

2012 UNIVERSITY ANNUAL LEARNING & TEACHING CONFERENCE

2012 & Beyond

Theme: the Hull Graduate

11:10 – 11:50

Introducing innovative enterprise

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Abstract:

Is there a danger that in our quest for recruitment, retention, achievement, innovative delivery, and the myriad requirements placed on Higher Education (HE), that we may have lost sight of taught techniques around how the graduate student differentiates themselves in the careers market? This paper considers the use of enterprise -with particular emphasis on social enterprise - in Higher Education as an extra curricula activity in adding value to the student CV.

This starts with a brief overview of the government initiatives on encouraging more emphasis on the need for work and practical skills from graduates (Redmond, 2011) and continues with an exploration of the lack of basic skills amongst learners in relation to employability - are learners taught theory but not practicalities? Given that many HE programmes lack any enterprise modules it is argued that there is a need for such enterprise to be implemented as extra curricula. Literature used will be from a variety of sources such as the government white paper on employability in graduates, Redmond, (2011) who reinforces the government's strategy on employability and asks the question *what is Higher Education for?* This is further explored by Tsui (2002) who suggests that HE teaches students what to think, when it would be better to teach them how to think. The central theme of this piece is to discuss the practical aspects of introducing enterprise to learners, using a live example currently in progress. This will involve discussing the creation of an enterprise committee consisting of a group of students from all levels of a BA (Hons) Business Management degree at GIFHE. All students on programme were given the opportunity to take part, with around fifty percent showing an interest, and 24 committing to the project.

The practical aspects of the theme will continue throughout and discuss the importance of the skills that the students will, and are, learning; the opportunities for business mentors to become involved, thus fostering business links; the participation of lecturers offering their expert knowledge; and potential CPD opportunities. Finally the concept of social enterprise will be discussed and how this can evolve into the students generating ideas for businesses, and ultimately creating a real business

that they can run autonomously.

References

Metranet (2007) **The UK Skills Agenda**. Available at <http://www.londonmet.ac.uk/services/london-office/the-uk-skills-agenda/>, accessed 09/11/11.

Redmond (2011) **The Future of Graduate Employability: Looking Forward to 2012**. The Higher Education Network. Available at <http://www.guardian.co.uk/higher-education-network/2011/oct/24/graduate-employability-2012?INTCMP=ILCNETTXT3487>. Accessed 09/11/11.

Tsui, L (2002) Fostering critical thinking through effective pedagogy: evidence from four institutional case studies. **Journal of Higher Education**, Vol. 73