Interventions that enhance student and graduate employability

As part of the research phase of the project we conducted a search of university websites to identify ways interventions which are used by universities to improve graduate employability. Common approaches identified by this approach and in the literature on employability include:

- **Extra- or co-curricular activities**: support and/or recognition of volunteering roles, peer-assisted study or learning, and leadership roles in community groups (for example, see [http://www.employability.ed.ac.uk/Student/EdinburghAward/](http://www.employability.ed.ac.uk/Student/EdinburghAward/))

- Explicit support for finding graduate employment: e.g. how to write an application for work; practice interviews; access to employers and/or job listings;

- **Work integrated learning** incorporating formal and informal, real or simulated in the shape of credit- or non-credit awarding activities (for example see, Xia, Caulfield & Fern, 2014; Smith Ferns & Russell, 2014; and for a specific example see [http://www.rmit.edu.au/industry/student-work-placements](http://www.rmit.edu.au/industry/student-work-placements)); and

- Programs that develop skills such as teamwork, understanding of workplaces through case studies, and problem-based learning (for example, see Shen & Ooi (2013), Shen Buskes Evans & Ooi (2011); see also Mason et al (2009) for a detail evaluation of intervention effectiveness)

**Examples of employability services offered by universities in Australia and internationally**

**Bond University: Beyond Bond**

Run by the Career Development Centre, this program is designed to prepare students for the transition from academic study to employment and covers areas such as Work/Life Balance, Stress Management, Career Planning, Financial Management and others

**Deakin University's Job Shop**

The Job Shop is Deakin University's career web resource. It has an online employment service cover student part-time jobs through to graduate positions. It also offers support services for the recruitment process and for career planning.
La Trobe University's Career Ready program
This provides information on career planning and employability skills development.

RMIT University's LEAD program
The LEAD program assists students gain experience through co-curricular opportunities mainly through volunteering roles within the university. It is accredited and can lead to a certificate issued by the University.

The University of Western Sydney's CareerUWS
The vUWS is an online suite of career modules covering; career preparation; work placement preparation; career management; and graduate employment. It also has a series of modules on workplace resilience. The modules can be incorporated into the curriculum or taken as a co-curricular activity.

The University of Melbourne’s Skills towards Employment Program (STEP)
STEP is a compulsory hurdle for all engineering students. It assists students developing generic skills including communication, teamwork, project management and leadership. Students demonstrate their skill proficiency using ePortfolio.

The University of Melbourne (2015). School of Engineering Industry Based Learning elective
The link is to the 2015 Subject Handbook Entry. This is an example of a subject based around a WIL project. Assessment is through reflective writing and presentations, and a final report of 8,000 words.

The University of Nottingham (2015). Advantage Award.
This is an extra-curricular structured accredited program consisting of about 160 modules. The modules are provided by a variety of organisations, including employers. They develop employability skills such as leadership.

The University of the West of England (2014). Careers services.
This is another example of a university careers service, providing in person and online assistance to students. It also has an online job vacancy board. There is a employment placement program allowing students to gain work experience during their studies.

Examples of university support for graduates in the years immediately after graduation

University of Warwick Services for alumni
All alumni with free access to its careers service for up to three years after graduation. Support includes appointments with careers consultants, checking CVs and applications, online support, mock interviews, careers skills workshops and access to careers fairs

University of the West of England alumni support
Services similar to Warwick are offered to alumni. In addition, there is support and funding to start new businesses.
Examples of university programs to effect organisational change to enhance the teaching of employability skills to students


**Mobility programs**

Greater mobility between industry and academia was a dominant theme throughout the case studies. Notable mobility programs include study programs such as the European Union's *Industrialised Countries Instrument - Education Cooperation Programme*, which enables students to study in a partner country (including Australia).

They also include research-industry partnership programs such as the Australian Research Council's *Linkage Grants* and, in Europe, funding for *Public Private Partnerships in Research*. Versions of these programs are also seen at most higher education institutions; however, at every level they appear to ignore learning and teaching.

The Office for Learning and Teaching might consider a new "Linkage" program focussed on learning-industry linkages that benefit both educators and students through industry exposure. It is likely that such a program would be of interest in the European Union, where there are similar discussions about employability.

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