

INTRODUCING CAREER REGISTRATION FOR A SMARTER CAREERS SERVICE

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INTRODUCTION.

Careers Network at the University of Birmingham started collecting Career Registration data for the first time this academic year (2017/18). As one of the largest institutions in the UK (approx. 37,000 students) the adoption of the data has been an exciting opportunity to understand the specific needs and interests of the entire student population on an individual basis, in a way never before possible.

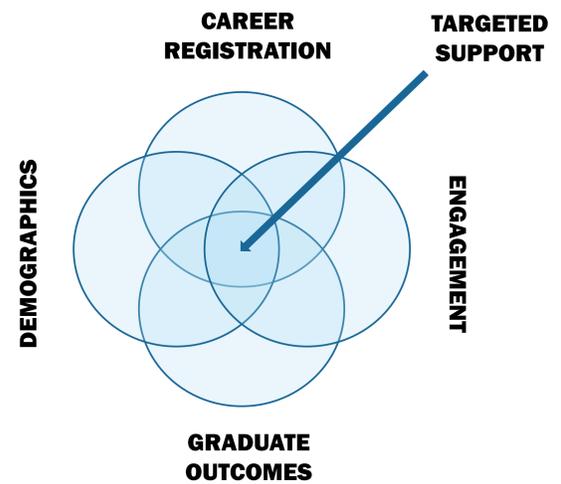
The questions we posed to the students were based largely on the tried and tested approach used by the Careers Group for the HEFCE Learning Gain Project: Career readiness, sector interests and previous work experience. Within Careers Network, the introduction and usage of the data set has been lead by the Employability and Data Implementation Officer, closely supported by a Career Registration Working Group who meet monthly.

Although the larger benefits of this data will be realised when the student journey can be tracked and the data compared year on year, this poster outlines the approach Careers Network has taken at this early stage.



BIG DATA, SMALL NUMBERS.

We know that our university's ranking for graduate prospects can be affected by a very small number of students. For example, in 2015/16 the difference between 86.4% and 87.4% came down to only 32 students. Career Registration, when combined with other data, is the final puzzle piece in predicting which students are most likely to need additional support in their final year in order to achieve graduate level employment, helping us to work smarter and focus our resource.



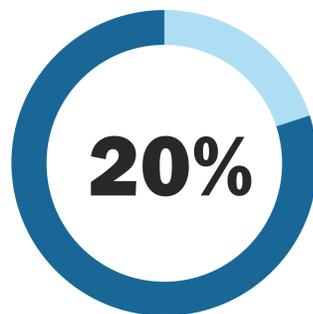
WHO MIGHT NEED US MOST?

Career Registration allows us to better understand which students might benefit the most from our services in order for them to enter into graduate level employment after their time at Birmingham. We used the following method to identify cases where students might particularly benefit from our service, as well as potentially be the ones to affect the University's overall graduate outcomes:

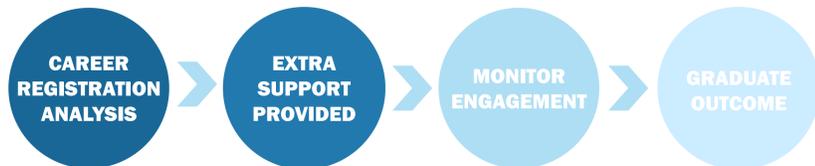
UG, home, final year students who answered any of the following:

- I am not ready to start thinking about my career yet
- I have no career ideas yet but want to start thinking
- I have no work experience to date

As well as providing our usual service to all students, our priority for the autumn term was to reach out to the 20% of final year students who may benefit from additional support in terms of securing graduate level employment. We did this in a number of ways:



- Invitations to guidance appointments
- Personalised emails from Careers Consultants
- Tailored and informal events especially for this group
- Personalised promotion of existing events such as career planning workshops
- Personalised promotion of placement modules for those with no work experience



IMPACT: Of the students we reached out to, 49% engaged with Careers Network this year. This is compared to 45% of other final year students in the 'decide' phase. We will be able to measure impact further following the Graduate Outcomes survey.

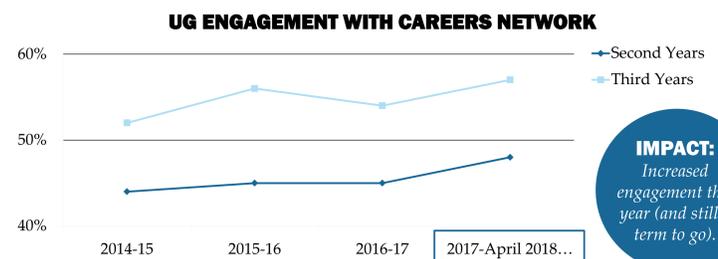


TAILORED COMMUNICATIONS.

The ways in which we contact our students, promote our services, and advertise our events have the potential to be transformed when using Career Registration data. In this first year we have been piloting a number of ways to tailor our communications in order to make them more relevant and ensure the right information reaches the right students. This approach has included:

- Using the 'Career Stage' question to invite students to events to meet their current needs e.g. Career Planning Workshops.
- Using the 'Sector Interest' question to invite students to sector specific events e.g. the Law Fair
- Using the 'Work Experience' question to promote opportunities to those lacking in real-world experience e.g. The Consultancy Challenge

As well as targeted communications to segmented groups, Career Registration is giving us a more accurate picture of the needs and interests of the whole student population. For example, rather than assume sector interests based on the school or college, we now have the data to prove or dispel these assumptions, then market events accordingly.



IMPACT: Increased engagement this year (and still a term to go).



LOOKING AHEAD...

So far we have been able to pilot various approaches for using Career Registration data, however the conclusions we can draw at this early stage are limited. Once we have had this data for a number of years and identified trends, it can be reliably used to inform service enhancement.

Not only this, but the longitudinal data will allow a deeper analysis into the journey of our students, and ultimately connect this to their graduate outcome. Additionally, we will be able to compare statistics year on year to help set targets and measure impact.

AFTER A NUMBER OF YEARS WE WILL UNDERSTAND:

- The ways in which students plan their careers over time
- Whether sector interests change and to what extent
- When and how students gain work experience

ONCE TRENDS ARE IDENTIFIED WE CAN:

- Develop the events we offer to further fit career planning
- Review the employers we work with to meet sector interests
- Implement a smarter marketing strategy across the board

MEASURING IMPACT

Reduce % of potentially 'at risk' by working with 1st & 2nd year 'deciders'

Track career planning stage and any relation to engagement type

Increase overall % engagement through tailored communications

Measure success of interventions through the Graduate Outcomes survey