

STUDENT JOURNEY PROJECT

Review of Placements and Careers

1. Introduction and Purpose of the Review

The Student Journey Project is centred on improving the efficiency and effectiveness of BU's administrative student processes and supporting services. It aims to ensure that students are at the centre of these processes and as a result have an enhanced experience embedded in a culture of service excellence and delivered as efficiently as possible.

Following the consultation on proposed service owners, a review of Placements and Careers is now being undertaken. The service owner consultation confirmed that Placements advice and support will be owned by the academic Schools and also that common service standards should be determined as part of an employability framework.

The purpose of this review is to determine how these changes will be implemented and will therefore consider the current Placements and Careers provision, the common service standards required to ensure future Placements support meets students' needs and what changes will be needed to realise the separation of the current Placements and Careers service.

2. Background and Strategic Context to the Student Journey Project

The Student Journey Project commenced in March 2012 when the University Executive Team approved a Project Charter to undertake the first phase of work with the following objectives:

- To enhance the student experience and embed service excellence by designing process, service and supporting organisational structures around student need.
- To identify efficiencies in professional support and administration costs
- To produce a tender specification for a Student Record System (SRS).

Work was undertaken between May and December 2012 to review existing student administrative processes across the University. This work involved around 200 professional and support staff who deliver the processes involved. Their contribution and feedback has been key to understanding existing processes and IT systems, issues of concerns and limitation and has helped to develop the optimal requirements for new systems and processes.

3. Service Ownership of Placements and Careers

The work undertaken during Phase 1 of the Student Journey Project analysed a range of processes that were within the project scope as they form part of the student's journey through the University.

Following consultation it has been confirmed that service ownership for Placements support will reside with Academic Schools as part of on-course support. The rationale for this being that matters relating to on-course study are of a specialist nature and need to closely complement the academic delivery of the course and therefore are best supported by the Schools within which the student is based. The consultation outcome also confirmed that the service owner for Careers, which includes the Student Development Award, will be the Head of Student Support Services.

4. Scope of Placement and Careers Support

The Placements and Careers Service currently provides a range of services to support current BU students and graduates up to three years after graduation. During Phase 1 of the Student Journey Project, a BU wide consultation took place on proposals for a Student Development Service. The Student Journey Project provided input and feedback to that consultation which included a summary of the current Placements and Careers provision.

The Student Journey Project noted that the Placements and Careers Service currently provides both student facing and supporting services. The student facing services were categorised as:

- Careers Guidance
- Careers Advice
- Placement Advice
- Careers Education
- Access to Graduate opportunities
- Access to Placement opportunities
- Access to Part Time Employment Opportunities
- Course Support
- Pastoral Support

The supporting services were categorised as:

- Generation of Placement Opportunities
- Generation of Graduate Opportunities
- Horizon Scanning and Communication

The Student Journey Project also considered what these categories include and how they are currently delivered. This led to the following descriptions of the range and scope of responsibilities provided by the different aspects of Placements and Careers support:

Careers Guidance provides support to the student whilst they identify and reflect on their career aspirations and helps the student to understand the full range of options open to them that will contribute to pursuing those aspirations. It includes clarifying what an individual wants to get out of a career, what they have to offer, widening their horizons and challenging assumptions; thus enabling them to make considered decisions and action plans. Careers Guidance is therefore not specific to the student's programme of study as, for example, the full range of options open to the student can include changing courses, taking part in activities not related to BU, not continuing in higher education, and, for those who are unsure about what they want to, taking actions that will help them decide. These services are offered to current students, potential students and alumni.

Careers Advice is similar but is more restricted. It may be that the options discussed with the student as part Careers Advice are restricted to certain courses or sectors, or to the extra-curricular activities available at BU. Careers Advice is also provided by multiple roles. Any student can access Careers Advice from Employability Co-ordinator or a Careers Adviser. Students on long placements can also get this support from Placement Development Advisors. It is currently only Careers Advisers that provide Careers Guidance

Similarly **Placement Advice** is restricted by the programme the student is studying. Placement Advice therefore involves providing support for students to find the best placement for their career and academic aspirations, and their development, within the restrictions of the placements that fit with their course. Placements Advice is currently provided by two different roles at BU. The Employability Coordinator provides this service whilst the student is looking for a placement. The service is also provided for students on placement who are considering changing their placement.

For short placements this support is provided by Employability Co-ordinators, for long placements this support is provided by both Employability Co-ordinators and Placement Development Advisers.

Careers Education supports students in gaining the employability skills and knowledge they will need to be successful in achieving their career aspirations. For example, this can involve feedback on CVs, application forms and personal statements; conducting 'mock interviews'; putting into context psychometric test results, identifying areas for further development; demystifying the assessment and selection recruitment process. This support is currently provided by a number of roles. The Employability Co-ordinators and Careers Advisors are heavily involved in providing this service and it can also be accessed from the Student Adviser and, for those students on long placement, from the Placement Development Advisor.

The Information Officer is also involved in providing students with information about, and resources for, employability skills. The Graduate Employment Officer and Graduate Employment Assistant arrange skills workshops that are led by employers.

5. Process and Service Improvements identified by the Student Journey Project

• Process User Group Improvements

During Phase 1 of the Student Journey Project, work was undertaken to consider the support provided by the Placements and Careers Services. The Student Journey Project also provided a response to the Student Development Service (SDS) consultation which was underway at the same time.

The Process User Group work made suggestions for improving student Placement support. One related to the number and type of Placement Development Advisor visits the student receives and also the scope of business engagement that the Placement Development Advisor role provides. A range of other suggestions were made in relation to how Placements and Careers staff currently provide support in the areas of course administration, internal communications and events, these suggestions will be considered in other review work to be undertaken by the Student Journey Project.

6. Review Format and Timescales

The review of Placements and Careers will be led by the Student Journey Project Organisational Change Lead in conjunction with the School Director of Operations as the Service Owners for on-course Placements advice and support and the Head of Student Support Services as the Service Owner of the Careers Service.

The following timescale is proposed for the review:

Activity	Timescale
Review of Placements and Careers commences	w/c 30 th September 2013
Review of Placements and Careers completes	1 st November 2013
Outcome of review and decision on appropriate next steps	w/c 4 th November 2013

The review work will involve the following:

- Discussion meeting with Placement Development Advisors
- Discussion meeting with Employability Co-ordinators
- Discussion meetings with Careers Advisors and other Careers Service staff
- Discussion meetings with relevant School academic staff e.g. Deputy Dean Education, Associate Deans, Placement Tutors, Student Experience Champions
- Discussion meeting with HSC Professional Placement Support
- Meetings with Level P and Level H students on both short and long placement
- Review of outcomes from the SDS consultation undertaken in August 2012 and the Student Journey response.
- Review of current job descriptions
- Review of the Phase 1 Process User Group work and recommendations

There are a number of key questions to be considered as part of the Review:

- What activities are involved in on-course Placement preparation and support? Does the scope provided by the Student Journey Project encompass all aspects?
- The line management of Placement Development Advisors is recommended to reside within the School. What needs to be considered to maximise the benefits of this?
- It is recommended that line management of those who support students in preparing for Placement, resides within the School. What needs to be considered to maximise the benefits of this?
- The Employability Co-ordinator role currently includes careers advice and support. In line with the rationale for Placements advice and support to be owned by schools as part of on-course support, it is recommended that the role should only provide this for placement support. Should any other factors be taken into account?
- What are the activities that will fall within the remit of the central Careers Service once it is separately owned?
- How will external compliance requirements for Placements advice and support be met and consistency ensured e.g. immigration regulations?
- How will consistent levels of service for Placements advice and support be ensured?
- BU2018 requires all UG programmes to offer an optional placement year by 2014. What impact might this have on the placement support required?
- How can the existing staff network across the different roles be maintained to continue sharing of best practice and professional knowledge?

During the Review in addition to discussion sessions, staff can raise questions or provide information through the Student Journey Project email: studentjourney@bournemouth.ac.uk or direct to the Organisational Change Lead, Jackie Molnar: jmolnar@bournemouth.ac.uk.

Once the Review has been completed the findings, along with an equality assessment, will be considered by the School Directors of Operations with the Student Journey Project Organisational

Change Lead and in collaboration with the Head of Student Support Services. A decision will then be made as to next steps and how those changes are taken forward.