Supporting students to articulate the value of postgraduate study: Case study from the School of PPLS

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Session outline

• Background and rationale
• What we did
• Impact and successes
• Future potential
• Questions
Background

• Approached by Programme Director MSc Developmental Cognitive Science
• Specialist course: issues with students ‘selling’ their degree to employers and identifying relevant opportunities after graduation
• Issues with students understanding what they have to offer
Wider context

- Competitive job market generally
- Lack of distinct masters graduate job market in most cases
- Students often good at articulating subject knowledge and technical expertise developed through masters study
- Increasing numbers of PGT students > no competitive advantage?
- Evidence from employers that applicants are not clear about added value of PGT degree
What we did...

• Interactive workshop:
• Discussion on what students have done in their degree: range/diversity of activities, successes and challenges
• Discussion on skills developed: Thinking beyond technical and subject specific skills to wider transferable skills
• Generating specific examples of skills developed and how using STAR/CARL framework
• Competency questions and mock interview activities
• Analysing job descriptions/person specifications to see how degree could be relevant to a wide range of job roles
• Getting students to identify skills and their application rather than us telling them!
Impact and success

• Positive anecdotal feedback from students after sessions
• Evidence of strong engagement in sessions
• Positive feedback from academics in School
• Approached by academics for other programmes and for PGR students
• Developed similar session for PGR students – lab with students at different stages and looking at application of skills to non academic jobs
• Ran for final year UG students: Developing a sense of community and sharing learning across disciplines
Future potential

• Not just for PGT students: UG and PGR students can also benefit
• Scope to develop around specific aspects of students’ degrees e.g. dissertation, research projects, lab work
Thank you!

Any questions?