e3i

Embedding, Enhancing & Integrating Employability

The Sheffield Hallam University Employability CETL (e3i)

Outputs And Achievements 2005-10

Sheffield Hallam University

SHARPENS YOUR THINKING

Contents

Contact Information:

Embedding, Enhancing & Integrating Employability
Centres for Excellence in Teaching and Learning
Sheffield Hallam University
City Campus
Floor 2
111 Charles Street
Sheffield
S1 2ND
United Kingdom

Website: http://employability.shu.ac.uk

Phone: 0114 225 4735

Introduction

All Centres for Excellence in Learning and Teaching funded by HEFCE have been asked to reflect on their work and impact as the CETL project comes to a close in 2010. When doing this, the e3i team at Sheffield Hallam felt it would be useful to share some of our resources, outputs and achievements with colleagues in the UK HE sector with the aim of continuing to support Employability development and Employability thinking within a university context. A key resource in this context is our website:

http://employability.shu.ac.uk/.

If you or your colleagues are interested in discussing any aspect of the work summarised below, then please don't hesitate to get in touch, and please use or disseminate this information as you see fit.

Our Aims And Objectives...

The specific goals of the CETL are stated below in bold. The summary that follows reflects upon the extent to which we think these goals have been achieved, and uses the following outcome descriptors: **fully achieved, significantly achieved, partially achieved, not achieved** to describe the progress we feel has been made.

1 Increase the number of courses within SHU that incorporate Employability dimensions within their design and delivery. Summary outcome – *fully achieved.* The evidence base to support this conclusion is the employability survey results (four iterations of the survey allowing an analysis over 6 years), the number of e3i funded projects that have impacted upon the curriculum or LTA practices, and the analysis of course validation documentation, undertaken for the years 2005-6 and 2006-7. We are not saying here that **all** SHU courses have **significant** Employability dimensions as part of their offer, but that the number of courses with such features has increased.

2 Deepen the impact and imprint of Employability within course curricula. Summary outcome – *significantly achieved.* This is evidenced by data sources outlined in 1 above, and the fact that SHU courses are now required to describe their employability strategies in detail as part of the validation process. Two informative examples here are in the Sheffield Business School, which revalidated all of its undergraduate programmes in 2006 and created and "Employability Pathway" within each UG course focused on employability skills development, and the programme of career development for sandwich students in the Faculty of Arts, Computing, Engineering and Sciences.

3 Foster and support innovative approaches to Employability learning and teaching. Summary outcome – *significantly achieved.* We have used the following mechanisms in this context: support/advice/resources for course planners, buy-out time for colleagues involved in innovative employability projects, funding of Assistant Directors of e3i from each of the four Faculties and the Careers and Employment Service, who have been charged with encouraging innovation in their local contexts, research support and evaluation for colleagues seeking feedback on employability initiatives.

4 Support specific and named individuals and projects that are actively involved in innovative approaches to embedding, integrating and enhancing Employability within provision. Summary outcome – *fully achieved.* We were able to allocate a significant proportion of the CETL funds to secure this objective.

5 Support the establishment of Employability as a core value of SHU. Summary outcome – **fully achieved.** Employability has been established as one of 3 core values of the university. The university Employability Framework has been updated (yet to be ratified by the SHU Academic Development Committee). The university's LTA strategy incorporates Employability as a key feature, and this is replicated in Faculty LTA strategies. The university corporate plan 2009-2014 identifies Employability as a core value/objective of the university, and e3i has supported the work of a task group charged with producing the employability strategy (Core Minimum Entitlement for Employability) for the university going forward.

6 Disseminate the findings and experiences of activities associated with the work of the CETL both internally within SHU and externally across the national and international HE sector. Summary outcome – **partially achieved.** We have used workshops and staff development events, newsletters, publications, conferences organised by e3i, conference presentations by e3i staff and the e3i website to achieve this goal. We have been most successful internally and then within the national HE sector, with some exposure internationally (e.g. the staff development work we have undertaken in China), hence the summary outcomes of partially achieved.

...And What We Have Achieved

What We Have Done

1 We have supported colleagues (advice, resources and buy-out time) within the university to make changes to their teaching/learning strategies which have a direct impact upon students: integration of employability teaching within and alongside the traditional curriculum; additional employability teaching within a course; development of resources to support employability skills; innovative teaching practices to foster employability; sharing of approaches to employability teaching and resources across Faculties; encouragement of employer involvement in the learning experience; student centred and activity based approaches to enhance student employability; students as co-producers of knowledge and resources.

2 We have contributed to the university's strategic approach to employability and helped to establish this as a way in which the university perceives and differentiates itself: brand, Corporate Plan, realignment of infrastructure and Faculty priorities.

3 We have raised the profile of employability by our participation in different groupings around the university e.g. core team members have provided a CETL perspective in LTA committees and placement working groups.

4 Colleagues from the Careers and Employment Service have been key members of the e3i team providing a model for how central departments can influence and be involved in decision-making and impacting upon students across the university.

5 We have rewarded colleagues involved in supporting Employability development within the university – honoraria, buy-out, payment for case studies of innovative practice – and established both the principle and these practices within the existing HR system.

6 Capital funds have been used to provide part of the infrastructure to support Employability at SHU, and these facilities will form part of the legacy of the CETL. They have been used to build an extension to the Learning Centre, whose physical construction is based upon the principles of collaborative learning and the role of informal learning spaces, and to equip 3 CETL rooms which can be booked out on a flexible basis by colleagues involved in developing student Employability skills.
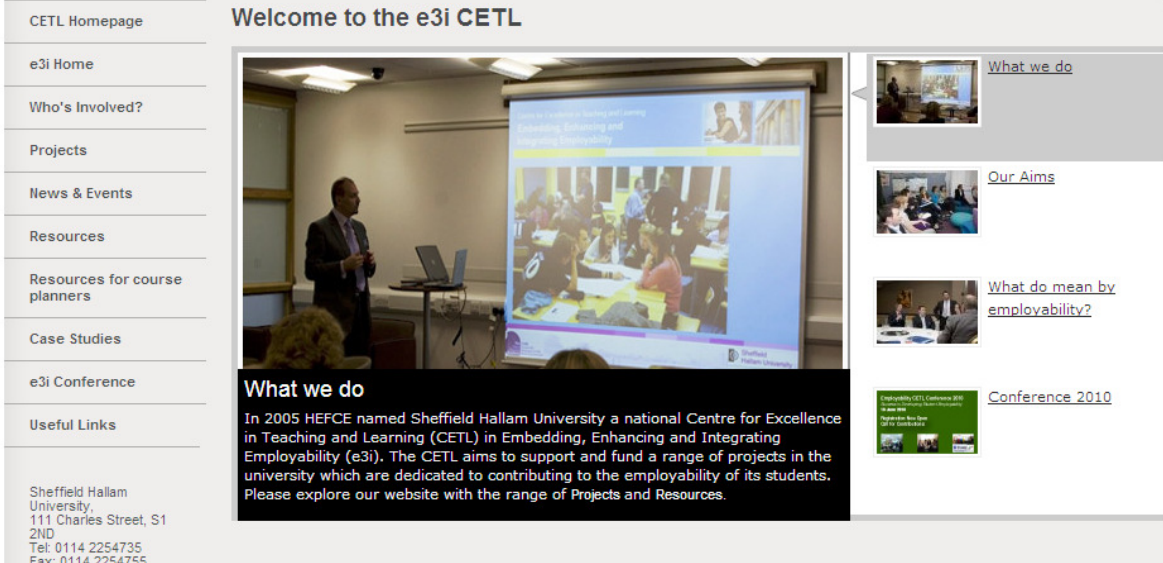
The CETL Rooms.

Left Owen 222

Right Owen 223

Left Owen 221

7 e3i established and supported a number of Special Interest Groups which have formed communities of

The e3i Website http://employability.shu.ac.uk

practice, involving colleagues within SHU, around specific themes: PDP, Career Management Skills (convened by members of the Careers and Employment Service), work-based Learning and Enterprise skills. Some of these have been more active than others, but the latter in particular has been highly successful in developing an innovative approach to developing student enterprise skills (The Venture Matrix) which is now seen as a crucial part of the university infrastructure.

8 We have involved students in the work of the CETL to ensure the student voice is integrated at an early stage, and given shape and form to the values and principles of student engagement/involvement and partnership in learning within the university – e.g. via the mechanisms of inviting a Student Officer into the e3i management team, having a student intern as part of the e3i team, involving students in our SIGs (e.g. students produced a guide to PDP for students) and projects e.g. as researchers. One of our former student interns went on to become a full time Student Officer.

9 Our learning and expertise has been drawn upon and deployed by institutions and organisations externally (e.g. the British Council, other UK HEIs, Foundation Degrees Forward, universities in China); we have made our resources available externally (e.g. via the website and the launch of the STARs resource at the annual e3i conference 2008-9).

10 We have been involved in a number of networks of Employability Developers and have informal contacts with other CETLs with a Focus on Employability, creating a linkages and connections of Employability Developers which can be leveraged in the future.

11 We have disseminated our research and evaluation work via conferences, workshops and publications and the e3i website.

12 We have contributed to HEA events (HEA seminars, Subject Centre workshops) and in so doing have actively contributed to the HE community of practice in the UK.

The e3i CETL has:

STARS
Helping you articulate your skills & personal development

Produced a career management skills resource (STARs) in conjunction with the University of Bedford and the OU which received considerable interest from across the sector at its launch at the e3i annual conference in 2009.

Produced a memory stick resource "What Next" (which could also be delivered via a website) for final year students to help them in the transition into work in the current economic climate– this again of interest when launched in the same way as STARs.

Resources

Produced a case study booklet which is available in both hard copy and via the e3i website which includes exemplars of Employability pedagogy.

Produced a booklet of projects undertaken 2008-9 by colleagues involved in exploring student perspectives on employability (available from our web site).

Supported the design and use of two alumni websites and contact systems (in real estate and hospitality) which we think will be of interest across the sector as HEIs become increasingly proactive in developing alumni communities.

Developed a website of official publications relating to Employability which has been made available to the sector as a whole.

Produced a Career Development Learning module guide and tutor pack, which has informed the design of credit bearing career management skills modules in SHU and other HEIs as well as providing source material for the teaching and assessment of CMS in SHU.

module guide
CAREER DEVELOPMENT LEARNING
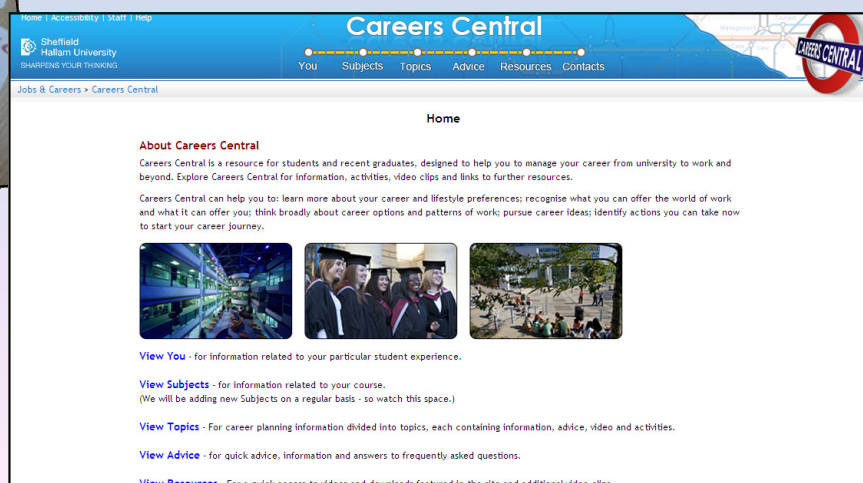A dynamic career management learning resource
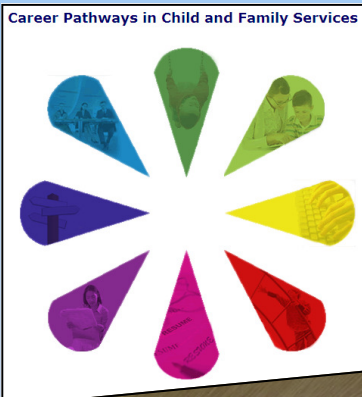
Produced a career management skills CD Rom for education studies students, the design and template of which could be of interest to other subject areas.

Produced a PDP card game which can be run in a number of guises and which has been well received by academics who have used this with students.

Assisted in the development of a new careers website for students, Careers Central.

The Venture Matrix – we have supported the development of a unit within the university that facilitates, supports and organises opportunities for students to engage in work-related and work-based learning with a particular emphasis upon enterprise skills. Students engage in this process in a variety of ways e.g. student groups offering and providing a particular service, student groups undertaking work for outside clients. Students gain academic credit for participating in the VM. The design of the VM plus the knowledge gained in building engagement from all four Faculties of SHU could be of interest to other institutions in the sector.

Venture Matrix™
Providing real world opportunities

Employability Guarantee/Employability Award – We have researched Employability Awards in other institutions and the notion of an Employability Guarantee used by one institution in the US. Following on from this we have designed our own Employability Award, the template for which might be of interest to HEIs wishing to develop their own scheme.

Approaches to embedding Employability in the curriculum – we have considerable experience in "designing Employability into the curriculum", including Employability modules, holistic course design, supporting processes such as PDP, that could be of interest to colleagues interested in "how to do Employability".

Centres for Excellence
in Teaching and Learning
Employability Audit Instrument
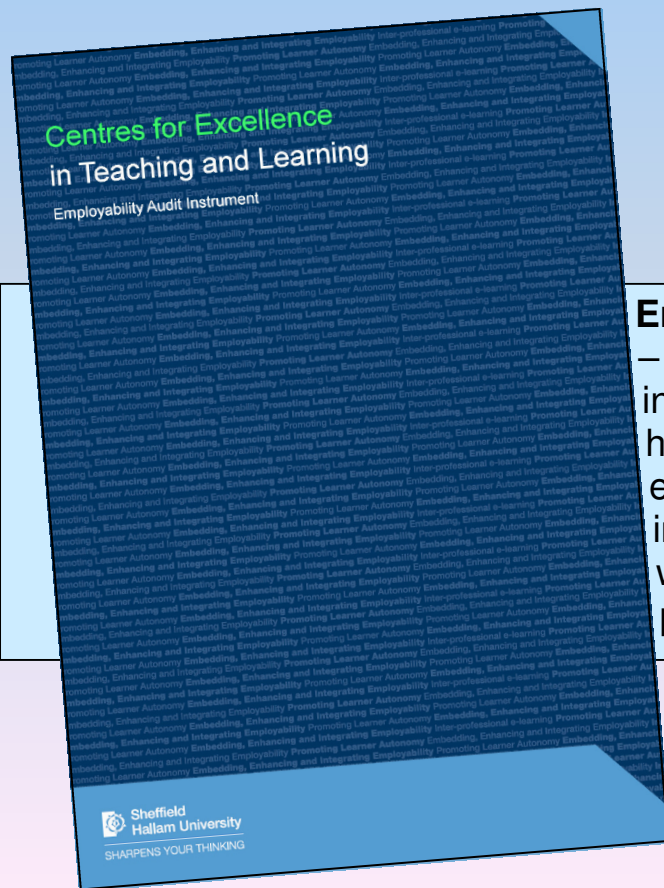
Employability survey instruments – we have developed a survey instrument and an audit instrument to help developers understand the extent to which Employability is incorporated in curriculum design which would be of interest to programme planners and reviewers.

Sheffield
Hallam University
SHARPENS YOUR THINKING

Research on alumni perspectives on their employability skills – we have conducted research with our alumni investigating their perceptions of how well their courses prepared them for the world of work in terms of their Employability skills. The research provides insights that will be of interest more broadly across the sector, particularly in relation to those skills which are seem to be more important and those more difficult to facilitated in a convention educational setting. The report is available from our web site.

Validation pack – we have produced a pack, both electronically and in hard copy, to inform and support course planners when they are either designing or re-designing courses. This is not SHU specific and would be useful to colleagues in similar roles outside of the institution.
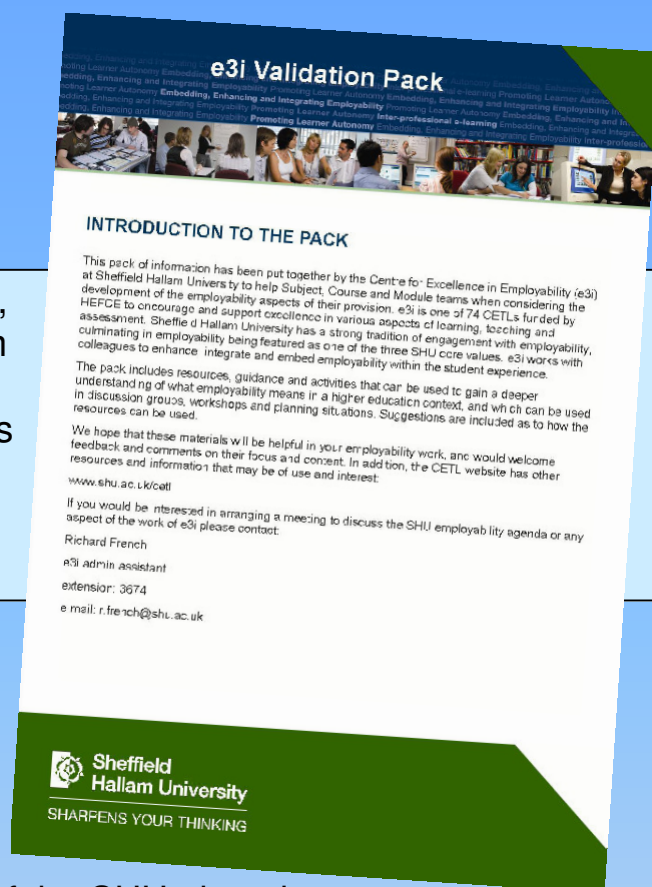
Alumni schemes – we have supported two alumni schemes (in real estate and hospitality) which use a customised version of the SHU alumni software to maintain contact and communication with alumni; the design of these web-based systems and the broader alumni strategy that has been designed would be of interest in universities which have similar alumni objectives.

Graduate Consulting Unit in the Sheffield Business School (The Alchemy Exchange) – e3i has supported the development of a graduate consulting unit in SBS where employers are invited to pay for high quality consultancy services provided by

PG students. The design of the GCU plus the knowledge gained developing its modus operandi could be of interest to other institutions in the sector.

Embedding, Enhancing & Integrating Employability

Centres for Excellence in Teaching and Learning
Sheffield Hallam University
City Campus
Floor 2
111 Charles Street
Sheffield
S1 2ND
United Kingdom

Website: http://employability.shu.ac.uk

Phone: 0114 225 4735