

Career Award – York St John University

Background

The Award was designed in 2015 and implemented September 2016

It was designed primarily a tool to ensure all students had a baseline of career development accessible to them, regardless of their programme of study. It is also a 3-stage career learning pathway, so it empowers students to explore their own career development in a structured format.

Structure

For each 'stage' of the Award there are 4 compulsory activities (e.g. a skills audit, an exercise exploring motivations, a CV upload and a reflective exercise) and an additional activity, which can be a choice of three things (e.g. attendance at a Careers Workshop, attendance at a networking event or a mock interview with a Careers Advisor).

Recognition

All our activities are HEAR eligible, and the awards are Open Badges so can be represented in portfolios and on LinkedIn.

Size/Engagement

All students are eligible to take the core awards. There are additional Badges for specific student groups, e.g. students wishing to start their own businesses. Approximately 5% of the student population (~350 students) start the Award each year and approximately 30% of those who begin complete, with outliers who began the award in previous years completing in their next academic year.

The award is taken by predominantly level 5 students, often because most of our programmes have an employability-based module on that level which drives student engagement with our co-curricular offers. Certain academic programmes encourage all their students from 1st year to take part, so those programmes are also key demographics (e.g. Psychology, and also Theology)

Platform/ IT system

Abintegro, plus content written internally and pulled in from LinkedIn Learning etc.

Reporting

Data from Abintegro and Excel. Is used for reporting.

We report on engagement overall, completion rates (and time taken) and how many students claim their Open Badges following completion.

Resourcing

Careers Advisor: 0.2 FTE (approx.) Careers Co-ordinator: 0.25 FTE (approx..) – variable depending on time of year.

Evaluation and Impact

Emailed surveys developed on Qualtrics are used to evaluate the impact of the Award. At the moment we don't do anything to evaluate the longer-term impact of the Award as it hasn't been running long enough yet but we have plans to do so.

Key Successes and Challenges

- What has worked well for your Award?
Academic staff encouraging students to use the Award has been hugely helpful in engagement. It is also useful for us in the sense that not all students want to speak to an Advisor face to face (or are unable to; there are only 2 of us) so this gives us something to offer for those students
- What have been the main challenges in developing/delivering your Award? Administration is burdensome, especially relating to the HEAR. Engagement drops off when new academics take over certain modules and the relationships take time to re-build.
- What advice would you give to others setting up an Award? Check with other teams in the university what they can offer. LinkedIn Learning as a subscription has been a valuable tool for us when we haven't had all the right content.

Future Developments

Gaining student, employer and academic feedback and using this information to improve the award.

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