2il Gynhadledd Dysgu ac Addysgu

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# Crynoldebau / abstracts

Engagement with Employability

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It is widely recognised that the proportion of our students who achieve graduate level employment is a metric that impacts negatively on our ranking in league tables. Employability skills are by their nature generic and transferable and, to flip the usual interpretation of this, developing these skills at the start and throughout a student’s academic career will help them perform at a higher standard in assessments. I currently have responsibility for promoting and facilitating engagement with Personal Development Portfolios in IBERS. I have used Campus Pack through Blackboard to repackage the IBERS approach to PDP to embed it into the curriculum with a strong emphasis on acquisition and documentation of skills. I also encouraged tutor-led activities for making employability and PDP more enjoyable. Aligning PDP transparently with employability led to an increased engagement amongst first year students from an anecdotal 20-30% to a recorded value of 82%. Students have benefitted from professional resources relating to CV and cover letter preparation, interview skills, seeking and documenting relevant experience. The next stage will be to move this forward to identification of individual gaps in numeracy and literacy skills with directed resources to address them. Employees need the right attitudes as well as knowledge and nurturing a love of learning is good for employability. Our role as educators needs to include equipping our graduates with the capacity and enthusiasm to continue to learn wherever their future may lead. People who have acquired the tools for independent learning will have the confidence to continue to learn within the work environment. This session will outline the approach taken, plans for the future and identify opportunities for establishing a cross-disciplinary team to address weaknesses in student work with the aim of boosting employability.