

July 2015 Newsletter | Humanities

Mission Employable

Knowing, growing and showing the skills for career success.

As Mission Employable moves into its second year, we introduce you to the student team helping to plan the next 12 months:

- Cora Phillips and Bobbi Quinn – Employability Modules
- Lewis Brennen – Peer Mentoring Coordinator 2015/16
- Sophie Pitman – Enterprise Champion for Humanities
- James Chadwick and Lizzy Oliver – OPUS
- Champions for Humanities
- Francesca Rock – Humanities Year Abroad/Study Abroad Employability
- Charlotte Medland – Employability Coordinator and Team Lead

The team will share their plans for summer work, and how they see Mission Employable growing in 2015/16.

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Employability Modules: HUMA1036 & HUMA2014

By Cora Phillips and Bobbi Quinn: C.E.J.Phillips@soton.ac.uk & B.J.Quinn@soton.ac.uk

Cora

I have just completed a BA in English at Southampton and have thoroughly enjoyed my three years here, so the opportunity to be an Educational Development Officer for Mission Employable and give something back to the Faculty really excited me.

A degree is only part of what companies are looking for in graduates: they also need to have developed transferable, professional skills alongside their academic studies. The Employability Module, established last year for first year students and currently under development for second years, is therefore a great tool for students to learn and develop the skills they need to enter the world of work.

I am working with Bobbi Quinn to create the second year employability module to start this September (2015). So far, we have looked in depth at the existing first year Blackboard employability module and written a report on how it can be streamlined and made more user friendly for students. Receiving guidance from Eleanor Quince, Director of Employability and Charlotte Medland, Humanities Employability Coordinator, as well as training in how students can build an online presence for employers, has generated many ideas for the year two employability module material. I am really looking forward to working with Bobbi on the module; it is very exciting to think that students will benefit from the resources and lectures we develop and will feel more confident in applying for jobs and internships!

Bobbi

Entering my third year of English Literature at the University of Southampton with the prospect of the graduate job market looming, I have never been more aware of the importance of employability. The position of Educational Development Officer for Mission Employable appears to be the perfect role to make a difference in preparing students for future employment. Supported by Eleanor Quince and Charlotte Medland, Cora Phillips and I are reviewing the first year Employability Module and creating the structure and content for the second year module session.

Picking up from where last year's interns left off, we have spent the last few weeks reviewing the first year module. Although this has been tough considering the high standard of the original content, we are working towards 3 main aims:

- Making the lecture content more relevant to first year students;
- Improving the Blackboard site;
- Reviewing resources to make sure they are appropriate.

Once we have implemented our changes and are satisfied with the first year module, we will move on to the creation of a second year module. Although I am sure the next few weeks will present us with some challenges along the way, I am all the more excited to proceed with working on the project with Cora to improve the employability of future students!

A Word from the Mission Employable Lead

By Dr Eleanor Quince:
E.M.Quince@soton.ac.uk

Since the end of June, our Mission Employable student intern team has been working hard to kickstart our new initiatives and revamp those which are continuing. You'll see from this newsletter that we have been joined this year by students working to develop and promote OPUS and Enterprise activities. Being able to take inspiration from these wider University initiatives strengthens our intern team, engaging the students with interns working across the institution.

In the meantime, we have been doing some inspiring ourselves. Over the past few months Mission Employable has been gaining recognition nationally, recently being recognised by JISC as a leading student-partnership initiative. Internally, the University is now looking to Mission Employable to provide guidance on the development of an employability framework which can be utilised institution-wide.

The success of Mission Employable would not be possible without our student partners, whose ideas, enthusiasm, dedication and know-how have provided direction for the initiative from the start. I am therefore very pleased to be joining the students in this, our first newsletter of our second year, to tell you about our plans.



The Summer 2015 Mission Employable Team

To stay updated on our progress:

Like our Facebook page:  www.facebook.com/missionemployable

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>

Enterprise and the Humanities

By **Sophie Pitman:**

S.E.L.Pitman@soton.ac.uk

Hi everyone! My name is Sophie and I'm a 3rd year Film and English student. This summer, I am undertaking an Excel placement as the Humanities Enterprise Champion (eChamp), working alongside Eleanor and Charlotte to scope out enterprise opportunities across the Faculty of Humanities and the University. The Enterprise Champion initiative was launched after a successful bid to the Intellectual Property Office (IPO) to enhance the awareness of enterprise and intellectual property (IP) among the student community.

There is a common misconception that enterprise equates with business: in fact, its definition is not so definite. Enterprise is a mind-set, encompassing a variety of different skills that are highly coveted by employers. These skills include time management, problem solving, innovation and creativity. The latter in particular is invaluable to Humanities students as it empowers them to think outside the box and come up with fresh ideas that companies are looking for in response to changes in technology and globalisation.

The success of the 'Mission Employable' initiative over the past year has demonstrated that students are engaging with material that will help them secure a job at the end of their degree. Implementing additional information on enterprise will offer students another insight into the working world. Through this internship, my goal is to improve student and staff engagement in enterprise by drafting several module specifications to fit within the curriculum as well as building a database of profiles that exhibit exceptional case studies of enterprise.

If you would like to know more about the project or have ideas to share on your experiences with enterprise at the University, it would be great to hear from you. Send me an email at selp1n14@soton.ac.uk

OPUS, The Southampton Opportunity Project & Humanities

By **James Chadwick and Elizabeth Oliver (Humanities OPUS Champions):** J.A.Chadwick@soton.ac.uk & E.Oliver@soton.ac.uk

Elizabeth: I have just finished my first year of studying History at the University of Southampton. Having benefited first hand from the Employability module launched last year, I was keen to get involved with the development of new and exciting opportunities for students across the Faculty of Humanities.

I am working as a Humanities OPUS intern. The OPUS web resource is a database profiling all of the opportunities available to Southampton Students. Working within Humanities, James and I are researching all of the curricular, co-curricular and extracurricular opportunities available to students. The web resource was created last year and will be relaunched in September, profiling a wider range of opportunities from across the University. By talking to academic staff, the student union sabbatical officers, society presidents and academic presidents, we have been able to gauge which activities offer unique opportunities for our students.

Moving into Second Year, I think that being an OPUS intern has helped me to become more aware of and engaged in the opportunities available to Humanities students across the University.

James: Having completed my second year of Film Studies at the University, I was keen to find an internship which could supplement my learning and develop my existing skillset. As the Academic President for Film, I come into the OPUS project with a knowledge of the Humanities Faculty's structure. My role in the Students' Union brings with it a strong desire to help improve the experience of my peers during their studies and beyond. Working on the opportunities portal represents a genuine chance for me to do so.

For Humanities students, I think identifying the skills encompassed in their degree can be slightly more challenging. However, Lizzy and I will be seeking to demonstrate that the Faculty contains some truly diverse learning opportunities. Outside of academia there are a wealth of other avenues for students to explore; with a huge array of student societies, elected positions and jobs available within the Union.

We have contacted these groups and subject staff in order to reflect the broad spectrum of opportunities on offer within the Faculty. I hope that a fully-formed OPUS website will enable my peers to discover new opportunities and help them to reflect on the variety of skills gained from those in which they already participate. The resource looks great and works fantastically and I'm excited to begin generating further content to populate it.



Peer Mentoring Scheme: Update on 2015/16 Planning

By Lewis Brennen: lb9g12@soton.ac.uk

I have just graduated from Southampton with a BA in History and am glad to say that I will be returning in October to commence my MA in History. Throughout my third year here I was the Welfare Officer for the History Society, one of my tasks being to enhance the Society's employability agenda. I was invited by Eleanor Quince and Charlotte Medland to sit on the newly formed Mission Employable Working Group and have been involved with Mission Employable since its early days. During the year I could see the real impact the Mission Employable team were having on the students, particularly with the Peer Mentoring Scheme (of which I was a part). It was the desire to have a similarly positive impact on the student experience, along with the opportunities to further my own employability skills, which led me to apply for the post of Peer Mentoring Coordinator.

My job for this summer revolves around taking on the feedback from staff and students on last year's Peer Mentoring Scheme, making improvements where possible and then rolling out the scheme again in time for the next academic year. On the whole, the feedback has been positive; one student commented, 'A brilliant idea. I had all possible questions answered (which were a fair few) which will help me in future, and I enjoyed every meeting. The mentors were really nice. The scheme should continue!' My job is to look into the viability of the improvements that have been suggested by those involved in the scheme and work towards achieving them. The scheme will be rolled out in September following the implementation of changes, appropriate liaisons with staff and the recruitment of mentors (already underway).

The first task I was presented with when I began working on this project at the end of June was to recruit next year's mentors. This involved setting up application forms using iSurvey, advertising the scheme via email and social media, collecting and collating the data from the responses and then assessing the applications appropriately. I have also begun to think in more detail about how in the future we will market the scheme, to both prospective students (and their parents) and to current students whom we might want to target as potential mentors. Over the coming weeks, whilst setting the scheme up from a logistical and administrative point of view, I will be looking in more depth at various aspects with an eye to making further improvements. I plan to develop the role of the Mentor Officers; look at how the scheme could interact more effectively with the PAT system; improve the use of social media; and investigate how the scheme could be better embedded in departmental literature sent out to any offer holders. I look forward to working with appropriate members of staff where necessary in order to achieve my aims this summer.

Events

- Mission Employable had its very first stand at the open days on 3rd and 4th July 2015, and we had a really positive response from the students and parents we spoke to. We plan to build on this success to ensure the September open days go even better!
- Eleanor and Charlotte attended the JISC 'Connect More' conference in London on 15th July 2015. Eleanor presented on how she implements student partnership working in Mission Employable, and as a result of the event both Eleanor and Charlotte have been invited to contribute to future JISC activity and publications. Watch this space!
- Our 2014 interns James Tribe and Amber Dudley graduated with their BA (Hons) in Modern Languages on Monday 20 July 2015. Also graduating were 2015 interns Lewis Brennen (BA Hons, History) and Cora Phillips (BA Hons, English). Congratulations to all, and the entire Humanities graduating cohort!
- As part of the History graduation on 20th July 2015, Eleanor received her Vice-Chancellor's teaching award for excellence in teaching innovation, for Mission Employable.

Eleanor at graduation on 20 July 2015 after receiving her teaching award.



Mission Employable

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

ePortfolios for Employability: Pathbrite

By Charlotte Medland:
C.J.Medland@soton.ac.uk

One of the main outcomes from my research last summer on Group Activity was the need for students to reflect on both their curricular and extra-curricular experiences. This leads to heightened self-awareness and encourages further development, as well as giving students the confidence to excel.

The challenge this year has been finding a tool that is engaging, useful in articulating and reflecting on experience, and within budget. It also needs to be accessible to students after they graduate, so that they can continue to develop as professionals.

We are hopeful we have found the solution: Pathbrite. This is a free ePortfolio tool (www.pathbrite.com) that students can sign up to using a personal email address, giving them complete ownership over (and responsibility for) their portfolio content. With the support of our colleagues in ILIaD and Careers, we are piloting Pathbrite for employability development through the Year 2 HUMA2014 Employability Module from October this year.

We are still planning the implementation of this pilot project, and will be paying particular attention to embedding it within the Year 2 module as an essential part of the learning process.

This is a work in progress, so if you have any guidance or advice, please get in touch with me.

I look forward to a new year and new developments!

The REALIE Project: Employability for students studying and working abroad

By Francesca Rock: F.Rock@soton.ac.uk

Throughout my first four weeks working as the Educational Development Officer for Year Abroad Intern, I updated and redesigned the REALIE website with new content, whilst also repopulating the Modern Languages Employability Blackboard. This involved analysing and modernising the content, researching and sourcing new web resources and documents for students and working . I am pleased to be continuing my work for another 12 weeks, to improve the site further and source student bloggers. My work now involves contacting various alumni to ask for contributions to the website, and sourcing Humanities students who will be completing a Residency Abroad in the upcoming academic year to blog about their experiences for REALIE.

By using the website as a blogging platform, students can share their experiences of their own Residency Abroad with their peers, whilst also informing first and second year students of the realities of living, studying and working abroad. The blog will give Humanities students the chance to post articles about the skills they develop in their host country, living, studying and/or working in a foreign culture. The project will therefore continue to be developed by students, for students.

Applications to blog for REALIE opened last week and I am pleased that we have already had a positive response. I hope that as REALIE progresses and develops over the coming years, it will encompass all of the countries that Southampton students travel to, providing a range of experiences and advice.

I am thoroughly enjoying my experience working for Mission Employable - I have learnt so much in a short space of time and it has been great to work with the rest of the team. I am very optimistic about the further development of the blog following the student response we have already received and look forward to sharing my own experiences next year!

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

Humanities Employability Coordinator - Charlotte Medland:

C.J.Medland@soton.ac.uk

REALIE & YA Employability - Francesca Rock:

F.Rock@soton.ac.uk

Peer Mentoring 2015-16 - Lewis Brennen: lb9g12@soton.ac.uk

Project Director - Dr Eleanor Quince: E.M.Quince@soton.ac.uk

