



How International Experiences Develop and Shape Students' Employability Skills, Aspirations and Capabilities as Global Citizens

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Abstract

SHU's commitments to internationalisation, broadly speaking, are built on three pillars – international curriculum, physical mobility and virtual exchanges. After the first-year rollout, in 2025-26, more physical and virtual international mobility activities were incorporated into the new curricula to strengthen students' global awareness and experiences. In January 2026, twenty-six undergraduate students and staff visited Bochum (Germany) representing SHU and Sheffield to commemorate the 75th twinning anniversary between Sheffield and Bochum. The longer-term impact of this international trip/project will play out over time, but the immediate effect seemed significant. For some students, visiting Bochum was their first overseas trip as an adult. Prior to the trip, most students had little knowledge of city twinning or Bochum. In February, the group visited the Sheffield Town Hall to share their Bochum experiences with the Lord Mayor of Sheffield. The trip has enabled our students to gain valuable experiences and confidence, and forge connections with individuals and institutions at Bochum and in Sheffield. Also, following the Bochum trip eight of the students applied to the study abroad programme or summer schools. A few others volunteered to present their enterprise projects to other Hallam students, or their Bochum experiences to the guests at the Business School Open Days alongside the senior leaders. These examples illustrate how the international trip has provided our students with diversified experiences and employability skills. The trip's outcomes are consistent with the UUKI (2025) study which reveals that international mobility improves students' academic and career outcomes regardless of their social economic backgrounds.

Keywords

international experiences, employability, global citizens.

References

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