EMPLOYABILITY AND DIVERSITY

Lee Harvey,
Centre for Research and Evaluation, Sheffield Hallam University

Keynote at the *Social Diversity and Difference Seminar*, University of Wolverhampton, Wolverhampton Science Park, 15 February

Introduction

This paper draws primarily on two research reports: *Enhancing Employability, Recognising Diversity* (Harvey *et al*., 2002) and *HE Careers Services and Diversity* (Morey, *et al*., 2003)
     There is a growing awareness in the UK of the importance of higher education in providing the innovation and creativity for the development of a knowledge-based economy in an increasingly competitive global market. Three major policy initiatives have contributed to this over the last decade:
*   widening participation and improving retention;
*   enhancing employability.
*   lifelong learning;
   Both higher education and the graduate labour market are changing rapidly. The student intake is becoming more diverse, in age, background, previous educational experience and interests and ambitions although government's efforts to broaden the social base of the undergraduate population has recently been characterised as a limited success. Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) performance indicators published in December 2002 demonstrate that there was only 0.3% increase in participation of socio-economic groups IIIm, IV or V since 1998 (HEFCE Performance Indicators, 2002). In addition to relative poor entry levels, working-class students are also more likely to drop out.
     The nature of graduates' work is being transformed and diversifying, and many students already work part-time throughout their courses. Institutional responses to developing employability are also diverse. This paper explores the ways that higher education is addressing employability in this new context (Harvey *et al*., 2002 also includes case studies of initiatives).
     Increasingly, widening participation issues have moved forward through the student experience from access, to support and retention to successful completion and towards job acquisition. Meanwhile, the emphasis of employability has shifted from job-market intelligence and job-getting techniques to developing a range of attributes through the learning process, with some institutions taking a holistic strategic approach. There is a growing emphasis on enabling students and empowering them to take advantage of their educational experience. There is a potential for organic convergence in the implementation of a forward-looking participation agenda that empowers students as successful learners and an employability agenda (developed by the national Enhancing Student Employability Co-ordination Team (ESECT)) that sees employability outcomes

as rooted in an empowering learning process that runs throughout the higher educational experience.

Since the Dearing Report (NCIHE, 1997), higher education institutions have developed opportunities for their students in three broad areas.

First, institutions have developed a more sophisticated understanding of the complexity of the modern workplace, the needs of employers and of graduates in a variety of different work settings (large and small; private, public and voluntary; employment and self-employment) and an appreciation of the diversity of attributes that contribute to 'employability' (as well as enterprise and entrepreneurship).

Second, there has been a wider debate on the nature of employability, informed by long-term studies of graduate employment and career paths (Elias *et al.*, 1999), that goes beyond the first destinations of graduates.

Third, there is growing awareness of the diversity of activities of universities and a sharing of good practice in the sector.

Cultural shift

Although vocationalism has always been a part of UK higher education, there has, in the last decade, been a considerable cultural shift in higher education and a growing awareness among academics of the need to develop students' employability (Mason *et al.*, 2002). This is paralleled by a revival in interest in pedagogy and a focus on student-centred learning. However, despite a growing engagement with the employability agenda, there are reservations, not least because of the continuing debate about the purpose of higher education.

Some academics think that embracing employability could infringe academic autonomy, undermine critique and result in a shift in the balance from 'education' to 'training'. There is, though, no desire in government or among employers for such a shift. The Confederation of British Industry (CBI) notes that 'employers are not looking for oven-ready graduates' (Lindsay, 2002). Training has a short shelf life and it is far more important, for employers, that graduates have a range of attributes that empower them as lifelong learners (Harvey *et al.*, 1997).

World of work and graduate attributes

The world of work is changing with more graduates entering small and medium enterprises (SMEs), going into freelance work (especially in art and design but increasingly in other areas) and self-employment. Furthermore, with the expansion of higher education, the long-time concerns of employers about graduate attributes have become more pronounced. Employers are looking for something in addition to a degree and have become more explicit about the skills they seek and more sophisticated in identifying them in their recruitment procedures (at least at the end of the recruitment process).

Many research studies have revealed a consistent core set of desirable skills, often independent of the degree subject. These consist of interactive attributes — communication skills, interpersonal skills and team working — and personal attributes, including, intellect and problem solving, analytic, critical and reflective ability,

willingness to learn and continue learning, flexibility and adaptability, risk-taking and self-skills In short, attributes that help organisations deal with change.

Moving on from skills

As analyses of employer needs and graduate attributes have become more sophisticated, there has been a shift away from 'skills'. The 1990s was characterised by approaches that sought ways to develop skills, such as the CBI 'key skills', the pronouncements in the Dearing Report (NCIHE, 1997) and the work of the Skills Task Force (1998). DfEE Higher Education Projects Fund, 1998–2000, included projects funded to 'develop strategies to ensure all learners had the opportunity to develop Key Skills, employment skills and transferable skills' (DfEE 1999, p. 2).

There has been a shift in higher education from seeking to develop specific skills through specialist modules or extracurricular activity to a more holistic approach. Institutions are seeking to develop employability attributes as an explicit and embedded part of academic learning. Furthermore, employability is also developed through continuous professional development.

The nature of employability

Employability has many definitions but they break down into two broad groups. The first relate to the ability of the student to get (and retain and develop in) a job after graduation. The other set are concerned with enhancing the students' attributes (skills, knowledge, attitudes and abilities) and ultimately with empowering the student as a critical life-long learner (Hillage and Pollard, 1998; Harvey, 2001). One index of employability is whether students get jobs within a specific time after graduating, however this is flawed as it does not measure the attribute development of the student (but merely the graduation rates from a department or university). The simplistic model of employability (the magic bullet model) is that students are somehow given employability as a result of their having been a student, which leads them to being employed (Figure 1). A rather more realistic approach addresses a range of factors of which being equipped to do a job is but one element. There are personal characteristics of the students, including, *inter alia*, age, gender, ethnicity and personality traits, all of which have been known to influence recruitment. There are also external economic factors, which may be sector- or region-specific (Harvey, 2000). There is thus a distinction between the employability potential of the individual (a matter of self-development) and the actual employment of the individual (a matter mediated by external factors).

The factors linking together the development of graduate attributes and the obtaining of an appropriate job are summarised in Figure 2. The graduate has to choose to engage with the employability development opportunities provided by the institution. The graduate will also have extracurricular activities, including work experience, to draw on, some as a result of the higher education experience and some external to it. Employability development includes:
*   the development of employability attributes
*   work experience;
*   the development of self-promotional and career management skills;
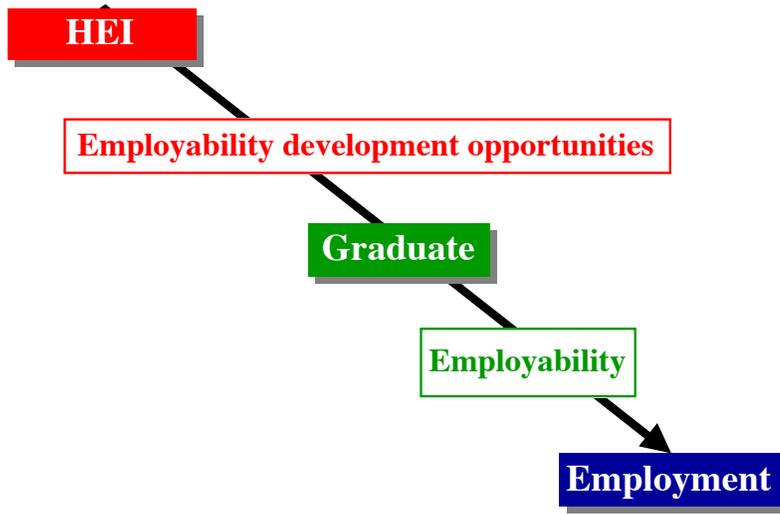
- a willingness to learn and reflect on learning.

HEI

Employability development opportunities

Graduate

Employability

Employment

Figure 1: "Magic bullet" model of employability

Subject area

HEI → **Employability development opportunities**

pedagogy

Graduate — engagement —

- **employability attributes**
- **work experience**
- **self-promotional skills**
- **willingness to develop**

Extra-curricular experiences

reflection

Employability

External factors

articulation

Employer → **Recruitment** → **Employment**

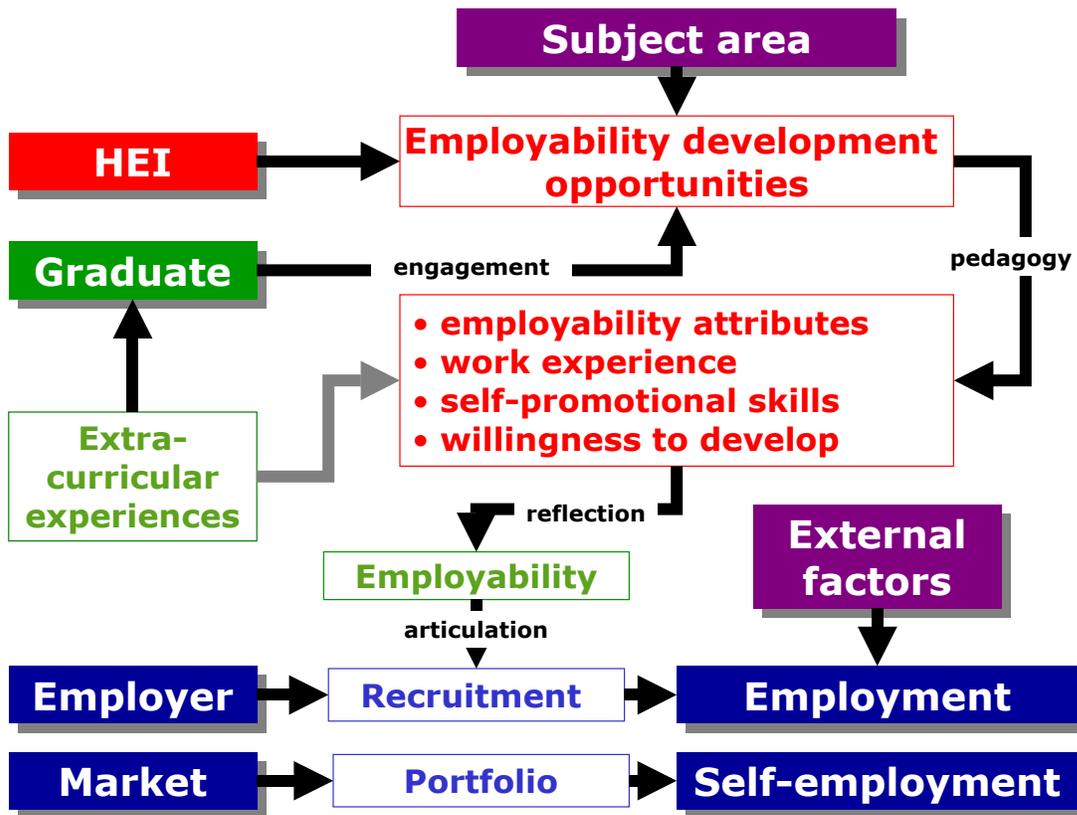**Market** → **Portfolio** → **Self-employment**

Figure 2: A model of graduate employability development

Three core processes impact on employability, first the *pedagogic* process that encourages development, second, *self-reflection* by the student and, third, *articulation* of experiences and abilities.

In addition, employability development opportunities, to some extent, are affected by the subject discipline of the graduate. Some programme areas tend to be more active in promoting employability, either because they more readily lend themselves to developing particular employability attributes or because of a need to ensure engagement with the world of work. Similarly, engagement in employability development, reflection and articulation are often easier for students in vocational areas. However, vocationalism is not synonymous with employability.

Government policy has it that there is a graduate premium in the marketplace, hence the introduction of fees. However, it is clear that the premium is uneven, white, upper-middle class, young males get a far higher premium on average than black, working-class, first-generation, mature women returners.

Recruitment practices

Recruitment practices of the employer are a key element in the process by which graduates get jobs. However, despite 'scientific approaches', almost all employers in the *Graduates Work* survey exhibited some bias in their recruitment processes, most noticeably discriminating against older graduates (Harvey *et al*., 1997).

Data from the General Household Survey on occupational attainment, showed that, compared to traditional-age graduates, mature graduates were disadvantaged on entry to the labour market but after about 15 years they have similar attainment to non-mature graduates. However, mature graduates are more likely to work in public or welfare sectors, which has implications for levels of pay (Egerton, 2001). The *Access to What?* study (CHERI, 2002) also found that, even after taking the 'indirect effects' (of status of university, subject studied, geographic region) into account, the age and socio-economic/ethnic background of a graduate appears to influence recruitment decisions. Research by CEL (2002) showed that six months after graduation male information technology, electronics and communications graduates earned 3% more than females and this grew to 20% three years after graduation. An earlier study of art and design students also showed salary bias in favour of males (Harvey and Blackwell, 1999). Graduates from Oxbridge whose father is an associate professional have the highest gain from their degree; their earnings increase by 16% compared to those graduating from Oxbridge whose father was in a non-middle class occupation' (CIHE, 2002, p. 25). The Council for Industry and Higher Education issued guidelines for good practice in recruitment (CIHE/ESRU, 2002), which made several observations about why employers recruit non-traditional graduates. These included:
- external drivers (legislation, government targets);
- business case (wider talent pool, those that match diverse customer base, positive messages to staff);
- commitment to equal opportunities (especially so in larger organisations);
- commitment to employment diversity (diversity brings creative impact, positive messages to staff and potential staff) (CIHE/ESRU, 2002, p. 7)

Despite progress, recruitment processes, particularly of large organisations, continue to be skewed in favour of some groups of graduates. However, recruitment practices have changed over the last five years. There is less recruitment to graduate schemes and more direct job-related recruitment. There is also a growing tendency to recruit from students who have had some work experience with the organisation. Use of the internet for recruitment, in theory, widens the potential pool of recruits but the systems in place are often restrictive and discriminatory. As careers and widening participation are more explicitly linked, so the role of higher education careers services in encouraging fair recruitment practices and empowering students in the job market will come under increased scrutiny.

Developing employability in higher education institutions

The Higher Education Funding Council for Wales (HEFCW), at the turn of the century, developed a system-wide approach to employability through its Work Experience and Employability Plans (WEEPs). An audit of employability activity (HEFCW 1999) revealed that considerable work was being done, although most institutions did not have an overall employability strategy. Employability work included providing or encouraging students to undertake work experience in various forms, providing central careers service support to undergraduates and graduates of the institution and, to a lesser degree, embedding employability skills in the curriculum. Following three years of WEEPs, which included a small amount of ring-fenced funding, there was a noticeable change in the strategic approach to employability and embedding of employability in programmes of study. More recently, employability has been an enhancement theme in Scotland in the new quality assurance approach.

The lack of a system-wide approach in England has led some institutions to develop their own. The University of Newcastle, the University of Central England in Birmingham and Sheffield Hallam University developed institution-wide approaches linking employability to learning: a process also being developed elsewhere through employability-related centres for excellence in teaching and learning.

Range of activity

The diverse range of employability enhancing activities within institutions can be categorised as four broad areas:
1   enhanced or revised *central support* (usually via the agency of careers services) for undergraduates and graduates in their search for work;
2   *embedded attribute development* in the programme of study often as the result of modifications to curricula to make attribute development explicit or to accommodate employer inputs;
3   innovative provision of *work experience* opportunities within, or external to, programmes of study;
4   enabled reflection on and *recording of experience*, attribute development and achievement alongside academic abilities, not least through the use of progress files.

Central support

Central support, usually in the form of careers services, has changed since the mid-1990s, with a much wider array of services and a growing tendency to work with academics in enhancing employability. The Harris Report (DfEE, 2001) noted that in an era of widening participation, careers services should ensure that those students most in need of advice are encouraged to seek it.

The AGCAS MERITS (2002) Project is an example of initiative that supported disadvantaged students: it targeted Black and Asian students and graduates, who tend to be disadvantaged in the job market. The programme involved several institutions including the Southampton Institute, Manchester Metropolitan and De Montfort universities. A group of universities in Yorkshire developed a similar initiative, called IMPACT, that provides tailored support for students to develop their employability skills through confidence building, mentoring and workshops.

However targeting is a contentious issue. In the study of Careers Services (Morey *et al.*, 2003) opinions were divided about the appropriateness and utility of targeting particular groups of students, as well as conflicting thoughts on how, or in fact whether, it could be done in practice.

Opposition to targeting

One problem with targeting is to identify the groups being targeted. Targeting also raises the problem of getting information to the targeted group without them feeling they are being labelled. Furthermore, there is the danger of patronising non-traditional students in settings where they are in the minority (such as in some post-1992 universities). In other settings it where the majority of the student body is 'non-traditional', targeting particular groups may lead to divisiveness. As one advisor noted, targeting based on ethnicity or age had been tried, but 'it's not been the slightest bit successful, quite the opposite. Our students see themselves as very much non-traditional students, and to separate them out into particular units like that just doesn't work'. Furthermore, despite being in most need of extra help ion the labour market, students at a university with a majority non-traditional intake were unable to take advantage:

> They don't have time to (do) nice little fluffy diversity schemes that seem to happen in every university, and so because of that we work very hard to try and embed employability skills into the curriculum here, because it's the only thing our students can do… they're too busy running off to their paid jobs. Or they can't do groovy little workshops either [because] they've got to pick up their kids from school or whatever (careers adviser, London)

Perhaps the most striking argument for *not* targeting groups of students was made by a member of widening participation staff: 'You've got to try and touch as many as possible. I'd rather have a one-day course for 500 than a ten week course for five' (widening participation staff, north west).

There remains, though, a concern among careers staff about the lack of awareness of the range services available especially among non-traditional students. Most students

interviewed were aware of the core services but not of activities designed to address their particular needs. Sometimes, the names of initiatives were not descriptive of the initiatives' purpose and target student group

There are various attempts to integrate centrally-supported employability development into the curriculum in various ways, such as Leeds Metropolitan University's *Skills for Learning* and UCE's self-help guide *Delivering Employability* (UCE Careers Service, 2002). The University of Wales, Swansea appointed an employability and skills officer to work with departments to review their programmes of study to identify and enhance employability.

Embedding employability in the curriculum

Apart from central initiatives, there is a growing tendency towards an integrated approach to employability development that includes embedding the development of student attributes within the subject curriculum.

Employability audits, outcome statements and benchmarking

Following the national audit in Wales, most Welsh institutions followed up with their own audits of the employability content of programmes and modules. Other places have also undertaken audits such as Sheffield Hallam University (Bowers-Brown *et al*., 2005) and, in the creative industries sector, the University of Central Lancashire and the Cumbria College of Art and Design (Sewell, 2001).

In some institutions, the integration of skills in the curriculum has been aided by the restructuring of programmes to identify outcomes or take account of QAA benchmarks. For example, integration of key skills in the curriculum, at the University of Glamorgan, took into account the QAA subject benchmarks and the national qualifications framework.

Pedagogic developments and managed learning environments

The introduction of computerised managed learning environments offers another opportunity to embed employability in the curriculum. Embedding does not require wholesale changes and the Skills*plus* (2002) approach, for example, argues for tweaking of curricula (Knight & Yorke, 2000).

A widely-used pedagogic device to develop employability skills is group working. However, this is frequently unsupported and students are often grouped together and told to work as a team.

Some programmes, particularly in the arts, are aware of the self-employment option. At Liverpool John Moores University, an optional one-day course for arts students on self-employment has been in operation since 1997. The Department of Culture Media and Sport has a task force exploring how entrepreneurship in the creative industries is developed through taught courses in higher education.

The full extent of the embedding of employability within curricula is difficult to assess as development activity is often informal and may include lecturers' business and

industry contacts, personal support and encouragement to students and provision of information.

Work experience

The *Graduates' Work* research for the Dearing Committee pointed to the need for enhanced opportunities for students to undertake work-related learning opportunities (Harvey *et al*., 1997). Increasingly, work experience is being seen as a major vehicle to enable students to make connections between their academic study and the world of work and to familiarise themselves with the skills necessary to be effective in the work setting.

Work experience can take a variety of forms ranging from traditional placements through 'live' project work to part-time employment. Three main categories of work experience are (Harvey *et al*., 1998; CSU/NCWE, 1999; Little *et al*., 2001):
- organised work experience as part of a programme of study;
- organised work experience external to a programme of study;
- *ad hoc* work experience external to a programme of study.

Employers tend to be favourably disposed to work experience and a recent study of final-year students (in progress) has shown very strong endorsement of the value of work experience (even short periods of work experience). There is a growing trend among employers to recruit from students who have undertaken work placement with companies.

The positive view of employers is supported by a statistical analysis of first-destination employment returns, provided by the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA), for all full-time degree qualifiers from all higher education institutions in the United Kingdom in 1995–96 (Bowes and Harvey, 2000). Overall, graduates from sandwich courses have higher post-graduation employment rates (69%) than students on equivalent non-sandwich courses (55%). This advantage is dependent on subject area: science and language sandwich graduates for instance do not enjoy a significant advantage but most built environment, business, engineering and social science sandwich graduates do. Of the 33 subject areas that could be directly compared, sandwich students had the highest employment rate in 21.

A study of nearly 2000 art and design graduates from 14 British institutions in the mid-1990s (Blackwell and Harvey, 1999) revealed that respondents who had undertaken a work experience placement had higher rates of full-time permanent employment after graduation. They also had a more favourable view of the undergraduate programme and a belief that their employability skills had been more strongly developed in the undergraduate years. Those who had work experience that was related to their current job also tended to have higher incomes.

These outcomes are mirrored in the *Working Out?* study: 'Nearly 48 per cent of graduates felt that relevant work experience in a similar organisation was an important factor in enabling them to obtain their job' (Purcell *et al*., 1999, p. 16).

Recording and reflecting on achievement

Two major, complementary, developments have occurred over the last five years: first, support to help students reflect on work experience and identify the learning from it and, second, the development of progress files.

The *Work Experience* report (Harvey *et al*., 1988) argued strongly that experience of work should not be regarded as something that is intrinsically beneficial. On the contrary, it is the learning that comes from the experience that is important. This view now appears to predominate within higher education institutions and is reflected, for example, in the approach adopted by the National Council for Work Experience (NCWE, 2002), InsightPlus and the NUS.

Part of the developmental framework for higher education is the introduction of progress files (QAA, 2001, 2002). Although still not a fully-embedded part of the higher education landscape (as was intended by now), progress files provide the framework for more systematic reflection and personal development planning.

Conclusion

The last half decade has seen considerable proactive development of employability in higher education institutions augmented by collaborative activities with employers. Employability initiatives are varied and are, increasingly, being integrated into programmes of study rather than marginalized. Furthermore, some institutions are taking a strategic approach to employability development.

However, the very diversity and dynamic nature of provision means that development is not even. Some institutions are better at embedding employability in the curriculum than others. Some institutions prioritise the role of central services; others have excellent relations with employers and have made enormous progress in developing and acknowledging work experience opportunities. Some institutions have taken a strategic approach, which in Wales has been encouraged by the funding council and in Scotland by the Quality Assurance Agency.

The field is also constantly changing and not all changes are incrementally forward. Some initiatives do not achieve their goals and others lose momentum and fade away. There is a long history of funded initiatives that produce good results during the funding period but which, despite good intentions, fail to be embedded in institutions. There is a lot of information, albeit scattered, on initiatives and activities but relatively little analysis of the impact of employability development in universities. Employability performance indicators are entirely inadequate measures of the impact of such activities.

There is also an issue about targeting non-traditional students that is far from resolved. Although minority ethnic students generally, if not always, overcame their concerns about 'special treatment', disabled students were often less enthusiastic about schemes. Students from lower socio-economic backgrounds remain very difficult to target. If careers advice is to be targeted, then greater collaboration with other departments within the institution, most notably widening participation and outreach officers, is necessary. Furthermore, if it is decided that targeting is desirable, then the nettle needs to be grasped; information about students that is held by institutions needs to be used to target effectively.

References

AGCAS / MERITS (2002), *MERITS: Minority Ethnic Recruitment, Information, Training and Support (Merits) Project: final report*. AGCAS, Sheffield.

Blackwell, A. and Harvey, L., 1999, *Destinations and Reflections: Careers of art, craft and design graduates*. Birmingham, Centre for Research into Quality.

Bowers-Brown, T., Stevens, A., Leman, J., Harvey, L., Drew, S., 2004, *A report of the Employability and Personal Development Planning (PDP) Survey Findings*. March. Sheffield, Centre for Research and Evaluation, Sheffield Hallam University.

Bowes, L. and Harvey, L., 2000, *The Impact of Sandwich Education on the Activities of Graduates Six Months Post-Graduation*. London, National Centre for Work Experience and the Centre *for* Research *into* Quality.

Careers Service Unit and National Centre for Work Experience (CSU/NCWE), 1999, 'What is work', pp. 6–7, *Focus on Work Experience*. Manchester, CSU.

Centre for Higher Education research and Information (CHERI), 2002, *Access to What?* London, CHERI, forthcoming

Collective Enterprise Ltd (CEL), 2002, 'The experience of recent graduates in IT, electronics and communications (ICET). Summary paper, prepare for a presentation at the Conference Centre, Victoria Street, London, 18 April, 2002.

Council for Industry and Higher Education (CIHE), 2002, *Rates of Return to Qualifications: A summary of recent evidence*. A report for CIHE by Conlon, G. & Chevalier, A. issued at a meeting of CIHE Council, 12 May 2002.

Council for Industry and Higher Education/Employment Studies Research Unit (CIHE/ESRU), 2002, *Employers in the New Graduate Labour Market: Recruiting from a wider spectrum of graduates*. London and Bristol, CIHE, ESRU.

Department for Education and Employment (DfEE), 1999, *Higher Education: Quality and employability digest*, December 1999. Sheffield, DfEE.

Department for Education and Employment (DfEE), 2001, *Developing Modern Higher Education Careers Services*. Report of the Review led by Sir Martin Harris, Vice-Chancellor, Manchester University. DfEE/1701/200. Nottingham, DfEE Publications.

Egerton, M., 2001, 'Mature graduates I: occupational attainment and the effects of labour market duration', *Oxford Review of Education*, 27(1), pp. 135–50.

Elias, P., McKnight, A., Pitcher, J., Purcell, K. and Simm, C., 1999, *Moving On: Graduate careers three years after graduation*. Manchester, IER for CSU, DfEE and AGCAS.

Harvey, L., Locke, W. and Morey, A., 2002, *Enhancing Employability, Recognising Diversity*. London, Universities UK.

Harvey, L. and Blackwell, A., 1999, 'Gender bias in incomes of art and design graduates', *Industry and Higher Education*, 13(5), pp. 323–29.

Harvey, L., 2000, 'An employability performance indicator?', *Perspectives*, 4(4), pp.105–9.

Harvey, L., 2001, 'Defining and measuring employability', *Quality in Higher Education* 7(2).

Harvey, L., Geall, V., and Moon, S. with Aston, J., Bowes, L. and Blackwell, A., 1998, *Work Experience: Expanding opportunities for undergraduates*. Birmingham, Centre *for* Research *into* Quality.

Harvey, L., Moon, S. and Geall, V with Bower, R., 1997, *Graduates' Work: Organisation change and students' attributes*. Birmingham, Centre *for* Research *into* Quality (CRQ) and Association of Graduate Recruiters (AGR).

Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE), 2002, *Performance Indicators 2002*. Available at http://www.hefce.ac.uk/learning/perfind/2002/report.asp, accessed 26 January 2006.

Higher Education Funding Council for Wales (HEFCW), 1999, Pilot Audit of Employability provision in higher education institutions in Wales. Cardiff, HEFCW.

Hillage, J. and Pollard, E., 1998, *Employability: Developing a framework for policy analysis*. Department for Education and Employment (DfEE) Research report, RR85, London, DfEE.

Knight, P. and Yorke, M., 2000, Skills *Plus*: Tuning the Undergraduate Curriculum' http://www.open.ac.uk/vqportal/Skills-Plus/documents/ProjPaper1.pdf.htm

Lindsay, A., 2002, 'The development of skills', presentation at the Social Market Foundation Lunchtime Seminar, Broadway House, Broadway, London, 26 May 2002.

Little, B., Moon, S., Pierce, D., Harvey, L. and Marlow-Hayne, N., 2001, *Nature and Extent of Undergraduates' Work Experience.* London, CIHE/DFES.

Mason, G., Williams, G., Cranmer, S., and Guile, D., 2002, *How higher education enhances the employability of graduates*. Institute of Education and NIESR for HEFCE.

Morey, A., Harvey, L., Williams, J., Saldaña, A., Mena, P. with Watson, S. and MacDonald, M., 2003, *HE Careers Services and Diversity: How Careers Advisory Services can enhance the employability of graduates from non-traditional backgrounds*. Manchester, Higher Education Careers Service Unit (HECSU).

National Committee of Inquiry into Higher Education (NCIHE), 1997*, Higher Education in the Learning Society*. London, HMSO.

National Council for Work Experience (NCWE), 2002, *Work Related Learning Report*. February. Nottingham, DfES.

Purcell, K., Pitcher, J. and Simm, C., 1999, *Working Out? Graduates' early experience of the labour market.* Manchester, CSU.

Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA), 2001, 'Guidelines for HE Progress Files', http://www.qaa.ac.uk/ crntwork/progfileHE/guidelines/progfile2001.pdf

Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA), 2002, 'What is a Progress File?' http://www.qaa.ac.uk/ crntwork/progfilehe/contents.htm

Sewell, P., 2001, 'Higher level skills in creative industries in Lancashire & Cumbria' *LMI Briefing,* 26, July. North West Labour Market Partnership.

Skills Task Force 1998, 'Towards a National Skills Agenda: First report of the National Skills Task Force. Sudbury, Suffolk, Prolog.

Skillsplus, 2002, http://www.open.ac.uk/vqportal/Skills-Plus/home.htm.

University of Central England in Birmingham (UCE) Careers Service, 2002, *Delivering Employability: A framework for career development in the curriculum*, Birmingham, UCE.