

AGCAS Skills Award Case Studies:

LOUGHBOROUGH EMPLOYABILITY AWARD

Background

Established in 2008, the Loughborough Employability Award recognises a student's development and enhancement of employability skills through participation in extra-curricular activities, such as volunteering and work experience.

Following a successful pilot project with 36 undergraduate students from all degree subject areas, the award scheme now has 400 new places each academic year, with students able to enrol from their first year and complete the award at any time up to the beginning of the final term in their final year. In 2011 it was expanded to include postgraduate taught (PGT) students.

Structure/model

The award scheme is delivered and managed through a module on the university's Moodle-based virtual learning environment. The award is a points based scheme, with the requirement that a student achieves a minimum of 100 points. It is non-credit bearing. The student is required to obtain verification for participation in the activities submitted for the award.

Each student is required to attend an induction session and then complete an initial skills assessment and action plan to secure a place on the scheme. Each student is required to complete a quiz on the subjects of cross-cultural awareness and sustainability (reflecting two aims in the University's strategic plan).

A student submits a CV, with support to reach a standard approved by the Careers Network, and an application form to complete the award.

Activities

- Students' Union activities, such as academic representatives, involvement in student committees, media roles, training, coaching and volunteering
- Workshops and courses run by the Library, the Careers Network and other support services on campus
- Student Enterprise activities
- Outreach work with schools
- Part-time employment, either vacation or term time
- Volunteering, either vacation or term time
- Departmental co-curricular activities, for example, peer mentoring schemes, STEM projects, student ambassadors
- Employer led challenges, employer run workshops and skills sessions
- PGT students reflect on (a minimum of 3) activities which were completed prior to starting their course and at least 1 during their time at Loughborough University.

Recognition

We have a celebration event to present successful students with a certificate and 145 completed in 2017. The award is recognised by the University in the graduation programme and on the Student Transcript.

Resources

The award scheme is managed by the Award Manager (0.2 FTE) and administered by several Careers Assistants (1 FTE in total).

Future developments

We have several satellite awards which are trialling alternative methods of assessment and we are looking to upscale in the future.

Evaluation

Students who complete the award are asked to complete an online survey to gather feedback and information about the impact of participation in the award has had on their search for placements and employment.

“Working towards the award has helped me to recognise and articulate my employability skills. I have been able to identify skills gaps and how these can be addressed while at university. Pushing myself to take on more responsibility has exposed me to various scenarios which could occur in the workplace. I have also been able to work with a diverse range of people from different cultures, ages and backgrounds. This has allowed me to adapt my communication skills and work in different teams with sometimes difficult characters. As a result, I feel better prepared for the workplace. I would recommend the award to any student looking for a placement or graduate job. It has helped me to realise and develop the skills employers are looking for. When interviewing for graduate jobs employers are always eager to hear about the award as it shows self-improvement and learning.”

Final year Mathematics and Management student

Email Contact: Jocelyn Moffatt J.E.Moffatt@lboro.ac.uk

Website: [Careers Network Website](#)