



## **Employability Focuses Intervention – Your Futures Day – Professional Development**

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### **Abstract**

This paper explores how employability-focused interventions can strengthen course identity while remaining meaningfully embedded within modules and assessments. In response to increasing staff concerns regarding Level 5 students' low confidence, limited academic self-belief, and weak career aspirations, the Sport Management & Development staff team designed and delivered "Your Futures Day". The initiative aimed to enhance aspiration, resilience, and cohort cohesion, while explicitly linking students' academic experiences to future career pathways.

Delivered at a critical point in the academic calendar (week 14), when engagement & retention often declines and students are required to source a PT / FT placement. The professional development day combined opening and closing keynote sessions delivered by course alumni who work in key roles within the industry plus specific workshops and activities linked to careers & employability development and one-to-one alumni mentoring, directly informing reflective and professional development assessments.

A key feature was the integration of alumni throughout the day, providing relatable role models who demonstrated tangible career trajectories. This strengthened course identity by connecting current students with a shared professional narrative. Additionally, alumni undertook formative interview assessments with students providing them with advice and guidance which ultimately informs and helps students when seeking a placement and with their professional development.

Preliminary feedback indicates improved student motivation, increased awareness of career pathways, and enhanced peer and cohort bonding. Crucially, embedding these activities within module frameworks ensured that employability was not an "add-on" but a core, assessable component of the student experience, aligning identity formation with academic and professional development.

### **Keywords**

employability education, alumni mentoring, authentic assessment, student engagement, professional development

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