



Department of Education, Sport and Culture
Rheynn Ynsee, Spoyrt as Cultoor

Employment and Skills 2019 Review

1. Overview

Attendees at Employment and Skills 2019 were from 13 years old upwards with the vast majority of these being school/college students at key transition points in their education. Adults interested in an employment or career change also attended throughout the day. The qualification levels of those attending ranged from no qualifications to post-graduate and everything in between.

14-16 year old pupils attending varied in their confidence in initiating and then sustaining conversations with employers on stands. For the 2019 event the employer skills card acted as an icebreaker and shifted pupil activity from a 'supermarket sweep' for freebies with limited questioning around job roles and careers to a real learning experience for the majority. The learning from this event will also support these students in their transition into further education or employment through improved verbal communication skills and experience of talking to a range of employers about their skills.

The employer skills card was simple in design and execution but provided a much greater focus to conversations between pupils and employers than in previous years' events. In addition, the employability skills 'translator', prompts and employer skills cards (see appendices) have significant longevity in terms of supporting additional engagement with employer and other stakeholder groups.

2. Evaluation

A formal evaluation of Employment and Skills 2019 was undertaken with employers at the event and pupils and teachers soon afterwards. Standardised statements and Likert scaling were used on evaluation forms and return rates for each group were:

- Employers – 55%
- Pupils – 80%
- Teachers – 100%

Likert Scale used on Student, Employer and Teacher Evaluation Forms:
1 = strongly disagree with statement to **10= strongly agree** with statement

Statement	Student Average	Employer Average	Teacher Average
1. There were good student/employer conversations around employability skills	7.7	7.2	8.5
2. Students asked good questions about pathways into employment or training	7.2	7.9	8.3
3. The employer skills grid card was a useful tool to support conversations between employers and students	7.0	7.3	9.4
4. Having employers zoned in sectors was helpful to the running of the event	7.2	7.4	9.0
5. As a result of attending this event students have a better understanding of how broad, transferable employability skills will help them be successful in the future	7.1	7.5	7.9
6. Compared to previous years students were more engaged at this event	N/A	N/A	9.2

Open Responses from Evaluations

Highest number of positive employer qualitative comments around:

Stamps and employer grid cards

- excellent way to approach students
- broke the ice
- more engaged than in previous years

Feedback follows from Paragon Recruitment Agency who acted as a 'Skills Hub' on the day and sponsored a prize draw for pupils who had engaged positively with the employer skills card.

"Paragon's experience during Employment & Skills 2019 was very positive – we found that students were better prepared and more aware of the purpose of the day, in addition to being more open about starting and holding conversations. The new Skills Grid approach worked exceptionally well, and we felt it gave both exhibitors and students purpose and aims for the day, encouraging meaningful conversations and much improved levels of engagement.

The feedback we received on the day and following the event was equally as positive from students, teachers and employers/exhibitors. We felt the Skills Hubs initiative was also a really worthwhile addition to the day, and further encouraged engagement and participation across many levels. Both initiatives developed specific awareness of the skills, expectations and behaviours essential for today's workforce, which is invaluable from our perspective. It was a pleasure to be involved and we very much look forward to Employment & Skills 2020 as a worthwhile addition to our business calendar."

Debbie Scrimshaw, CEO Paragon Recruitment agency

Feedback from Education and Employers Charity who attended the event supported this view.

"As exhibitors at the Employment and Skills event, we were pleased by the effectiveness of the resources provided and the structure of the event. The skills cards and stamps helped to facilitate meaningful and personal interactions. The stamps were an incentive to approach us and the skills framework was a useful way to link the information we were supplying to key employability concepts that were well understood by the students."

Mathew Haine, Schools Engagement Manager, Education and Employers

Highest number of positive student qualitative comments around:

- I learnt about the job I wanted to do
- I found out about other pathways/jobs
- I got to know what people do in their job
- I talked to people about how they got into their job

Illustrative positive teacher qualitative statements:

"A great event which has given students a great insight into what they might like to do and they have gained great experience in starting and continuing conversations with adults which is a good skill to develop. Well done to all involved."

"It really inspired the students to speak to people. "

"Grid a massive help for the majority. "

3. Proposed changes for next year as a result of feedback from different stakeholder groups

a) More time allocated in all schools for students to prepare prior to them attending the event and time to follow up afterwards, ideally linked into other school systems (eg ROA Personal statement etc).

This should be achievable as the Employment and Skills learning resources have been developed and with slight modifications are ready to use in schools.

b) Slight modifications to the Employer skills card to create space for students to write some of their own questions.

A minor change, easy to implement.

c) Opening the event up for Year 12 and 13 students to attend from any school from lunchtime onwards will support links between learning and employment.

Nearly 25% of 18 year old school leavers entered permanent employment in Summer 2019 so currently this is a missed opportunity for career exploration by this age group. As long as there are no Senior Sports fixtures running this day then this should be relatively easy for schools to support/facilitate.

d) Further development of the use of Skills Hubs at the event.

DESC to work with recruitment agencies to explore what they feel they could offer at the event that would build on their positive input into the event in 2019.

e) More support for those students who are least confident in approaching employers on stands to start conversations.

Using the DESC Careers Adviser or Skills Hubs stands as a starting point for these students engaging with employers would be good additional support for some of the least confident young people attending.

f) Better Information available and a separate stand on apprenticeships and funding for qualifications would be helpful for Employment and Skills 2020.

DESC Corporate Services support with this requested.

g) Better marketing for the event including posters and use of DESC Signposts website for communication.

Exploration around and securing support available with marketing in IOM Government.

DESC Corporate Services support to be requested.

Jan Gimbert GIBiol PGCE MSc FInstLM
School Improvement Adviser with responsibility for Careers and Employability
Education Improvement Service
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Appendices

Appendix 1

DESC Employability Skills Agreed Common Language

This common set of words for employability skills and simple prompts was developed using a meta-analysis of words KS4 students on the Isle of Man are exposed to. Initially this was used as a 'translator' to support writing of Year 11 student personal statements as they approached the end of compulsory schooling. It was also the starting point for the Employer Grid Card for Employment and Skills 2019.

Problem Solving

Prompt: Think about a time when you found an answer to a new problem or issue.

Teamwork

Prompt: Think about a time when you achieved something as part of a team and the role you played.

Communication

Prompt: Think about a time when you have talked to others and managed to explain an idea or point well.

Resilience

Prompt: Think about when you have overcome a challenge or set back and have achieved something positive

Self-awareness

Prompt: Think about a time when you have made a mistake, thought about it and changed your approach going forward.

Ability to learn

Prompt: Think about when you have learnt something new and how you approached it.

Appendix 2

Use the Employer Grid Card to have lots of conversations AT THE EVENT			
How do you work as part of a team? TEAMWORK	Do you use Maths in your job? How? PROBLEM SOLVING	How do you use verbal communication in your job? COMMUNICATION	Why do you enjoy your job? Are there bits that you don't like? RESILIENCE
How often do you have to learn new things in work? ABILITY TO LEARN (AND RE-LEARN)	What kinds of qualifications do you need for your job? SELF AWARENESS ABILITY TO LEARN	What kind of tools/ equipment do you use in your job? ABILITY TO LEARN PROBLEM SOLVING	Did you get your job as a result of what you studied at school/college? SELF AWARENESS
Can you give an example of a mistake you made in work and how you used it to improve? SELF AWARENESS	How do you use problem solving day to day in your job? PROBLEM SOLVING	How do you use on-line communication in your job? COMMUNICATION	What makes you stick at things when work gets difficult? RESILIENCE
What pathway did you follow after leaving education? SELF AWARENESS RESILIENCE	How do you use written communication in your job? COMMUNICATION	Did an interest that you had outside school influence your career path? SELF AWARENESS	Do you have to be creative in your job? How? PROBLEM SOLVING

- Talk to employers on the stands.
- Once you have asked a question from your employer skills grid, listen carefully to their replies and ask any other questions that come to mind.
- Then ask the employer on the stand to stamp the appropriate box on the skills grid to show that you have had a conversation with an employer about this aspect of their role.
- They may also offer you a 'freebie' (ruler, pencil etc) when you get your stamp on the skills grid for particularly good conversations!

Don't forget to get your STAMP when you visit the skills hub

