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BREMNER, P.A.M.

2017

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Are we making our fashion graduates ‘work ready’? Considering the transferability of skills by students transitioning into the workplace.

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School of CCB

Overview

- The Rationale
- The Literature
- Methods and sample
- Findings
- Recommendations

DELTA DEPARTMENT FOR THE ENHANCEMENT OF LEARNING, TEACHING AND ACCESS

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Rationale

EXPLOIT
INTERACTION
SPEED
GOOGLE
NETWORKS
CLOUD
VISION
TOOL
INFORMATION
TRANSCOPYRIGHT
DATA
RESPONSIBILITIES
TECHNOLOGY
APPLE
FOCUS
WEB
TOUCHPOINTS
GOVERNANCE
INNOVATION
DIGITAL
DISRUPTION
SECURITY
XANADU
AMAZON
REVOLUTION
VULNERABILITY
TRANSFORMATION
MICROSOFT

Aim

The aim of the research was to examine the transferability of the skills delivered (LLO's) in the honours year to students on the Fashion Management Degree at RGU, into a 'disrupted' workplace.

Literature

- Students leaving University are faced with tough competition for places on graduate schemes or first destination employment (High Fliers 2016).
- Robert Gordon University is the top University in Scotland for graduate prospects (Guardian 2017).
- However, the UK economy is changing with many jobs being focused on the incorporation of ‘digital skills’ (Trowbridge 2016) within jobs.

Literature

- The fashion industry, a strong sector of the UK economy (Oxford Economics 2014) is becoming highly digitised through Omni-channel routes of delivery of both communication (customer relationship management) channels and product sales.
- There is an increasingly holistic approach to graduate skills development (Harvey 2002; Black 2013). Graduate skills have to be transferrable and attribute based including a range of skills relating to the soft skills area and organisations have to be proactive to change (Harvey 2002; Mason et al. 2002: Millar 2014).

Literature

- Often, some of these ‘skills types’ mentioned are embedded in degrees through the inclusion of group work

Hoadley and Kilner (2005) noted group work as related to the concept of ‘social learning’ which incorporates the communities for practice framework C4P.

Fearon et al. (2012) highlight it is ‘increasingly recognised as a way for students to problem solve and demonstrate transferrable skills necessary for the workplace’ (2012, p. 114).

Fashion Management:
My Journey to Employment

Year One

Knowing Your Skills

Understanding opportunities with your course

More Than a Degree

Introduction to Careers

Refresh Introduction to Careers

Year Two

Understanding CVs & Application Forms

What does an employer expect from my CV?

Interviews & Assessment Centres

Does my CV match the job description?

Year Three

Speculative Applications – where to start?

Year Four

What to do when things change

Into the future...

Finding Opportunities – looking further afield

Finding Your Career Path

my CV relevant?

Literature

- In terms of embedding employability in fashion courses workplace experience is used to develop attributes as well as modules which blend the creative and management focus required
  - Scotland's Quality Enhancement Framework (QEF)
  - Enhancement-Led Institutional Review (ELIR)
- The BA Hons FM achieved a 100% course satisfaction rating from the National Student Survey (NSS) in 2015-2016.
- Aberdeen - the downturn of the oil industry means it is important that courses deliver the attributes required for employment. This will help the graduates transition from University to a workplace in the global marketplace, where holistic and transferrable attributes are necessary.

Method

LLOs

Method

2 X 6

2

ROBERT GORDON UNIVERSITY ABERDEEN

Tell us about your Fashion Management Degree

Understanding the transition of the skills embedded in your University Degree and their transferability into graduate employment

RESEARCH LEAD
Dr Pauline A M Bremner. p.bremner@rgu.ac.uk, Tel: +44 (0)1224 263012

Dear Respondent

Please help us with our research and give yourself a chan £50 Amazon voucher for completing our short questionnaire. minutes and all responses are confidential. Take the chan future as your valued input is meaningful to our courses ar developments.

7

As one of our Fashion Management alumni we want to find out if the learning outcomes and skills delivered on your F helped you transition from University int you will help us with this project. All res with RGU research ethics policy, which http://www.rgu.ac.uk/research-ethics-pc

57

Strongly Agree | Agree | Disagree | Strongly Disagree

12. **I am able to use a variety of computer based packages to manipulate and present data in an appropriate manner**

Strongly Agree | Agree | Disagree | Strongly Disagree

13. **I can manage my own learning within my workplace, seeking out and making use of feedback**

Strongly Agree | Agree | Disagree | Strongly Disagree

14. **I can interact effectively in a variety of group situations within my workplace teams**

Strongly Agree | Agree | Disagree | Strongly Disagree

15. **I am able to use negotiation skills where necessary**

Strongly Agree | Agree | Disagree | Strongly Disagree

16. **I am able to provide leadership where necessary**

31. **I feel I had enough digital skills development such as creating web pages**

Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
○	○	○	○

32. **I feel I needed more development of numeracy skills e.g. such as the development of Excel and basic budgeting skills**

Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
○	○	○	○

33. **I feel I could have done with more development in group working considering conflict and negotiation**

Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
○	○	○	○

34. **I feel I had enough development of soft skills, such as dealing with people**

Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
○	○	○	○

If you wish to add anything to the questions you have just answered please do so in the box provided.

Section Seven - This final section relates to your transition out of University into the workplace, considering the services you may have used to transition and how important certain services may be.

The following training provisions and advice are delivered by specialist support departments within the University.

Did you use any specialist training or advice from the support departments on any of the following provisions whilst at University?

35. **Developing your LinkedIn profile**

○ *Yes* ○ *No*

36. **Getting your CV 'work ready'**

○ *Yes* ○ *No*

Findings

digital skills development

Photoshop
Excel for formulae
Digital portfolios
App development

Findings

Not always ready

Findings

- Contention existed as to who was responsible for helping students transition out of University. Mixed feelings existed as to whether University needs to 'play a part' in this final development.

- Secondly, an issue highlighted by some of the alumni interviewed is that they were not sure what skills they have and are not sure how to show this transferability to the workplace.

- This is despite the Professional Skills Enhancement Programme in stage 4

Findings

Adds to previous research

Recommendations

Soft Skills

University of Glasgow graduate attributes

The academic abilities, personal qualities and transferable skills which all students will have the opportunity to develop as part of their University of Glasgow experience.

Attribute	Academic Dimension	Personal Dimension	Transferable Dimension
Subject Specialists	Understand and respect the values, principles, methods and limitations of their discipline(s).	Possess a breadth and depth of knowledge within their disciplinary area(s).	Possess discipline-relevant professional skills, knowledge and competencies.
Investigative	Are intellectually curious and engage in the pursuit of new knowledge and understanding.	Are able to locate, analyse and synthesise information from a variety of sources and media.	Are able to investigate problems and provide effective solutions.
Independent and Critical Thinkers	Identify, define and assess complex issues and ideas in a researchable form.	Exercise critical judgement in evaluating sources of information and constructing meaning.	Apply creative, imaginative and innovative thinking and ideas to problem solving.
Resourceful and Responsible	Are experienced in self-directed learning and authentic research-led enquiry.	Are motivated, conscientious and self-sufficient individuals capable of substantial independent work.	Manage their personal performance to meet expectations and demonstrate drive, determination and accountability.
Effective Communicators	Articulate complex ideas with respect to the needs and abilities of diverse audiences.	Present their ideas clearly and concisely in high quality written and spoken English.	Communicate clearly and confidently, and listen and negotiate effectively with others.
Confident	Defend their ideas in dialogue with peers and challenge disciplinary assumptions.	Possess excellent interpersonal and social skills fostered within an internationalised community.	Demonstrate enthusiasm, leadership and the ability to positively influence others.
Adaptable	Experience multi-disciplinary and/or inter-disciplinary learning in an internationally renowned institution.	Respond flexibly and adapt their skills and knowledge to excel in unfamiliar situations.	Demonstrate resilience, perseverance and positivity in multi-tasking, dealing with change and meeting new challenges.
Experienced Collaborators	Engage with the scholarly community and respect others' views and perspectives.	Are experienced in working in groups and teams of varying sizes and in a variety of roles.	Conduct themselves professionally and contribute positively when working in a team.
Ethically and Socially Aware	Consider and act upon the ethical, social and global responsibilities of their actions.	Welcome exposure to the richness of multi-cultural and international experiences, opportunities and ways of thinking.	Have a practical and contemporary knowledge of relevant professional, ethical and legal frameworks
Reflective Learners	Use feedback productively to reflect on their work, achievements and self-identity.	Set aspirational goals for continuing personal, professional and career development.	Identify and articulate their skills, knowledge and understanding confidently and in a variety of contex

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And something to think about

1. Identify and evaluate the strategic corporate issues within retailing and retailer internationalisation.
2. Appraise the range and scope of strategic development within the specific retail sector, in view of current trends.
3. Critically analyse retailer motivation for international market entry with consideration for the retailers domestic operation whilst defining the type of international retailer.
4. Critically evaluate strategic options undertaken by retailers and identify competitive advantage both domestically and internationally.

- Add to the module descriptor

- A skills section – transferable

-communicate in a clear, systematic and concise way, in writing and orally (with staff, fellow students and external contacts);
- manipulate and apply certain simple and more complex formulae pertinent to business and finance;
- address and use word processing ,simple statistical packages, and spreadsheets;
- use and interpret graphical information;
- engage effectively in a variety of roles; debate; produce clear, well-structured reports and other extended pieces of work; give clear, subject specific presentations in a variety of contexts;
- learn and apply more complex statistical techniques as part of a research methods module. Use skills in numeracy in more open ended situations;
- use a variety of computer packages to retrieve and manipulate data;
- learn in an increasingly effective and purposeful way, progressively developing skills as an autonomous learner;

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