

The Employability Points Scheme: An Innovative Approach towards Enhancing Student's Skills and Industry Collaboration

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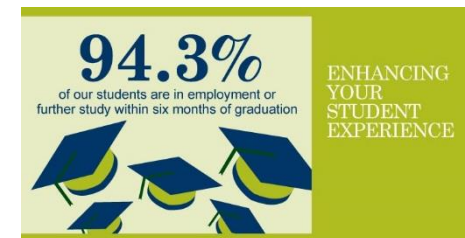
What is the Employability Points Scheme?

- The Employability Points Scheme is a University of Kent initiative, which looks to bridge the gap between education and employment.
- The scheme encourages students to engage with as many extra-curricular activities as possible. For each activity completed, the student can claim '*Employability Points*'.
- By completing these activities students are developing valuable 'soft skills' and ensuring their CVs stand out from the crowd.
- Students can redeem their points for the chance to apply for 'rewards' which are offered by local, national and international employers.
- Rewards include paid-internships, work experience, project placements, skills development sessions, and more.



Context: The University of Kent

- 1965 - Royal Charter granted – 2015 50th Anniversary
- Global outlook – UK's European University
- World-leading research: Kent is 17th overall in the 2014 Times Higher Education Research Excellence Framework. Confirming Kent has world leading research across all of its subject areas and that 97% of the research is of international quality.
- Superb student experience: Kent was ranked 5th in the UK for overall student satisfaction in NSS 2015,
- 2013, 2014 & 2015 – Kent consistently ranked 20th in the Guardian University Guide; 16th in 2016.





Kent Innovation and Enterprise

- The EP Scheme is part of the wider Kent Innovation and Enterprise (KIE).
- KIE is responsible for building strong links between research and businesses; developing, supporting and creating high-growth enterprise.
- KIE supports companies through:
 - Consultancy
 - Contract research
 - Student placements
 - Funding
 - Commercialisation
 - Access to IP
 - Training
 - Access to facilities
 - Room booking
- KIE specifically supports students through the EP Scheme and the HIVE initiative.



Growth of the Employability Points Scheme

	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014	2014-2015	2015-2016
Number of Students:	987	1939	2408	3713	5014	6,700+
Number of businesses involved:	31	89	111	110	130	130
Number of prizes:	70	284	374	410	567	600+





Students Engage with Extra-Curricular Activities

- It is clear that graduate employers want to see more than just academic success from graduates. In particular, to stand-out, graduates need to demonstrate 'soft skills'.
- By undertaking extra-curricular activities, students can develop these skills and boost their graduate prospects.
- At the University of Kent, there are various activities students can engage with, for example:

Peer academic mentoring
Student Ambassador Scheme
Language Courses
Kent Extra
Kent Student Certificate of Volunteering
Employability Festival events
Student Enterprise

- By completing each activity, students are enhancing their employability and in turn, they can claim '*Employability Points*'

Students claim ‘Employability Points’

- Points are manually allocated based on two principles:
 - Relevance of the activity to student employability.
 - Level of commitment demonstrated by the student.

Type of activity	Points value		
	Normal	Min	Max
Events			
Contribute to/present at conference	20	10	40
Organise University event	20	10	40
Work experience			
Part time work (on-going for more than 1 month)	30	20	50
Assessment centre	10		
Interview/presentation	5		
Mentoring and achievements			
Student Mentoring	30		
University prize (Chancellor's Prize, Entrepreneur of the Year)	15		
Volunteering			
Volunteering	15	5	40
Languages and international opportunities			
Study, work or volunteer abroad (not as part of degree)	50	30	100
Completion of a World language module	45		
Completion of a Language Express course	30		
Training and workshops			
Accredited course (1st Aid, Health/Hygiene, ECDL)	15	10	20
Kent Union Stand Out training	15		
Skills Workshops	10	5	15

The benefit of earning Employability Points

- Through allocating points for extra-curricular activities:
 - a) It encourages students to reflect on respective employability value.
 - b) It encourages students to engage with more activities, creating a competitive outlook.
- Foremost, through the EP Scheme, students can redeem their points for exclusive 'rewards'.
- Rewards are offered by the external business community, including large corporates, SMEs and start-ups and public sector organisations.

Reward	Points required
Internship	200
Project placement	175
Work experience	150
Training	125
Work shadowing	100
Skills development workshops	75
Company experience	75
Mock assessment centre	75
Employability session	50
Voucher	50
Sponsored 'highest points' prizes	variable



Key sponsoring companies 2010-2016

University of Kent



CALIPER
Transforming Business Through People



Internships – 200 points

- Internships have been offered by international corporations, local businesses and public sector organisations.
- Some examples of current and previous internships, offered via the EP Scheme, include:
 - IBM recruited an EP student in the delivery of software products. Commented that students on EP were far more ‘rounded and experienced’
 - Coca-Cola Enterprises have offered internships in computing and recruitment, leading to three students gaining full-time employment.
 - Enterprise Rent-a-Car have offered various internships focused on management and business operations.

“As a company we are always looking for bright, enthusiastic and engaged students to join our graduate or internship programs. Now, with so many people deciding to go to University and obtaining degrees it is harder to stand out from the crowd. Those students who take part in the EP scheme are those who go the extra mile, those students who see increasing their employability skills just as important as their degree.”

~Tomas Christodoulou, Enterprise Rent-a-Car



Project Placements – 175 points

- Project placements allows organisations to utilise student skills for specific projects. Previous examples include:
- Creation of promotional videos.
- Creation of web content.
- Creating design work for a project.
- Market Research.



Winter Warmers with The Campaign for Wool

Lamb Weaning on the Farm!
All of this years lambs have now been weaned from their mums to give the ewes a rest before...

Meet Our New Representative!
This Sunday, the 18th of September, our new representative will be attending their first eve...

Knit British - A Wool Journey With Romney Marsh Wools
We are very excited to have been featured by Knit British on their podcast. It was great t...

Blog of an intern: Something personal
Friday, July 17 Today I have completed my interactive story and I suppose, officially c...

Blog of an intern: Something Kent
Friday, July 10 It's been a challenging but incredibly productive week. I have utilis...

Work Experience – 150 points

Although work experience placements are short in duration, a student can have a profound impact during this time:



“The students have provided an immediate lift to the business, leading to so many changes coming into place...As a result of the students, we are now starting events on the weekends and Stephanie’s survey has been brilliant. It answers the queries about what we really need to know.” ~ Dawn Lilford, Director for Lilford Gallery and Framers



“Through Sergey we had a fresh pair of eyes looking at our products and it was productive having an input from someone else who is not fully integrated into the organisation. The work Sergey has done will really help us move on with our product development.” ~ Rhiannon Lane, Co-Director for BrightShadow



“We really enjoyed having Jayna with us. ...[We] gave her lots of experience in the news department and she worked closely with Zora Suleman who was able to work with her on both Kent news and national stories.” ~ Emma Liddiard, MD for This is Global





The value to the student – case studies

Through engaging with the EP Scheme, students can ensure they stand out to employers by both developing 'soft skills' and gaining relevant work experience.

The EP Scheme has benefited thousands of students since inception in 2010. Here are two of our favourite stories:

David Stibbards

Internship with Coca-Cola Enterprises: Software



David was studying for a PhD in Physics when he started earning Employability Points. Having earned over 200 points, David was awarded with an internship with Coca-Cola Enterprises, testing their software for the company's supply chain commitments for the 2012 London Olympics.

Having impressed so much, David was offered a full-time place on CCE's graduate programme. David has since excelled at Coca-Cola Enterprises and is a manager in the IT Enterprise Strategy team.

Andrew Wilson

Internship with Kent County Council: Resilience and Emergencies



Andrew, a law graduate, excelled through the EP Scheme in order to gain exposure to employers. As a result, Andrew was rewarded with an internship with KCC.

Due to his law background, Andrew was tasked with reconsidering high-level policy and planning. Andrew impressed management was offered a permanent position and secured further promotion within a couple of months.

Andrew is currently the Resilience Officer at KCC.

EP Rewards Night Sponsored by Santander Universities

Annually, top performing students are invited to attend the Employability Points Rewards Evening, where the highest scoring EP students are awarded iPads, vouchers and much more....





Closing Comments

- The employment market becoming increasingly competitive and the Employability Points Scheme is a unique mechanism to allow Kent students to stand-out from the crowd.
- The points system is designed to reflect the views of industry in terms of student employability and rewards aim to provide essential work-based experience.
- The impact on students is clearly profound, whereas the scheme also benefits local, national and international employers.
- Recruiters can therefore be confident in knowing EP winners have gone to great lengths to gain a chance to undertake work experience. In turn, these students can impact the business during the duration of their placement.

- Our 5 year strategy is to commercialise the scheme, partnering with European and International Institutions.

Thank you for listening and any questions?

Matt Cook

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