

Genius

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The magazine of the ACU's
Graduate Employment Network

This issue

- 2-3 Graduate employment:
exploring the value of
higher education**
Dorothy Garland's report on
the Graduate Employment
Network's biennial
conference.
- 4-5 Connecting the
employability dots**
Liz Medford and Jane
Fletcher on an extra-
curricular programme
offering life and leadership
skills.
- 6-7 Tackling unemployment:
the Youth Economic
Participation Initiative**
Amy Newcomb Rowe
reports on a new
international initiative.
- 8 The power of university
networks for business**
Samir Farrag looks at how
the university experience
helped one entrepreneur.
- 9-11 News and publications**
Nick Mulhern highlights
recent developments and
publications in the area of
graduate employability.

Encouraging enterprise

Welcome to the ninth issue of *Genius*, the magazine of the ACU's Graduate Employment Network. Following our successful conference in Auckland, New Zealand, earlier this year, this issue focuses on some of the principle outcomes from the meeting.

In our first article, Dorothy Garland takes us through the event and its key outputs and conclusions. For anyone wishing for more information about the conference, please go to the Graduate Employment Network section of the ACU website where you will be able to find all the contributors' presentations.

We also feature two institution-led programmes which were presented at the conference. The first is the Victoria Plus Programme, run at Victoria University of Wellington in New Zealand. An innovative scheme that helps students develop those key 'soft skills' which are so in demand in the workplace, the article is a fascinating read for anyone seeking to develop an extra-curricular programme within their student community. Also featured is the work of the Youth Economic Participation Initiative (YEPI) run by the Talloires Network. Focusing on youth unemployment in emerging economies, YEPI supports the efforts of socially responsible universities to test and improve innovative university-led models that enable upper-year university students and recent alumni to accelerate their transition to the workforce.

Our last feature is an example of how these types of programme

can be a success. Based in the UK, FlatClub started out as an MBA thesis project. With the support of the London Business School Incubator, however, the project developed into a successful company in its own right. Samir Farrag explains the motivation behind setting up FlatClub, and reports on its success.

Finally, the ACU's librarian, Nick Mulhern, rounds up recent developments in the field from around the Commonwealth and highlights useful publications.

Membership of the Graduate Employment Network is free to staff of ACU member universities. If your university's careers department is yet to join, the ACU would be delighted to welcome you into the Network. If you have any feedback or ideas on the Network or would like to contribute to future issues of *Genius*, please contact us at graduate.employment@acu.ac.uk

Sara Calamassi

Sara Calamassi
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Graduate employment: exploring the value of higher education

In July this year, delegates gathered in Auckland, New Zealand, for the second conference of the ACU's Graduate Employment Network. **Dorothy Garland** reports.

Without data, you are just another person with an opinion' was the challenge from Andreas Schleicher at the end of his keynote address to the ACU's Graduate Employment Network conference, co-hosted with Universities New Zealand in July 2013.

The theme of the conference – 'Exploring the value of higher education to the economy' – brought together an international mix of vice-chancellors, career development professionals, employers, industrialists, politicians, and student leaders to consider whether today's universities are fit for purpose, whether they are producing employable graduates, whether the contribution of higher education to the economy is recognised, and whether the value of mobility and collaboration – especially between higher education and industry and between TVET (technical and vocational education and training) and the HE sector – is properly exploited.

In addition to Dr Schleicher – Deputy Director for Education and Skills and Special Advisor on Education Policy to the OECD's Secretary-General – other illustrious speakers included the New Zealand Minister for Tertiary Education, Skills and Employment, Hon Steven Joyce; Professor Roy Crawford, Chair of Universities New Zealand and Vice-Chancellor of the University of Waikato; Professor Rajesh Chandra, Vice-Chancellor of the University of the South Pacific; Thamsanqa Maqubela, CEO of the South African Graduates Development Association; Vicki Thomson, Executive Director of the Australian Technology Network of Universities;

Dr Rick Ede, Chief Executive of Unitec Institute of Technology, New Zealand; and a dynamic cross section of workshop session presenters.

A number of messages arose from the conference to our various stakeholders, but it has to be said that Schleicher's challenge – the need for data – proved to be the *leitmotif* of the event. Without data, universities are hard-pressed to prove that they are producing employable graduates who are making a worthwhile contribution to society, whose earning potential has been enhanced, who are healthier, more tolerant, better able to analyse and criticise the status quo, and more likely to promote democracy and the rule of law. Without data, it is not so easy to prove the link between a student's experience of engagement with society and his or her employability, or between the experience gained on internships and being employable, or between studying in a research-led teaching environment and developing a sense of wonderment, innovation, or entrepreneurial spirit.

New Zealand is taking this need for data very seriously. The latter half of 2011 saw the Graduate Longitudinal Study New Zealand (GLSNZ), which was commissioned by Universities New Zealand, conduct a survey of 8,600 final year students. Those same students will be re-surveyed in two, five and ten years' time to ascertain whether their university education has influenced their lives and, if so, how and to what extent. Note is being taken of lifestyle, employment, career development, earnings, health and wellbeing in a bid to ascertain the value of a New Zealand tertiary education. The initial stages of this longitudinal study have been funded in large part by the Tertiary Education Commission, with additional funding from the Ministries of Education and Women's Affairs. The GLSNZ is led by Professor Richie Poulton at the University of Otago and was presented to the conference by Dr Karen Tustin.

Irrespective of the intrinsic value of the data which will be forthcoming from the GLSNZ, an overriding question was raised more than once during the conference, namely: how much of any earnings premium relates to higher education and how much to innate ability? It was mooted that the answer to this question is often skewed by the fact that the brightest students are likely to go on to a second or third degree rather than immediately entering the workplace.

Nevertheless, much discussion took place around how to give students a competitive edge



*Tai-Marie Yorston, Senior Career
Education Advisor at Careers New Zealand*

and make them more employable. These are some of the strategies which were promoted:

- Regular review and monitoring of curricula for relevance (and embedding key, generic elements therein – such as ethics and governance, ICT and research skills)
- Flexibility – provide more opportunities for mixed degrees (combining Mandarin with physics, for example), for open and distance learning, and for lifelong learning
- Development of multi-disciplinary research teams not only to address complex issues facing society, but also to inculcate teamwork
- Project work or internships, which can provide invaluable experience of writing proposals, time management, decision-making, teamwork, networking, project management, reporting, oral presentation, and developing interpersonal skills
- Promoting involvement in university clubs and societies as a means of developing fundraising, communications, leadership, organisational, negotiation and public speaking skills, among others
- Participation in projects with the local community – such as the excellent Victoria Plus Programme at Victoria University of Wellington – or in helping to provide disaster aid can also offer vital experience of dealing with complex and challenging issues

Our speaker from South Africa, Thamsanqua Maqabela, made the point that project work can be particularly valuable in providing students with the experience and skills which will help prepare them to be employers rather than employees. If they have the entrepreneurial spirit and will to take these skills into rural areas and set up in business there, they can help to improve the local economy and can even be instrumental in transforming society there.

One of New Zealand's major industries, Fonterra, was represented at the conference by Kevin Palfreyman, External Relationships Liaison Manager for Research, Science, Technology and Development. While speaking about the mutual benefits of the inter-relationship between industry, government, universities and students in the provision of their technical internships programme, he proffered the advice that Fonterra, as a company, is, 'more interested in recruiting graduates with a heart, who will fit in to the company, than taking the best grades'.

Reverting to the topic of data: those working in career development services voiced how difficult they find it, without data, to demonstrate exactly how valuable they are. Consequently, they are in many universities viewed as 'nice to have' rather than essential to core business. Although professionals in this field are working at the intersection of graduate employability, civic engagement and entrepreneurship education, they are an often under-utilised resource. One exception, among those represented at the conference, is the University of Wollongong in Australia, which has positioned career development services more centrally in order to signify to the wider world the importance the univ-



*The OECD's Andreas Schleicher asks:
Are universities fit for purpose?*

ersity attributes to its students and their careers. Are other universities missing a marketing trick by failing to do the same?

Among many other messages, questions and challenges (not to mention solutions), let me mention just three more which struck a particular chord.

First, one SME employer drew attention to her perception that the outside world in general finds universities too hard to navigate. There is no obvious 'front door' and this makes it hard for employers to enter and to start making the connections that would be mutually beneficial.

Second, let us recognise the genius of the 'and'. Society needs both TVET and higher education; face-to-face and online learning; post-secondary and lifelong learning. It should not, and need not, be a matter of either/or.

Third, are universities paying sufficient heed to preparing students for life (not just for jobs), for quality of life – their own and wider society's – and for lifelong learning (whether formal or informal)? In a global context in which flexibility is key, the capacity to continue learning is essential, as was so succinctly captured in Eric Hoffer's words, offered to us by the final speaker, Rick Ede: 'In times of change, learners inherit the earth while the learned find themselves beautifully equipped to deal with a world that no longer exists'.

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The Victoria Plus Programme: connecting the employability dots

How can universities encourage their students to participate in valuable learning experiences beyond their academic studies? **Liz Medford** and **Jane Fletcher** outline one university's initiative.

Students engaging with their community and realising the value of the transferrable skills they have gained have been key factors in the success of a leadership and service programme offered at Victoria University of Wellington (VUW) in New Zealand. Introduced in 2008, the Victoria Plus Programme encourages a diverse mix of students at the university to enhance their leadership, social responsibility, and employability skills.

The Victoria Plus Programme offers formal recognition to those students who have made a significant contribution to volunteer and student support work, both within the university and in its local community in Wellington. The programme specifically addresses leadership, both through the development of student leadership skills and through reflection on the programme as an experience of leadership. The objectives of the programme are as follows:

- To develop students' employability skills to help in their future life and work
- To raise awareness and develop an understanding of social responsibility
- To provide formal recognition for students' contributions to volunteering and student support work

The university is keen to encourage its students to develop a broad range of skills and to participate in experiences which will complement their studies. It aims to prepare graduates who are active and engaged global citizens, able to work both independently and collaboratively, and who know how to set and achieve personal and professional goals. The Victoria Plus Programme is one of several informal learning opportunities to develop these qualities.

Practice

Students can enrol on the programme at any stage of their degree and all students enrolled at the university are eligible to register at no cost to themselves. Participants complete components alongside their qualification and, if successful, their achievement is recorded on their academic transcript.

To complete the programme and achieve the Victoria Plus Award, students must successfully complete three different components: participation in experiential activities, attendance at professional and personal development workshops or presentations, and the recording of reflective comments in their CareerHub electronic portfolio.

Experiential activities

Students on the programme participate in a range of approved volunteer and student support work, verified by Victoria Plus Programme staff. Potential roles include mentoring, leading clubs and teams, working with people from different cultures, representing fellow students, and community volunteering. Points are allocated for completing each activity, with the points scale for each role established in advance and publicised online. The supervisor at the designated workplace signs a form confirming that the student has completed the experiential activity to a satisfactory level.

Workshop attendance

The professional and personal development component of the programme involves attending approved seminars, workshops, or presentations. These cover such areas as leadership and social responsibility, skills development, and career development.



ePortfolios and reflection

Students on the programme are required to reflect on their experiences by describing, interpreting, evaluating, and planning how to make use of what they have learnt. Staff monitor the reflective comments to ensure they meet the programme criteria. Victoria University uses the CareerHub ePortfolio tool (www.careerhub.info).

Evidence of success

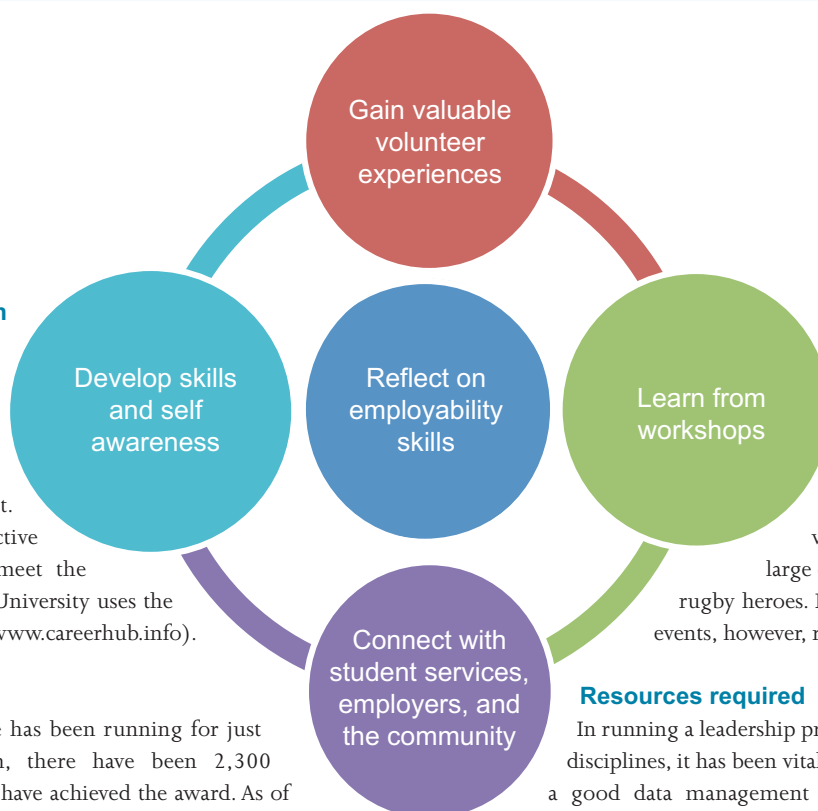
The Victoria Plus Programme has been running for just over five years. Since then, there have been 2,300 enrolments and 155 students have achieved the award. As of September 2013, there were over 500 active participants on the programme. Students from all disciplines and year groups take part in the programme. Feedback from employers demonstrates how they value graduates who have developed employability skills through this programme, and a survey of all award recipients confirms that they have gone on to graduate employment or further study.

Issues in managing a leadership and service programme

Liaising with students Students have competing demands on their time, with large academic workloads and often the need to work part-time to help finance their studies. Offering this type of extracurricular programme needs to have clear appeal and processes. Students naturally get distracted from anything which is not credit-bearing. However, encouraging them to participate alongside their studies, spreading the commitment of time needed to achieve all the necessary components, and supporting them with one-on-one advice, all help to offset this.

Influencing stakeholders Ongoing communication is vital to ensure that students are aware of the benefits and opportunities of being part of the programme. Word of mouth is a strong influencer for students to join the programme and, over time, this has begun to have a significant impact. It is important to ensure the visibility of the programme in university recruitment strategies, links with employers, and to student representative groups. Encouraging academics and faculty staff to appreciate the value of the programme can take time and requires cross-functional relationship building.

Organising the various components The programme aims to connect with a range of opportunities on campus and in the community. This takes time and requires programme staff to be aware of changes and new options. In terms of community service, it is useful to network directly with not-for-profits and collaborate with your local volunteer centre. On campus, it is important to work together with student services, clubs, and societies – as well as the students' union. In terms of providing workshops, the aim is to connect students to the many excellent sessions on offer around the university. The challenge comes in identifying everything that is available and ensuring it matches the programme criteria.



External speakers are invited to volunteer their time to deliver thought-provoking talks on leadership or social responsibility, and the programme has been very successful in scheduling such sessions – with talks by representatives from large corporations through to national rugby heroes. Ensuring students turn up to the events, however, requires constant marketing.

Resources required

In running a leadership programme open to students of all disciplines, it has been vital to plan, communicate, and have a good data management system. Victoria University of Wellington has made best use of its careers service in order to achieve this.

The programme's coordinator and a part-time administrator manage the strategy and implementation of the programme. Now that the programme is well-established and participation is increasing, resources will need to be reviewed. Victoria Plus staff are employed within the Career Development and Employment Service, which is part of Student Academic Services (Recruitment, Achievement and Equity division). Good client relationships and data management systems help keep resources to a minimum and, by using the CareerHub tool, we have been able to record progress and create a system of targeted communication.

Future plans

2014 will see the introduction of a certificate level which can be completed in 6-12 months. It is a shorter version of the existing scheme and entails completing one third of the current requirements. While the Victoria Plus Certificate can lead on to completion of the full award programme should the student wish to pursue this, the certificate is being specifically introduced in order to enable students who may be studying at Victoria for one year only – or who have a limited amount of time – to engage in extra-curricular experiences that will enhance their employability skills and student experience.

The Victoria Plus Programme is an integral part of the student experience. It enhances the university degree by giving students the chance to step up to leadership and get involved. The university is proud of the graduates who have been involved in this programme, as they successfully make the transition to their future lives and carry on their contribution to society. ■

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Tackling unemployment: the Youth Economic Participation Initiative

A new initiative from the Talloires Network hopes to explore and address issues relating to youth unemployment, as **Amy Newcomb Rowe** reports.

The Talloires Network is an international coalition of over 300 universities committed to strengthening their civic roles and the social responsibilities of higher education. The network facilitates exchange, awards seed grants to members, provides training, and offers annual prizes for outstanding community engagement programmes.

In 2012, the Talloires Network launched the Youth Economic Participation Initiative (YEPI). The initiative seeks to address the crisis of youth unemployment in emerging economies by supporting the efforts of socially responsible universities to test and improve innovative university-led models that enable graduates to accelerate their transition to the workforce. According to the World Economic Forum, young people aged 15-24 make up approximately 17% of the world's population and 40% of the world's unemployed. In 2011, a young person's risk of being unemployed was three times higher than that of an adult. In today's world, a university degree is not a guarantee of employment. What, then, are universities doing to prepare their students for successful and sustainable employment?

Exploring unemployment

To help answer this question, the Youth Economic Participation Initiative began with a year-long exploration of the nature of youth unemployment around the world and of the efforts currently being undertaken by Talloires Network member institutions to address the issue. Working with the youth consultancy firm DECODE, the Talloires Network conducted a multi-country study based on 90 peer-to-peer interviews with students in ten countries.

In particular, participants highlighted the significant barriers to engaging with entrepreneurship and the lack of access to necessary personal and professional networks. Although hypothetically enthusiastic about ideas of starting a business, most participants rejected entrepreneurship as a serious option due to a series of large obstacles. These included the high cost, the low availability of seed funding, the consequences of pervasive corruption, and the high personal risk involved. DECODE's outreach also indicated that if young people felt the risks were sufficiently low to engage in entrepreneurship, they would prefer to create enterprises that would help their communities. Findings pointed toward the powerful impact entrepreneurship can have, both on individual outcomes and on society.

In addition to student interviews, ten university professors and administrators from around the world participated in a six-week online learning community, discussing the role of universities in promoting economic opportunities for educated young people. Gaps between university curricula and current industry needs topped the list of challenges for engaged faculty working with recent graduates, along with a lack of understanding of the job-search process. A scarcity of practical resources – such as computer access, local transportation for students to the community, and opportunities to participate in unpaid or low-paying training – prevent the sustainable connections with community-based experiences that can be essential to building life skills crucial for the job market.

Missing competencies

Skill sets were identified by participants and pointed to the idea that universities often excel at equipping students with academic and theoretical knowledge, but fail to provide the vital interpersonal skills and practical experience that employers seek. Such missing competencies might include: interpersonal communication, teamwork, problem-solving, public speaking, leadership, negotiation, creativity, and entrepreneurship. Employers also value a young person's work ethic, their social competency (the ability to build relationships, empathise, show respect, compromise, and cooperate), and their ability to engage effectively with complex social and cultural environments.

A recent report from the MasterCard Foundation, *Economic Opportunities for Youth Strategies*, similarly identified a lack of abilities such as digital literacy and life skills, describing them as the combination of cognitive skills for analysing and using information, personal skills for developing personal agency and managing oneself, and interpersonal skills for communicating and interacting effectively with others.

These insights helped inform a planning committee comprising university leaders, representatives from the business community and NGOs, and highly engaged students. The committee developed a strategic process for the design of the initiative, and the assessment of activities to be implemented by Talloires Network member institutions. The process revealed that the range of possible ways in which universities can address the challenges of youth unemployment is vast. The participants in DECODE's study advocated that universities espouse activities such as career centres, internships, mentorship programmes, and alumni networking. Participants in the learning community further cited their own success with internships and apprenticeships, faculty networking with employers and industry, curriculum redesign, service learning and volunteering programmes, work placement, alumni networking, and support for student entrepreneurship efforts.

Many of these suggested activities mirror those already undertaken by members of the Talloires Network. There are a considerable number of impressive and geographically diverse examples of effective university-community programmes to improve youth employability. All of these interventions hold promise for expansion and can help to influence and guide expanded efforts by other institutions.

Possible approaches

Prominent examples of existing activities from the YEPI-DECODE study included the following:

- **Business skills and entrepreneurial training** – such as programmes at the University of Mzumbe, Tanzania, to encourage and mentor students to start their own businesses while still studying
- **Technical assistance to small enterprises** – such as that provided by the Entrepreneurship Centre at the University of Dar es Salaam in Tanzania
- **New dialogues between employers and universities** – such as those initiated and maintained by the University of Venda, South Africa, through its 'Amplifying Community Voices' programme

Universities often excel at equipping students with academic and theoretical knowledge, but fail to provide the vital interpersonal skills and practical experience that employers seek.



- **Internships that directly link students with employers** – such as those initiated by Effat University in Saudi Arabia to facilitate job placements for women in engineering, architecture, and other areas
- **Comprehensive community planning and development** – such as the post-secondary short-cycle education programmes developed by the School of Professional and Continuing Education at the University of Central Asia

Although these examples increase the understanding of how universities are currently addressing the gaps, they do not represent a comprehensive list of the possible approaches. It is important to note that, to date, very few of these current initiatives have evaluated, documented and disseminated their learning in such a way as to allow knowledge from individual programmes to benefit a wider, global audience. The majority of lessons learned remain with the key individuals or, at best, within departments or universities. Few rigorous evaluations have been conducted, and even fewer attempts have been made formally to cultivate and share insights on best practices. The lack of evaluation signals the urgent need for an initiative such as YEPI to begin to identify and directly disseminate learning from promising programmes and to increase the ability of individual staff and teams to exchange information with their peers.

Demonstration grants

To this aim, the Talloires Network is partnering with the MasterCard Foundation to identify eight universities in Latin America, south east Asia, and Africa that are already conducting innovative programmes of entrepreneurship-promoting activities in order to boost graduate employability. In 2013, eight demonstration grants of USD 350,000 were awarded to universities in Burkina Faso, Chile, Malaysia, Mexico, Pakistan, Rwanda, South Africa, and Zimbabwe.

The demonstration grant awardee programmes – chosen from over 60 applicants and 20 strong finalists – represent innovative and effective efforts in collaborating with public and private sectors, engaging students and alumni in the design and implementation of specialised curricula, promoting gender equity in employment, and bridging ideas between social responsibility and entrepreneurship. Over the course of three years, these institutions will track and evaluate the scope of their efforts to engage a greater number of students and employers, with an expected outcome of greater ties between universities and their communities.

The eight institutions show outstanding ability to ground the design and implementation of their programmes in a nuanced analysis of their contexts; they fully understand the risks involved with entrepreneurship and actively support students and graduates to realise their own entrepreneurial goals. Lessons and best practices from the demonstration programmes will be used to develop new employment models that will be shared with the higher education sector through the Talloires Network.

A global community of practice

Sharing best practices from the demonstration programmes is a primary focus for the Youth Economic Participation Initiative. Using coalitions of global and regional networks, the Talloires Network will disseminate findings through a community of practice to enable evaluation findings and accumulated learning to reach university leaders, as well as student groups, faculty, community partners, and employers. The key to YEPI's success will be its role in organising and facilitating connections which will encourage and guide universities to adopt these findings and use them in changing their structures, policies, and practices. The community of practice will play a central role in supporting this process, bringing this new information together with the types of engagement that are required for real learning to occur.

Universities, particularly those with social responsibility and civic roles, are playing a larger and more important part in effectively preparing students for employment. Students equipped with industry skills – combined with the experience and awareness of community conditions – will be better prepared for today's job market. ■

Amy Newcomb Rowe is Program Manager at the Talloires Network.
www.talloiresnetwork.tufts.edu

The power of university networks for business

Drawing on his experiences as an employee of a successful start-up with roots in the university community, **Samir Farrag** explores the key role universities can play in the creation and growth of new businesses.

Nitzan Yudan moved to the UK and enrolled at London Business School in the hope of accelerating his banking career, but ended up seeing the real power of university networks when he founded a business focused on their power – FlatClub. Not only does FlatClub leverage students' existing social networks to help them with short stays and accommodation needs, but the business is also a prime example of how universities can prove to be the bedrock for entrepreneurship and innovation in business.

Trusted university networks

As an international student, Nitzan faced the common problem of needing to continue paying for accommodation in London whilst travelling home for academic breaks that could last well over a month. Not wanting to lose out on money, Nitzan faced the question of how to find someone he could rely on to live in his home. The answer he found was turning to his university community, in which trust existed between him and his peers. The family of an alumnus visiting for the winter break, in need of a place to stay, provided the perfect solution – and led to the founding of FlatClub.

Trust between members of university communities sits at the core of what Nitzan identified. We share a common experience and a bond that leads to a powerful network of students, alumni, staff and faculty. This was excellently illustrated by FlatClub's early traction at London Business School, where one email to the community in 2011 resulted in 70 flats being listed in less than two weeks. Members were not just open to the idea of hosting and visiting each other, they were eager to engage with their community.

Developing a business at a university

The service was perfect for the university community, but the same network also proved essential when developing the idea into an actual business. Both faculty and classmates helped Nitzan shape his business idea and provided feedback on strategy, marketing, targeting, and funding. 'For all of these essential parts of our business, I found advice all within the same school and programme,' he says. Within his class alone, classmates were drawn from nearly 60 countries. 'I could very easily see if FlatClub could scale because I was talking with classmates who were my potential customers from different countries. It also helped me understand the different challenges in various markets.'

Furthermore, universities offer reputation and networks – both critical ingredients for the success of any new venture. 'The most important factor when reaching out to customers, to investors, to clients, and to partners is reputation,' says Nitzan. 'As an entrepreneur, it's sometimes the hardest challenge to solve, but the university network is what makes it happen.' The alumni network at London Business School was immeasurably helpful and any budding entrepreneur should have their alma mater's network as their first port of call when starting out a new business.

Nitzan recalls: 'Six months after launching the site, we managed to break even and hire our first employee. I realised that we now needed



Nitzan Yudan, FlatClub's CEO and Co-founder

employer's insurance. Instead of spending a week on research, I sent an email to the LBS entrepreneurs community and within 30 minutes I had five answers, including one from an ex-insurance broker recommending exactly what to do.'

Shortly after graduating in 2011, Nitzan joined the newly-formed London Business School Incubator. The Incubator provides entrepreneurs with services and space as they build their businesses, and lasts for one year. FlatClub rapidly grew within the London Business School community, with the network also producing the lead investors: Professor Eli Talmor, Jeremy Collier (Collier Capital), and alumnus David Wolfe.

Expanding connections

FlatClub has grown to include nearly 10% of the entire London Business School community as members, and began developing 'Clubs' at other top universities shortly after the genesis of the first FlatClub. With universities including Columbia and New York in the US, FlatClub is now expanding across the globe, linking each connected university to a network of peers.

By developing a business that facilitates short stays for members of university communities in major cities, Nitzan has been able to boost the company's profile, as well as the reputation of London Business School. Features in *Forbes* and the *Financial Times* not only showcase a successful, growing start-up, but also reiterate the power and ability of universities to play a vital part in building new businesses. ■

Samir Farrag is University Partnership Manager at FlatClub.
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Publications

Nick Mulhern, ACU Librarian, rounds up the latest titles in the field of graduate employment.

Careers of Doctorate Holders: Analysis of Labour Market and Mobility Indicators

A working paper exploring labour market and mobility patterns, research work, and the competition for talent in OECD states, based on a second large-scale collection of data on the careers of doctorate holders. The number of doctoral degrees has increased by 38% between 2000 and 2009, but there is a 'sustained, if not increasing, premium on doctorate skills'. Although short-term temporary postdoc contracts are common, the appeal of a research career remains, with reasons cited being the intellectual challenges offered and opportunities for advancement. Movement between countries is now characteristic given that 'research is carried out on a truly global basis'.

[Auriol, L., et al; OECD; 2013]

bit.ly/1brwz9



Defining and developing your approach to employability:

A framework for higher education institutions

The UK's Higher Education Academy (HEA) uses a series of questions to guide HEIs in ensuring that employability is acknowledged in what they do – from institutional planning and course programmes, to engagement with employers. It is intended to offer starting points – ideas which can be 'adapted and interpreted to meet...specific subject needs' rather than a prescriptive framework, but also includes information on other resources and references on employability.

[Cole, D.; Tibby, M.; HEA; 2013]

bit.ly/1e0lMxs

Does Student Mobility During Higher Education Pay? Evidence from 16 European Countries

An analysis of the estimated effects of student mobility on careers and employment using comparative data from two large-scale surveys of European graduates. It shows the possible links between study abroad and later work, but also how the evidence nevertheless varies both by country and subject. 'Student mobility is associated with a significant increase in the probability to be mobile after graduation and this effect is larger the more time is spent abroad'.

[Rodrigues, M.; European Commission; 2013]

bit.ly/18vWLCs

Do Study Abroad Programs Enhance the Employability of Graduates?

A discussion paper looking at the beneficial effects of participating in international student exchange programmes on subsequent employment prospects, particularly for those from disadvantaged backgrounds. For the disadvantaged, it speculates, studying abroad could represent the 'opportunity to develop marketable skills (e.g. intercultural competence, global awareness, and foreign language skills) to which they may have been less exposed given their family background'.

[Di Pietro, G.; Institute for the Study of Labor (IZA); 2013]

bit.ly/1bRmawz

Education at a Glance 2013

The OECD's latest analysis of education statistics which this year acknowledges the continuing worldwide impact of youth unemployment. It includes internationally comparative data on how levels of educational attainment affect employment, as well as information on earnings premiums, enrolment in tertiary education, and international student mobility.

[OECD; 2013]

bit.ly/1jCSWD7

How are University Students Changing?

A briefing note using OECD data indicating that enrolment in HE is increasing and that the profile of the typical student is changing (e.g. average age, numbers by country, and in terms of international mobility – 'the number of international students has more than doubled during the last decade'). Trends in subject choice are also summarised – social sciences, business, and law being the most popular.

[OECD; 2013]

bit.ly/1aNCKr4

Looking at the employment outcomes of tertiary education: New data on the earnings of young graduates

An update to an analysis (*Moving On Up*) published earlier this year of the links between tertiary education and work in New Zealand summarising further information on earnings, as well as destinations data for the first six years after graduation. It confirms the extent to which earnings and employment rates increase with the levels of qualification gained, and that earnings vary considerably by subject of study (ranging from medicine to the creative arts). The effects of the recession have continued with falls in real terms of graduate median earnings.

[Park, Z. et al; NZ Ministry of Education; 2013]

bit.ly/18vFuMJ

OECD Skills Outlook 2013: First Results from the Survey of Adult Skills

The first annual overview completed as part of the OECD's Programme for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies (PIAAC) surveyed the level and use of skills ('literacy, numeracy and problem-solving in technology-rich environments'), and the mismatch between skills, qualifications and work. ('If there is one central message...it is that what people know and what they can do with what they know has a major impact on their life chances.') One related argument made is the need to move from dependence on initial education to encouraging 'lifelong, skills-oriented learning'. The concluding analysis of key skills and economic/social wellbeing gives evidence not only of the benefits in employment and income but also in health and political engagement.

[OECD; 2013]

bit.ly/19vkses



Time for the US to Re-Skill: What the Survey of Adult Skills Says

A report on the policy implications of the OECD's international Survey of Adult Skills for the US. Its recommendations include linking basic skills, perhaps through work-based learning, to career preparation.

[OECD; 2013]

bit.ly/1aNBk5

News

Nick Mulhern, ACU Librarian, highlights recent developments in the field.

The second round of the **ACU's Early Career Academic Grants** is now open for applications. The awards enable early career academics who have not yet had the opportunity to work, study, or travel outside their own country to attend relevant conferences or academic meetings in another Commonwealth country. The closing date for applications is 7 February 2014.

www.acu.ac.uk/early-careers-academic-grants

The next conference of the **ACU's HRM and PR, Marketing and Communications Networks** will take place from 13-16 July 2014 at the University of Glasgow, UK.

www.acu.ac.uk

A World of Learning: Canada's Performance and Potential in International Education

is the latest analysis from the Canadian Bureau for International Education (CBIE) of trends in international student numbers. Currently, Canada is the seventh most popular host country for international students, the largest proportion being from China. Some 46% of those surveyed plan to apply for permanent residency on graduation.

bit.ly/1aNVyq4

Following an **International Skills Development Forum** in the Philippines, related policy briefs have been published by the Asian Development Bank (ADB): *Skills for Competitiveness, Jobs, and Employability in Developing Asia-Pacific* and *Skills Development: Promising Approaches in Developed Countries and Emerging Economies*.

adb.org/publications

Australia's New Colombo Plan, which is being funded by AUD 100 million over five years, aims to support exchanges (including at undergraduate level) with the Asia-Pacific region. The pilot phase (2014) will involve Hong Kong, Indonesia, Japan, and Singapore, prior to the scheme's full implementation in 2015.

dfat.gov.au/new-colombo-plan

The 2013 **Canadian Postdoc Survey: Painting a Picture of Canadian Postdoctoral Scholars** offers a profile of Canadian postdoctoral students based on a survey of their current concerns. Those surveyed were positive about the Canadian research environment but raised some specific issues: their wish to be treated as employees with salaries and benefits reflecting their work and experience, and that Canadian postdoctoral appointments be supported with 'appropriate and relevant career development opportunities'.

caps-acsp.ca

A study published by the Institute of International Education (IIE) – **English-Taught Master's Programs in Europe: an Update** – records a significant (42%) increase in the number of English-taught Master's programmes since its 2011 report. The Netherlands and Germany remain the leading host countries, while business/economics and engineering/technology courses continue to be the most popular subject areas.

bit.ly/1cw3v7U

The European Commission has issued **European Higher Education in the World**, a higher education strategy to support EU member states and HEIs in their approaches to internationalisation. It aims to 'ensure European graduates gain the international skills they need to work anywhere in the world and that Europe remains the most attractive destination for international students'.

bit.ly/18jQhMm

The **European University Association's** regular series of reports surveying European higher education – *Trends* – will continue with a focus on the development of new forms of teaching and learning, in part reflecting systematic changes to structures in courses and qualifications (the Bologna process, for example). The next **Trends 2015** project will therefore include coverage of issues 'such as the student body, staff development, academic programmes and the development of e-learning'.

bit.ly/18Rca62

In October this year, a workshop titled **Expanding and Sustaining Excellence in Doctoral Programmes in Sub-Saharan Africa: What Needs to be Done?** was convened in Johannesburg by South Africa's National Research Foundation (NRF) and the Carnegie Corporation of New York.

bit.ly/IASpUj

Inclusion, innovation, and impact are the themes for next year's **Going Global**, the British Council's biennial conference on internationalisation in HE. Among its concerns will be the recurring problem of funding and access – the provision of 'sufficient high quality tertiary education to ensure the widespread inclusion and participation of their citizens'. The event will take place in Miami, USA, from 29 April-1 May 2014.

ihe.britishcouncil.org/going-global

A programme is being introduced in the UK over two years to inform debate over the assessment and record of academic achievement. As part of this, a **Grade Point Average (GPA)** system is to be piloted by selected HEIs, enabling comparison with the current degree classification system. Cited benefits of the GPA system are that it helps students to be 'engaged throughout their degree programme, increases the granularity and transparency of the final degree score, and provides greater international comparability of degree result'.

bit.ly/1fcRgNR

An occasional paper from the European Consortium for Accreditation – **Guidelines for Good Practice in Awarding Joint Degrees** – gives good practice and clarifying examples for the award and recognition of joint degrees.

bit.ly/1aO6hkl

The **Hefei Statement on the Ten Characteristics of Contemporary Research Universities**, developed by several national and international university associations at a C9 meeting in Hefei, China, identifies key characteristics for research universities, the environment which would help generate them, and the values on which they could

be based. It includes an acknowledgement of research integrity, academic freedom, and tolerance of competing views.

bit.ly/1hK7a5O

Horizon 2020, the European Commission's new research and innovation programme (EUR 80 billion over seven years) has been formally approved. It has been developed to 'deliver results that make a difference to people's lives', and defines its structuring priorities as 'excellent science, industrial leadership, and societal challenges'. Through this, various projects and schemes have for the first time been rationalised as a single comprehensive programme.

bit.ly/1e0J32f

The Institute of International Education (IIE) has developed a new course to help train staff in developing countries in creating and managing an effective international relations office. '**Connecting to the World: International Relations for Higher Education Institutions**' is currently being introduced in Myanmar.

bit.ly/1jDDgzG

INFOACES is a new information system for HEIs in Latin America and the Caribbean which collates statistical and other data (staff/student numbers, details of courses) to help profile some 800 institutions from throughout the region.

bit.ly/1fcNVP4

In **Kenya**, a consortium of Kenyan and Canadian universities have developed, with NGO support, a programme to provide formal training to volunteer teachers working in a refugee camp. The **Borderless Higher Education for Refugees (BHER)** project has introduced, as a first stage, a bridging/access course to prepare students for university study. It is hoped that it 'may be a model for similar programmes on other camps and countries'.

bit.ly/19vRyLe

New Zealand is introducing changes to its visa requirements to clarify the opportunities for international students to work while studying. International students taking a course of one year or more will have full-time work rights during scheduled holidays, while international PhD and Master's by research students will have unlimited work rights.

bit.ly/1e0Lzph

The **Postgraduate Research Experience Survey**, undertaken by the UK's Higher Education Academy, was redeveloped for 2013 to sharpen its focus on researcher development (consistent with the Researcher Development Framework or RDF). Research culture, research skills, and professional development were reviewed.

bit.ly/1iSsmIt

The Triennial General Meeting of the **Southern African Regional Universities Association (SARUA)** in September 2013 reiterated the role it could play in supporting 'networks, collaboration and joint programmes, partnerships, and management information systems to revitalise higher education in the region'.

bit.ly/1e2KYTT

New Zealand's Draft Tertiary Education Strategy (2014-19) has been released. Strategic priorities include 'delivering skills for industry' and 'getting at-risk young people into a career'.

bit.ly/18yLsto

Also published is **Moving Through: Tertiary Education Strategy Monitoring** (2010-2012) which covers progress towards the 2010-15 Tertiary Education Strategy for the period to 2012. The strategy's objectives included raising the 'skills and knowledge of the current and future workforce to meet labour market demand and social needs'.

bit.ly/JakSRj

Student expectations for employability was one of the areas included in a recent report, **Student Expectations and Perceptions of Higher Education**, commissioned by the UK's Quality Assurance Agency. 'Students want more support for their employability, focusing on processes, guidance support available and development opportunities, including internships, placements and work experience. There is a need for more information on employability, with a focus on 'process' and development opportunities, rather than 'product' statistics.'

bit.ly/ICIZaF

Statistics

Canadian postsecondary enrolments and graduates from Statistics Canada.

bit.ly/1f3Ir8w

Destinations of Leavers from Higher Education: Longitudinal Survey from the UK's Higher Education Statistics Agency.

bit.ly/1f3IwJa

Open Doors from the Institute of International Education (IIE) on international students and scholars at higher education institutions in the US, and US students studying abroad for academic credit at their home universities.

bit.ly/1hK5cCp

The UK's **Department for Business, Innovation, and Skills (BIS)** has issued various research papers recently, several of which relate to employment, earnings, part-time study, and work experience:

Employer support for part-time higher education students

[BIS research paper 119; 2013]

Learning from Futuretrack: the impact of work experiences on HE student outcomes

[BIS research paper 143; 2013]

The benefits of higher education participation for individuals and society: key findings and reports 'the quadrants'

[BIS research paper 146; 2013]

Impact of university degrees on the lifecycle of earnings: some further analysis

[BIS research paper 112; 2013]

Relationship between graduates and economic growth across countries

[BIS research paper 110; 2013]

Working while studying: follow-up to the student income and expenditure survey, 2011-12

[BIS research paper 142; 2013]

bit.ly/1bTuo7p



**The Association
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Universities**

The world beyond 2015

Is higher education ready?

The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) expire in 2015 and will be replaced by a new set of international targets.

**What next for universities?
How will higher education
respond to the challenges and
goals that emerge beyond 2015
– and is it ready?**

1. **Why does the Post-2015 agenda matter for higher education?**
2. **How are universities already addressing local, national, and international issues?**
3. **How can universities prepare to respond to the Post-2015 agenda?**
4. **What partnerships should universities establish to achieve their objectives?**
5. **How can universities champion their contributions to wider society?**
6. **How relevant and realistic are the Post-2015 goals likely to be?**

Join the ACU's campaign to raise awareness of how higher education can and should respond to global challenges beyond 2015.

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