

University of Roehampton - The Chancellor's Careers Award

Description

The Chancellors Careers online programme was developed in 2016 to support students in preparing for graduation through the development of employability skills and recognition of extra-curricular activities. Based upon the graduate attributes of the University, the Award is a collaborative venture with departments such as the Students Union, the four Colleges, student services and International and Study Abroad teams.

The Chancellors Award replaces the Roehampton Award, an annual celebration recognising students who contributed to the wider community through volunteering. As an online programme, the Chancellors Award is accessible to all students and alumni, all year round either through their academic programmes or as an extra-curricular activity.

Structure

The Award is a non-accredited programme consisting of fifteen compulsory tasks, divided into 4 themes aiming to address skills development of the graduate attributes:

- What employers want
- You and your career
- Develop your skills
- Your job search

Each task provides a number of online resources consisting of e-learning courses, assessments, quizzes, employer videos and articles, offering a choice to the participant. Progress through the Award is shown on a status bar, allowing for the Award to be completed over time.

The Award serves as a pathway to highlight to students their skills, achievements, goals and identify areas of development. In addition to the online interactive resources, students are asked to record their involvement in extra-curricular activities across the University and reflect on the skills they have developed through these, such as volunteering, work experience, sports and colleges initiatives.

Recognition

Upon completion of all fifteen tasks, students are awarded a certificate of completion, signed by the University's Chancellor, Jacqueline Wilson.

Size/Engagement

All students across the University, as well as Alumni, are able to access and complete the Award during the academic year. During the first year of the Award, 225 students and Alumni took part and in 2017/2018 we are aiming for 500 as specified in the Alumni, Development and Careers Business plan.

Platform/ IT system

The Award is housed in URCareerLink, the University's online careers portal, using the Abintegro system. The Award is developed using the Programme manager provided by Abintegro. The Careers team worked with Abintegro over a period of six months to develop an automated programme that would also incorporate extracurricular activity at the University.

Resourcing

The Award was developed to be an automated process to avoid the need for heavy administration by a member of staff. The structure was designed and created by a Careers Adviser in the department

who works with academics to monitor student engagement. Most staff time is taken up with promoting the Award to academics and students, which is supported by staff across the department.

Evaluation and Impact

To date, focus groups have been held with students to gain feedback on the content and usefulness of the programme. Further feedback will be gathered from students, alumni and academics towards the end of 2017/2018 academic year.

Key Successes and Challenges

The planning stage of the Award was crucial to its successful implementation across the University. The team met with managers, academics and support staff to determine the need and intended impact of the Award. Previous Award programme's successes and failures were considered, and talking to staff who had previously run such programmes was invaluable. This informed decisions such as:

- Not having a tiered programme (bronze, silver and gold) and making the programme online to increase accessibility. Students can start the Award at any point during the year and can do so from anywhere. This has allowed us to offer the programme to Alumni who may need to develop their employability skills and add to their CVs.
- An automated system to avoid increased workload for staff. This has proved to be a success for the department, as the Award has added value to the service provided to students without added workload on the department or the need for more staffing resource.
- The activities of the programme are interactive and content is engaging. Feedback shows that student's particularly enjoy the quizzes and assessments. The programme is updated every year with new resources to ensure it remains up to date.
- The Award is not credit bearing and does not infringe upon teaching hours. It has also proved straightforward for academics to incorporate into curriculum, which has resulted in buy-in from academic staff. At present, 7 out of 10 academic departments are incorporating the Award into their modules and programmes.

Future Developments

Further incorporation into the curriculum, aiming to have all academic departments using the Award to further student achievements.

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