

**2011 UNIVERSITY ANNUAL LEARNING & TEACHING CONFERENCE**  
*Changing Times: Refreshing the Learning & Teaching Strategy*

**Theme:** A university for graduate employability

10:50 - 11:20

**How do we make students more employable?**

*Paul Chin, HEA Physical Science Subject Centre*

***“I think the Learning & Teaching Strategy should enable students to demonstrate their full skill sets as graduates of Hull.”***

**Abstract:**

The theme of employability has become an increasingly important issue for Higher Education in recent years, not least due to Government policies on making Higher Education more open about costs and employment:

“We will publish more information about the costs, graduate earnings and student satisfaction of different university courses.”

(The Coalition: our programme for government May 2010)

Alongside this are HEFCE directives such as the recent requirement to produce an employability statement on both our and the Unistats website. So why is there such an emphasis on employability?

The issue of employability isn't actually that new as benchmark statements already emphasise the importance of developing employability, or transferable skills. Employers have also continually raised the importance of work ready graduates. Indeed, there is a general move in Higher Education to promote the value of 'graduates for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century' or 'graduate attributes'.

This session will address the 'university for graduate employability' sub-theme of the conference. This fits with the overall theme of the conference in 'refreshing the L&T Strategy' by providing the audience with a fresh look at promoting student employability during their time at Hull.

The obvious place to start with promoting student employability is in the curriculum but there are concerns here. The first is that core teaching will be displaced if we try to adapt the curriculum and secondly, are academics experienced or confident enough to promote employability when they are primarily discipline specialists?

Whilst these are valid concerns this session will provide the audience with examples of practice and resources developed at Hull to promote employability within the curriculum without the need for radical changes. These resources have also been successfully integrated into the curricula of other UK HEIs. Within Higher Education, and Hull in particular, we have a good track record of developing students with graduate attributes. With the impending increase in information the Government is expecting us to provide the public however, we must ensure that we maintain our high standards and look at a variety of ways of enhancing employability amongst our students – and also helping students recognise this for themselves at the same time.

This session will provide the audience with an opportunity to discuss issues and concerns about recent and impending developments. It will also demonstrate how the resources have been integrated into the existing curriculum to help promote skills development in order to make our students more employable.