Employability
http://GraduateEmployability.com

Research-based approaches to revolutionising undergraduate & postgraduate employability supports

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1. Employability problems in higher education
2. Research findings
3. Employability solutions/innovations
Employability problems in higher education
Employability Problems in Higher Education

Minimal employer and industry engagement
Employability Problems in Higher Education

Universities leaving everything up to the career centre
Employability Problems in Higher Education

Not enough work experience and internships
Crowded curriculum means graduates are not well rounded.
Employability Problems in Higher Education

Missing or inappropriate postgraduate supports
Employability Problems in Higher Education

Absence of career guidance
Employability Problems in Higher Education

Surplus of graduates for job vacancies
Employability Problems in Higher Education

Applicants unable to sell themselves to employers
Employability Problems in Higher Education

Graduates do not have necessary skills (hard & soft)
Employability Problems in Higher Education

1. Too many graduates un- OR under-employed
Employability Problems in Higher Education

2015 – GCA
68% employed FT 4-months post graduation
Only 14% (7 people) who expressed an opinion (51 people) among interviewed postgraduate students and university staff (82 people across Australia) are optimistic that postgraduates will secure related careers upon graduation. 51% are pessimistic and the others neutral.
Employability Problems in Higher Education

61% (of the 71 people who expressed an opinion) believe that Australian universities need to improve postgraduate employability supports.

Are you satisfied with postgraduate employability supports & services?
Research Findings
Australian National Research

- 2014: Graduate Employability (mostly UG)  
  n=852
- 2015-2016: Postgraduate Student Experience  
  n=366
Research Findings

Universities’ employability approaches have impact
Research Findings

Employment Outcomes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Educational Institution</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Divinity</td>
<td>87</td>
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<tr>
<td>Charles Darwin</td>
<td>85.5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Southern Queensland</td>
<td>85.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UniA2015</td>
<td>63.9</td>
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<tr>
<td>UniB2015</td>
<td>63.6</td>
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<td>UniC2015</td>
<td>63.1</td>
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Research Findings

There is dissonance between the perspective of students, graduates, employers and educators.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategies</th>
<th>Students</th>
<th>Graduates</th>
<th>Higher Education</th>
<th>Employers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Capstone</td>
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<tr>
<td>Careers Advice</td>
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<td>Extracurricular</td>
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<td>Mentoring</td>
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<td>Networking</td>
<td></td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
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<td>PT Work</td>
<td>✔</td>
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<td>Portfolios</td>
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<td>Prof Assocs</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>✔</td>
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<td>Social Media</td>
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<tr>
<td>Volunteering</td>
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<td></td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
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<tr>
<td>Work Experience</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
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<tr>
<td>Stakeholder</td>
<td>Participants</td>
<td>Participants who mentioned <em>assessment</em> Percentage of stakeholder group</td>
<td>Overall no. of <em>assessment</em> mentions Percentage of full data set</td>
<td>Mean no. of <em>assessment</em> mentions by participant</td>
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<td>-------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students</td>
<td>21 (17%)</td>
<td>6 (29%)</td>
<td>11 (9%)</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Graduates</td>
<td>26 (21%)</td>
<td>5 (19%)</td>
<td>5 (4%)</td>
<td>1</td>
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<td>Educators</td>
<td>63 (50%)</td>
<td>22 (35%)</td>
<td>112 (88%)</td>
<td>5</td>
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<td>Employers</td>
<td>17 (13%)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>127</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>128</td>
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</tbody>
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Research Findings

Employers’ top super-skills are:

1) Communication

2) Motivation/Initiative

3) Leadership
Industry relevant employability strategies

Graduates’ Attributes and Characteristics Expected by Employers

- Communication: 75%
- Motivation/Initiative: 55%
- Leadership: 50%
- Resilience: 35%
- Well-rounded: 35%
- Change Management: 35%
- Problem Solving: 30%
- Teamwork: 30%
- Technology Skills: 30%
- Values: 25%
- Creativity: 20%
- Defined Personal Brand: 20%
- Research Skills: 20%
Figure Three: Employer Industrial Classification of Interviewees

- Professional, Scientific and Technical Services: 20%
- Education and Training: 15%
- Administrative and Support Services: 15%
- Arts and Recreation Services: 15%
- Public Administration and Safety: 10%
- Multi-national company with multiple industries: 10%
- Finance and insurance: 5%
- Health Care and Social Assistance: 5%
Research Findings

The following are all important to employability:

- reflection
- attributes
- Knowledge
- skills
- identity
Research Findings

Graduate career pathways and profiles are changing

→ More contract work
→ More Start-ups
Employers, students and graduates think work experience & internships are key to employability
Research Findings

Employers & Educators think extra-curricular activities make graduates more employable

Students & Graduates think part-time work
‘I look for a resume that almost looks like they’ve been working for four years in addition to studying. They’ve been working part-time, volunteering or doing community work. I like to find people that look like they’ve been busy and have a full life, that they’re doing lots of things apart from just studying and sitting in their room.’
Research Findings

3. Students need to be able to present personal brand and distinctive identity.
Research Findings

2

Employers hire well-rounded graduates
Employability is everyone’s responsibility
Employability solutions/innovations
Employability solutions/innovations

Employability MOOC EMPLOY101x – Unlocking your employability

The University of Queensland
Employability solutions/innovations

Formal postgraduate strategy with employability

→ Strategic commitment to postgraduate employability

Australia Catholic University
Employability solutions/innovations

Clear online presentation of Arts careers

→ Informing students’ Career identities

The University of Sydney
Employability solutions/innovations

Postgraduate concierge

→ Personalised services for all postgraduate students

LaTrobe University
Employability solutions/innovations

Entrepreneurship incubation for all Bond Business students

→ Fostering entrepreneurial mindset for all

Bond University

Employability solutions/innovations

Career Ready Learning & Practice
Work-integrated learning for at-risk students in non-professional disciplines

University of Wollongong

Employability solutions/innovations

4 Internships for all

All students have opportunities to gain valuable work experience

University of Technology Sydney
Graded employability assessment

Students do career research and conduct information interviews

Griffith University
Employability solutions/innovations

Me in a Minute

Students make personal brand video

Deakin University
Employability solutions/innovations

Beyond Bond

→ Crediting students for employability activities

Bond University

https://bond.edu.au/beyond-bond
Key Points

• Employability needs to be a university priority
• Universities’ approaches to employability make a difference
• Support graduates to be ‘well-rounded’ & share a distinctive identity