

# Employability Strategy

## **Document Summary**

Date of approval: 18/11/2019

Approved by: Academic Board

Last revision date: 31/08/2025

Next revision date: 31/08/2026

## 1: Aims of the Employability Strategy

This strategy aims to develop the qualities and skills of students relevant to the current labour market, ensuring each student is work-ready. We are committed to fostering positive student outcomes, aligning with the Office for Students (OfS) definition of "good outcomes," which includes entry into professional or managerial occupations, as well as sustained employment and further study.

In addition, we aim to provide effective support for students by increasing employability provision, thereby enhancing student support through an enhanced focus on developing the skills and personal qualities demanded by the labour market, including a propensity for lifelong learning. This increased provision is also expected to positively impact student outcomes by increasing student engagement.

## 2: Background

The strategy aims to advance activities that enhance the employability of our students, including self-employment. Employability is defined as the achievements and capabilities of each student, developed through the integration of knowledge, skills, experiences, and attributes from the academic curriculum and co-curricular activities necessary for gaining employment and successful career options.

The strategy uses improvements in the employment and destination of our students as a key measure of success. It is recognised that wider career options and sustained professional development are equally important. Therefore, improvements in the rates of employment, particularly in professional and managerial roles as measured by the Graduate Outcomes (GO) survey, should be seen as a valuable outcome.

The College aims to integrate the academic curriculum with the co-curricular, treating the whole student experience as a journey in developing each student's skills and attributes. This model, which involves both academic and pastoral elements, ensures that employability is the responsibility of the College as a whole. This means that everyone has a responsibility to contribute to the development of our students' employability, be that through the support for individual students, provision of information and awareness-raising, the provision of opportunities for the acquisition of knowledge and the practice of skills, or through the engagement of students with the range of opportunities provided. This approach aligns with the Quality Assurance Agency's (QAA) guidance on a holistic, embedded approach to student achievement.

## 3: The Student Journey

The strategy is organised around the student journey in considering their career options.

Students must:

- **Decide** - what is it I want to do, and what are the realistic career options for me in my chosen field?
- **Plan** - how can I secure the skills, digital capabilities, and attributes to secure the career path I've decided upon, taking into account the financial realities of graduate life?
- **Compete** - how can I compete effectively to make sure I get the career I've planned for (or develop alternative pathways)?

#### **4: To deliver this strategy we will:**

- Foster a culture in which work-related skills and experience are highly valued by all.
- Provide opportunities for work-related skills to be developed. For our Higher National students, this is delivered through the Pearson curriculum, which is designed with a strong focus on professional competencies.
- Offer a curriculum with opportunities for our acupuncture students. This is already embedded in the third-year through clinical practice and modules on running their own business.
- Continually develop best practice in teaching and learning, which enables the development of work-related skills for all.
- Provide opportunities for developing personal skills, confidence, and experience vital for future employment.

#### **5: Foundations**

The foundation for employability at the College is to deliver units with strong employability skills within each programme. For our Higher National students, this is delivered through the Pearson specifications, which provide all students with the opportunity to acquire honed employability skills required for effective employment. For our acupuncture students, the third-year clinic provides practical, real-world business experience essential for their future careers.

It considers the skills required for general employment, such as interpersonal and transferable skills, and the dynamics of working with others in teams or groups, including leadership and communication skills. It also deals with the everyday working requirement of problem-solving, which includes the identification or specification of the 'problem', strategies for its solution, and the evaluation of the results through reflective practices.

#### **6: Study Skills support**

This is integrated into the programme and designed to help the students achieve their employment goals.

The activities include:

- Public speaking
- Role-play for mock interviews
- Where and how to look for work
- How to write CVs
- How to write effective covering letters
- How to address people during the interview
- What to wear at an interview

The above are some of the important and most useful activities. When data is available, they are informed by the latest dataset in graduate destinations and earnings from sources such as the Graduate Outcomes survey and the Longitudinal Education Outcomes (LEO) data, providing a realistic foundation for career planning.

## 7: Themes – Employability and Careers provision

Three themes are identified as the focus in the College's Employability Strategy. These themes are embedded within the teaching and learning of the courses. They are delivered by our experienced lecturers, ensuring the topics are integrated directly into the academic and practical learning of each student.

- Working in Your Sector – The Possibilities and the Pitfalls
- Building a Career in Your Sector
- Ethics: The Balance of Professional and Personal Considerations in the Workplace

## 8: Opportunities for Employability and Careers

Here are some useful links to external resources for career information and advice, which you can use to signpost students.

- **National Careers Service:** <https://nationalcareers.service.gov.uk/>
- Provides free, impartial information and guidance to help people of all ages make decisions about learning, training, and work.
- **Prospects:** <https://www.prospects.ac.uk/>
- A well-established graduate careers website with advice on finding jobs, writing CVs, and exploring different career sectors. It also features a "What can I do with my degree?" tool.
- **Targetjobs:** <https://targetjobs.co.uk/>
- Offers a wealth of information on graduate jobs, internships, and careers advice, including a blog and advice by sector.
- **Bright Network:** <https://www.brightnetwork.co.uk/>
- A careers network for students and graduates, providing access to exclusive events, advice, and job opportunities with top employers.
- **Jobs.ac.uk:** <https://www.jobs.ac.uk/>
- Although often associated with academic roles, this site also has an excellent career advice section for students and graduates.