

June 2015 Newsletter | Humanities

# Mission Employable

**Knowing, growing and showing the skills for career success.**

Before we welcome our new Mission Employable summer interns, we reflect on our achievements during 2014/15. The HUMA1036 Employability Module, our Student Working Group, the Humanities Alumni Network and all the fantastic student-led employability activity we have facilitated in our launch year. As we continue to develop over the summer and into 2015-16, we celebrate the progress the team has made, and look at future developments and improvements.

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# Mission Employable: Reflecting on the first year

By The Mission Employable Team

The Mission Employable team worked hard last summer to create new employability activity for the Faculty of Humanities. The team was therefore excited to see our plans become a reality, but also a little apprehensive as to whether or not they would work.

The first big launch of the year was our Peer Mentoring Scheme, with training held on the Monday of Week 0. The scheme ran throughout Semester One, and you can find out more by reading the entry from our newly appointed 2015-16 Peer Mentoring Coordinator, Lewis Brennen. Lewis graduates with a BA in History this summer, and was both a Mentor and Mentor Officer for the History Society during 2014-15. We look forward to welcoming him to our summer intern team from 29 June.

Following the successful start of the Peer Mentoring Scheme, we launched our HUMA1036 Employability Module – compulsory for all first years in the Faculty – in Week 3 of Semester One. You can read a review of the scheme on page 3. We have two student interns joining the Mission Employable team over the summer: Bobbi Quinn (second year) and Cora Phillips (finalist). Both are keen to get started on developing the HUMA1036 module and creating the HUMA2014 second year module in partnership with our colleagues from Career Destinations. We are excited to start working with Bobbi and Cora to implement some of their fantastic ideas and reinvigorate the module for 2015-16.

From this month, we also welcome Francesca Rock to the team as a student partner, working on employability during the Year Abroad. Francesca is working on both the REALIE and Blackboard sites for students doing a residence abroad – read her entry on page 5. Francesca will continue to work with Mission Employable during her own Year Abroad in Aix-en-Provence from September this year, so if you have any comments to make on the site, or would like to share ideas or contributions with her, please do not hesitate to get in touch: [F.Rock@soton.ac.uk](mailto:F.Rock@soton.ac.uk) Twitter: @FrancescaRock10.

Our Humanities Alumni Network launched this year with help from our Mission Employable Working Group. Each of our student partners on the Group invited alumni to join the Network when they were approached to take part in activities and events. The response from alumni was universally positive, with both those unable to attend and those who took part in events joining our LinkedIn groups, offering insight into their careers, and even, in some cases, offering internships! We plan to grow our Network with the launch of our External Advisory Board and new activities in 2015-16, but in the meantime, if you know an alum you think we should be in touch with, please let us know.

Enjoy the newsletter!

## Reflection from the Mission Employable Lead.

By Dr Eleanor Quince:  
[E.M.Quince@soton.ac.uk](mailto:E.M.Quince@soton.ac.uk)

2014/15 saw the first rollout of Mission Employable - our employability 'brand' created by last year's summer interns Amber Dudley, Charlotte Medland, Verity Smith and James Tribe. It has been amazing to grow and develop the project over the past nine months and to see students across the Faculty embracing the opportunities it offers.

My highlight of the year is probably the TED talk I gave at the University's TEL Conference back in April. Standing in a vast lecture theatre, in the dark, blinded by spotlights and knowing that I was being filmed for YouTube, was terrifying but also exhilarating - Mission Employable had succeeded! My talk centred on how we have used technology within the Mission Employable project - improving our students' digital literacy through the use of online tools such as Kahoot, Weebly and Trello. As TED talks need to have a 'hook' on which to hang the story you want to tell, I used 'the story of James' - how our intern, James Tribe, had used his Mission Employable experience to improve his own online presence. The 'story of James' explored James' development of our 'brand' and how he was able to demonstrate his success by showing a potential employer our newsletters and blogs - all available online. Unsurprisingly, the talk ended with James having secured a fantastic new job!

Running through my talk was a simple message: the desire to eradicate the phrase 'I don't know what it is that I want to do' - something I hear a lot of, especially from students in their final year. My goal is that as Mission Employable continues to grow and develop, fewer and fewer Humanities students will become finalists without having some idea of how they wish to shape their future. It's not a small goal, I know, but I think it's a good one!

Here's to further success in 2015/16!



To stay updated on our progress:

Follow the Mission Employable team on Twitter:  [@HumsEmployable](https://twitter.com/HumsEmployable)

Follow our team blog containing regular updates from all members of the team:  <http://blog.soton.ac.uk/missionemployable>

## On a personal note...

By James Tribe

When I applied to work in Humanities as a summer intern the role seemed like a great opportunity to help make a difference working in my own Faculty and also to develop both personally and professionally before entering my final year of study.

At first the prospect of restructuring the Faculty's entire employability strategy seemed a daunting task and a lot to accomplish in just 12 weeks. However, the high level of partnership working involved in the project helped me gain so much from the role and enabled us to achieve our goals. Having worked closely with a range of departments including Career Destinations, Marketing and Communications, academic staff, Finance, and ILIaD, I was able to improve my knowledge of each as well as develop my teamwork, interpersonal, and project management skills. The creative freedom we were given throughout the project was also crucial as it allowed me to think outside the box and strive to design something innovative.

In retrospect I feel incredibly proud of the results that we achieved. The creation of the Mission Employable brand was not something we initially planned, but rather developed from Eleanor's ambitious ideas into a fully-fledged, highly-visible and well-supported initiative that is now ready to grow further!

Being able to play a role in designing such a scheme has certainly provided me with a wealth of valuable experience. In fact, I recently secured a hugely exciting graduate job in central London and I can honestly say that it was my experience working on a project as complex and successful as this that was the major talking point in my interview and exemplified the skills needed by my future employer. I owe so much to the project, will never forget my time working with the Mission Employable team and feel that my internship will be an experience I can continue to draw upon and benefit from for years to come!

# Humanities Employability Module Year 1: Outcome and Future Plans

By Charlotte Medland: [C.J.Medland@soton.ac.uk](mailto:C.J.Medland@soton.ac.uk)

The pilot year of the HUMA1036 Employability Module launched at induction in September 2014, when Mission Employable presented at the subject welcome talks. Afterwards, our Peer Mentors spoke to students about the module in their Week 2 meetings, ahead of the first session in Week 3. We ran four sessions across the year, three of which were delivered by Career Destinations, with the final session delivered by colleagues in ILIaD.

- Session 1 (Week 3, Semester 1): *Introduction to Mission Employable and Employability Skills*
- Session 2 (Week 8, Semester 1): *Career Choice & First Year Opportunities*
- Session 3 (Week 3, Semester 2): *Building an Internship Ready CV*
- Session 4 (Week 8, Semester 2): *What is your Digital Footprint? Using Social Media wisely to improve your professional profile*

We gathered feedback from both students and delivery staff at the end of both semesters, and met with our partners in Career Destinations after the Easter break to formally review the first year. We now have a clear plan to simplify the module Blackboard site, include more practical/additional sessions next year, and focus on local experiences in Year 1, moving to internships and work experiences further afield in Year 2.

The summer interns who will be working on the Year 1 and 2 modules, Bobbi Quinn and Cora Phillips, are excited to get started and have lots of creative ideas to engage students with the module from the Open Days to Induction. This work will ensure that the Module becomes a vital part of the life students expect from Humanities at Southampton. We hope that embedding the module within recruitment materials will engage students with their skills and employability from the very beginning of their degree.

Additionally, the Employability Module is now being held up as an example of best practice at both an institutional and national level. Eleanor has been approached by several UK universities for guidance on how to start something similar, and has also been invited to speak about our use of digital technologies for the module at a JISC event on 15 July: <http://www.jisc.ac.uk/events/connect-more-with-jisc-in-england-london-15-jul-2015>.

We look forward to developing the Module even further over the next few months, and to seeing how it impacts on our students' self-awareness and motivation to take advantage of everything that Southampton has to offer.



Students at the History Society Careers Fest event in December 2014 – one of the first events organised by the student members of the Mission Employable Working Group. As is evident from the photograph, a variety of local and national businesses were showcased, as well as the Excel Placements and Student Consultancy schemes available through Career Destinations.

# Peer Mentoring Scheme: Completion and Planned Activity

By Lewis Brennen: [lb9g12@soton.ac.uk](mailto:lb9g12@soton.ac.uk)

The Humanities Peer Mentoring scheme, which has just finished its inaugural year, has seen groups of first year students matched with second and third year mentors. The aim has been to make that transition from sixth form to university (and all that it entails) as easy as possible. By all accounts the scheme has been a great success.

It formally began in September 2014, when mentors first made contact with their new mentees via email and attending a training session on 22 September. The mentors first met with their mentees during Week 0, mostly at the departmental welcome drinks held during that week. From then on the students met fortnightly and engaged in a range of activities and discussions to help the first years settle in as quickly and fully as possible. This often included tours of the campuses and city, sessions on how to use the library, advice on achieving a good work/life balance, and advice on arranging housing for next year. The Mid- and End-Point Reviews offered mentors and mentees alike the chance to give feedback and discuss what worked well and what needed improving. On the whole this feedback left us feeling very encouraged – the scheme had obviously achieved its core aims and students in all years agreed that it was a worthwhile pilot and should continue. The End-Point Review in Week 12 marked the official end of the scheme, though in many cases mentors continued to be available to offer advice to their mentees on an ad-hoc basis, which was, again, hugely encouraging.

The Peer Mentoring scheme will continue next year and will be even more ambitious – this year we hope to increase the number of mentors recruited to match a rising intake of new students and reduce the size of mentoring groups. Recruitment for next year is already underway and it is particularly pleasing to see that last year's mentees now wish to become mentors. Indeed, one applicant wrote that she wants 'other first years to have the same gratifying experience as I did with the mentoring scheme in order to help them settle in well.'

Over the next three months I will be one of the Mission Employable interns, working with Eleanor Quince and Charlotte Medland, to roll out the Peer Mentoring scheme for next year. This will involve taking on board feedback to ensure we continue with the parts of the scheme that worked best and iron out the wrinkles to ensure a smooth running. It is hoped, therefore, that this year the scheme will be an even better version of last year's success.

I loved being a part of the Peer Mentoring scheme last year and am greatly looking forward to working with students and staff as Peer Mentoring Coordinator for 2015-16.

## Events and Publications

- Presentation at Southampton Opportunity Showcase on both Peer Mentoring and Group Activity research – 26 November 2014
- Publication of a Mission Employable article in the Journal for Educational Innovation, Partnership and Change (<https://journals.gre.ac.uk/index.php/studentchangeagents/article/view/207>) – 1 February 2015
- TED Talk on technology within Mission Employable at the ILIaD Technology Enhanced Learning Conference, 15 April 2015

### Forthcoming:

- JISC Change Agents Network Webinar on Mission Employable and student-led activity for employability – 30 June 2015

### Under Consideration:

- Article on Peer Mentoring in the Journal of Learning Development in Higher Education – special edition of Peer Assisted Learning
- AGCAS workshop on student partnerships with Career Destinations – September 2015

*Additionally, Mission Employable will have a presence at the Open and Visit Days this year.*



## Mission Employable

*'Knowing, growing and showing the skills for  
career success'*

## The REALIE Project: Employability for students studying and working abroad

Having been involved with Mission Employable this past year as a member of the Working Group and as Peer Mentor Officer for English, I was delighted to be offered the chance to work with the team throughout June to develop a Mission Employable Year Abroad resource.

I am working on the Residence and Employment Leading to International Employability (REALIE) website, originally created in a 2012 partnership with the Centre for Languages, Linguistics and Area Studies (LLAS). Additionally, I am developing the Modern Languages Employability Blackboard in partnership with staff from Modern Languages. Together, these resources will help students to realise, develop, and demonstrate the skills they gain during a residence abroad, increasing their employability. Whilst the Blackboard site will be available to Modern Language students exclusively, REALIE will provide information that can be used by any student completing a period of study or employment abroad as part of their degree.

The REALIE website, in addition to providing information about the transferable skills gained during a residence abroad and how to articulate them, will also serve as a blogging platform for students to share their experiences. This ensures that the project continues to be **for** students, **by** students and, I hope, will provide first and second year students with a wealth of advice in preparation for the year abroad. The blog will also give those students who are abroad the opportunity to reflect on the skills they have gained throughout their placement.

**By Francesca Rock**  
Educational Development Officer-  
Year Abroad

# Mission Employable Working Group: Review & Plans

**By Charlotte Medland:** [C.J.Medland@soton.ac.uk](mailto:C.J.Medland@soton.ac.uk)

Our Mission Employable Working Group is made up of student representatives from each of the seven Humanities disciplines (often committee members from subject societies), alongside Dr Eleanor Quince, Charlotte Medland, a representative from Career Destinations and postgraduate representatives. Additional members may be invited to meetings on an ad-hoc basis.

Our key aims for the launch year of the Group were:

- To encourage student engagement in the new Employability initiatives;
- To work in partnership with our students to raise the visibility and availability of Employability development opportunities throughout the university to Humanities students, and to identify gaps and create new activities to fill them;
- To monitor student feedback on the Employability initiatives, and amend future planning accordingly;
- To review the success of the initiatives and create a plan for continuing success and/or improvement during the 2015-16 academic year.

I am happy to say that we achieved all of these aims. The Working Group was at the centre of our student-led employability activity, with events developed and hosted by our students throughout the year. These events included a presence from Career Destinations, the Student Consultancy, and Excel Placements. Many invited enterprising student societies such as Enactus, Fish on Toast, Bright Futures and Southampton Hub, and creative societies like SUSUtv, Wessex Films and The Edge. Alumni that contributed to the events included a Film student now working for Paramount Pictures, a Modern Languages student working for Telefonica in Spain, and an English student working for Harper Collins publishers. We heard careers advice from self-employed musicians, the Executive Director of City Eye, and a Senior Associate with Deloitte.

All activity was created by polling the current student cohort and asking what career sectors and companies they wanted to hear about. Many of our Working Group members have created web resources out of their events, with websites already live for Philosophy and Modern Languages, and forthcoming sites from Film, Music and Archaeology.

Our Working Group also helped us review the Peer Mentoring Scheme, the Employability Module Blackboard site, and gave us ideas for amendments to the REALIE web resource.

At least half of our student members are staying on next year, while our members for History, Music and Modern Languages are graduating. We thank them for their dedication....and remind them to join the Alumni Network!

If you would like to comment on, contribute to, or simply find out more about our work, please contact us at the relevant address:

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