



**IOBTC**  
Teaching Conference for  
Management Educators

**IOBTC 2016 at  
University of Winchester  
July 8<sup>th</sup> – 9<sup>th</sup>, 2016**

Submission Template

**SUBMISSION GUIDANCE**

*\* Remove all identifying properties from this document \**

*\* All files must be saved in PDF format \**

*\*Please include ALL supplementary text at the end of this document\* \*Only one document should be submitted\**

**Submission Template for the 2016 IOBTC  
International Teaching Conference for Management Educators**

**1) Title of Proposal:**

An evaluative case study of a career coaching approach to improving student placement success in a UK Business School.

**2) Abstract:**

*Please include a brief session description (not to exceed 100 words). If your proposal is accepted, this description will be printed in the conference program.*

Describes the innovative approach adopted in a UK business school to improve the number of student placements. A module was designed to provide students with the skills to search, apply for and gain a year-long placement as part of a degree 'sandwich' course. A blend of workshops, recorded lectures, online formative feedback exercises and one-to-one career coaching created a tailored, practical approach to skill enhancement.

This session provides the presentation of the adopted methodology the results of the evaluative research, a live demonstration of the coaching approach and a discussion with the audience of ideas for development of the approach.

**3) Keywords:**

*Use three or four keywords to describe your session.*

Placements, career coaching, evaluation

**4) Format**

- Activity or exercise  
 General discussion session

**5) Time Requested:**

- 20 Minutes  
 30 Minutes  
 60 Minutes

**6) Planning Details:**

*Does your session have any special requirements for space or materials?*

No – PC and projector with MS power point

**7) Learning Objectives or Goals for the Session:**

*What are 2-4 specific learning outcomes that participants will get from your session?*

1. Understand the methodology involved in an innovative approach to developing employability skills in students and increasing placement success.
2. Gain comprehensive evidence of the approach in relation to student satisfaction, engagement, attainment and placement success
3. Participate in a collaborative exploration of potential improvements and refinements to the methodology adopted in this module.

## **8) Management or Teaching Topics:**

*Describe what management and/or teaching topics are relevant to your session, and why. Please include theoretical, disciplinary, or theoretical foundations that will help reviewers understand how your ideas fit within the broader field of management.*

Placements have a clear link to improving the development of essential soft-skills and subsequent graduate employability (Andrews & Higginson, 2008; Bennett, Eagle, Mousley, & Ali-Choudhury, 2008; Bowes & Harvey, 2000; Crebert, Bates, Bell, Patrick, & Cragolinini, 2004; Little & Harvey, 2006; Mason, Williams, Cranmer, & Guile, 2003). However, the competitive nature of the placement recruitment process makes it increasingly challenging for students to successfully secure a placement role (Brooks, 2012). A wealth of research exists regarding the benefits of placements in relation to employability however there is very little research regarding interventions that can assist students in increasing their success in securing a placement. Those studies that have provided examples of such support tend to focus on traditional career advice functions such as CV workshops, mock interviews and mock assessment centres (i.e. Maher, 2010; Taylor & Hooley, 2014). This research project provides a case evaluation study that illustrates an innovative approach to supporting students in gaining a work placement. In addition to the traditional careers advice functions, we also provided 'bitesize recorded lectures'; online formative feedback exercises; summative assignments aimed to encourage proactivity and application skills and most importantly, one-to-one career coaching. This research integrates literature on work-based learning, employability skills pedagogy and coaching. The extant literature on workplace coaching has demonstrated its efficacy in generated a range of learning and performance outcomes (Jones, Woods & Guillaume, 2015), this paper illustrates how coaching principles are applied in an academic context with the primary objective of improving success in securing a placement.

## **9) Session Description and Plan:**

*What will you actually do in this session? What activities will you facilitate, how long will they take, and how will participants be involved? Reviewers will be evaluating how well the time request matches the activities you'd like to do, and the extent you can reasonably accomplish the session's goals. Reviewers will also be looking for how you are engaging the participants in the session. Include a timeline for your session.*

20 minute presentation of the methodology and evaluation results to include a brief real-time demonstration of the coaching approach employed in the module.

10 minute question and answers and facilitated discussion. Indicative questions that the audience will be asked:

- Do any audience members have first-hand experience of techniques or approaches used to improve placement success?
- Have any audience members utilized a 1:2:1 coaching approach with students? What are their reflections of the impact of this approach?
- Have any audience members utilized recorded lectures with their students? What are their observations of the impact and engagement with this format of lecture?
- What is your experience of the factors that influence the success of student placement achievement?

**10) For Activities and Exercises:**

*Attach any materials needed to run the activity and debriefing questions. Evidence for effectiveness may also be included.*

NA

**11) Implications for Teaching or for Teachers:**

*What is the contribution of your session?*

- To provide an evidence-based, innovative approach to engaging students with the development of employability skills required to secure a work placement.
- To provide a specific methodology that can be adopted in order to develop employability skills and improve student placement success
- To provide a forum for a focused discussion on the techniques adopted in our approach and the wider issues in relation to student placement success

**12) Application to Conference Theme:**

*How does your session fit with the overall IOBTC theme of *Elevating Aspirations*?*

Our session directly maps onto the theme of 'Elevating aspirations in the wider student experience'. One of the most direct ways that students can engage with the broader local and global community is by participating in a placement year. Evidence has indicated that students who complete a placement year are more likely to effectively apply their learning and engage in critical reflection (Carson & Fisher, 2006), gain a deeper and clearer understanding of theoretical concepts learnt in the classroom and benefited from an enhancement of subsequent studies following the placement year (Andrews & Higson, 2008) in addition to improving their employability prospects upon graduation.

13) Unique Contribution to IOBTC:

*Have you presented the work in this proposal before? If so, how will it be different? Is this proposal under current review somewhere else? If so, please explain. How will your proposal be different for the IOBTC conference?*

We can confirm that the material presented in this paper has not been presented elsewhere in any format.

14) References and/or Additional Materials:

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Bennett, R., Eagle, L., Mousley, W., & Ali-Choudhury, R. (2008). Reassessing the value of work experience placements in the context of widening participation in higher education. *Journal of Vocational Education and Training*, 60 (2), 105–122. doi:10.1080/13636820802042339

Bowes, L., & Harvey, L. (2000). *The impact of sandwich education on the activities of graduates six months post-graduation*. London: National Centre for Work Experience and the Centre for Research into Quality. Retrieved from <http://www.heacademy.ac.uk/resources/detail/employability/employability78>

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Carson, L., & Fisher, K. (2006). Raising the bar on criticality: Students' critical reflection in an internship program. *Journal of Management Education*, 30, 5, 700-723. doi: 10.1177/1052562905284962

Crebert, G., Bates, M., Bell, B., Patrick, C.-J., & Cragolini, V. (2004). Developing generic skills at university, during work placement and in employment: Graduates' perceptions. *Higher Education Research & Development*, 23, 147–165. doi:10.1080/0729436042000206636

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Little, B., & Harvey, L. (2006). Learning through work placements and beyond.  
Retrieved from  
[http://www.hecsu.ac.uk/learning\\_through\\_work\\_placements.htm](http://www.hecsu.ac.uk/learning_through_work_placements.htm)

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Mason, G., Williams, G., Cranmer, S., & Guile, D. (2003). *How much does higher education enhance the employability of graduates?* Retrieved from  
[http://www.hefce.ac.uk/pubs/RDreports/2003/rd13\\_03/](http://www.hefce.ac.uk/pubs/RDreports/2003/rd13_03/)

Taylor, A. R., & Hooley, T. (2014). Evaluating the impact of career management skills module and internship programme within a university business school, *British Journal of Guidance & Counselling*, 42, 5, 487-499, DOI: 10.1080/03069885.2014.918934