4ydd Gynhadledd Dysgu ac Addysgu

4th Annual Learning and Teaching Conference

6 Mis Gorffennaf – 8 Mis Gorffennaf| 6 July – 8 July 2016

# Crynoldebau / abstracts

Enhancing Employability and Building Self-Confidence Among Postgraduate Students

Elizabeth New and Jessica Gibbs

This presentation will focus upon our developing initiatives in the History and Welsh History department to enhance the employability and boost the self-confidence of our postgraduate students. While postgraduate employability until recently has not received the attention given to undergraduate employability, it is a live topic today, and one that we believe will become increasingly important in the future. A growing number of students undertake MA study in the humanities without the expectation of continuing to a PhD and need to consider carefully the transferability of their skills to employment elsewhere. At the same time many final year PhD students and recent PhDs face significant challenges in moving on to a first temporary or permanent academic post.

Two History and Welsh History department initiatives will be spotlighted: HYM9920 ‘Working with History’, an MA module with a heritage sector placement, which is core for our History and Heritage students and optional for all our other MA students, and a scheme piloted by the speakers which provides application advice and interview practice for advanced postgraduate research students intending to pursue an academic career.

The presentation will reflect upon our experiences and those of our students, and consider ways in which we might refine both of these initiatives in the future. We hope to open the floor to a wider discussion of the challenges of preparing postgraduate students for employment both within and outside academia. As members of staff with responsibility for mentoring PhD students in their teaching role (Jessica Gibbs) and employability (Elizabeth New), we are both deeply committed to this aspect of our work at departmental level and would like to contribute to its development within the university.