



University

BIS | Department for Business
Innovation & Skills

HIGHER AMBITIONS

The future of universities in
a knowledge economy

Building 
Britain's Future

- 31 The CBI/UUK publication *Future Fit*⁴² showed how we can build on the good work already underway across the sector on employability by spreading the successful approaches of a number of universities and businesses in areas such as sandwich courses and foundation degrees, and by building in employability skills as a core component of every undergraduate and post-graduate course. The UK Commission for Employment and Skills has also published a report on employability as the first stage of a major review of the issue across further and higher education.
- 32 Many universities already build employability skills and work placements and projects into their courses, and fund this through current HEFCE teaching costs. Although we recognise that a one-size-fits-all approach would be inappropriate, we believe examples of excellent practice could be more widely diffused throughout the sector.

Case Study:

Employability skills at Liverpool John Moores University

Liverpool John Moores University's World of Work® (WoW) initiative aims to ensure that every student is equipped with the skills they need to successfully engage in the world of work, either because they possess skills which are highly valued by employers or because they are well equipped to set themselves up in their own business.

The programme, developed and delivered collaboratively with employers, identified the need for higher level skills most valued by employers covering Self Awareness, Organisational Awareness and Making Things Happen. It also identified eight graduate transferable skills as being essential for employment: analysing and problem solving, team working and interpersonal skills, verbal communication, written communication, personal planning and organising, initiative, numerical reasoning, information literacy and IT skills. All students are encouraged to develop these key skills within their subject and also at the purpose-built Graduate Development Centre.

These employability skills are developed and recognised through the WoW® Certificate which comprises a skills gap analysis, workshops and a filmed one-to-one interview with an employer and the "Ready for Work" Programme of group sessions, employer master classes and student profiles demonstrating skills attainment. The programme also encompasses conventional careers advice and guidance.

⁴² *Future Fit: Preparing Graduates for the World of Work*, CBI (2009) http://highereducation.cbi.org.uk/uploaded/HRE_091_Future%20Fit%20AW.pdf