

# Guidance for Placement Learning

As outlined in section 4.8 of the Quality Manual there are two USW models that support the process of work placement learning. The aim of both is to satisfy the learning outcomes listed in section 4.8.2 for employability. It is expected that the majority of courses will follow model 1.

## Model 1

It is recognised that for most courses the real world experience needs to be very visible for all students and an approach that embeds the above learning outcomes in various modules does not enable students to clearly identify this learning across their curriculum. Course teams are therefore to develop a discipline specific 20 credit “Professional Practice and Employability” module included in each course. The module must include at least 70 hours of Relevant Work Experience or equivalent (‘RWE’). Many courses with embedded work experience or sandwich years will greatly exceed this minimum.

## Model 2

However there are a number of courses where PSRB requirements include a fully embedded approach to professional practice and employability through placements e.g. Initial teacher training, Chiropractic, social work. For these courses there will not be a requirement to identify the 20 credit module outlined above, rather they will be expected to embed these learning outcomes in their current practice modules. The embedded approach will be agreed and approved at validation.

Course teams will be able to make a case to be included on the list of courses held by QAE which meet the employability criteria. This is done at the development stage for a new course or before a Critical Review of an existing course if they feel that they are similar to those courses already on the register.

The learning outcomes will be delivered through the vehicle of the discipline so that where possible, teaching material will be specific to the professional activities or industries associated with the course.

Flexibility to accommodate longer or shorter work placements is achieved through the **Professional Practice and Employability module** which will include two themes:

- a) Professional practice which includes the attributes needed to be a graduate in a relevant industry. This must be partly or wholly evidenced through ‘Relevant

work experience or equivalent ('RWE') i.e. RWE is mandatory - Learning Outcomes 1 and 2;

- b) Preparedness for job applications, interview and selection. These might be delivered using some material drawn down from the Careers Service but it must be subject specific where possible - Learning Outcome 3.

Examples of "Relevant Work Experience or equivalent" (RWE) include: a two week industrial observation; an eight week placement in the summer, 'live projects' etc.

The "Professional Practice and Employability Module" can be taken by the student at various times during the course, requiring flexible assessment boards. Academic staff are encouraged to be creative in how these modules are managed. They could be run over a short time period, block weeks, through the summer break, or over a year on a day a week basis.