Helping Your Students Gain the Competitive Edge: Australia, Canada and UK Case Studies
SESSION AGENDA

- Welcome activity
- Employability of an international degree
  - Australia
    - Chris Lawrance, University of Sydney
  - Canada
    - Håkan Björn, University of British Columbia
  - United Kingdom
    - Joey Kirk, British Council
    - Jennifer Rich, Royal Holloway, University of London
- Q&A
What does USyd do to get grads ready?

The Careers Office at the University helps students:
Find jobs, Apply for jobs,, Course advice, Employer presentations, Careers fairs (4 major fairs per year), Careers Centre workshops, Career advice

+ The Alumni Office hosts alumni events, both in Australia and overseas
What do employers think of Australian grads?

In 2014, 5 Australian Universities, including USyd and the University of Melbourne, surveyed grads and employers.

**Overall** - Graduate and supervisor respondents gave very positive feedback about the degree outcomes on the work place.

**Skills** - Most highly rated skills clusters were *teamwork* and *interpersonal skills, foundation skills & adaptive skills*. Even *enterprise skills* (the lowest rating category) were favourably rated.

**Employers vs Grads** - A striking finding is the consistent degree to which supervisors rated their graduate’s qualifications more highly than the graduates themselves.

Graduates of Group of 8 universities tend to spend longer between graduating and working. Higher rate of transition to PG + highly selective employment profile

Source: EMPLOYER SATISFACTION SURVEY
REPORT FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION, JUNE 2014
Employment Rates

• Employment rates after graduation have been decreasing across Australia over the preceding 3 years.

• More students are choosing to take time off after study for travel and a higher proportion are progressing directly into higher levels of study.

• On average across Australian universities, 68% of graduates are in full-time employment 4 months after graduation. This jumps to 74% for graduate school.

Graduate Destination Survey Results 2013
What does it mean to be an International grad?

- There is little data comparing international and domestic cohorts. The water is somewhat muddied by graduates taking Australian citizenship during or after graduation. Further difficulties arise as NZ citizens are classified as ‘domestic’.
- Anecdotally, and from my own research, it would appear that international students take longer to get first job after graduation, but income levels and job satisfaction are about equal.
Career Opportunities with Canadian Degrees

Håkan Björn
Canada’s Post Secondary Education System

• Public post-secondary education system
• Highest participation in PSE in the world (OECD)
• 2.8% of GDP on Education (OECD)
• Diverse course offerings with flexibility
• Annual costs compare favorably with other destinations
• Welcoming and safe
International Students in Canada

• Rapid Growth - Doubled since 2008
• 450,000 by 2022
• What drives this growth?
  • Affordability
  • Student Support and Welcoming Environment
  • Career Opportunities and Graduation Outcomes
Career Opportunities

- Career Services Departments
- Job Entry Support
- Networking Events and Fairs on campus

- UBC’s Work-Learn Program
- Paid work opportunities
- Co-op/Internships
- Part time work on or off campus
- 3 year post graduation work permit
THIS WEEK AT CAREER SERVICES

MON SEPT 19  Bank of CANADA
MON SEPT 19  ZYNGA
TUES SEPT 20  SUNCOR
TUES SEPT 20  LOBLAW
TUES SEPT 20  PMC-SIERRA
TUES SEPT 20  SUNCOR

WED SEPT 21  IMPERIAL OIL
WED SEPT 21  MICROSOFT
THURS SEPT 22  ENDAKO MINES
THURS SEPT 22  IBM
THURS SEPT 22  AUSTRALIAN MED& DENTAL
THURS SEPT 22  SYNRUDE

RESUME CLINICS
→ MONDAYS TO THURSDAYS

CHECK THE SCHED:
@careers.ubc.ca

HEY YOU!
TAKE ONE!
ALUMNI & CAREERS

294,500 ALUMNI IN 140 COUNTRIES
90% CO-OP GRADS RECEIVE JOB OFFERS WITHIN 1 MONTH

UBC
THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA
3 Year Post-Graduation Work Permit Program

- Multiple Paths to Permanent Residence
- Post-Graduation Work Permit Program (PGWPP)
  - 2005: Up to two years
  - 2008 Reform: Up to three years and no restrictions
- Generous opportunity to build career skills and experience
- German Literature & Languages
Return on the Investment

- Canadian universities are a great value
- Career outcomes: The most important
- Gallup Poll: Career opportunities
- OECD: Canada most successful at retaining its international students (33%)
Summary

- Canadian universities are a great value
- The Canadian Government encourages international students to stay on and gain valuable skills
- Universities put major efforts in training and retaining international students
- Study German Literature if you want to improve your chances of gaining employment at a moment’s notice
UK EMPLOYABILITY
A competitive edge: The value of an international degree

Online survey of employers in the US (411) and Canada (436)

Reach decision-makers and exclude employers not requiring 50% or more of employees to have university degrees

Qualitative interviews in US: VA, SC, UT and MI.
RESPONDENT PROFILE

Location: the sample number of HR managers reflected the relative size of the states/provinces, and also the largest states/provinces as per the general population.
ORGANIZATION SIZE

The surveys included HR managers from small, medium and large organizations (based on the number of employees).

US

- Large (1000+ employees) - 24%
- Medium (50–999 employees) - 29%
- Small (1–49 employees) - 47%

Canada

- Large (1000+ employees) - 24%
- Medium (50–999 employees) - 29%
- Small (1–49 employees) - 47%
EMPLOYERS WANT:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Skill</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Relevance to industry</td>
<td>56%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Specialization in relevant subject areas</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Critical thinking and writing</td>
<td>47%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional/industry experience</td>
<td>47%</td>
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STRONG ‘SOFT SKILLS’

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Skill</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Communication Skills</td>
<td>44%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Self motivation</td>
<td>40%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Good at team work</td>
<td>30%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Time management</td>
<td>24%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Creativity</td>
<td>22%</td>
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INSTITUTION QUALITY

Employers focus on:

The strength of the university's reputation
54% in the US and 55% in Canada say that reputation is important

The university's relevant industry expertise
54% of employers in both the US and Canada say that this is important

“Connections to businesses are important. Work experience while studying is important to initiate students into the workplace”

Large business, Healthcare, Virginia

47% feel rankings are an important source of information
UK degrees have what employers want: ‘Critical Thinking’ and ‘Industry Relevance’

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>United States</th>
<th>Canada</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The tutorial system of learning</td>
<td>71%</td>
<td>64%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Earlier specialization in specific subject areas</td>
<td>63%</td>
<td>53%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More independent study</td>
<td>63%</td>
<td>60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Applications made to specific academic programs</td>
<td>63%</td>
<td>52%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional Degree subjects such as law and medicine are taught</td>
<td>56%</td>
<td>44%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presence of large proportion of international students</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>42%</td>
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Most employers in the US and Canada consider degrees earned in the UK to be equal or better to those earned in North America.

Employers are seeking candidates who have received a quality education and they perceive this to be characteristic of Americans who have studied at universities in the UK.
Barriers with transferability and recognition:

- Lack of education in specifically American/Canadian matters: United States 30%, Canada 31%
- Qualification not recognized by professional organizations: United States 29%, Canada 28%
- Employer difficulty assessing the quality of their education: United States 25%, Canada 29%
CANDIDATES SHOULD

Students should emphasize the highly-valued characteristics of their international higher education.

For students in the UK, this includes:
• earlier subject specialization
• independent study
• dissertation
EMPLOYMENT RATES

• HESA collects system-wide data on employability

• 93.2% of UK domicile full-time first degree leavers were in employment and/or further study six months after graduating

• The majority of HE providers saw 92-96% of UK domicile full-time first degree leavers enter employment and/or further study. 20 HEPs achieved an indicator of over 96%
Royal Holloway, University of London
The student journey

Nervous fresher + University experience = Employable graduate
What are employers in the UK looking for?

“If we recruited on the basis of degree level we'd just use a computer, but we're looking for examples of leadership, teamwork and commercial awareness which are usually found in extra curricular activities and work experience. In short, your degree alone won't get you a job. You need work experience too.”
“At KPMG we see first hand the advantages that volunteering brings to our graduate applicants. Our interviews are all competency based and that means we look for examples of how a student has demonstrated they posses the skills and abilities we look for. Whether it be team working, leadership or accountability there are few better ways of gaining the skills that employers need than via volunteering. Volunteering offers the ideal opportunity for a student to really stretch and challenge themselves.”

Keith Dugdale
Director of Recruitment
How do UK universities support their students?

- Increasingly, UK universities are directing attention to developing well-rounded students with development initiatives outside the classroom, including:
  - Volunteering
  - Internships / work placements (both as part of degree programme and independent summer placements)
  - Part-time work
  - Guest lectures from industry professionals
  - LinkedIn best practice
  - CV writing workshops
  - Mock interviews
  - Access to online tests
What does a Year in Industry / Business entail?

**When?**
- Students generally need to choose ‘Year in Industry/Business’ option at application stage to be eligible
- Usually takes place in year 3, extending the total length of degree to four years
- Some conditions (eg passing academic modules; finding suitable placement)

**Where / what?**
- Placement length is usually 9-12 months
- Most student secure placements with private companies or Government organisations (either in the UK or overseas)
- Wide variety of roles, but typically work is entry/graduate level

**How?**
- Most placements attract a salary, although the amount will vary significantly depending on company, nature of role and location
- University keeps in touch and usually visits each student on the placement
- Sometimes students will be required to complete an academic project
International students on Tier 4 visa:

- Eligible to work up to 20 hours per week in term time and full-time in vacations
- Tier 4 visa usually expires four months after course end date
- International students may be granted permission to work in the UK after graduation, if they receive employer sponsorship (and meet Home Office criteria)
Questions?

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