

HE Employability Digest

A regular update on policy developments, reports and opportunities to influence decision-making in HE employability from The Careers Group, University of London

Number 5 — February 2017

Updates

HEA: Increasing academic interest in both employability policy and delivery

Artess, J., Hooley, T. and Mellors-Bourne, R. (2017). *HEA: Employability: A Review of the Literature 2012-2016*. York: Higher Education Academy http://derby.openrepository.com/derby/bitstream/10545/621285/1/employability_a_review_of_the_literature.pdf

- The academic literature which explores both the politics and practice of employability is expanding.
- In a marketised higher education system, employability is likely to be a key motivator for student choice making.
- Findings also emphasised the importance of embedding employability in the curriculum and ensuring that students are able to make a connection between employability outcomes and their discipline
- The review also illustrated the value of using institutional career guidance services as the organising and co-ordinating structure for an institution's employability strategy, especially when those services are broadly conceived.
- Many patterns identified in the literature reflect the HEA's *Framework for embedding employability* which many in the sector see as a useful summary of best practice.

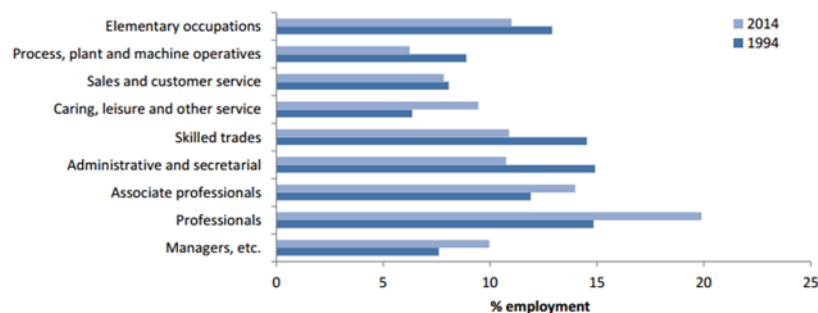
More information

- HEA's Framework for Embedding Employability <https://www.heacademy.ac.uk/enhancement/frameworks/framework-embedding-employability-higher-education>

Demand for skills has increased substantially over twenty years

Government Office for Science (2016) *The UK's Skill System: Training, Employability and Gaps in Provision: GOS & Foresight* https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/571691/ER7_The_UK_s_Skill_System_Training_Em_employability_and_Gaps_in_Provision.pdf

Figure 1: Occupational structure of employment: 1994 and 2014



- Increasing levels of educational attainment amongst the population (including skilled migrants) has significantly improved skills supply.
- An increasing share of employment is accounted for by managerial, professional, and associate professional roles.
- Evidence shows those with relatively high level qualifications experience a premium with respect to earnings.

More information

- UUK Blog <http://www.universitiesuk.ac.uk/blog/Pages/Is-skills-education-Higher-Education's-problem.aspx>

SMC: Evidence of unacknowledged 'class pay gap' within professions

Social Mobility Commission (2017) *Social Mobility, the Class Pay Gap and Intergenerational Worklessness: New Insights from The Labour Force Survey* https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/586000/Social_Mobility_-_The_class_pay_gap_and_intergenerational_worklessness.pdf

- Using data from the UK Labour Force Survey (LFS) with a sample of c.65,000 this report provides the most comprehensive analysis of social mobility to date.
- Evidence shows professionals from working class backgrounds earn on average £6,800 less than colleagues from professional and managerial backgrounds
- Even when comparing individuals with the same education, occupation and level of experience, those from working-class backgrounds are still paid £2,242 less than more privileged colleagues.
- Traditional professions (e.g. medicine, law, journalism, and academia) remain dominated by those from advantaged backgrounds: 73% of doctors are from professional and managerial backgrounds and less than 6% are from working-class backgrounds.
- However, technical professions such as engineering and IT as well as many public sector professions are markedly more open - with a clear majority not from professional families.

More information

- Social Mobility Commission - <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/new-research-uncovers-class-pay-gap-in-britains-professions>

Call for evidence

British Academy's Flagship Skills project: Arts, Humanities and Social Science

- The British Academy's *Flagship Skills Project* aims to produce an evidence base of the skills that are inherent to the study of arts, humanities and social sciences (AHSS), their value to the individual, and the contribution they do make and could make in future to society.
- The project will seek to intellectualise what we mean by skills, and explore questions such as: *what skills should studying AHSS develop? What skills do individuals who have studied AHSS demonstrate? What contribution do individuals with AHSS skills make to society and the economy? What skills do employers want? What skills will be needed in the future?*
- They are seeking evidence addressing these questions from a broad range of stakeholders to inform their future report due in Autumn 2017.
- Responses of up to 3000 words can be submitted at to skills@britac.ac.uk by **Wednesday 15 March 2017**.

More information

- <http://www.britac.ac.uk/sites/default/files/British%20Academy%20Flagship%20Skills%20Project%20Introductory%20Booklet.pdf>

Vitae: Careers in Research Online Survey & Principle Investigators Surveys Opens Soon

- The *Careers in Research Online Survey (CROS)* and the *Principal Investigators and Research Leaders Survey (PIRLS)* are run biennially and gather anonymous data about working conditions, career aspirations and career development opportunities for research staff and research leaders in higher education institutions.
- These two surveys provide valuable data and benchmarking for measuring progress in relation to the REF, for example.
- The CROS and PIRLS online surveys will be open from **1 March to 31 May 2017**

More information

- Vitae - <https://www.vitae.ac.uk/impact-and-evaluation/cros>