

# Preparing work-ready graduates : a role for universities

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# The University of Central Lancashire

- Originally founded in 1828 in Preston, Lancashire
- Gained full university status in 1992
- Fifth largest University in the UK
- Programmes in 20 countries
- Highly vocational



# Ready for work graduates

- Key drivers :
  - Increased tuition fees (average £9,000pa)
  - Graduate unemployment figures
  - The changing needs of business and the global jobs market
  - A new breed of student

# Survey findings

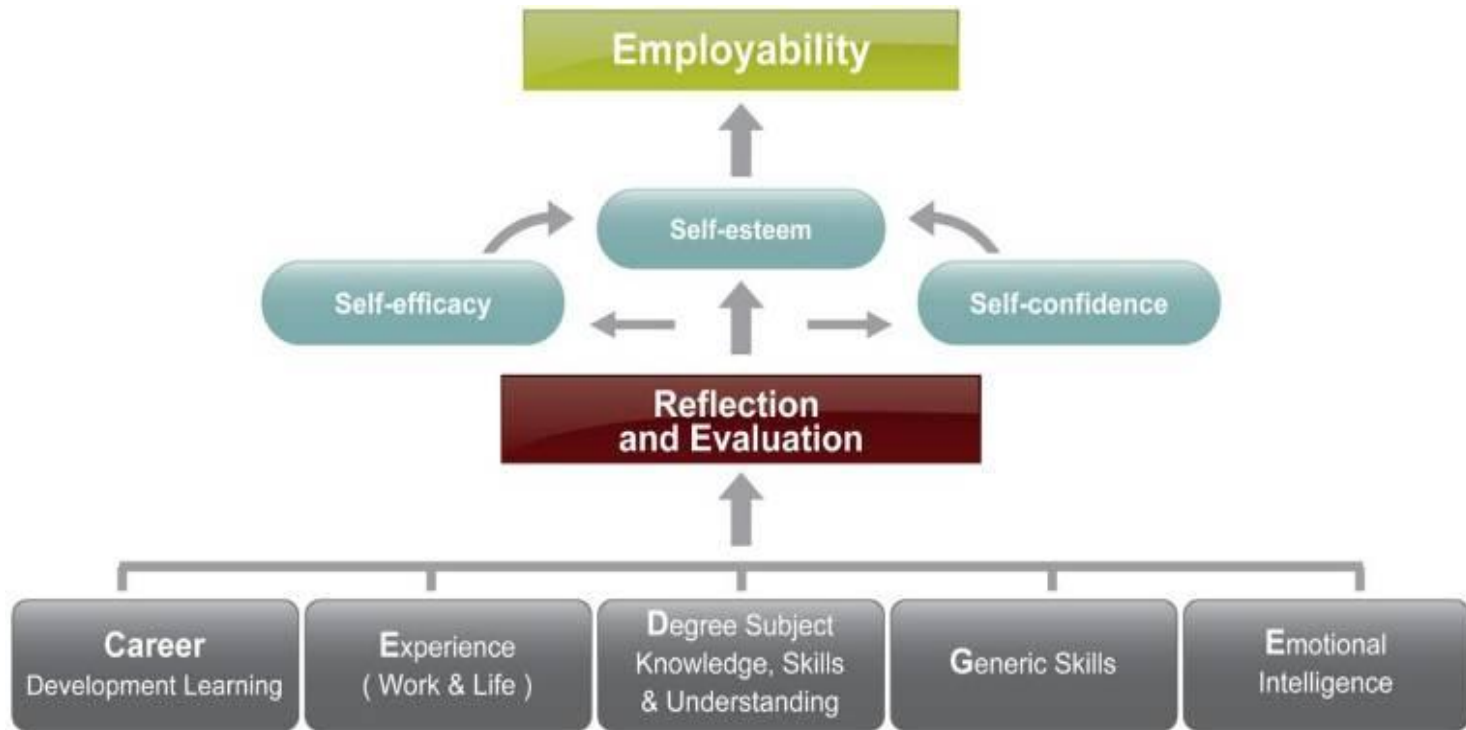
- 74% of students who took part in a key survey in 2012 said their main reason for going to university was to improve their job prospects
- The majority were concerned that they will struggle to find graduate-level work on completion of their studies

# HSBC: an example

- 100,000 applications per annum
- 1,500 graduate jobs
- 90% of applicants have a 2:1 or a 2:2
- What else does it take for someone to stand out?



# Curriculum provision for employability



Dacre Pool & Sewell (2007)

# How UCLan has responded

- Employability is at the centre of our strategic planning
- Now regarded as a crucial part of the student experience at UCLan
- Fully endorsed by the Vice Chancellor and academic staff
- More collaborative partnerships with employers

# Old approach

## Centralised support

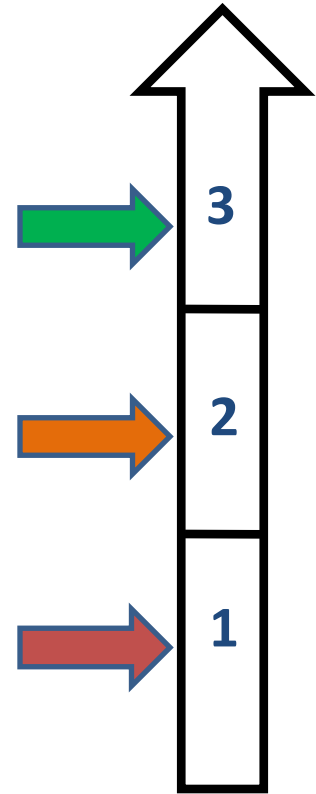
- Personal development managed by Schools
- Additional bolt on employability award
- Central service for careers guidance



# New approaches

## Embedded learning outcomes

- Employability learning outcomes embedded in every course at each level
- Tangible 'Employability Essentials' milestones to be achieved by each student
- e-Portfolios used to document and evidence the student's development



# New approaches

## Meeting individual needs

- ‘Employability Extras’
  - 1:1 Careers guidance
  - Workshops
  - Tutorials
  - Employer engagement activities
  - Live student projects



# Example

## Mobile application design project



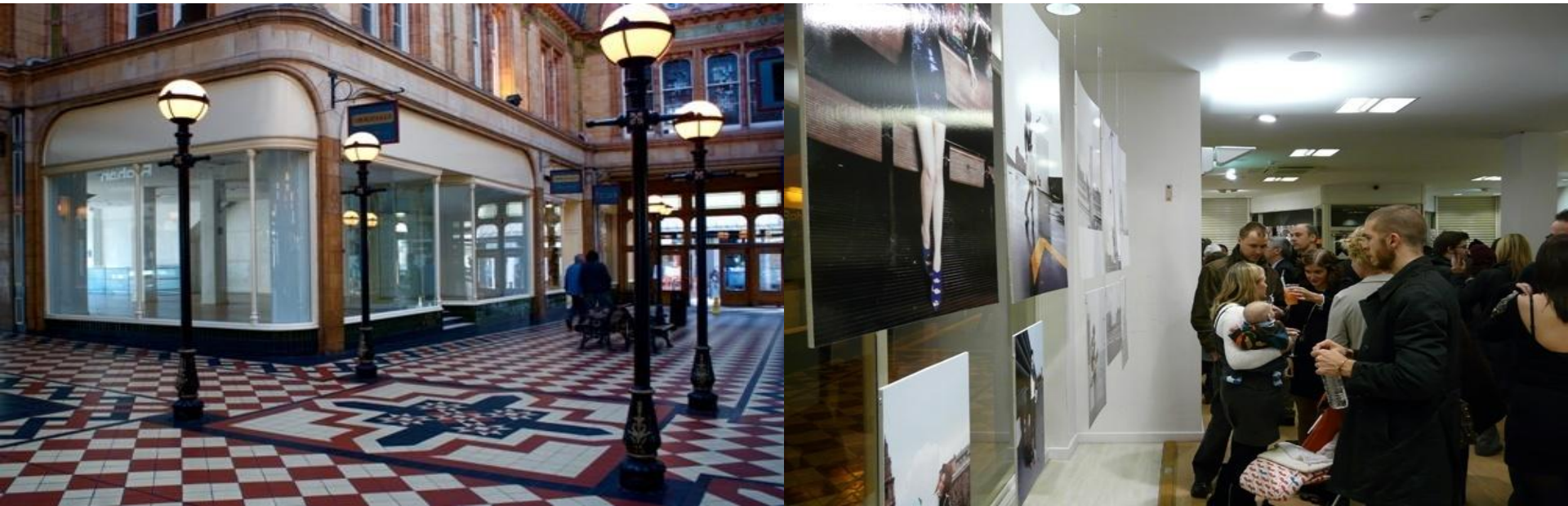
# Example

## Live project with Samsung



# Example

## Student led project



“It's a breath of fresh air from ‘academic’ study, but much harder, as so much of it has to be tackled independently.”

**INNOVATIVE THINKING  
FOR THE REAL WORLD**



# Example

## Outreach initiatives

- Computing, Engineering, Maths and Physics
  - STEM Ambassadors
  - Teaching projects in schools
  - Observatory tours
  - Prince's Trust Challenges



# Example

## High flyers programme



- Helping Business students gain top graduate jobs
- Industry mentors
- CMI accredited



# Next steps

- Structured work experience
- Leadership and development Programme
- Leadership challenges
- Cultural exchange visits





# Enterprise and Entrepreneurship



“The team at Northern Lights have been amazing, our business has doubled in size in a year and is still growing, we couldn’t have done all this without their support.”

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Thank you for  
listening

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