



Getting Students to Think About Their Career: Experiences of Supporting Students' Career Development on the MSc Public Health Course

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Abstract

There is an increasing need to prepare university students for their future career ensuring smooth transition from university to the workplace (Jackson & Wilton, 2017; Quinla & Renninger, 2022). Careers and Employability Service provides a range of career-related support to students throughout their time in the university and after graduation. However, given the wide variety of courses, the large number of students they support, and the variety of needs among students, it is often a challenge to cater to very narrow areas of interest. The MSc Public Health course is one of the largest courses in Sheffield Hallam University in terms of student recruitment, and it has many international students. Evidence has shown that international students face unique employability challenges (Huang, 2023; Singh, 2023), but they also share some challenges with home students regarding lack of clarity about career directions, lack of familiarity with labour market requirements and limited awareness of career-related resources available within the university. Through repeated requests from students, it was observed that MSc Public Health students needed their own career-related information specific to public health. Having academic and professional backgrounds in public health, I took various steps to address this need. This presentation is based on my personal practice and experience and will discuss various steps I took during 2022–2026 to support students' career development ranging from organising an online careers seminar, embedding career-related details into module tasks and outcomes, designing a public health-specific career planning template and providing hands-on career planning sessions for all students in 2024 and 2025, and inviting Employability Advisers to speak to students during new students induction sessions, and current students welcome back sessions. These measures proved to be highly engaging for students because they encouraged proactive career behaviours (Clements & Kamau, 2018) and serve as a starting point for drafting career ideas and to stimulate students' interest in booking appointments to seek guidance from Employability Advisers.

Keywords

Career planning, employability, public health students, student outcome, transition to workplace

References

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