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# Adding value through enterprise and entrepreneurship education in higher education

## **A case study collection**

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**Edited by Stuart Norton and Leigh Sear**

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## Introduction

There has been a significant growth in enterprise and entrepreneurship education within the higher education (HE) sector in the United Kingdom over the last 20 years, which has been driven from a number of sources. For one, the UK national government and European Commission have invested in entrepreneurship education as a way of fostering entrepreneurial activity which will generate economic value. Students have also identified enterprise and entrepreneurship education as a way of supporting the journey into self-employment, as well as developing commercial awareness and other 'soft skills' required by employers (The British Academy, 2017). Finally, a number of business surveys have highlighted that small businesses are facing a management and leadership shortage, and larger businesses have a need for employees who are orientated to the development of new business initiatives and ventures as a way of supporting business improvement and competitiveness.

Within higher education institutions (HEIs), this growth in enterprise and entrepreneurship education can be seen in: (i) the diversity of programmes and modules within the curriculum; (ii) the range of extra-curricular activity offered to support students in developing ideas, engaging with external stakeholders and starting a business; and (iii) the rise of regional and national competitions which provide an opportunity for students from different institutions to exchange experiences and learn from each other.

While the growth in enterprise and entrepreneurship education has led to increasing diversity in provision, there remains a number of challenges to embedding enterprise and entrepreneurship in education in disciplines beyond the domain of business and management. These challenges relate not only to the language of enterprise and entrepreneurship but also perceptions of staff and students as to its perceived value, extent and nature of relationships with external stakeholders.

Despite these challenges, what we do know is that enterprise and entrepreneurship education can add to the experiences of students. A growing evidence base highlights the value of developing enterprising and entrepreneurial skills in learners; both in terms of facilitating the creation of new ventures while in education and upon graduation, but also by enhancing their skills, values, attributes and behaviours relevant to all manner of employment opportunities.

To explore this topic, the [Embedding Enterprise in the Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences](#) was developed in collaboration with Advance HE, SFEDI, the UK Government recognised Sector Skills Organisation for enterprise and business support, and higher education providers across the sector. Designed to promote collaboration the project was grounded in sharing practice, developing innovative approaches and assessing the impact of change. Institutions involved in the collaborative project benefited from focused support on key issues, a safe space to share challenges and build networks of support, and implementing meaningful change.

We are delighted to share four case studies with you from the project. These will enable you to learn and engage with colleagues' experiences and developments from the [Embedding Enterprise in the Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences](#), as we work to enhance student success. The series brings some of the more emerging and conceptual work being undertaken across HEIs to embed enterprise and entrepreneurship learning, reflecting on different aspects of embedding enterprise and entrepreneurship in the arts, humanities and social sciences. In particular, they explore:

- + how to develop sustainable relationships with businesses in the local community which can be used to shape activity in the curriculum
- + how to create a 'live' exchange of good practice amongst staff in embedding enterprise and entrepreneurship in the curriculum
- + how to develop a values-driven, competency-based framework for embedding enterprise in the curriculum
- + how to link enterprise education within the curriculum with supporting local community organisations struggling with the realities of enterprising behaviour and actions.

This is the first case study collection to be produced from the enterprise and entrepreneurship collaborative projects and this will be the start of a series from which we will explore how to embed enterprise and entrepreneurship education within a range of different academic disciplines. In so doing, the case studies will hopefully support experience exchange amongst educators wishing to add value through enterprise and entrepreneurship education.

It leaves us to thank all contributors for their open and honest contributions. This series will help develop conceptual ideas, often exploratory in nature as they begin to identify, collect and design their approaches to track and measure demonstrable impact on students. Key themes and common challenges may become apparent, what is clear is that while it's a complex area, it is important, and we welcome sharing this range of practice and helping connect colleagues across the sector to ultimately enhance student success.

**Stuart Norton and Leigh Sear**

**May 2022**

# Fostering enterprise skills: employer engagement in the curriculum

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## Stage one: background

The University of Portsmouth's educational strategy aims to “engage every student in a life-changing experience”. This partly rests on “designing and delivery of courses engaging external stakeholders”, notably with the view to improve “student enterprise”. How to implement this strategic objective at module level for humanities and social science students is the subject of this project.

The QAA has long recognised “the centrality of employer engagement in the design and delivery of the curriculum” to foster student employability (QAA, 2014, 1). Recent case studies focusing on “new forms of employers’ engagement” have demonstrated that student employability is more effectively enhanced when it is co-produced by “a community of [...] internal and external stakeholders” (Norton and Dalrymple, 2020, 4). Yet, the creation, sustainability and organisation of such a community is problematic. The benefits of co-production between students and staff has convincingly been made (Brown, 2019; Dickerson, Jarvic and Stockwell, 2016). However, employer, and more generally external partner (EP), engagement in the curriculum raises challenges which are somewhat different from work-based learning (Little, 2006) or research and innovation collaboration (Dowling, 2015). This is particularly true for degree programmes which are non-vocational, or do not require accreditation, as is often the case in humanities and social sciences. This case study focuses on different ways to engage EPs within two undergraduate, core, level 5 modules – Politics and Policy in Action and Literary Prizes and Public Acclaim – and highlights the organisational difficulties, but also pedagogical benefits, of doing so.

Strategic factors facilitating and hindering EP engagement have been well identified (Petrov, Southall and Bolden, 2016; Plewa, Galán-Muros and Davey, 2015; Hogarth et al, 2007). At module level, questions pertaining to “the why, who and what engagement” are key. Why EPs are willing to engage in curriculum activities is not immediately obvious (Bolden et al, 2010). Certainly, “affective commitment” plays a part, and explains why alumni are usually keen to engage (Snijders et al, 2019). The quality of alumni networks, the clarity of communication, and senior management commitment all facilitate EP engagement in the curriculum (Plewa, Galán-Muros and Davey, 2015; Scesa and Williams, 2008) whereas the lack of responsive or flexible HE processes can hinder collaboration (QAA, 2018; University Alliance, 2015). Further, EP engagement is impossible without an equal commitment from academic staff. This requires a better understanding of staff motivations, whether they be extrinsic (such as increasing chances of promotion or securing funding), or intrinsic (such as enhancing the quality of teaching, or improving graduate employability). Research shows that intrinsic reasons are central but they need to be enriched by CPD activities (Orazbayeva et al, 2020).

To facilitate EP engagement in pedagogic and curriculum development, CPD workshops on “assessing enterprise and employability in humanities and social sciences” are organised at faculty level twice a year, and include staff, employers, career advisors and student representatives. Following the Advance HE project (2019), these workshops seek to encourage educators to reflect on their own practice, and build collaborative relationships with EPs. The workshops focus on enterprise as: “the application of creative ideas and innovations to practical situations... combin[ing] creativity, ideas development and problem solving with expression, communication and practical action” (QAA, 2018, 7). The core objective is to co-design authentic assessments, and to shift the focus away from didactic approaches to experiential learning – learning through doing, thus providing learners (staff and students) with an experience of being enterprising (QAA, 2018). Using the EntreComp framework, participants identify, within a specific module, the skills needed “for turning ideas into action,” (Bacigalupo et al, 2016, 16), and methods and criteria to assess them. The following case studies demonstrate the opportunities and challenges of engaging EP within the curriculum.

## Stage two: approach

Politics and Policy in Action is a core second-year module in the undergraduate politics and international relations curriculum. It is designed as a continuously assessed simulation exercise in which small teams of students work with EPs to develop a political campaign or lobbying strategy to influence policy effectively. The subject of the campaign is relevant to their local community, such as homelessness in Portsmouth, student mental health or preservation of local green spaces. First, workshops with EPs – representatives from local civil society organisations and local government – help students to develop their campaign proposal (20% of the overall mark for the module), as EPs share their insight with students into what makes an effective political campaign, how to develop it, and the mistakes that should be avoided. Then, EPs provide students with formative feedback on their campaign proposals, and throughout the duration of the module act as critical friends to the students. At the end of the semester, the students present their ‘campaign launch’ to fellow students, the teaching team and EPs. The campaign takes the shape of an eight-minute video (again, 20% of the overall module mark), followed by Q&A. For this assessment, students are required to apply discipline knowledge and concepts such as political advocacy, policy influence and social mobilisation in a practical setting, and to use a range of skills to reach solutions to specific problems.

As both our experience within this module and previous research suggest, students are more likely to engage in an assessment out of an inherent interest in the activity – in this case political campaigning – rather than for the development of specific skills (Finch et al, 2013; Pegg et al, 2012). In this module, then, the focus on enterprise skills only comes to the fore in the last assessment (for 60% of the overall mark), when students, individually, reflect on the nature and development of these skills. Using the detailed self-reflective journal kept throughout the semester, including feedback received from EP, and frameworks explicating such skills (such as the EntreComp framework), students demonstrate the degree to which they have developed key enterprising skills (such as judgement, prioritisation, goal setting, problem solving) for solving specific problems.



EP engagement in this module stems, in large part, from the feeling of belonging to the same local community. Altruism plays a part, but also the desire to share with students – and staff too – a sense of urgency underpinning local issues. EP are enthusiastic guest speakers who are willing to provide feedback. Yet, as EP may – and will – change from one year to another, it is difficult to build a community of learning: co-defining marking criteria, for instance, is difficult. As QA processes often requires a long lead in time to modify assessment procedures, EP involvement in assessment is likely to remain advisory and informal.

Literary Prizes and Public Acclaim is a core second-year module in the undergraduate English literature curriculum. It focuses on promoting self-awareness and development of enterprise. It does so by engaging EPs from the publishing and literary prize industries within the curriculum, to help students organise a literary prize event. EPs include the founders of international literary prizes, publishers, literary agents, booksellers, literary prize judges and writers, and alumni, who have developed careers as novelists or publishers. First, EPs in the field of management, marketing and communications lead workshops to support students in producing a project management portfolio for the preparation of a literary prize. This includes a pitch for a prize idea, the development of communication strategies and timelines for the completion of key tasks. The pitch requires students to identify how principles underpinning the discipline, such as judgement of literary value, inform the project. A panel of industry professionals and the teaching team assess the pitch. Second, key speakers from the publishing and literary prize world are invited to a special event to share their experience in a student-led Q&A session. Finally, working in teams, students run a short-story prize. The final assessment is a self-reflective report, focusing on the enterprise skills developed in setting and running a literary prize. Contact with the guest speakers during the workshops and the special event provide essential real-world advice and inspiration to support the students in their enterprise. In 2022, students on this module had the opportunity to help run the literary prize organised by Portsmouth City Council's libraries department. The work includes preparing the prize, communicating with the public and processing the entries for judging. As the majority of the EPs have repeated their involvement, there has been a development of a clear sense of pedagogical and professional collaboration, such as providing guidance and formal and informal feedback on how to run a literary prize.

### Stage three: outcomes

Both case studies illustrate a shift from a didactic approach to problem solving: the objective is not primarily to learn about enterprising skills, but to create learning environments that help students to discover what it is to be enterprising. The three distinctive characteristics of such environments are (i) EP engagement in the assessment design; (ii) the practical activities that students undertake and (iii) the reflective process by which students map their own learning ('learning through'). In both case studies, 'enterprise' corresponds to the generic definition provided by the QAA (2018, 7), and, yet, in each case the starting point remains the academic discipline. An understanding of the relationship between the subject and work-related environments is key, and precedes any reflection on the

transferability of such skills to other professional settings. In practice, skills acquisition is a function of the autonomy and self-managed nature of the group activity, rather than the outcome of the group work: as such, these case studies could be easily adapted to any discipline.

For the majority of the students, these modules present a challenge that introduces them to new skills and new forms of assessment but also a different understanding of their discipline. The students have shown signs of trepidation and some anxiety, particularly approaching assessments. Module feedback shows that they value EP engagement and the opportunity to engage with authentic assessments. Conversely, self-reflective practice does not come naturally, and requires substantial support from peers, academic staff, career advisors and EPs, a time-consuming exercise affecting workload and EPs' goodwill. To sustain EP engagement from one year to another can be difficult. Academic staff often use informal networks as their first port of call, frequently relying on alumni contacts, or professional and informal networks; to sustain such relationships in the medium term could be difficult. Therefore, the next steps will focus on developing a strategic approach to EP engagement.

Some of the questions pertaining to "the why, who and what engagement" are yet to be answered. First, we need to know more about our current EP motivations. This will form the basis of a new research project, using in-depth interviews and focus groups, as these methods allow respondents to contextualise their perceptions and experiences. Second, a clear narrative explaining and illustrating how humanities and social sciences students can make a positive and original contribution to a wide variety of businesses is currently being developed across the faculty (British Academy, 2017): a shared understanding among all educators is key to enhance the quality of learners' experience. Third, EP engagement in the curriculum is unlikely to be sustained unless it is embedded in institutional processes from curriculum and assessment design to course approval and programmes reviews. The value of their engagement in the co-creation of the curriculum must be formally acknowledged in a way which adds value to their own professional network (for instance, being appointed as visiting lecturer, or accessing CPD activities for free). This raises interesting questions about the institutional level at which EP engagement in the curriculum should be organised, and whether it should remain distinct from other forms of EP engagement. For all these reasons, the faculty is currently reviewing the way its industrial boards are organised – membership, leadership, terms of references – so that EP contributions to the student experience is not restricted to that of placement providers or guest speakers.

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# Enterprise Exchange: analysing the levels of enterprise and entrepreneurship activity embedded in Faculty of Arts and Creative Industries programmes at the University of Sunderland

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## Stage one: background

Our research aims to create a 'live' exchange of enterprising innovations within the Faculty of Arts and Creative Industries (FACI) at the University of Sunderland, to bridge current gaps that exist when communicating and sharing good practice.

Despite positive outcomes and initiatives surrounding enterprise, there is evidence from preliminary focus groups that challenges exist in disparate areas of 'joined-up' thinking. The Exchange offers a solution in the form of an accessible pedagogical innovation with the scope to have a more cohesive approach to sharing enterprising activities within the curriculum. Thus, we are in the process of creating an Exchange which asks, 'in what ways can entrepreneurship be embedded and developed to enhance active learning practices?'

Our Exchange aims to:

- + navigate challenges in embedding enterprise in the curriculum
- + share practical guidance to support colleagues in embedding enterprise
- + embed industry practices, collaborations, and innovations
- + enhance cross-subject collaborations and innovations.

In line with the Knowledge Exchange Concordat (KE), we aim to offer a significant method to respond and commit to a long-term programme of continuous improvement, engagement and capacity in building the university's exchange activities (UUK, 2020). Furthermore, it responds to the issue that higher education institutions (HEIs) are under pressure to meet the expectations of students, employers and the government around demands to maintain employability and vocationally focused opportunities within the curriculum. This is supported by growing evidence that highlights the value of developing enterprise and employability skills<sup>1</sup> in learners (QAA, 2018). This is both in terms of facilitating the creation of new ventures while in education and on graduation, but also by enhancing their success into employment and adding value within different contexts (QAA, 2018; Department for Education, 2017).

<sup>1</sup> When the terms enterprise, entrepreneurship and employability are used interchangeably as we do in this paper, it is collectively known as entrepreneurial skills. We recognise the differences between the three terms, as denoted by the QAA's guidance on engaged terms. However, when used together we are establishing that entrepreneurial learning is taking place.

We acknowledge that employability is not the same as employment, offering learners an experience of a professional working environment in advance of graduation, as recommended by Harvey (2005). By working beyond end-point assessments and engaging students in employment-level professionalism as part of the curricular process we focus on developing the skills of students into the skills of graduates.

Via the CareerEDGE Model of Graduate Employability (Dacre Pool and Sewell, 2007) and with considerations of the updated model (Dacre Pool, 2020), we develop transferrable skills that go beyond the student's subject-specialism, nurturing enterprising skills such as levels of self-esteem, self-efficacy and self-confidence. Procedurally, this links student learning with external 'communities of practice' (Wenger, 1999) building the confidence of students as active participants working with professionals beyond the university. This coincides with Gibbs' Reflective Cycle which encourages exploration of experience through "description, feelings, evaluation, analysis, conclusion and action planning" (1988) and concurs with the recommendations of the USEM model of employability (Yorke and Knight, 2002). The overwhelming evidence for the value of work-based learning experiences (Lowden, Hall, Elliot and Lewin, 2011), enables "authentic learning; where the outcomes of student learning have transferability into real world settings" (Ashwin et al, 2015, 16) which remains the central focus of what we want to capture and share through the Exchange.

We hope the Exchange provides a platform to identify greater opportunities for our curriculum to be profession-facing (in line with corporate strategy (University of Sunderland, 2020)) emphasising and capturing the university's core values of innovation and collaboration. We believe this has a demonstrable positive impact on the employability of graduates, wider impact on how modules are delivered locally, and opportunities for the university to develop future industry relationships. This is an opportunity for staff to continue to think about and shape the experiences they are affording students within FACI programmes. It highlights how the Exchange, whose primary audience is staff, can use the platform to generate benefits, impact and value for their students, helping students understand theory *and* practice, ready for recruitment into industry. It is important that our work and thoughts regarding curriculum design continues to consider this.

The perceived impact of the Exchange is to:

- 1 Highlight current good practice, knowledge, resources and contacts that exist but are fragmented.
- 2 Reveal and reduce duplicity in programmes across faculty (and institution) where enterprise and employability are embedded in the curriculum.
- 3 Broaden the scope and accessibility of current pedagogical innovations around active learning and enterprise education.
- 4 Share knowledge of cross-discipline pedagogical practice that has a positive impact on the student experience.

- 5 Highlight and make a series of recommendations based on the areas that still need developing in progressing pedagogic approaches in active learning to progress and develop enterprise education.
- 6 Align university practice to the commitment made to the Knowledge Exchange Concordat.

The benefits of the Exchange are for the institution, staff and students (in relation to their experience on their programme of study and into employment), and any partners, stakeholders and members of the wider community who could interact with the curriculum and the Exchange.

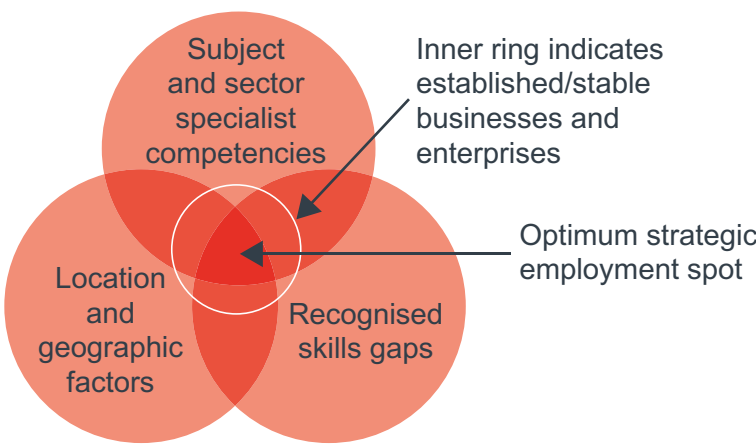
Stage two: approach

The approach took the form of a multi-methodology (Robson, 2009) incorporating preliminary study findings, data analysis of programmes and/or modules, steering groups with programme teams, case studies of good practice (Denscombe, 2007, 35), interviews with graduates working in the creative sector and interviews with business and innovation colleagues (Robson, 2009, 269). This ensures a robustness and rigour to survey the current enterprise and entrepreneurial landscape at the University of Sunderland, enabling us to ‘join the dots’ of good practice, identifying areas of improvement.

The methodology works to identify the optimum strategic employment spot<sup>2</sup> (see figure 1, QAA, 2018), enabling us to target specific areas of improvement in our faculty, and provide opportunities to recognise and share good practice. This required an iterative approach to building on data already collected by the preliminary study undertaken by the collaborative project as a foundation and taking findings forward over the course of the next academic year. The outcomes of the preliminary study highlighted that there were disparate areas of joined-up thinking and there is a lack of an accessible pedagogical space to share innovation, along with gaps where enterprising activity could be taking place in modules and programmes but is not. The sample size was dependent on initial findings and what responses we needed to enact to take this project forward. However, the sample is reflective of the whole faculty and is substantial (see Figure 3). This provided a foundation of information to highlight any further developments the Exchange may need. This also helped with the growth of the Exchange beyond our faculty and potentially beyond our institution.

2 The optimum strategic employment spot is the coming together of three distinct areas such as subject-related competency development, physical factors (eg location) and meeting a recognised demand.

Figure 1. Finding the optimum strategic employment spot (QAA, 2018, 8)



The initial stage of the research was conducted between September 2020 and December 2021. It investigated programmes within FACI, which is split into two schools: the School of Art and Design and the School of Media and Communications (see Figure 2).

Figure 2. FAcI school and programme structure 2021

FAcI (Representative of 1,303 students)				
School of Art and Design		Media and Communications		
Art	Design	Media and Performance	Journalism, Media Theory and Cultural Studies	Humanities
Fine Art	Graphic Design	Media Production and Performing Arts	Fashion journalism	English
Photography, Video and Digital Imaging	Illustration and Design	Performing Arts	Film and Media	English: Creative and professional writing
Artists, Designer Maker: Glass and Ceramics	Fashion Design and Promotion	Applied Music FdA	Journalism	History
FdA Applied fine art practice	Animation and Games Art	Film Production	Mass Comms top up	Politics and History
Fine Art MA	Advertising and Design	Media Production	Media, Culture and Communication	English MA
Glass and Ceramics MA	Fashion Product and Promotion	Music Top Up	Social Media Management	
Photography MA	Design MA	Screen Performance	Sports Journalism	
		Media Production: Film & TV MA	Journalism MA	
		Radio, Audio & Podcasting MA	Public Relations MA	
		Dance City Professional Dance BA		
		Postgraduate Advanced Dance MA		
		Advanced Professional Practice Dance MA		

Eighty-one modules have already been looked at within the School of Media and Communications, with close attention being paid to the learning outcomes of the modules. This will be supported moving forward by further information from programme leaders about specific teaching and learning activity and modes of assessment (see Figure 3). The resulting data is to be collated and analysed against the Enterprise and Entrepreneurship Framework (Advance HE, 2019) to see what sorts of activity are already embedded across programmes and levels. This information will then be fed into the next stage of the project to develop the Exchange. Analysis of Fine Art modules can only be done once a process

of periodic review (2021) has been completed and these programmes and modules have been updated by programme staff. Therefore, we still have data to address within the School of Art and Design.

Figure 3. Structure of research and anticipated outcomes

Research structure	Dates	Methods	Number of participants	English
Preliminary study	September 2020	Focus group with colleagues	11	Identified key issues in FAcI to inform main study
Main study	December 2020 – ongoing	Programme/module analysis	Representative of 1,303 students over 39 programmes	Identifying different levels of activity and skills and attributes
		Case study	N/A	Consolidating data and key themes
Future activity	January 2022	Further programme/module analysis	Representative of 1,303 students over 39 programmes	Consolidate mapping levels of activities against skills and attributes through learning outcomes
	January 2022	Steering groups	Identified school representatives – 7	Informing the shape of the exchange
	June 2022	Establishment of Exchange	FAcI staff – programme leaders – 40	

Stage three: outcomes

Preliminary findings

Prior to this research, we were unaware of the different activities and opportunities that were taking place across the different modules and programmes. The data presented below (see Figure 4) is an analysis of module descriptors and learning outcomes that articulate clear intentions of placement, professional discussion, client input or links with industry. Specific details of these activities are not clearly defined in the descriptors, and we are aware that other activities within modules and extra-curricular opportunities are taking place but are not evidenced here. This will be the focus of the next stage of the research to try to capture these additional activities. Also, more detail needs to be sought to determine what are ‘simulated’ (eg a placement within a university setting or delivering a teaching



workshop to peers rather than a community group external to the institution) and what are ‘active’ enterprise and entrepreneurial activities. Although these simulated opportunities are of lower risk to the students, they are developing the same enterprise and entrepreneurial skills but at a lower competency level.

**Figure 4. Data analysis of media and communications programme descriptors for evidence of enterprise and entrepreneurship (EE)**

Programmes in Media & Comms	Stage	No of Modules	Placement	Professional Discussion	Client Input	Links with Industry	Total EE	Total EE %
Media	1	14	0	2 (14.28%)	0	0	2	14.28%
	2	16	2 (12.5%)	3 (18.75%)	1 (6.25%)	3 (18.17%)	9	56.25%
	3	18	0	2 (11.11%)	2 (11.11%)	2 (11.11%)	6	33.33%
	TOTAL	48	2 (4.17%)	7 (14.58%)	3 (6.25%)	5 (10.41%)	15	31.25%
Performance	1	7	0	2 (28.57%)	0	1 14.3%)	3	42.85%
	2	10	1 (10%)	6 (60%)	0	8 (80%)	14	140%
	3	16	1 (6.25%)	5 (31.25)	3 (18.75%)	5 (31.25%)	14	87.5%
	TOTAL	33	2 (6.06%)	13 (39.39%)	3 (9.09%)	14 (42.42%)	31	93.93%
All programmes	TOTAL	81	4 (5%)	20 (24.69%)	6 (7.4%)	19 (23.5%)	46	56.79%

From the data collated (see Figure 4), there are four distinct levels of activity that can be captured within module delivery, which each require different skills and attributes from students. However, we know through discussions with colleagues and graduates that there is a fifth level of activity, innovation as practice, that emerges through the influence of module or programme content but exists outside of specific delivery and assessment. This is more challenging to quantify and it is an area that, moving forwards with the next stage of the research, we want to try to investigate in more detail.

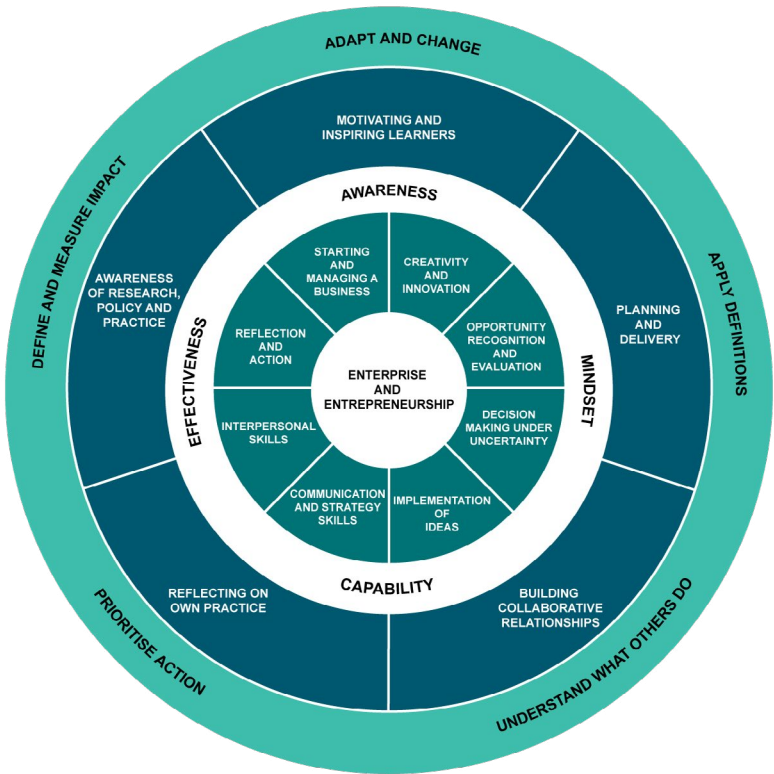
The five distinct levels of activity that will inform our research analysis moving forward are:

- 1 Simulated activity – an opportunity for students to work in a simulated environment within the safety of the university.
- 2 Professional discussion – an opportunity to speak to professionals in a specialist area.
- 3 Live client brief – a way for students to work as a professional unit with a client external to the university and produce work with/for that client.

- 4 Industry placement – a number of hours/days/weeks where a student may go and experience working in an industry working environment.
- 5 Innovation as practice – students developing a new initiative or starting an enterprise having been influenced by the contents of a module or programme.

There were varying amounts of these activities embedded in the curriculum as it stands, but there were also areas where opportunities overlapped with other modules and programmes, resulting in a duplication of resource and experience. As well as duplication of enterprise and entrepreneurship across some modules, there are also big gaps that can extend across whole stages of programmes where no formal enterprise and entrepreneurship activity takes place. This is particularly acute where students choose optional modules in stage two and three, which may result in gaps in experience and therefore missed opportunities in developing certain skills and attributes. There is a further analytical opportunity here to compare core and optional modules.

**Figure 5. Advance HE Enterprise and Entrepreneurship Framework (2019)**



Professional discussion was often found to be more prevalent in stage one and two modules where the level of risk for the students was less acute, in line with expectations of the skill level being developed. It may also emerge that instances of simulated activity are more prevalent at these stages. These areas of activity still require students to engage with the Enterprise and Entrepreneurship Framework (see Figure 5), by developing “interpersonal skills, reflection and action, communication and strategy skills, decision making under uncertainty etc” (Advance HE, 2019). However, these skills

will be attained in an environment that is at a lower level of risk to the student because the students are developing these skills within the safe space of the university (see Figure 6). Whereas, at stage three, students working on a live client brief are developing on the same framework but doing so by operating in a much higher risk environment where their actions are accountable to not only themselves and the university, but also to a potential future employer. Therefore, the environmental risk correlates to the competency level of the skills being developed.

**Figure 6. Mapping identified levels of enterprise and entrepreneurship activity in UoS programmes and modules to existing taxonomies (Hulsmeier and Jenkins, 2021)**

Entrepreneurial skills	Levels of EE activity	Bloom (1956)	Gibb (1988)	OSS (2018)	Advance HE (2019)
High level	Innovation as practice	Evaluation	Evaluation/ conclusion	Environment, Subject specialist skills Recognising demand	Effectiveness Awareness Mindset Capability
	Live client brief	Analysis/ synthesis	Analysis/ conclusion		
	Industry placement	Application	Action plan/ conclusion		
	Professional discussion	Comprehension	Feelings/ conclusion		
Low level	Simulated activity	Knowledge	Description/ conclusion		

It remains important to ascertain what the lecturer is delivering for the students to develop skills on different levels of the Enterprise and Entrepreneurship Framework (Advance HE, 2019), which is representative of different skills and attributes connected to a range of higher-order thinking. For example, some students may be able to ‘define and measure impact’ whereas it may be achievable for all students to ‘understand what others do’. This is important to consider in relation to how we capture enterprise and entrepreneurship at each stage and on each programme in FACI.

The next stage

Building on these findings and further programme analysis, we hope to start a conversation with colleagues about how an Exchange might provide more opportunities for all four levels of activity to be embedded across all programmes. This will help us design and develop the Exchange to best suit our faculty needs and aspirations. We hope to develop more research into understanding the full impact of this Exchange for the students, the university and its partners, particularly from a quantitative angle and to ultimately measure the impact of the Exchange to help build a foundational map in which to inform the success of the Exchange. We also hope to ascertain assessable enterprise and entrepreneurship outcomes for students that map onto the Advance HE Enterprise and Entrepreneurship Framework (Advance HE, 2019) (see Figure 5) and our identified levels of activity which may help in the formulation of an enterprise and entrepreneurship learning and assessment rubric.

The Exchange, by further aligning to KE, affords the opportunity to expand internally to other faculties within the university and externally to other universities, among partners, communities and fellow academic institutions. By growing and evolving, the Exchange aims to provide innovation, high-quality support to staff and expanded opportunities for students in engagement with enterprise and entrepreneurship. The Exchange aims to offer a method in which the university generally, and staff specifically, can consider their role in making a commitment to developing enterprise and entrepreneurship, which remains at the heart of the university’s core values and corporate strategy.

Following the implementation of the Exchange, we aim to evaluate its success by collecting documentation which combines staff feedback, data analysis of programmes and modules, steering groups with programme teams, and statistics that outline who has accessed the Exchange. We hope that the data collected to undertake our evaluation will be qualitative and quantitative (eg stats, figures, leavers’ destinations). Self-assessment of the Exchange will be essential to ensure regular, collective monitoring.

Conclusion

It is the synergy between staff and the curriculum that ensures students are introduced and exposed to complex and challenging affective learning opportunities beyond the immediate parameters of their academic disciplines. The impact of enterprise and entrepreneurship offers constant and consistent developments across the faculty to support employability and the Exchange is an example of pedagogical innovation, which aims to place the conversations around enterprising practice in one accessible place. Moving forward, in order to join up disparate areas of practice, create an accessible pedagogical space to share innovation and close identified gaps where enterprising activity could be taking place in modules and programmes, our next steps are to:

- 1 Continue programme analysis: consolidating the mapping of the levels of activities against skills and attributes through assessed learning outcomes on modules to get a better overview of the transparency of key skills and attributes for students.
- 2 Undertake steering groups: to inform the shape of the exchange but also identify key invested colleagues.
- 3 Establish the Exchange during summer 2022.

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## Enterprising students: a values-driven, competency-based framework for embedding enterprise in the HE curriculum

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### Stage one: background

Higher education (HE) needs to equip students with enterprise skills, alongside the technical and subject knowledge they receive, to enable personal growth and successful transition beyond the university (Wilson, 2012). The wording is important here, with the focus on the development of the individual not just on employment outcomes (although these are very important). Enterprise skills are present in every aspect of teaching and learning but are not always clear. The enterprise concept focuses attention on maximising opportunities for the development, enhancement and application of enterprising behaviours, attributes and competencies. Enterprise and enterprise education (the latter primarily used in the UK) are terms with no clear agreement of definitions (Mulholland and Turner, 2019), but for simplicity, enterprise is defined here using the QAA's definition (2018, 7):

“... as the generation and application of ideas, which are set within practical situations during a project or undertaking. This is a generic concept that can be applied across all areas of education and professional life. It combines creativity, originality, initiative, idea generation, design thinking, adaptability and reflexivity with problem identification, problem solving, innovation, expression, communication and practical action.”

Enterprise education is also defined using the QAA's description:

“... as the process of developing students in a manner that provides them with an enhanced capacity to generate ideas, and the behaviours, attributes, and competencies to make them happen. It extends beyond knowledge acquisition to a wide range of emotional, intellectual, social, cultural and practical behaviours, attributes and competences, and is appropriate to all students. These are all underlying factors that can enhance employability prospects as well as be taken further through Entrepreneurship Education.” (QAA, 2018, 9)

The key aim is to equip students with the awareness of enterprising skills, *mindset* to act on these skills, and *ability* to apply these skills at some future point. The QAA (2018, 8) goes on to highlight:

- + enterprise behaviours can include: taking the initiative, making things happen, reflecting, communicating, pivoting and adapting, storytelling, taking responsibility, networking, personal effectiveness and managed risk taking
- + enterprise attributes can include: open mindedness, proactivity, curiosity, self-efficacy, flexibility, adaptability, determination and resilience



+ enterprise competencies can include: intuitive decision-making, identifying opportunities, creative problem solving, innovating, strategic thinking, design thinking, negotiation, communicating, influencing, leadership and financial, business and digital literacy.

UK higher education institutions (HEIs) are increasingly accountable to employability or employment outcomes (Department for Education, 2017). Employability has become intrinsically embedded in university strategies. For example, at Liverpool John Moores University (LJMU) it is present in the Teaching and Learning Strategy 2017-2022, and the Student Employability, Enterprise and Employment Strategy 2019-2023. UK employers typically use competency-based recruitment to test an applicant's skills or competencies (Swain, 2021), and increasingly this is being supplemented (or replaced) by values-based recruitment, particularly in healthcare (Health Education England, 2021) and policing (College of Policing, 2018). With this external context and increased expectations, providing HE students with opportunities to develop enterprising skills, thus demonstrating their competency and values, is important.

The Faculty of Arts, Professional and Social Studies (APSS) at LJMU has more than 7000 students, which is the equivalent size of a small HEI. The subjects range from art to architecture, education to fashion. The students go into roles across many sectors, typically graduate roles which do not require a specialist subject, so having the right skills, abilities and values is very important.

How enterprise skills are recognised and understood by students in HE programmes requires urgent attention. One key challenge is that lecturing academics are not well placed to demonstrate the enterprising elements of their programmes (Nicholson and Wood, 2015). This does not mean they cannot do this, but that they are not necessarily able to do so; for example, not possessing the knowledge to create assessments which measure skills and technical and subject knowledge, or perhaps not motivated to do so due to high workload demands. Identifying new approaches to clarify enterprise skills within HE programmes will enhance:

- 1 the student and staff experience; benefiting understanding and knowledge of how key skills and competencies are addressed at modular level
- 2 HE programmes; enhancing consistency across modules within programmes
- 3 equip students with necessary enterprise skills to transition beyond the university (QAA, 2018) enhancing their awareness and ability to apply these skills. This will also be of benefit to faculty APSS management in demonstrating how enterprise skills and competencies are being addressed and achieved, which can link to the employability need, creating more efficient and focused practice around employment support.

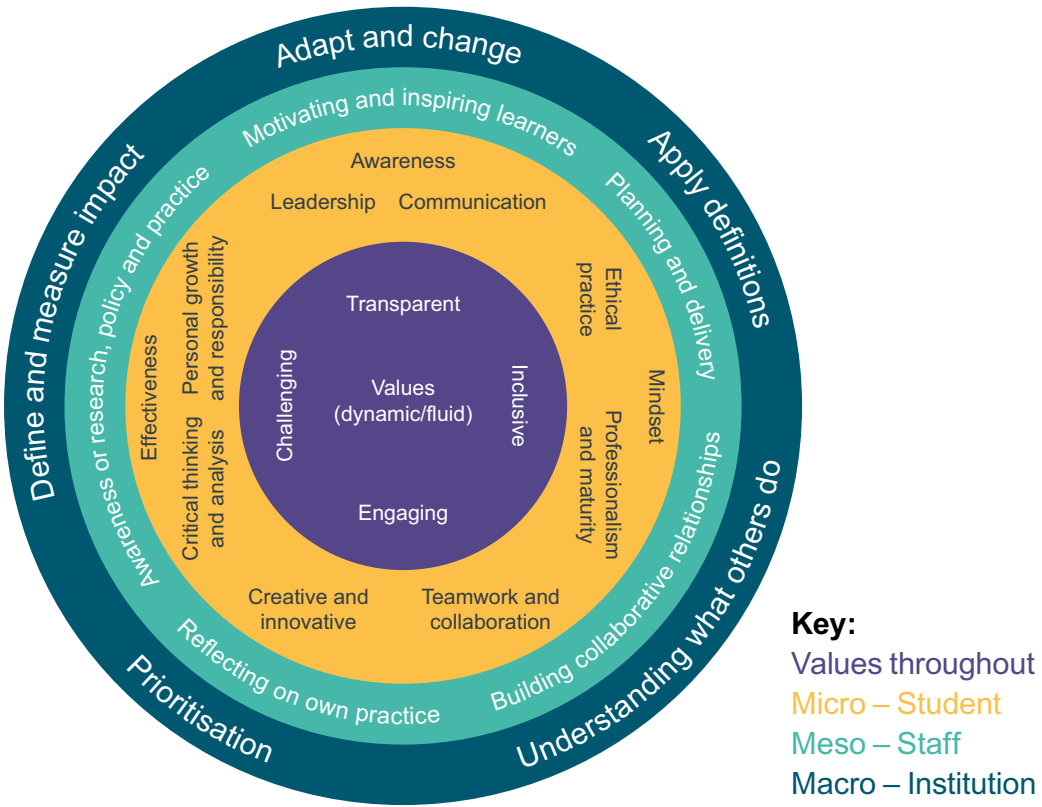
A one-size solution cannot fit all subjects, staff or students so a flexible and adaptable approach is needed. The Advance HE Enterprise and Entrepreneurship in Higher Education framework (Advance HE, 2019) provides an approach which can be adapted, and this is our starting point.

Stage two: approach

We are adapting the Advance HE Enterprise and Entrepreneurship in Higher Education framework (Advance HE, 2019) to create an Enterprise Education Framework that goes beyond more commercial or simply employability outputs, to think more broadly about enterprise, and include values-driven elements. Most, if not all, HE institutions advocate *values* as part of the organisational vision and strategy. For example, LJMU (at the time of writing) states transformation, innovation, excellence, partnership, leadership and community as ‘our values’ (LJMU, 2017). It follows that if the organisation adopts these values, that HE programmes use these as starting points to direct competency and skills enhancement. A strength of the Advance HE framework is that it can be adapted to include a values-driven approach.

This is being tested with a small pilot in the 2021-22 academic year. Starting with a values-driven approach, the model aims to identify and develop key competency areas (see figure 1). Values (in the centre) should be informing all elements of the model throughout the key areas (from the centre outward): (1) competencies (in yellow) which are primarily student responsibilities, (2) elements (in green) primarily module/programme level responsibilities, and (3) elements (in blue) primarily institutional responsibilities. In this case study we will focus on the values and competency elements.

Figure 1. A values-driven, competency-based framework for embedding enterprise in the HE curriculum



Values are fluid and dynamic, they will and should evolve with time and change. The values presented here are for demonstration purposes, and should be defined by the local delivery of the framework (there are many ways to decide on values – see for example, [www.mindtools.com/pages/article/newTED\\_85.htm](http://www.mindtools.com/pages/article/newTED_85.htm)). The aim is to maximise opportunities for the development of enterprising behaviours, attributes and competencies in students in the expectation that these will be used, deployed and developed at some future point. For example, within these broad competency areas of awareness, mindset, capability and effectiveness, enterprising skills can be addressed such as: communication, teamwork, professionalism and personal growth.

We need to make these competencies ‘actionable’. If we can measure and demonstrate these competencies in HEIs, we can begin to see where we are excelling and where there are gaps to develop. This will assist in programme design and, ultimately, lead to enhanced learning for everyone – students and staff alike.

Initially, we have reached out to decision-makers and key staff in the history department and begun working with students from LJMU history degree programmes, in focus groups, to identify their thoughts on support around their studies. History students have been chosen as the initial pilot group as they typically encounter more obstacles to employment on graduation. This is supported by data from the Student Graduate Outcomes Survey, demonstrating that only 26.1% history undergraduate students (subject level) are in highly skilled employment at the point of the survey. A pilot enterprise programme will run with these students, grounded in the enterprise framework (see below). The development of enterprise skills is an integral part of the programme to empower students to recognise and reflect on core competencies they encounter in HE, improving personal growth, employability awareness and graduate outcomes.

Linked to LJMU institutional strategies (the outer, purple layer of figure 1), and history programme criteria (the orange layer of figure 1), we are implementing an ‘awareness-journal’ approach to test the embedding of enterprise education in the HE curriculum. This will consist of:

- 1 a pre-semester and post-semester survey of level 4 (first year undergraduate) history students. The framework will directly link to an initial questionnaire (administered as an e-survey to participants) to assess student thoughts on values, competencies, skills and LJMU support)
- 2 an initial awareness session for students (delivered in week one of the semester) about the presence of behaviours, attributes and competencies in their teaching and learning (guided by the inner, green and blue, elements of the framework and the initial questionnaire)
- 3 a ‘semi-structured reflective journal’ which students will complete throughout their modules in semester one, thinking about what enterprise competencies they have covered. This will include a checklist of weekly module sessions and a list of core competencies met each week with some detail of what exactly was completed in a session – for example, in this week’s lecture, teamwork: there was a break-out group discussion. Students can identify this and reflect on what they did aligned to the competency not just the specific lecture task. Using the semi-structured approach, there will also be scope within the journal for students to add to the list of competencies and self-reflect on their awareness and application of these.

## Stage three: outcomes

As this is a work in progress, we anticipate that students who complete the ‘awareness-journal’ approach will have enhanced awareness and ability to apply enterprising behaviours, attributes and competencies. Evidence suggests that the semi-structured reflective journal approach may lead students to perceive themselves as self-regulated learners (Alt and Raichel, 2020) and can enhance student learning, fostering students’ understanding and application of concepts (Connor-Greene, 2000). Although reflective journals are not without their downsides (Dyment and O’Connell, 2003), with some structure and clear instruction, students are likely to engage with and enhance their self-learning.

At the time of writing, the faculty has been planning a separate ‘employability audit’ across all subject areas, to discover what employability projects and support is available. This audit will provide useful knowledge alongside the pilot enterprise project to highlight levels of need across the faculty, working examples of employability projects, and engage staff in thinking about skills within programmes.

On completion of the pilot, the key learning will form the basis of further roll-out to other subject areas within the faculty. This will involve consulting with respective subject heads and staff to identify needs around enterprise and employability. In turn, key learning can inform faculty, and university, strategic development; in particular the Teaching and Learning Strategy and the Student Employability, Enterprise and Employment Strategy, which are periodically reviewed. The framework is adaptable and will be a continuous work-in-progress as it is embedded into different subject areas.

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## Nottingham Trent University School of Social Sciences 'SUCCESS' project: students using community collaboration for enterprise in social sciences

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### Stage one: background

The School of Social Sciences at Nottingham Trent University (NTU) has had a long history of fostering students' enterprise and entrepreneurial skills. A range of in-curriculum and extra-curricula events and activities have traditionally been delivered, often in conjunction with Nottingham Trent University's HIVE (now the Dryden Enterprise Centre). However, a range of factors led to the school's desire to enhance the student experience in this space. These included student feedback requesting more input, the development of a new Enterprise Centre at Nottingham Trent University and academic colleagues within the school with increased knowledge, interest and expertise in this area. This was enhanced centrally by professional support from within our Enterprise Centre and from within our employability team. Institutionally, Nottingham Trent University is ambitious for success in this area. It seeks to

Support and grow outstanding student, recent graduate, staff and academic enterprise through consultancy, information, advice and guidance.

In relation to this, the newly established Enterprise Fund supports student and graduate (within two years of graduation) startups through grants, convertible loans and possible future equity funding. It provides a route to early funding for student and graduate startups and gives them first cash investments to test their business ideas and develop their plans.

Secondly, to increase university-wide engagement with enterprise activities, raising awareness of entrepreneurial activities amongst hard-to-reach student groups, thereby supporting NTU's commitment to social mobility.

For this, a series of workshops are in place to increase enterprise outreach to, and engagement with, students across the three campuses, particularly from hard-to-reach groups. The development of specialised programmes designed to support the growth of new businesses also form part of the strategy. NTU's ambitions in this area also include increased business advisor support for more students to navigate their enterprise planning and support them throughout their entrepreneurial journey.

Finally, to provide cutting edge facilities that support the ambitious growth of enterprise activities within the East Midlands and increase the number of new, full-time, paid jobs in partner SMEs.

To achieve this, the Dryden Enterprise Centre forms the focal point for the university's future enterprise activities, creating a dynamic environment where student and graduate entrepreneurs,



small businesses and larger companies can interact and collaborate with academics, leaders in business and each other. A full programme of events, workshops and innovation showcases is offered, and the Centre will be developed as a hub for enterprise innovation, technology and business growth across the East Midlands. (Nottingham Trent University, 2021)

Within the higher education sector, enterprise education, defined by the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA) as “the process of equipping students (or graduates) with an enhanced capacity to generate ideas and the skills to make them happen” (QAA, 2018), has been in existence in the United Kingdom for the past 40 years, and is becoming increasingly embedded in university curricula (Turner, 2017) The main principle underpinning this process is the empowerment of individuals as active participants in an immersive learning environment, characterised as being relevant, challenging and real. This approach complements existing learning where the primary function is the imparting of knowledge: the focus is very much on creating learning ‘for’ as well as ‘about’. Strong links to external stakeholders, including the local community, public service and business, are the access routes to real learning experiences. These relationships are significant and require investment in time and energy to ensure partners understand the value and impact for themselves and for students.

### **The SUCCESS project: ‘students using community collaboration for enterprise in social sciences’**

Key stakeholders in developing enterprise approaches in NTU School of Social Sciences include academic colleagues, the employability team, the NTU Enterprise Centre, alumni team, NTU’s Centre for Student and Community Engagement (CenSCE) and local community organisations and employers. Participation in the Advance HE Enterprise and Entrepreneurship project was viewed as an opportunity to connect with other HEI teams fostering this agenda, and to share practice and approaches within the academic community. Feedback from students at lunchtime enterprise events highlighted a desire for more support for enterprise linked to their curriculum and subject of study. The SUCCESS project was designed to link enterprise education with curriculum study and local community organisations struggling with the realities of enterprising behaviour and actions.

## **Stage two: approach**

### **Project ambitions**

Our next step was to decide on the strategic direction of our ambition to enhance the enterprise education of our students. The direction was informed by a desire to encourage our students to apply their enterprise learning, using a consultancy-style approach grounded in engagement with employers. The QAA states that enterprise education is a tool to prepare students for changing environments and enhanced impact is achieved through activities that build links between academic institutions and external organisations (QAA, 2018). It was decided to deliver a programme to the students centred around employer challenges. Students would present their findings to the employers

as the cumulation of a two-day workshop focused on using their curriculum learning, consultancy skills and enterprise education to solve a range of challenges, particularly pertinent to the discipline areas of social sciences.

### **Initial audit of enterprise in the school**

Our initial action was to audit the existing provision, and this concluded that enterprise education in our school was largely a ‘bolt-on’ optional activity delivered, solely or collaboratively, by either the Enterprise Centre, the employability team or as part of the ‘Succeed with Social Sciences’ employability programme. A working group was formed of representatives of these teams as well as volunteering team colleagues, academics and representatives from Nottingham Civic Exchange. Audit intelligence informed our decision to plan a three-day participative enterprise event targeting initially one department in the school, where it was felt students would benefit from developing their understanding of enterprise, developing problem-solving skills applied to community challenges and where there was a particular interest from academic colleagues. This would be timed immediately after completion of final year study but prior to graduation.

### **Adapting the focus**

The focus of the event was to be on community organisations providing enterprise-focused challenges for student groups followed by post-event work experience hosted by the employer with funding from Nottingham Trent University. The event was timed for June 2020 and in March 2020 it became apparent that a force greater than us was at work: Covid-19. The event in its planned form was then postponed, and alternatives were discussed, acknowledging key emerging factors including the online teaching environment, academic staff changes, a redirected budget and significant pressure on community organisations during the pandemic, meaning their support for the project could no longer be guaranteed. The decision was therefore made to continue with the original objectives for the event but move to an online learning experience, replacing the placement experience with a series of online community challenges briefed by employers. For this reconfiguration, it was agreed to broaden the participation to include all students within the school – a decision made by the steering group on the basis that there would be value in students working on these challenges across disciplines. To manage any potential demand, priority would be given to students from a widening participation background on the basis of the lack of a level playing field for these students. We also particularly targeted those courses where placement experiences had been disrupted due to Covid. Recent graduates would also be invited via our graduate support initiative. Members of the steering group were able to share their shift in project focus at the collaborative day for HEI participating institutions in December 2020 and receive feedback from both Advance HE and the other partner organisations, which were used in the planning of the future event.

## Objectives and delivery model

It was agreed that the adapted SUCCESS project would be reconfigured as a bespoke online two-day enterprise programme for students to be delivered in June 2021, involving student participants, key NTU stakeholders, academics, and employer and community partners, particularly representative of NTU interests.

For the students it would provide:

- + exposure to enterprising and entrepreneurial behaviour and cultures
- + insights into the discourse of enterprise, for example similarities and differences between enterprise and entrepreneurship
- + a chance to work, in cross-disciplinary student teams, on 'real world' enterprise community and business focused challenges
- + an opportunity to apply their discipline-specific theoretical knowledge and skills to problem solving in real time.

For the School of Social Sciences and NTU we aimed to:

- + provide a pilot experience for the students with a view to embedding such a model within the curriculum in the future
- + share practice in learning and teaching for enterprise across the school and NTU through scholarly channels eg, Trent Institute of Learning and Teaching, School of Social Sciences Employability Group
- + develop employer partnerships with a range of social and community organisations as part of our local society agenda, and in so doing encourage positive graduate outcomes.

A SWOT analysis revealed potential challenges to the programme as:

- + recruitment – too many or too few participants
- + budget – for the event and to fund the internships
- + getting enough business/community challenges from employers and community organisations.

Review and evaluation of the programme also needed to be considered. It was decided to:

- + monitor attendance and participation in the event
- + use evaluation questionnaires after the event for both the student participants and the organisations providing the business challenges.

With academic endorsement supporting this extra-curricular opportunity, we initially recruited 40 students to the event, mainly finalists. The students were then allocated to specific challenges working in cross-disciplinary teams.

The key next steps were to engage with local organisations to seek business and community challenges, particularly reflecting the graduate career paths of social scientists. Members of the steering group worked together to locate suitable employers using intelligence from our employability business facing team and alumni. The group then selected six quality relevant community-based challenges for inclusion in the two-day programme, to represent a range of diverse career interests and occupational areas. Each organisation completed a proforma outlining their challenge and meetings were convened between the challenge provider and the school employability managers to brief them about purpose and ensure objectives were aligned.

Marketing messages to students used accessible language, and gave examples of project challenges. This was aimed at countering myths about the narrow focus of enterprise as self-employment and allaying student concerns about lack of experience:

“Would you like to be part of an exciting two-day event where you help solve real life challenges facing community and business organisations? Challenges are diverse and include developing a mental health resource, supporting an 'Active Nottingham' plan, problem solving for a local theatre company and Art Gallery.

Do you want to find out more about how to be enterprising at work and discover what enterprise is? Would you like more experience for your CV and some evidence of developing skills at interviews?

Do you want to learn more about consultancy and how to run a short consultancy project?

Would you like to work with students from other courses?

Full guidance and support will be offered by NTU staff. No experience necessary, just lots of enthusiasm!”

The first morning of the programme was carefully created to ensure that students were able to develop insights into how to manage a successful consultancy project, facilitated by an experienced project manager. Myths about enterprise and entrepreneurship were then busted by our school enterprise manager in an interactive session using a range of creative techniques. Only then were students allocated a team challenge and explained their mission for the rest of the programme. At this point, student groups were provided with written brief of their challenge by the challenge provider and it was explained that they would be expected to present the results of their findings, including a series of recommendations, in the final afternoon. At key points in the process the challenge providers would join the student groups to provide input or give further information once students had adequately digested the challenge brief.

## Stage three: outcomes

Students engaged with the two-day online event exceptionally well and the online approach had a number of surprising benefits. Firstly, it enabled a flexible approach to the challenge providers input, enabling them to support the student task groups at key points. They popped in and out of the working teams' rooms sporadically, which worked well. Secondly it supported inclusivity, extending participation to include international students who were engaging from their home countries through Microsoft Teams. Student evaluation highlighted new learning about consultancy and project skills, presentation and negotiation skills, understanding the fundamentals of enterprise, entrepreneurship, and intrapreneurship and how to apply these principles to problem solving for businesses and communities. Participant feedback included:

"My hopes were to build/learn skills to take into the workplace and for personal development. This was met because I learnt to believe more of myself and be confident with sharing my ideas of solving a challenge to my team members."

"To work on my skill set and open my mind to different ways to approach tasks which was defiantly met through working with a range of people all from different courses and uni years."

The student feedback correlates with relevant literature (Smith and Paton, 2014) which argues that in embedding employability the development of transferable skills is key.

There were also clear benefits for the employers who had provided the challenges. Each of the organisations had a community-based agenda and several were social enterprises. They all used the event as an opportunity to share authentic contemporary challenges that went to the heart of their organisation's mission. The prime motivation of the organisations was to receive innovative and fresh ideas to help solve challenges they were experiencing. For example, a local theatre company was seeking support for funding sources given the impact of Covid on their business. A community-based health promotion organisation asked the students the question; 'How can we increase self-referrals to family weight management services as part of the 'Eat Well Move More' family weight management service?'

The organisations reported a very high level of satisfaction with the recommendations presented by the student groups, particularly valuing the students' application of theoretical perspectives to the challenge, and their ability to use their imagination and provide a fresh perspective. The ultimate endorsement of their value was evidenced by participating organisations subsequently offering placements and work experience to the students. Partnerships were fostered between not only the challenge provider and the steering group, but also a wider pool of academic colleagues

This evaluation of the event has enabled us to reflect on future direction. Firstly, the programme should ideally be delivered as an integral part of the curriculum in order to ensure 'buy in' and engagement from participants. While we had anticipated some attrition in participation, this was significant on the day. This necessitated a last-minute change to the programme and reallocation of students to ensure all the organisations had a team to work on their challenges and students could still benefit from cross-discipline perspectives. As a result of this, the Department of Social and Political Sciences is going to host the next SUCCESS event as part of its employability curriculum offer. Secondly, although the online delivery mode had several advantages, subsequent events will be delivered 'face to face'. This will allow for easier discussions and group work and provide a more 'real world' flavour to the event.

## Conclusion

A key objective was to raise the awareness of enterprise and entrepreneurship in the School of Social Sciences and at Nottingham Trent University more widely. This has been achieved by upcoming presentations within the school and as part of the Trent Institute of Learning and Teaching presentation series. The SUCCESS project was also presented at the Advance HE Teaching and Learning Conference 2021. To conclude, the SUCCESS project met its stated objectives and has succeeded in becoming an integral part of the employability offer in the School of Social Sciences. There are additional benefits, such as work experience and placement opportunities for our students. It also benefited a range of community organisations who gained fresh insight into challenges impacting on their business success and health.

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