



BUCKINGHAMSHIRE  
NEW UNIVERSITY

EST. 1891



# CAREERS AND EMPLOYABILITY POLICY

## **Contents**

<b>Background</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Purpose Statement</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Applicability and Scope</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Responsibilities</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Definitions</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Services</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Projects</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Equality and diversity</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Feedback and evaluation</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Appendix 1: Mapping of Policy</b>	<b>6</b>

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## Background

- 1 This policy supports the University's mission to "ensure that our curriculum is fit for purpose and that those completing our courses are well-equipped to achieve in their chosen careers" (Strategic Plan, 2010-15). This document sets out the entitlement, and identifies the action, in the context of the following:
  - a QAA Code of Practice for Careers Education, Information and Guidance (CEIG);
  - b The Buckinghamshire New University Strategic Plan 2010-15, in particular referring to the Student Experience Strategy, Partnership Strategy and Performance Strategy held within it, and the Learning & Teaching Strategy (the Directorate within which the Careers & Employability Service sits);
  - c The AGCAS Code of Practice.

## Purpose Statement

- 2 The purpose of the policy is to:
  - a Establish student entitlement to the range of Careers and Employability services;
  - b Identify the most effective ways of offering and delivering Careers and Employability services through understanding the partnerships between various departments within the University who are involved in this delivery;
  - c Ensure that Careers and Employability services meet the requirements of the institutional, and national, principles against which it may be audited. To this end Appendix 1 of this document maps delivery against these principles.

## Applicability and Scope

- 3 This policy applies to all services provided by the Careers & Employability Service (CES) specifically but can be used as a guidance document by other departments within Bucks New University.

## Responsibilities

- 4 The University recognises that the mechanisms through which students can acquire the necessary skills for future employability must be a shared responsibility, integrated within the curriculum, but also responsive to individual needs, and supportive of the diverse ways in which people can manage their careers;

## Definitions

- 5 For the purposes of this document "Guidance" is understood to refer to one-to-one interventions between qualified, or trainee careers consultants and students. "Careers Education" refers to the information and advice shared with students in the format of a lecture or seminar. "Careers information" can comprise online or physical material accessed by a student, or staff member, independently or with the support of a member of the Careers & Employability team.

## Services

- 6 Careers Consultants deliver high quality, current careers education sessions as part of curriculum programmes.
- 7 Daily drop-ins provide access for students to individual advice and guidance from qualified careers consultants; supporting students in planning and managing their careers, and developing individual approaches to this (creating and maintaining ePortfolios, enhancing CVs and application forms, encouraging take up of work related experience, self-awareness and self-esteem).
- 8 A mentoring programme is provided, available to all students, comprising a database of mentors, framed by a mentoring guide, and audited for a balance of mentors to support the university's student community, to support students in developing their industry knowledge, understand industry norms and develop their self-awareness and self-esteem.
- 9 An Enterprise programme is available to all students, to support the development of students' entrepreneurship skills, by means of an annual Enterprise Month, succeeded by ongoing business planning, and funding information and advice.
- 10 The Alumni network facilitates ongoing information, advice and guidance to all alumni of the university to support their career planning and management, including circulation of job opportunities, and updates on study opportunities and university developments, including opportunities for students to get involved via graduate panels, as a mentor, through CPD opportunities and access to discounts and other benefits.
- 11 The "BucksTemps" agency identifies and promotes paid opportunities within the university community, for students and, in this context, offers advice and ongoing support to students in enhancing their applications, and developing their work related experience.
- 12 Information is collected, maintained and promoted to students, and staff, through partnership with the university's Library Service, and through the creation of online resources, accessible via the University website, and circulated via social media.
- 13 Relationships with employers are encouraged and maintained in a variety of ways, including the advertising of vacancies to students. In addition resource is focused on developing knowledge of employers and their recruitment methodology, in order to better support students, particularly in areas where DLHE improvements would be welcome.
- 14 Partners can be provided with guidance around employability practice to support the development of courses and all partner students have access to current and impartial careers and employability information via the University's website. Careers related events and activities are promoted to partner students as appropriate.

## Projects

- 15 Alongside defined areas of delivery the CES identifies, and responds to, student need through a range of projects, applying for additional funding where appropriate and feasible to support this work.

- 16 Through ESEP funding the Service is working collaboratively with the Students' Union and academic colleagues to develop Employability Awards, supported by an evolving culture of ePortfolio production, to support students in more effectively recording, and articulating, achievement gained beyond the curriculum.
- 17 The CES seeks to complement the good attainment of students with disabilities at Bucks by working closely with the Disabilities Service in relation to achievement beyond the curriculum. This includes the development of guidance to support DSA Mentors in relation to careers and employability work.

## **Equality and diversity**

- 18 The CES seeks to add value to the student experience for all students and this aim underpins all its work.
- 19 There is on-going training to and from the Service in relation to understanding the needs of students with disabilities in accessing work related learning and employment.
- 20 The Service supports the "Widening Participation" agenda by promoting postgraduate scholarships available, working alongside Schools and College Liaison colleagues on recruitment activities for prospective students from widening participation backgrounds and offering retention support.
- 21 Services take account of feedback from students and available resource to ensure accessibility for all students taking into consideration hours, location of delivery, style of delivery, style of materials, and access to particular resources in support of our diverse student community.
- 22 All work with employers is mindful of equality and diversity, taking account of the university's Two Ticks accreditation, and the findings of the Sutton Trust in relation to how vacancies are advertised (for further information see the CES Working with Employers guidance).
- 23 International students are supported alongside other students. It is recognised that they may require specific support related to visa status, and cultural norms in job search and applications. The CES supports inductions (including Erasmus) and the MBA programme and offers tailored support for this purpose.

## **Feedback and evaluation**

- 24 Feedback is collected from students engaging with individual guidance activities, on an annual basis from all students, and on an ad hoc basis from e.g. careers education sessions and Enterprise Month events. We also seek feedback from mentors and mentees, and BucksTemps customers and clients.
- 25 Feedback is used to inform design of services on an annual basis, as well as for early identification of issues and successes in support of staff development.
- 26 The annual Destinations of Leavers from Higher Education (DLHE) survey is the main measure of student outcomes in relation to employability. The survey activity is currently outsourced to the University of London's Career Group and is supported

administratively by Bucks' Business Intelligence and Planning Department and the CES. Once published the information is used by the Service to inform careers education sessions, and to influence areas of research and training, so that Service staff can positively impact on areas of need.

- 27 In addition to the annual, universal, DLHE survey HECSU commissions a longitudinal survey of a sample of universities on an annual basis. HECSU arranges its own outsourcing for this task, which is supported administratively by Bucks' Business Intelligence and Planning Department and the CES. Once published this information is used by the Service to inform careers education sessions, and to influence areas of research and training, so that Service staff can positively impact on areas of need.

## Appendix 1: Mapping of Policy

Bucks Strategy 2010-15	L&T Strategy 2013-17	UK Quality Code (QAA)	AGCAS Code of Practice	Careers and Employability Policy
<p>Vision: to be a leading professional and creative influence, shaping higher education for the benefit of people and employers.</p>				<p>Development of Bucks Graduate Attribute as part of Employability Awards with ePortfolio discussion.</p>
<p>Mission: to put our students first and work responsively with the very best partners to influence, inspire and nurture talent for professional and creative careers.</p>		<p>B4 Indicator 6: HE providers ensure all students have opportunities to develop skills that enable their academic, personal and professional progression.</p>	<p>1. Student-centeredness</p> <p>All member services will aim to develop a genuinely student-centred experience, formulating strategies and focusing operations for all their students, as well as with a clear view of the needs of targeted student groups. Member services will seek to enhance students' self-awareness and employability skills as well as encourage them to take responsibility for developing their own career pathway and explore options including further study and enterprise.</p>	<p>Delivery of a programme of activities that can be accessed outside of normal curriculum, inc opportunities to develop confidence, enhance self-awareness, and build personal brand. Work collaboratively with the Students' Union to develop a system of recognition for engagement in employability-enhancing extra-curricular activities. 1 to 1 guidance interventions with students.</p>

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			<p>Member services will ensure that operating models – organisation, processes, systems and people – are shaped to deliver the promised student experiences. This will be done through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Collaboration and partnership – member services will establish and evaluate partnerships and networks with all stakeholders to deliver services of the highest quality for students.</li> <li>* Confidentiality and impartiality – member services will promote and deliver impartiality, confidentiality and professional integrity in all aspects of service design and performance.</li> <li>* Accessibility – member services will design and deliver their services</li> </ul>	



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			<p>ensuring they are accessible to all students.</p> <p>* Equality and diversity – member services will promote, design and deliver their services to meet the needs of a diverse range of students.</p>	
<p><i>Student Experience Strategy A</i> shift in emphasis from organisational structures and processes to people-focused outcomes, resulting in; Strengthened engagement and partnership with students and employers.</p>	<p>Goal 2: Develop students who are enterprising, employable and who can lead.</p>	<p>B4 Indicator 4: HE providers inform students before and during their period of study of opportunities designed to enable their development and achievement.</p>		<p>Links with Personal Tutor programme. CES information (inc BucksTemps) available on University website (moving to Student Portal Sept 2015?). Increasing numbers of students access the CES, and specifically BucksTemps, prior to starting their course of study). Development of course specific materials (inc subject specific CVs) available on Blackboard.</p>
<p><i>Student Experience Strategy Plans</i> to deliver a quality academic portfolio that prepares students for employment;</p>	<p>Goal 3: Develop and deliver curricula which support our outrageous ambition (specifically increasing sustainability in the curriculum, recognising</p>			<p>Collaborative work with Academic Enhancement to identify links between sustainability, and careers and employability activities.</p>

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	the importance of this for students' future working lives and their contribution to society).			
<p><i>Student Experience Strategy</i> An inclusive interdisciplinary curriculum that encourages the development of entrepreneurial skills;</p>	<p>Goal 3: (specifically that curricula will reflect best practice in terms of engaging students, developing their faculties of critical reflection, and their independence).</p>			<p>Delivery of an annual Enterprise Month to encourage students to explore entrepreneurial activities, followed by ongoing business start-up planning support, support with identifying funding sources, and networking opportunities throughout the year.</p>
<p><i>Student Experience Strategy</i> A range of academic support, social and recreational activities to promote physical and mental wellbeing, personal security and citizenship.</p>		<p>B4 Indicator 3: A commitment to equity guides HE providers in enabling student development and achievement.</p>		<p>Collaborative work with Disabilities Service to inform and support Disability Mentors (who have a stronger relationship with some members of our student community). The sharing of sector good practice and planning of approaches as part of the Success and Retention Working Group. Collaborative work with Pam Owen to allow access for students to Equality and</p>

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				Diversity Awareness training. Continued support for alumni, and use of alumni in mentoring relationships (including monitoring to ensure diversity and positive matching experience).
<p><i>Partnership Strategy</i> The Strategic Plan requires active engagement with community programmes, employers, regulatory bodies and other educational establishments.</p>	Goal 4: Engagement of the whole community (specifically we will work increasingly closely with our external partners, end users, the community and industry, to ensure the relevance of our curriculum to meet society's needs now and in the future.	B4 Indicator 2: HE providers define, coordinate, monitor and evaluate roles and responsibilities for enabling student development and achievement both internally and in cooperation with other organisations.		Plans to audit which companies we have a high level of engagement with, and consider, in collaboration with academic colleagues, the development of memoranda of understanding with employers? Re-ignition of relationship with Thames Valley Chamber of Commerce, outlining benefit to students of the relationship.
<p><i>Partnership Strategy</i> As a future workforce provider we need to understand the part we play in the long term economic and social success of the region. This is a considerable</p>	Goal 4: (specifically We will continue to engage with agencies, employers and other key stakeholders in the region who interface with our targeted under-represented groups and to	B4 Indicator 2: as above. B4 Indicator 3: as above.	4. Commitment to AGCAS  Member services will show their commitment to AGCAS through:	Support of academic colleagues in meeting requirements of accrediting bodies e.g. Creative Skillset. Focusing employer engagement activities in

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<p>responsibility and one that requires us to be fully aware of the effects of a changing global environment, the needs of employers and our role as educators.</p>	<p>maintain a dialogue with relevant national groups. We will seek new ways and new opportunities to work responsively with external partners and the community, in co-operative, developmental and leadership capacities.)</p>		<p>* Supporting AGCAS – member services will support the vision, objectives and aims of AGCAS.</p> <p>* Promoting AGCAS – member services will promote the image and standing of AGCAS as the professional body for HE careers service professionals working in career development and employability by supporting staff to engage in active participation in the work and activities of the association.</p> <p>* Raising the profile of the HE careers profession – member services will help raise awareness of the role of HE careers service professionals in their institution and the wider community.</p> <p>Staff employed by member services will show their</p>	<p>support of course areas with lower DLHE outcomes.</p>

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			<p>commitment to AGCAS through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Ensuring good practice – staff will initiate and contribute in the sharing of knowledge and discussion of professional issues with members of the AGCAS community.</li> <li>* Getting involved – staff will contribute to the delivery of AGCAS services and products, such as training and publications.</li> <li>* Sharing knowledge and expertise – staff with areas of specialism will contribute to consultations on key issues. Some will also be encouraged to represent AGCAS in the media when appropriate.</li> </ul>	
<p><i>Performance Strategy</i> We will monitor our performance via ...DLHE graduate survey.</p>	<p>Goal 5: Improve the university's key systems and processes (specifically we will develop timely, relevant and clear</p>	<p>B4 Indicator 1: Through strategic and operational planning, and quality assurance and enhancement,</p>	<p>2. Quality and Continuous Improvement</p> <p>The overarching principles of quality and continuous</p>	<p>Evaluation of feedback on individual careers interventions and module evaluations where relevant.</p>

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	<p>information about student success, progression, student perception of their experience, and use of resources, to inform planning, decision making and resource allocation.</p>	<p>HE providers determine and evaluate how they enable student development and achievement.</p> <p>B4 Indicator 5: To enable student development and achievement, HE providers put in place policies, practices and systems that facilitate successful transitions and academic progression.</p> <p>B4 Indicator 8: HE providers make available appropriate learning resources and enable students to develop the skills to use them.</p>	<p>improvement will impact upon the service at differing levels and involve measurable benchmarks, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Ongoing review – member services will undertake the ongoing review of both strategic and operational priorities, based on micro and macro circumstances.</li> <li>* Impact measurement – member services will gather evidence to support the effectiveness and impact of the services they provide.</li> <li>* Access to up-to-date information – member services will ensure up-to-date information provision based on research and review.</li> <li>* Feedback and evaluation – member services will actively seek student and stakeholder feedback and</li> </ul>	<p>Develop more effective feedback to employers (as per HER recommendations). Proactive use of DLHE to plan work e.g. through employer engagement resource in relation to courses not performing as well in DLHE terms. Development of EPlay to streamline the BucksTemps registration and payment experience for students, and PSE colleagues, including for students prior to arriving at university. Online resources and physical delivery takes account of the needs of e.g. part time/ distance learners, learners at Uxbridge, mature and typical UG learners, PG learners. ESEP funding ringfenced for the development of an Employability Award approach, framed within a culture of reflection through the medium of eportfolio construction.</p>

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			<p>evaluate it to identify service strengths, areas for development and as an aid to implement change.</p>	
<p><i>People Strategy:</i></p>		<p>B4 Indicator 7: HE providers ensure staff who enable students to develop and achieve are appropriately qualified, competent, up to date and supported.</p>	<p>3. Professional Competence and Development</p> <p>Member services will address the need for professional competence and development through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Recruitment and selection – member services will provide appropriate recruitment and selection procedures in order to recruit high-calibre professional staff.</li> <li>* Induction – member services will provide a comprehensive induction for all staff who are new to the service or who have changed roles within the service.</li> <li>* Staff development – member services will</li> </ul>	<p>Encouragement for all staff within team to obtain HEA associate fellowship in 2015/16.</p> <p>All members of team registered with AGCAS.</p>

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			<p>support and encourage staff to develop and maintain the knowledge, skills and behaviours they need to do their job effectively, establishing learning needs through ongoing review processes.</p> <p>Staff employed by member services will ensure they meet the needs of professional competence through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Qualifications – staff will have, or be working towards, qualifications appropriate to their role and/or have relevant work experience.</li> <li>* Continuous professional development – staff will commit to the continuous development of their own professional knowledge, skills and practices.</li> <li>* Professionalism – staff will demonstrate the highest standards of</li> </ul>	



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			professional behaviour and service delivery.	