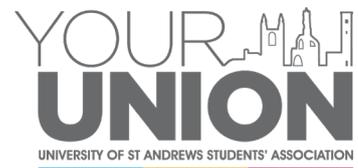


School-specific careers survey

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“ It might not result in a massive change straight away, but you can have an impact which changes the perception of careers events more long-term, so stick with it with enthusiasm! ”

The project

Last year we surveyed students in one school, in order to find out what careers events they wanted. This allowed the School President, a student representative with school-wide responsibilities, to put on events that students had actually asked for and increase engagement. This year the project was rolled out across the Schools by providing each School President with a template survey they could personalise to their school and send out to all their students. Most School Presidents adapted and sent out the survey, providing them with a clearer picture of what students wanted from careers events. Some have since reported this back to the Students' Association for further discussion, and others have begun talking with other presidents and student representatives to start work on careers events (either individually or as a cluster).

Benefits

The main benefit was that School Presidents had evidence of what the students actually wanted, rather than putting on careers events in the hope that students would engage. This evidence also allowed School Presidents to put on different events, which sometimes took a form they would not have anticipated, and to work more collaboratively across schools and disciplines (for example we ran a humanities internship panel in semester 1, covering students in History, Art History, English, and Classics, which resulted in over 100 people in attendance and great feedback).

Challenges

Some Presidents did not engage with the survey as they assumed they knew exactly what students wanted. However, as the semester went on and the less enthusiastic Presidents saw how much success others were having, more started to engage.

Working with your institutional colleagues

The University Careers Centre first had the idea for this survey to be personalised and sent out. They also offer support in terms of resources, some funding (the Association's employability fund provided the rest), and contacts.

What impact has this had on the student experience?

More tailored events which have received a much higher turnout than previous events (over 100 attendees compared to some that only had 15 last year). Careers events and workshops that students had asked for and therefore benefitted from by receiving valuable, desired knowledge.

What advice/top tips would you give to others who might try something similar?

Be prepared for a lack of engagement at first but keep pushing! Work with your careers team and your student officers and representatives.