can help you do this. RG19

A degree alone is not enough in today's jobs market, **you also need real world skills and knowledge** and mentoring can help you recognise and achieve these. P6

A degree is not enough **Make sure** that you **get involved in activites** in addition to your academic studies. P10

For an ever increasing number of **employers**, a degree is not enough to secure you a graduate position. **The need to acquire the relevant employability skills that recruiters are looking for has never been greater**, and a **placement or internship** is the perfect way of achieving this. RG6

It is very important that you are **proactive**; your degree alone is not enough, it needs to be backed up by real life skills. RG11

You'll be told throughout your university life that just having a degree is not enough to secure a job, even with a First. **Employers are increasingly looking** at other aspects of potential recruits, **making sure** they have **the experience and skills** to thrive in a workplace environment. RG24

It was agreed that the Careers Service would develop a new employability module and help students understand that 'a degree alone is not enough' and also to encourage engagement with the Service. RG6

Using an innovative approach, this module introduces first year students to the concept that 'a degree alone is not enough.' They are encouraged to explore what this means to them, and what they can personally do about it by making the most of their time at University, and so enhancing their employability. RG6

25.

Your CV or application creates the first impression that a potential employer has, so it is worth taking your time and doing it well. **This is you[r] chance to sell yourself**, your skills and experience. P27

This is your chance to sell yourself and demonstrate how your key competences match the company's needs. RG15

This is an opportunity to sell yourself and highlight the relevant skills you have. RG15

A CV is an opportunity to sell yourself, highlighting your experience, skills and qualities to potential employers. RG19

(about the interview) They'll nearly always ask if you've any questions for them. Prepare a few questions to show genuine interest in the job and to show you've researched the organisation. You can use this moment as **a final opportunity to sell yourself**. RG8

These are your selling points which you must let the interviewer know about. Use your answers as **a great opportunity to sell yourself** and show the employer you have what they are looking for. RG18

26.

The Guild is a valuable way **to improve** your CV and stand out from the crowd. RG1

Improve your skills and make your CV stand out from the crowd P26

Enhance your CV and stand out from the crowd RG2

Gaining high quality work experience can help you stand out from the crowd RG24

Stand out from the crowd - **equip** yourself with skills P3

The range of ncl+ opportunities aims to **develop** these skills and help you to stand out from the competition. RG15

Invest in your employability; and stand out from the crowd RG1

By **taking action early** you will be able to stand out from the crowd when applying for jobs! P26

27.

Gaining a fully accredited vocational award from the Institute of Leadership and Management (ILM), which has relevance to a wide range of employers and careers
Gaining a competitive advantage in the job market P32

During this fair, you'll have the opportunity to: [...] gain a competitive edge over other candidates P33

One of the key reasons why many consider continuing study is to gain a competitive edge in the job market P17

Working to help fund Higher Education studies is increasingly common in the UK. Students succeed in securing a wide range of jobs, giving them the vital work experience needed to gain a competitive edge once they have graduated. P27

Would you like to experience another culture first-hand and gain a competitive edge in the job market? P3

Developing financial markets skills – postgraduate and undergraduate students of finance can gain a competitive edge with potential employers through nationally recognised certification in Datastream. P32

28.

Employability is a measure of how easily graduates can find work, remain in work and succeed in it. P1

Find out what 'employability' is all about and what you should be doing each year to make yourself employable. P19

As employability is about getting the right employment and improving student opportunities, we support students locating and applying for jobs and further study. P26

We believe employability is the ability of King's graduates to be successful in their chosen career area, by recognising their skills and achievements, understanding the work environment into which they wish to move, and being able to present their skills to future employers with confidence. RG10

Employability is developed in a multitude of ways throughout a student's time at University, through studies, placements, part-time jobs and extracurricular interests, to name but a few. RG14

29.

But did you know that by taking part in these [extracurricular] activities, you'll also be developing skills that employers want to see? Demonstrating these skills and experiences you've had will help you to stand out in applications and interviews. RG16

skills modules that help our students develop, recognise and articulate the kind of competencies, learning and evaluation skills that employers are looking for in talented new graduates. RG16

Through these projects you'll get an insight into the world of consultancy, build the skills that employers are looking for and make a real difference to local companies and charities. RG16

The aim of these [internships schemes] is to provide the opportunity for DMU students and graduates to develop the key skills that employers look for when recruiting graduates. P6

By taking part in these activities you will explore many different skills, but to help you get started, below is a list of some of the key transferable skills that employers value. RG5

You must choose and attend four from the following range of skills-based workshops. These sessions will help develop the transferable skills that employers are looking for in a successful candidate. P23

30.

all part of our **aim** to help you become a more employable graduate. RG23

Middlesex University has an ambitious **vision** to ensure that all of our graduates are employable and able to secure a job when they leave University. P20

We're **working hard** to create highly employable and work-ready graduates by providing students with a range of work experience and career development support services RG11

The Careers and Employability Service is **dedicated to helping** you become a more employable graduate. P12

The University of Exeter Career Zone service **is here to help you to:** become more employable, [...] RG7

Did you know each faculty has its own Employability Adviser? **They're here to help you** develop your skills and make you more employable. P1

31.

whether from **Careers, your course, the Students' Union or on work placement, will help you reach your end destination** - becoming an employable graduate. P12

The **award** is very relaxed and easy to start, it does not interfere with your studies and **it will help you to become more employable**. P34

The student experience is central to what we do - we've developed this **project to help you** become more employable. P6

We have a number of different **events and workshops** that you can get involved in **to help develop** students to become more employable: RG22

Get involved in our activities and become more innovative, enterprising and employable! RG15

CGE has a **catalogue of opportunities** to help Coventry University students and recent graduates acquire the **skills and attributes** to gain **international experience** and become globally-employable. P5

Have a look at our **essential guides** - first and second year students should check out Your Guide to Becoming More Employable (PDF 475KB). P27

These **modules** are designed to develop your understanding of how you can become more employable. RG11

By following our **career timeline** and these **steps** you'll become more employable. P2

Although a good academic record is an excellent way of entering the career of your choice, it is equally important that you can show potential employers how 'employable' you are. P2

Volunteers gain valuable experience for their CVs and become more employable. P10

Discover how you can get **work experience** and become more employable P27

Postgraduate study is becoming increasingly important for students looking to become more employable in today's competitive job market. P20

Work experience is the most useful step you can take to become more employable. P12

Learn how to become more employable and **meet employers** at our events. P19

32.

Due to high competition for graduate jobs and further study, the aim was to encourage students to start thinking about their future early during their time at University and to encourage them to make the most of opportunities which may make them more employable. RG6

Your experience will make you even more employable when you graduate. RG20

Your experience may lead to paid employment or in the very least it will make you more employable. P2

Our courses are relevant to the workplace and already have employability built in. So from day one, you're gaining **sought-after skills** that make you much more employable when you graduate. P27

"Employers need graduates who are equipped with **a range of core work skills as well as academic ability**. It is these competencies, such as interpersonal skills, communication, team working and customer awareness which, in the final analysis, make graduates employable" P17

Year on year, the market becomes more competitive, so for candidates to have done **different projects and volunteering** and to have **mixed with people out of their comfort zone**, makes them more employable. RG14

The Value of **Work Experience** It can make your CV stand out. You develop **key skills** that will make you more employable. [...] P12

This is your chance to gain **work place specific abilities and skills** that will make you more employable in the future. RG4

It is about **standing out from the crowd** and showing that you **have the skills** that make you employable. RG5

This **innovative Award** gives our students the tools they need to make themselves more employable – through self-awareness development, objective setting, vital career-related experience, creation of an effective CV and practice of interview techniques. P8

33.

Make yourself more employable **Today's employers are looking** for more than a degree. To be employable, you need hands-on experience and work-ready skills. P27

Making yourself employable is about much more than just getting a degree. You need to understand the skills, qualities and qualifications that **employers are looking for** and then maximise your time at university so that you can gain these attributes. RG11

Our make yourself employable pages will give you an insight on what skills **employers want** and how you can use your time at University to gain them. RG11

Potential employers will look at all your achievements and experiences when considering you for employment, so make sure you develop your transferable skills and get some practical experience to make yourself more employable. P1

How can you make yourself employable?

Being employable is about being able to confidently demonstrate that you have the skills that **employers are looking for**. RG5

34.

The careers action plan should specify the student's career goal, evaluates this via a SWOT analysis and state the practical steps that they will take to achieve their goal. P34

SWOT analysis – assess your strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats in relation to your career goals. P34

SWOT analysis Consider using a SWOT analysis (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats) or pros and cons list to identify any external influences on your career choice RG1

Before undertaking a SWOT analysis, ensure you have researched the ideas that you identified in your ideal situation. P34

It can be useful to have some analytical frameworks to help you deal with the cases you will face. Some of the basic frameworks include:

SWOT analysis: Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats RG17

Use the template to set down your objectives, review your progress to date and help you to identify any skills gaps or areas that you need to develop further

Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) analysis

SWOT is a personal, subjective assessment of information organised into a logical order that helps understanding, presentation, discussion and decision-making. RG3

35.

A **placement year** is a great opportunity to gain real-world experience P25

Going on placement for a year **is really worth it** P24

Internships: provide **high quality**, paid experience P6

then voluntary work can be a **useful way to help you bridge this gap** P17

We understand how **important** it is for students **to benefit** from real-world experiences. P18

The **graduates themselves benefit** from gaining real world, high quality experience P6

Work experience is becoming **increasingly important** in the graduate job market RG5

Work experience is **becoming more and more important** P6

When looking for a graduate job **it is important to understand** the current graduate job market P27

Networking is often a **useful** tool in developing your career. RG9

We know that experience is **vital** to stand out in today's competitive job market. P34

gain **invaluable** international experience and ensure that you stand out in a crowded and competitive job market. RG19

In a competitive job market, work experience is becoming more and more **essential**. RG15

During this fair, you'll have the opportunity to: [...] gain a competitive edge over other candidates P33

One of the key reasons why many consider continuing study is to gain a competitive edge in the job market P17

36.

We understand how **important** it is for students to benefit from real-world experiences. P18

Internships are becoming an **ever more important** part of the student experience. RG17

Understanding the UK graduate job market, why is it **important**? RG11

The graduate job market does not always follow the general trends of employment in the UK. It is **important** to know what sectors are growing RG11

When job hunting, it is **important** to use all avenues available to you, including networking. P30

Although a good academic record is an excellent way of entering the career of your choice, it is equally **important** that you can show potential employers how 'employable' you are. P2

A degree is not enough! The Education and Skills Survey 2012 showed that your degree classification is less **important** to employers than your employability skills and having work experience. P28

It is very **important** that you are proactive; your degree alone is not enough, it needs to be backed up by real life skills. RG11

It [Work experience, paid or voluntary] gives you an opportunity to learn and develop key skills that employers regard as **important** and relevant to your future career and importantly will: RG9

Who do you know? Who knows you? Being able to network effectively is **important** in the competitive world of graduate employment. It allows you to increase your chances of employment and to access the hidden jobs market. P21

These are all very **important** skills in the work place. P6

37.

The job market is a rapidly changing landscape that can be intimidating at first glance, but a little research pays off quickly. P16

Nottingham graduates have been successful in a challenging job market. In 2013 70% of undergraduates and more than 75% postgraduates secured employment after their studies. RG16

By volunteering students can engage with the wider world, support the environment and gain new skills to compete in a rapidly changing job market. RG13

Future workshop topics will include networking and group-work skills, reflecting the demands of both the academic programmes and the need to **compete** effectively in a tough job market. RG6

The job market is tough and although your degree will be a big plus, you need to show that you have something special. Employers take note of dedication and passion. RG2

38.

Looking for an expert second opinion on your CV, cover letter or application? Book an appointment P33

Our webpages are full of expert information on writing CVs and Covering Letters. RG11

For expert one-to-one advice, bring your application form or CV along to a quick query interview RG12

Form checked for FREE by expert University of London Careers Advisers. RG20

39.

Careers guidance is the support offered by qualified and experienced Consultants to help you work through the process of making and implementing informed career decisions. RG6

Impartial advice from qualified and experienced careers consultants P2

Our appointments are tailored to each individual's circumstances and carried out by qualified, expert careers consultants. RG11

A dedicated team of qualified staff, providing tailored support within individual faculties RG20

talk to our professional, qualified staff in a confidential setting by booking an appointment with a Careers Adviser at the Careers and Employability Service P12

A guidance interview can be the ideal way of discussing your ideas in person with one of our professionally qualified advisers. P12

It is about taking control of your own employability with support from your University's professionally qualified, award winning careers team. P12

Access to one-to-one appointments with a professionally qualified careers advisor to discuss your CV and career planning options including P3

40.

We provide expert advice about working for yourself, covering topics including P27

We provide expert support to help you develop your business ideas, social enterprise or a freelance career through variety of activities including seminars, workshops, competitions and networking events. P18

We provide specialist one-to-one advice, careers management sessions and employment activities covering. P2

We provide specialist resources, advice and events for international students at The University of Manchester to help with career planning and making the most of your time whilst studying in Manchester. RG14

We have dedicated teams of experienced career consultants coming to your school [inside the university] to offer tailored support for you. Whether you want more information on specific careers or advice on where to start, we are here to help. RG11

41.

We offer tips RG16

We offer LinkedIn reviews P26

We provide a resource bank of useful information P12

we provide: careers appointments RG24

We provide workshops P21

we provide a series of enterprise workshops RG5

We offer assessment centre workshops RG16
We offer different levels of workshops P11
we offer workshops and practice interviews RG2
we offer interview workshops RG16
We provide an intense week of training sessions RG17
we offer early evening sessions P27
We offer online practice psychometric tests RG12
We offer opportunities to gain skills P27
We offer excellent opportunities for students P18
We offer many excellent courses RG7
We offer fantastic opportunities P27
We offer exceptional graduate training programmes RG8

42.

Once you have submitted your application via the Online Recruitment System we are unable to accept any changes or amendments. [the university's recruitment system] RG13

Regrettably, we are unable to accept late applications. RG13

we are unable to accept paper applications. RG13

In accordance with their Child Protection Policy we are unable to process applications without a fully completed application form. RG17

We're also unable to provide advice on an application without knowing what it's being used for as content / structure is likely to vary based on a particular recruiter's requirements. RG22

Please note, while we offer face-to-face feedback on applications for postgraduate study, we are unable to do so on research proposals. RG15

Please note we do not provide a CV checking facility via this service. (meaning email service) P9

We cannot therefore give advice on a "general CV" without at least having some idea of who it's being sent to and why. RG22

43.

We are unable to accept any application forms by email. P14

Unfortunately we are not able to provide a detailed critique of CVs or application forms by email. RG16

Please note that we are unable to book any type of appointment via email. RG5

We are unable to book appointments by email. P30

In both cases we ask that you telephone us if you would like to discuss arranging an appointment, as we are unable to arrange via email. RG5

As the Practice Interview session will include a period of feedback and further discussion after the role play exercise part, we're unable to conduct Practice Interview appointments over the phone. RG22

44.

Referral to an internet site, publication or organisation from our site does not constitute an endorsement or recommendation by UCL Careers. Items are included in good faith but we are unable to guarantee the quality/style of all references. RG22

The Careers Service, Imperial College London, make every effort to ensure organisations and vacancies listed on our website, emails, and publications are bonafide. However, we are unable to verify details in their entries and cannot guarantee their accuracy. We strongly recommend you check fully before applying in all cases. We are unable to individually verify the details of vacancies posted to JobsLive. RG9

We often retweet opportunities that we come across online, which we feel look relevant and interesting for students and graduates. However, we are not able to check out these opportunities individually. RG14

However, we cannot accept responsibility for the contents of external websites. RG19

We cannot guarantee that these links will work all of the time and we have no control over the availability of linked pages. RG21

we cannot take responsibility for pages that are maintained by external providers. P7

45.

We are unable to arrange careers advice appointments for UH alumni who have graduated over two years ago P11

The high level of demand we experience at LSE Careers means we are unable to arrange careers advice appointments for LSE alumni who completed their courses over two years ago. RG13

we are unable to offer appointments to those who graduated more than two years ago. RG3

46.

Careers advisers are professionally trained to give you objective guidance about the options open to you. We will not make any decisions for you; we can help you to weigh up different options, and make sure that you have accessed accurate information which can help you make an informed decision. RG12

If you are struggling to reach a decision, come and see us; we will not tell you what to do, but can help you decide. RG11

Although we cannot guarantee that you will find work, we will do our best to help you with your job search. RG5

We cannot tell you what career path you should follow, but we can give you guidance to discover areas that might interest you. RG6

47.

For example, we do not offer advice on admissions criteria or course content but full details about who to contact about admissions and course enquiries can be found in our FAQs section. RG13

We cannot help with admissions-related questions RG13

We are unable to offer legal advice on contracts or job offers. RG14

Please be aware these agencies are private organisations and we cannot advise on the suitability of the opportunities they offer. RG8

We cannot be held responsible for the job opportunity offered, but we do make every effort to ensure that all the information we publish is accurate. RG23

48.

Please note, we are unable to give visa advice to students. P13

We are unable to offer visa guidance on your own personal situation, advice on what route to work to take or support with visa applications. RG14

We are not able to advise you on your eligibility to work in the UK, but we can recommend services that can give immigration advice. RG6

However, we are not able to give individual guidance to students about their right to work in the UK after graduation, so you should refer them to the International Office. RG16

While we are able to provide comprehensive careers education, information and guidance in relation to the UK graduate labour market, we are not able to provide the same level of information about all other labour markets and practices RG17

We cannot give specific advice on working permits and visas. RG12

We cannot give you specific individual immigration advice RG24

We cannot provide advice on an individual's right to work in the UK - for this they must consult the International Student Advice Service team at the International Office. RG6

Unfortunately, we cannot provide you with immigration advice personalised to your own circumstances but we can suggest some information to point you in the right direction. P26

49.

You are required to bring printed copies of any documents which you would like feedback on (e.g. CVs) as we are unable to offer printing. P10

We do not offer a word processing or CV writing service, however we will advise you on producing CVs, covering letters and personal statements. P31

We do not provide a proof-reading service. P19

Careers will provide help regarding the content of your CVs, but we do not provide a proof reading service or English language support with writing CVs. P21

We are happy to help you with CVs and application forms, but we do not provide a CV writing service and cannot spend time correcting your spelling and grammar. P30

While Careers (via the CV Doctor, Appointments and Ask Careers) will provide help regarding the content of your applications, we do not provide English language support. P21

We do not provide individual tutoring or proof-reading services for any student. RG4

We do not offer one to one services to graduates from LJMU, University of Chester, Edge Hill or Liverpool Hope; you are advised to contact your own careers service. RG12

We cannot offer a proof-reading service for spelling and grammar. RG14

While the Careers Service will help you with the structure of your applications we cannot proof read your English. P21

We cannot provide a detailed proof reading service for spelling, grammar and English correction. RG14

50.

we offer a range of workshops and one-to-one advice to help you to develop academic skills. P21

We offer a range of training sessions and resources to help you develop skills in these areas so you feel prepared and experienced when you start applying for jobs RG7

We provide access to a range of resources that will help you write your CV and put together applications. P16

We offer a number of online presentations and webinars to assist you with your career planning. RG21

We offer a range of one to one advice services to help you explore your career options, develop your skills, jobsearch and what to do next. RG14

We offer a variety of drop-in sessions around campus for you to come and get help with your skills or careers queries. RG23

We offer a variety of services that give you the best possible opportunity to secure your dream job. P18

We offer a wide range of FREE events, workshops and courses each month to give you a range of transferrable skills! P26

we offer a range of internships that could give you the competitive edge. P34

We offer a free online job advertising service, helping you to meet your student and graduate recruitment needs. P10

We offer a variety of different appointments and drop-in services to help meet your career needs P32

we offer a range of support to help you realise your potential while you are studying and for up to three years after you have graduated RG15

We offer a range of face to face services aimed at providing the right advice to help you succeed in taking steps towards choosing and planning your desired future. RG12

We offer a variety of services that give you the best possible opportunity to secure your dream job. P18

We offer a range of career development modules to help you with your career planning and decision making. RG11

we offer a growing collection of exciting multimedia and interactive resources to assist with your career planning and management. RG21

We offer a range of services to enhance your academic skills RG20

we offer a number of workshops to help guide you and develop your entrepreneurial skills and knowledge. RG7

we organise a range of experiential learning activities to help you decide for yourself RG7

We offer a range of training sessions and resources to help you develop skills in these areas RG7

We provide comprehensive support material that can help you develop survival skills for this competitive and fast-moving environment P23

We provide structured careers education programmes to help meet your career development needs. P31

We provide access to a wide range of information resources in our Help with... section which can help generate more focused questions for when you meet your Careers Consultant. RG22

At the University, we organise a range of experiential learning activities to help you decide for yourself if you've got what it takes to be a successful entrepreneur. RG7

Every year we run hundreds of events aimed at helping students and graduates to decide, plan and compete. RG11

Every term we organise a large variety of events across all faculties to help you with a range of career issues and job hunting. P8

We organise many events throughout the year which are designed to assist you with your career planning, whether you're a student or a graduate. RG21

We organise events to help you improve your employability and articulate the skills you have in applications and interviews. RG11

51.

We can help you with anything connected with your career plans. P34

What job role or sector/s interest you? If you are unsure, we can help you explore your options. RG11

Whether you are a UK, EU or international student, we can help you to explore and realise your career goals. RG10

We will not make any decisions for you; we can help you to weigh up different options, and make sure that you have accessed accurate information which can help you make an informed decision RG12

Talk to us. We can help you to set targets and devise a plan of action to achieve your goal. RG12

52.

If you are struggling with these types of maths problems then it may be worth committing to attending several sessions so we can help you put together **a strategy** to become successful. P4

We can help you develop **a strategy** to make sure you get the most from your time at university P27

We can help you with **your job hunting strategies** and give you that competitive edge. P34

If you're stuck with your career planning we can help you to assess what you want from a job, get you to think about your skills, motivations, interests and abilities and help you devise **an appropriate career strategy**. RG11

We can help you develop an effective career and **skill development strategy** RG1

We can help you **connect** with other postgraduates, alumni and employers RG1

53.

Learn how to deliver effective presentations. We can help you **to practice** your **presentation skills** before an interview or assessment centre. RG12

We provide comprehensive support material that can help you develop **survival skills** for this competitive and fast-moving environment, and we can help you become a strong candidate and increase your profile by **enhancing your communication skills**. P23

We can help you **evaluate** your skills and make plans to **improve** existing skills or **gain** new ones. RG11

Being "employable" is simply about demonstrating that you have the skills that employers are looking for. **The good news is that whatever sector you want to work in, all employers look for the same key skills.** We can help you to develop these skills and **learn to sell them effectively** to your future employer in lots of ways RG5

We can help you **develop** independent **learning skills** by providing advice on general techniques and strategies that can be applied to your specific subject area. RG20

Read the Make the Most of You section of our website to find out all the ways we can help you **boost** your skills and experience. RG24

54.

Writing a CV can be a challenge but good news - we can help you to organise your experience and present it to employers so that you stand the best chance of success in finding part-time work RG20

We can help you to review and tailor your CVs and applications P9

There is no blueprint for the perfect CV, but we can help you to tailor your CV and develop the tools to adapt this to a specific role or career area. RG1

When you have enrolled, we can help you analyse your skills, learn how to write outstanding CVs and application forms and perfect your interview technique. RG13

There is no blueprint for the perfect CV, but we can help you to tailor your CV and develop the tools to adapt this to a specific role or career area. RG1

Interviews don't have to be scary. We can help you to prepare for the different types of questions you might face in a not-so-nail-biting interview. P13

If you've been invited to a real interview, we can help you prepare through an hour long practice session with a Careers Consultant. RG22

We can help you prepare for aptitude tests through practice test sessions and a range of reference books and online resources. RG6

Group assessment, psychometric testing and other strategies are employed to test prospective employees, and we can help you prepare for all of these by tailoring your profile, skills and CV accordingly. P23

55.

We can help you find placements, paid work and volunteering experience. P7

We can help you find work experience opportunities, including voluntary work, and discuss different career directions to enable you to take the next step. P7

We can help you find part-time work that fits around your studies, either on or off campus. P27

we can help you to find out about employers and to make applications for jobs, but we do not have any special influence with employers P21

56.

We can help you with finding and competing for internships, plus exclusive opportunities through The Huddersfield Internship Programme. P12

If you know that you want to set up your own business when you graduate, we can help you get a head start. P14

We have helped hundreds of students just like you. Whether you are an undergraduate, postgraduate, part-time, or mature student we can help you get streets ahead of the competition – fast. RG19

Please contact us or pop-in and talk to us about how we can help you plan for your future. P23

As a student or recent graduate, we can help you make well-informed decisions about your future, whether you want to start your career, go onto further study or take time out. P27

So whether you're fresh out of Uni, or have a few years' experience, we can help you land your dream graduate job. P7

If you are considering starting your own business or social enterprise, we can help you to make the jump and make your dreams a reality. P14

Contact us to find out how we can help you turn your dream into a reality. P27

57.

we are here to support you through the process to enable you to launch your enterprise. P14

We are here to support you through the Club 21 internship process. RG8

At the Careers Centre we are here to give you careers advice and support at all stages during your studies. RG11

We are here to offer help THROUGHOUT our graduates' subsequent careers. RG3

We are here to give you all the help and support you need to write successful applications. RG11

Whether you are an undergraduate, postgraduate or you've graduated within the last two years, we are here to help. RG19

We have projects of all shapes and sizes to fit around even the busiest of schedules. So if you are looking for a way to gain new experiences, develop new skills and meet new friends, then we are here to help. RG20

We are here to help with any careers issue. We will not give you lists of information or tell you what job you should do, but we will help you focus appropriately on the relevant issues concerning your enquiry. If you're stuck with your career planning we can help you to assess what you want from a job, get you to think about your skills, motivations, interests and abilities and help you devise an appropriate career strategy. RG11

Hearing you have successfully secured a Club 21 internship can be both exciting (and sometimes scary!) - we are here to help. RG8

We are here to help LSE students find a volunteering placement at a charity or not-for-profit organisation during your time studying at LSE. RG13

Purple Door's Volunteering Team actively works with 140 local and national charities and non-for-profit organisations. We are here to help with your volunteering search and applications, whether you are looking for experience that links to your course, career aspirations or addresses skill gaps in your CV. P26

We have a team of staff based across the Greenwich, Avery Hill and Medway campuses whose role is to support volunteers. We are here to help you so please contact us for further information or advice. P10

We are here to help you investigate your careers options, sort out your career plans and develop the important skills you need to make these plans happen. P34

(For 'doctoral research candidates') It is our aim to work collaboratively with the variety of academic services to assist you in finding and reaching your career and/or research aspirations. We are here to help, inspire and guide you towards your goals. RG21

If you are thinking of leaving or changing your course, we are here to help you. You may want to change courses because your ideas of your future career path have changed, or your present course is not fulfilling your expectations, or you may question whether higher education is right for you. P30

If you are thinking about changing or leaving your course this may be a worrying time for you. There are many reasons for considering this change and we are here to help and support you at this difficult time by providing useful information and support services to ensure you make the right decision. RG12

58.

Careers appointments are confidential and impartial. P9

We are a free, impartial and confidential service which exists to help you develop your career. RG16

All of our appointments are impartial, confidential and focussed on your individual needs RG8

The Careers Service offers a professional, confidential and impartial service and you can get information and advice in the following ways: P9

The Advice Team is made up of experienced professional advisors offering a confidential, impartial service to all students at the University of Lincoln. P15

The advice and guidance you receive will be entirely impartial. This means that you will not be encouraged to take any course of action unless it is in your best interests. P34

The University Careers Service: free, trusted and impartial RG17

59.

The Operating Department Practice course has been designed to enable students to become confident and capable, and are fit for award, fit for practice and fit for purpose. P1

Through volunteering abroad, students are able to become adaptable and develop their understanding of the world by working with diverse communities and other volunteers from around the world. RG8

Engaging with this process can help you to become more motivated and to take charge of your own learning and career development. RG19

60.

Northumbria Graduates into Business offered graduates a paid internship in a North East based small to medium sized business. P22

Register for bi-weekly email updates about paid internship vacancies. P4

The Engage system has a wide range of opportunities for students and you will find information on full-time, part-time and vacation jobs as well as paid internships and voluntary opportunities. P33

MyGateway advertises a range of paid internships. P6

We have strong links with big-name employers – from Trinity Mirror to IBM – which means that we can provide you with valuable work placements, paid internships and industry master classes. P16

This scheme provides funding PGRs who are doing research in the area of health technologies and medical devices to undertake a paid internship. RG20

If you're interested in undertaking a paid internship throughout or after your time at University come and see us. RG7

This unique programme allows students to develop enterprising skills and undertake a paid internship with a local social enterprise. RG1

Paid internships for Nottingham students in the local area. RG16

MGIP facilitate paid internships that run between 4-12 months for recent University of Manchester graduates. RG14

Appendix 4 for chapter 6 – Frequencies of common L1 and R2 ('Job hunting' – 'Job search')

common L1		Freq	common R1	Freq
academic	job hunting	2	job hunting advice	
academic	job search	10	job search advice	9
creative	job hunting	8	job hunting information	5
creative	job search	7	job search information	5
effective	job hunting	11	job hunting methods	1
effective	job search	1	job search method	1
global	job hunting	2	job hunting strategy / strategies	37
global	job search	3	job(-)search strategy / strategies	25
graduate	job hunting	8	job hunting techniques	7
graduate	job search	25	job search techniques	6
proactive	job hunting	3	job hunting tips	10
proactive	job search	3	job(-)search tips	6
country specific	job(-)hunting	2	job hunting process	10
country(-)specific	job search	5	job search process	3
successful	job hunting	2	job hunting skills	9
successful	job search	3	job search skills	6
useful	job hunting	2	job hunting handouts	1
useful	job search	2	job search handout	2
			job hunting resources	3
			job(-)search resources	13
			job hunting sections	2
			job search sections	1
			job hunting links	1
			job search links	2
			job hunting (web) pages / websites	4
			job search (web) pages / websites	23

Appendix 5 for chapter 6 – Tables

Table 1. ‘Skills and’ binomials

	‘skills and’ binomials	Freq	Range
1	skills and experience	349	55
2	skills and knowledge	132	39
3	skills and attributes	92	29
4	skills and abilities	66	26
5	skills and experiences	62	25
6	skills and qualities	89	25
7	skills and interests	37	21
8	skills and achievements	27	18
9	skills and competencies	41	18
10	skills and confidence	25	16
11	skills and qualifications	24	13
12	skills and career	13	11
13	skills and expertise	13	10
14	skills and behaviours	11	9
15	skills and values	12	8
16	skills and strengths	14	7
17	skills and work	9	7
18	skills and learning	5	5
19	skills and talents	6	5
20	skills and capabilities	4	4
21	skills and contacts	4	4
22	skills and ideas	4	4
23	skills and motivations	5	4
24	skills and strategies	5	4
25	skills and aptitudes	3	3
26	skills and attitudes	7	3
27	skills and enterprise	3	3
28	skills and enthusiasm	3	3
29	skills and leadership	4	3
30	skills and personality	4	3

Table 2. Verbs + ‘your skills’

	‘skills’ 2-grams (right)	Freq	Range
1	develop your skills	143	46
2	developing your skills	41	16
3	assess your skills	20	15
4	identify your skills	28	15
5	demonstrate your skills	24	14
6	match your skills	29	12
7	articulate your skills	23	11
8	enhance your skills	15	10

9	improve your skills	15	10
10	sell your skills	12	19
11	assessing your skills	13	8
12	market your skills	12	8
13	build your skills	13	7
14	present your skills	7	7
15	use your skills	7	7
16	analyse your skills	8	6
17	demonstrating your skills	10	6
18	evidence your skills	8	6
19	identifying your skills	9	6
20	selling your skills	9	6
21	showcase your skills	5	5
22	analysing your skills	7	4
23	highlight your skills	4	4
24	promote your skills	7	4
25	recording your skills	7	4
26	understanding your skills	11	4
27	audit your skills	3	3
28	boost your skills	3	3
29	broaden your skills	3	3
30	compare your skills	3	3
31	describe your skills	3	3
32	knowing your skills	4	3
33	marketing your skills	3	3
34	promoting your skills	3	3
35	test your skills	3	3
36	building your skills	2	2
37	consider your skills your skills	2	2
38	describing your skills	2	2
39	enhancing your skills	2	2
40	hone your skills	2	2
41	illustrate your skills	2	2
42	increase your skills	2	2
43	know your skills	2	2
44	matching your skills	2	2
45	presenting your skills	3	2
46	record your skills	6	2
47	review your skills	3	2
48	share your skills	2	2
49	showcasing your skills	2	2

Table 3. 'Skills' 2-grams (right)

	'Skills' 2-grams (right)		Freq	Range
1	transferable	skills	263	44
2	communication	skills	275	41
3	presentation	skills	114	39
4	interview	skills	103	38
5	language	skills	157	33
6	(self) management	skills	108	33
7	interpersonal	skills	86	29
8	professional	skills	86	29
9	leadership	skills	75	28
10	networking	skills	69	28
11	IT	skills	67	27
12	research	skills	76	27
13	business	skills	56	25
14	entrepreneurial	skills	46	24
15	problem solving	skills	55	22
16	graduate	skills	43	16
17	practical	skills	34	16
18	people	skills	19	16
19	soft	skills	30	14
20	enterprising	skills	30	12
21	listening	skills	25	12
22	numeracy	skills	18	12
23	career	skills	14	8
24	employment	skills	14	8
25	numerical	skills	11	8
26	build	skills	7	7
27	job hunting	skills	8	7
28	learning	skills	14	7
29	marketing	skills	10	7
30	organisation	skills	15	7
31	creative	skills	9	6
32	cultural	skills	12	6
33	teamwork	skills	7	5
34	teamworking	skills	11	5
35	vocational	skills	5	5
36	computer	skills	4	4
37	global	skills	4	4

38	self-reliance	skills	4	4
39	*awareness	skills	3	3
40	hard	skills	4	2

*Brand, commercial, self, cultural, global awareness

Table 4. L1 'Skills'

L1 skills	Freq	Range	L1 Skills	Freq	Range	L1 skills	Freq	Range
new	164	48	advanced	4	4	survival	2	2
key	126	37	employable	4	4	typical	2	2
relevant	90	32	extra	5	4	best	1	1
valuable	48	26	generic	6	4	correct	2	1
necessary	27	20	fantastic	3	3	etiquette	1	1
specialist	232	18	great	4	3	desirable	6	1
useful	25	18	general	3	3	'hidden'	1	1
existing	25	17	invaluable	3	3	'real-life'	1	1
life	23	17	common	2	2	motivational	1	1
own	25	16	crucial	4	2			
essential	22	14	diplomacy	2	2			
basic	16	12	diverse	2	2			
right	13	10	individual	2	2			
core	22	11	improved	2	2			
(employer)	14	8	innovative	2	2			
(job)	9	8	persuasion	2	2			
important	14	7						
main	17	7						
current	8	6						
required	6	5						

Table 5. 'make yourself employable'

Working abroad	Make yourself	employable	and for employment
Employability?	Make Yourself	employable	Being employable is about
First Years	Make Yourself	employable	Finding jobs and Work
Years	Make Yourself	Employable	Guide for First Years Make
more in our guide	Make Yourself	Employable	Guide for 2nd (Penultimate)
work experience.	Make yourself	Employable	Guide for Final Student
Volunteering	Make yourself	Employable	Guide for First Years If
Roundtable	Make yourself	employable	Link to Employability skills. Get
Events relating to	Make yourself	employable	Link to Employability skills.
your future. Our	make yourself	employable	Making yourself employable is
any questions.	Make Yourself	employable	1-2-1 mock interviews for

year to make yourself	employable	pages will give you an insight
Work Experience Make yourself	Employable	What is Employability? Make
Career Guide Make yourself	employable	Where to start Quick Guide:
Finding a job Make yourself	employable	whilst still at University With
Networking Making Yourself	employable	whilst at university guide The
jobs in the UK. Making yourself	employable	Work experience Working
topics such as making yourself	Employable	Accessing the Hidden Job
employable Making yourself	employable	as an international student

Appendix 6 for chapter 7 – Top 20 ‘we + verb’ clusters (3 and 4grams)

Table 1. ‘We are’

	‘We are’ 3grams	Freq	Range	‘We are’ 4grams	Freq	Range
1	we are looking	97	27	we are looking for	80	21
2	we are here	55	27	we are here to	54	27
3	we are unable	45	22	we are unable to	45	22
4	we are always	42	23	we are able to	32	21
5	we are able	33	22	we are happy to	29	19
6	we are a	31	18	we are keen to	26	16
7	we are also	30	16	we are committed to	24	21
8	we are happy	30	20	we are not able (to)	15	8
9	we are not	29	16	we are always happy (to)	11	8
10	we are keen	28	18	we are always looking	11	8

Table 2. ‘We have’

	‘we have’ 3grams	Freq	Range	‘we have’ 4grams	Freq	Range
1	we have a	177	47	we have a number	30	18
2	we have links	30	5	we have links with	29	4
3	we have been	26	17	we have a range	24	17
4	we have an	22	16	we have only included	14	1
5	we have to	20	10	we have lots of	12	5
6	we have the	19	12	we have a dedicated	11	7
7	we have only	15	2	we have a wide	11	8
8	we have provided	15	9	we have relevant books	10	1
9	we have developed	14	10	we have a large	8	5
10	we have created	13	10	we have a strong	8	7

Table 2.1. ‘We have a’

	‘we have a’ +1R	Freq	Range
1	we have a number	30	18
2	we have a range	24	17
3	we have a dedicated	11	7
4	we have a wide	11	8
5	we have a large	8	5
6	we have a strong	8	7
7	we have a related	5	1
8	we have a wealth	5	4

9	we have a huge	4	4
10	we have a long	4	3

Table 3. 'We can'

	'we can' 3grams	Freq	Range	'we can' 4grams	Freq	Range
1	we can help	344	52	we can help you	215	44
2	we can offer	89	32	we can support you	37	13
3	we can also	63	26	we can offer you	31	21
4	we can provide	52	23	we can also help	20	12
5	we can support	48	17	we can provide you	15	10
6	we can give	27	13	we can work with	15	13
7	we can work	17	15	we can also offer	13	6
8	we can arrange	14	12	we can help with	13	12
9	we can book	13	5	we can book you	12	4
10	we can do	12	11	we can give practical	12	2

Table 4. 'We will'

	'we will' 3grams	Freq	Range	'we will' 4grams	Freq	Range
1	we will be	64	31	we will contact you	25	13
2	we will contact	31	16	we will help you	25	21
3	we will also	26	18	we will email you	23	3
4	we will help	26	22	we will try to	13	10
5	we will email	25	4	we will send you	12	11
6	we will not	25	16	we will endeavour to	9	9
7	we will send	23	18	we will only advertise	9	4
8	we will provide	17	12	we will respond to	9	6
9	we will try	14	11	we will ask you	8	6
10	we will only	13	8	we will continue to	8	2

Table 5. 'We offer'

	'we offer' 3grams	Freq	Range	'We offer' 4grams	Freq	Range
1	we offer a	132	42	we offer a range	51	25
2	we offer and	12	11	we offer a variety	14	8
3	we offer to	12	8	we offer a wide	14	10
4	we offer the	11	7	we offer a free	8	8
5	we offer you	11	10	we offer advice and	8	4
6	we offer advice	10	6	we offer the following	6	4
7	we offer an	7	6	we offer a number	5	4
8	we offer students	7	7	we offer lots of	5	3
9	we offer free	6	5	we offer high quality	4	2
10	we offer is	6	5	we offer practice interviews	4	2

Table 5.1. 'We offer a'

	'we offer a' + 1R	Freq	Range
1	we offer a range	51	25
2	we offer a variety	14	8
3	we offer a wide	14	10
4	we offer a free	8	8
5	we offer a number	5	4
6	we offer a comprehensive	3	3
7	we offer a drop	3	2
8	we offer a broad	2	2
9	we offer a good	2	1
10	we offer a huge	2	2

Table 6. 'We do'

	'we do' 3grams	Fre q	Range	'we do not' + 1R	Freq	Range
1	we do not	95	30	we do not offer	14	7
2	we do this	15	13	we do not advertise	12	7
3	we do have	9	8	we do not have	10	4
4	we do and	7	5	we do not provide	9	6
5	we do it	6	6	we do not accept	6	2

Table 7. 'We provide'

	'We provide' 3grams	Freq	Range	'we provide' 4grams	Freq	Range
1	we provide a	27	16	we provide a range	14	7
2	we provide access	7	4	we provide access to	7	4
3	we provide an	6	6	we provide a wide	3	3
4	we provide advice	5	5	we provide services to	3	2
5	we provide and	5	5	we provide a comprehensive	2	1
6	we provide careers	5	5	we provide advice on	2	2
7	we provide the	4	4	we provide and our	2	2
8	we provide to	4	4	we provide and we	2	2
9	we provide for	3	3	we provide careers support	2	2
10	we provide services	3	2	we provide employers with	2	1

Table 7.1 we provide a

	'we provide a' + 1R	Freq	Range
1	we provide a range	14	7
2	we provide a wide	3	3
3	we provide a comprehensive	2	1
4	we provide a one	1	1

5	we provide a platform	1	1
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Table 8. 'We would'

	'we would' 3grams	Freq	Range	'we would' 4grams	Freq	Range
1	we would be	25	15	we would like to	20	15
2	we would like	24	17	we would love to	14	10
3	we would love	14	10	we would encourage you	8	5
4	we would recommend	13	10	we would recommend that	7	6
5	we would encourage	12	8	we would be delighted	6	6

Table 9. 'We run'

	'we run' 3grams	Freq	Range	'We run' 4grams	Freq	Range
1	we run a	58	31	we run a number	17	12
2	we run an	12	11	we run workshops on	10	5
3	we run workshops	12	6	we run a series	8	6
4	we run regular	5	4	we run a range	5	4
5	we run several	5	4	we run a variety	5	5

Table 10. 'We work'

	'we work' 3grams	Freq	Range	'we work' 4grams	Freq	Range
1	we work with	77	33	we work closely with	21	18
2	we work closely	22	18	we work in partnership	10	6
3	we work in	12	7	we work with a	10	9
4	we work to	6	4	we work with the	6	6
5	we work together	4	3	we work with all	5	5

Table 11. 'We recommend'

	'we recommend' 3grams	Freq	Range	'we recommend' 4grams	Freq	Range
1	we recommend that	41	27	we recommend that you	33	21
2	we recommend you	34	23	we recommend the following	6	5
3	we recommend the	7	6	we recommend a minimum	5	1
4	we recommend a	6	2	we recommend that students	4	4
5	we recommend to	3	1	we recommend that all	3	3

Table 12. 'We want'

	'we want' 3grams	Freq	Range	'we want' 4grams	Freq	Range
1	we want to	56	29	we want to hear	11	7
2	we want you	10	7	we want you to	10	7
3	we want our	7	5	we want to know	6	4
4	we want your	3	2	we want to give	5	4
5	we want the	2	2	we want our services	4	2

Table 13. 'We advertise'

	'we advertise' 3grams	Freq	Range	'we advertise' 4grams	Freq	Range
1	we advertise a	15	10	We advertise hundreds of	9	5
2	we advertise hundreds	9	5	we advertise a wide	7	6
3	we advertise vacancies	7	6	we advertise a range	5	3
4	we advertise the	4	3	we advertise vacancies and	4	3
5	we advertise these	4	2	we advertise a number	3	2

Table 14. 'We know'

	'we know' 3grams	Freq	Range	'We know' 4grams	Freq	Range
1	we know that	37	15	we know that you	5	2
2	we know it	5	5	we know that students	4	1
3	we know you	4	4	we know that graduate	3	2
4	we know how	3	3	we know from experience	2	1
5	we know from	2	1	we know it is	2	2

Table 15. 'We may'

	'we may' 3grams	Freq	Range	'we may' 4grams	Freq	Range
1	we may be	21	11	we may be able	16	9
2	we may contact	7	6	we may try to	6	6
3	we may try	6	6	we may ask you	4	3
4	we may ask	4	3	we may contact you	3	3
5	we may refer	4	3	we may refer you	3	3

Table 16. We cannot

	'we cannot' 3grams	Freq	Range	'we cannot' 4grams	Freq	Range
1	we cannot guarantee	19	10	we cannot guarantee that	8	6
2	we cannot provide	5	5	we cannot guarantee entry	4	1
3	we cannot offer	4	3	we cannot take responsibility	4	2
4	we cannot take	4	2	we cannot always guarantee	3	2
5	we cannot always	3	2	we cannot do: we	2	2

Table 17. 'We look'

	'we look' 3grams	Freq	Range	'we look' 4grams	Freq	Range
1	we look forward	48	19	we look forward to	48	19
2	we look for	9	6	we look at the	2	2
3	we look at	6	4	we look for when	2	2
4	we look after	1	1	we look for." think	2	1
5	we look to	1	1	we look after the	1	1

Table 18. 'We aim'

	'we aim' 3grams	Freq	Range	'we aim' 4grams	Freq	Range
1	we aim to	63	34	we aim to provide	10	8
2				we aim to respond	8	6
3				we aim to increase	4	1
4				we aim to answer	3	3
5				we aim to help	3	3
6				we aim to support	3	3
7				we aim to ensure	2	2
8				we aim to match	2	2
9				we aim to offer	2	1
10				we aim to promote	2	2
11				we aim to reply	2	2
12				we aim to work	2	2

Table 19. 'We organise'

	'we organise' 3grams	Freq	Range	'we organise' 4grams	Freq	Range
1	we organise a	23	12	we organise a wide	8	4
2	we organise events	5	2	we organise a number	4	2
3	we organise many	3	1	we organise a range	4	4
4	we organise regular	3	2	we organise a series	3	2

5	we organise employer	2	1	we organise a complete	1	1
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Table 20. 'We help'

	'we help' 3grams	Freq	Range	'we help' 4grams	Freq	Range
1	we help you	17	9	we help our clients	5	2
2	we help to	7	4	we help to measure	5	2
3	we help our	6	3	we help you to	5	4
4	we help students	5	4	we help hundreds of	2	2
5	we help businesses	2	2	we help students get	2	1

Appendix 7 for chapter 7 – ‘we * help you * your’ pattern

(a) Applications, CVs, cover letters

we	will help	you	develop	your	application
we	can help	you	to tailor	your	CV and develop the tools to adapt this to a specific role or career area
we	can help	you	to write	your	CV and covering letter and prepare for interviews

(b) Skills

we	can help	you	analyse	your	skills, learn how to write outstanding CVs and application forms and perfect your interview technique
we	can help	you	boost	your	skills and experience
we	can help	you	develop	your	enterprising, entrepreneurial and intrapreneurial skills!
we	can help	you	develop	your	skills, gain valuable experience through temporary work and volunteering and direct you to the most relevant information
we	can help	you	evaluate	your	skills and make plans to improve existing skills or gain new ones
we	can help	you	identify	your	skills and strengths
we	will help	you	use	your	work to build a bank of skills that you can use to impress employers when you graduate
we	can help	you	to practice	your	presentation skills before an interview or assessment centre

(c) Plans, ideas, goals, options, future

we	'd help	you	form	your	plans and even prepare for your return to the UK [after a gap year]
We	'll help	you	develop	your	idea over an eight-month period and the transferable skills you develop throughout the competition will improve
we	can help	you	plan for	your	future
we	can help	you	to reach	your	goals
we	can help	you	to explore	your	options for working during your studies
we	will help	you	to develop	your	business idea
we	will help	you	to devise	your	own Career Action Plan

(d) Job, role

we	can help	you	find	your	ideal job
we	can help	you	land	your	dream graduate job
we	can help	you	secure	your	ideal job

We	'll help	you	find	your	perfect role
we	will help	you	find	your	work placement

(e) Career

we	can help	you:	consider	your	career options
we	can help	you	develop	your	career
we	can help	you	get	your	foot on the first rung of your graduate career ladder
we	can help	you	research	your	career ideas
we	can help	you	to plan	your	future career irrespective of the stage you might be at currently

Appendix 8 for chapter 8 – Keyword lists (RG and P92 sub-corpora)

Keyword lists - Log likelihood - BNC written word list as reference corpus

	P92	Freq	Keyness	RG	Freq	Keyness
1	careers	4424	33836.162	careers	9493	66110.699
2	your	11689	33174.447	your	20330	53280.122
3	graduate	3598	27549.908	you	33686	44429.068
4	you	18428	25775.845	students	9073	41160.107
5	students	4857	23227.323	graduate	5422	36507.107
6	employability	2198	19768.369	skills	6511	30958.188
7	skills	3519	17748.680	career	5991	28930.048
8	graduates	2200	16053.418	employers	3969	20512.169
9	uk	3685	14588.009	graduates	3032	19273.584
10	cv	1687	14099.978	university	5393	19249.511
11	website	1506	13738.217	work	9967	19101.819
12	employers	2354	13325.119	opportunities	3986	18777.992
13	job	3509	13189.832	experience	5675	18390.121
14	career	2669	12844.778	internship	2328	18221.478
15	volunteering	1412	12190.284	website	2293	18017.704
16	opportunities	2356	12107.757	uk	5315	17938.292
17	university	3100	11918.356	information	6844	17606.206
18	jobs	2580	11865.361	job	5344	17500.351
19	student	2465	11554.861	internships	2098	16468.194
20	www	1203	10944.595	student	3865	16182.832
21	work	5148	9909.253	jobs	3957	16109.466
22	information	3693	9894.319	cv	2069	14892.985
23	placement	1318	9326.141	employability	1826	14075.730
24	experience	2694	8522.719	employer	2695	13544.170
25	online	1163	8414.874	vacancies	1980	13526.507
26	email	942	8234.512	recruitment	2328	13301.981
27	recruitment	1303	8096.910	online	1904	12298.549
28	advice	2023	7953.534	postgraduate	1806	11131.886
29	ac	1159	7829.622	lse	1456	10869.274
30	our	4498	7743.964	research	4401	10535.930
31	employer	1387	7316.963	volunteering	1403	10336.779
32	placements	897	6830.204	academic	2448	10172.981
33	vacancies	917	6828.828	advice	2984	10102.618
34	business	2710	6352.599	interview	2331	9933.050
35	interview	1350	6220.658	email	1222	9221.774
36	help	2712	6218.090	placement	1484	8835.054
37	internships	657	5978.410	application	2642	8509.855
38	vacancy	741	5508.284	our	6487	8293.678
39	http	562	5126.745	help	4213	8099.745
40	postgraduate	758	4842.743	alumni	1116	7896.640
41	prospects	929	4818.158	events	2544	7809.161
42	mentoring	539	4817.215	sector	2387	7732.903
43	events	1420	4630.781	pdf	1018	7679.992
44	support	2123	4582.669	phd	1100	7218.905

45	application	1378	4554.190	international	3241	7156.579
46	internship	501	4514.267	placements	1092	7129.495
47	employment	1398	4503.858	ac	1268	7119.325
48	pdf	522	4490.207	resources	2383	7118.844
49	find	2292	4441.166	find	4003	7078.095
50	campus	652	4274.197	business	3857	7072.745

Appendix 9 for chapter 8 – Tables

Table 1. P92 and RG internship schemes

P92 internship schemes	RG internship schemes
University of Brighton internship	LSE Careers internships
The University of Sunderland Graduate Internships	University of Exeter internship schemes
UWE Bristol Santander Graduate Internships Scheme	University of East Anglia: Graduate Internship Programme
UWE Bristol Undergraduate Internship Scheme	MGIP the Manchester Graduate Internship Programme
London Met Graduate Internship Scheme	Queen's Graduate Internship Programme
University of Wolverhampton Graduate Internships	The University of Warwick's Graduate Internships programme (WGI)
The Huddersfield Internship Programme	University of Glasgow's dedicated, in-house internship programme exclusive Leeds Internships
Sheffield Rise – Internship options	The Leeds Internship Programme
Sussex Internship Programme	Imperial College London internship unit
Staffordshire University Internships	LSE Internships Scheme
	Nottingham Internship Scheme
	LSE Parliamentary internships
	Oxford University's Internship Programme (OUIP)
	University of York SME internships
	University of York's Student Internship Bureau
	Birmingham Undergraduate Internship Programme
	UoB Internship Scheme
	UoN Internship Scheme
	Warwick Internship Programmes

Table 2. 'Support' 2-5grams

2-5grams	P92		RG	
	Freq	Range	Freq	Range
support you	171	29	127	24
support your	48	23	76	19
support you in	39	18	31	16
support and advice	31	14	39	15
support and guidance	19	13	30	11
support to help you	9	7	12	8
support the development of	10	9	3	3
support from the careers	11	7	9	5
support from the university	5	4	11	6
can support	56	17	45	16

will support	35	16	31	12
financial support	44	17	61	13
careers support	35	15	39	14
advice and support	41	21	76	17
help and support	18	13	31	15
information and support	24	11	16	8
one-to-one support	19	12	10	4
a range of support	10	7	12	9
are here to support	6	6	7	6
is here to support	6	5	9	7
a wide range of support	4	4	4	4
we are here to support	4	4	4	4

Table 3. 'Help' 2-5grams

2-5grams	P92		RG	
	Freq	Range	Freq	Range
help you	1195	34	2002	24
help you find	72	25	87	20
help you get	44	25	103	23
help you make	56	20	88	20
help you develop	42	19	95	19
help you identify	39	16	68	19
help you with your	1	16	37	17
help you get started	8	6	50	15
help you stand out from	13	10	6	4
help you to stand out	3	2	12	8
help you make the most	9	6	24	14
to help	955	34	1638	24
will help	315	34	423	24
can help	448	33	680	24
we can help	126	29	218	23
here to help	62	27	79	20
designed to help	38	23	102	21
able to help	29	22	44	18
are here to help	27	19	29	14

how we can help	34	18	82	14
be able to help	22	17	38	16
we are here to help	15	11	23	11

N-grams

Table 4. P92 and RG 3-grams

	P92 3-grams	Freq	Range	RG 3-grams	Freq	Range
1	a range of	582	34	a list of	286	24
2	are looking for	271	34	a number of	659	24
3	as part of	253	34	a range of	915	24
4	if you are	721	34	a variety of	454	24
5	the opportunity to	380	34	a wide range	475	24
6	to find out	413	34	advice and guidance	125	24
7	to help you	486	34	and how to	261	24
8	would like to	279	34	applying for jobs	112	24
9	you need to	407	34	are interested in	399	24
10	a number of	327	33	are looking for	394	24

Table 5. P92 and RG 4-grams

	P92 4-grams	Freq	Range	RG 4-grams	Freq	Range
1	a wide range of	253	33	a wide range of	472	24
2	to find out more	208	33	can help you to	121	24
3	you would like to	175	33	if you have any	174	24
4	find out more about	287	32	to find out more	370	24
5	if you would like	140	32	you are interested in	330	24
6	if you want to	98	30	you would like to	287	24
7	you are interested in	163	30	a great way to	161	23
8	you will need to	196	30	advice on how to	108	23
9	you are looking for	86	29	are a number of	118	23
10	if you are a	96	28	at the end of	147	23

Table 6. P92 and RG 5-grams

	P92 5-grams	Freq	Range	RG 5-grams	Freq	Range
1	if you would like to	97	30	there are a number of	114	23
2	to find out more about	122	30	to find out more about	237	23
3	find out more about the	65	25	what you want to do	82	23
4	if you are interested in	68	24	find out more about the	139	22
5	is a great way to	55	23	if you are interested in	138	22
6	of leavers from higher education	59	23	if you would like to	121	22
7	stand out from the crowd	44	23	at the end of the	63	21

8	there are a number of	63	23	make the most of your - 12	77	21
9	at the end of the	48	20	the most of your time - 5	54	21
10	if you are looking for	35	20	if you have any questions	74	20

Table 7. P92 and RG 6-grams

	P92 6-grams	Freq	Range	RG 6-grams	Freq	Range
1	to find out more about the	38	20	to find out more about the	75	19
2	of leavers from higher education dlhe	31	19	make the most of your time	33	17
3	association of graduate careers advisory services	29	18	on a first come first served	39	17
4	destinations of leavers from higher education	38	17	the most of your time at	29	17
5	leavers from higher education dlhe survey	21	16	a first come first served basis	38	16
6	you will have the opportunity to	22	15	association of graduate careers advisory services	31	15
7	the association of graduate careers advisory	20	14	how to make the most of	32	15
8	destination of leavers from higher education	20	13	about what you want to do	20	14
9	if you have any questions about	16	13	the job you are applying for	24	14
10	the job you are applying for	27	13	destinations of leavers from higher education	50	13

Table 8. P92 and RG 7-grams

	P92 7-grams	Freq	Range	RG 7-grams	Freq	Range
1	of leavers from higher education dlhe survey	21	16	on a first come first served basis	38	16
2	destinations of leavers from higher education dlhe	21	14	the association of graduate careers advisory services	19	12
3	the association of graduate careers advisory services	18	13	make the most of your time at	15	11
4	association of graduate careers advisory services agcas	15	12	the most of your time at university	18	11
5	on a first come first served basis	18	11	uk council for international student affairs ukcisa	16	10
6	the destinations of leavers from higher education	20	11	as much as you can about the	15	9

7	destination of leavers from higher education dlhe	10	9	association of graduate careers advisory services agcas	13	9
8	keep up to date with the latest	9	8	find out as much as you can	18	9
9	working in the uk after your studies	16	8	help you make the most of your	12	9
10	destinations of leavers from higher education survey	12	7	if you have any questions please contact	14	9

Appendix 10 for chapter 8 – Pricelist for services offered to employers

Service or event offered by CSs	Price	University
Clubs	£550+VAT pa	RG10
Recruiters' Club		
Sponsorship		
Sponsorship - 'Ultimate exposure for your organisation'	£995 + VAT (including exhibitor fee)	RG4
Exhibitor Plus - 'Make your organization stand out'	£195 + VAT (on top of exhibitor fee)	RG4
Exhibiting – 'Be seen and engage with Cardiff's finest'	£349 + VAT	RG4
Fairs		
Fair banner (sponsorship)	£600 +VAT	P34
Fair guide (sponsorship)	£400 +VAT	P34
Registration deal – Cards and Carrier bags and pens with your logo	£500 + VAT	P34
Fair package*	£500 ex VAT	RG5
Stand Package	A stand (3mx2m): £475 + VAT B stand (4.5mx2m): £595 + VAT	RG14
17 briefing booklets in the series**	£1500 + VAT pa	RG20
Business and Finance Fair	£1000 (+ VAT).	RG11
Science Careers Fair	£325 + VAT	RG9
PhD Careers Fair	£350	RG9
Events		
Departmental Skills Programme 2014 / 15	£350+VAT per programme	RG10
Legal Week – Autumn term 2014	- £150 + vat	RG10
Assessment Centre Series - Spring term 2015	- £150 + vat	RG10
Media Week – Spring term 2015	- £150 + vat	RG10
Employer Presentations	£95 plus VAT.	RG4
Showcase events	£250 plus VAT	RG4
Skills Sessions	£95 plus VAT	RG4
Recruiting Visits	£45 plus VAT	RG4
Barristers Event***	- £430 + VAT	RG3
Postgraduate Law Event	£100 + VAT	RG3

Work to Change the World	Organisations: £100 + VAT, Charities: Free of charge	RG3
Careers in Creative Industries	Organisations: £100 + VAT,	RG3
Banking & Finance Event	£1025+VAT	RG3
Consultancy Event	£1025 + VAT	RG3
Graduate Schemes & Internships Event	£500+VAT	RG3
Solicitors Event	£1025+VAT	RG3
Careers in Economics	£425+VAT	RG3
Careers for Mathematicians	£425 + VAT	RG3
Engineering, Science & Technology Event	(different firms each day) £850+VAT	RG3
Summer Recruitment Event	£680 + VAT	RG3
Rooms		
book 1 room for 3 consecutive days	£120 + VAT per day = £360 + VAT	RG9
Targeted emails		
Targeted email to 367 students First 100 Additional 267 means an additional 3 groups	£50 + VAT £75 + VAT	RG9
Sending a UCLAlert target by nationality **** many nationalities (example of 3 nationalities) many nationalities (same example) + different messages	£149 (+VAT). £149 (+VAT) £149 (+VAT) £447 (+VAT)	RG22
Advertising		
Display advertising is available at different levels: Size/location Quarter Page, Half Page, Full Page, Inside front / back cover Outside back cover, Mono Colour	PRICE RANGE FROM £150-£1,500	RG9
Where job descriptions are 25 words or under, the entry is free, but for more than 25 words each entry	£149 (+VAT)	RG22 RG18
To send a message through QM Alert costs	£149 (+VAT)	RG18
TV advertising ***** 1 week: 2 weeks: 3 weeks: 4 weeks: £325+VAT	£100+VAT £175+VAT £250+VAT	RG10
for adverts 25 words and over (includes logo)	£149+VAT	RG10

*Package includes

attendance on one day only

individual exhibition space, 3m x 2m (w x d) with a table and two chairs
13A power supply to exhibition area
lunch for two (extras charged per person)
refreshments for representatives
portering
free listing in fair guide to promote your organisation and vacancies
presence on Fair website
direct weblink to your organisation's website
comprehensive on-campus marketing campaign

**** SOLD OUT**

*** For organisations with immediate Autumn vacancies to meet recent graduates and postgraduates. 3mx2m pitch for 'pop-up' OR 'banner' stands, 3 representatives per pitch.

2014 - 29 organisations met 353 graduates and postgraduates. Bookings taken from April 2015

**** However, If you wish to target by nationality, you can send an email to ALL UCL students of any particular nationality at a cost of £149 (+VAT).

This charge is to send the same message to as many nationalities as you wish. For example: you could send the same text to Chinese, Hong Kong and Taiwanese nationals at UCL for £149 (+VAT), but sending different messages to these three nationalities would cost £447 (+VAT).

*****These screens are visible to students walking past the careers service, or those who are waiting for appointment, therefore it is great visibility to students and can help to increase your brand awareness on campus!