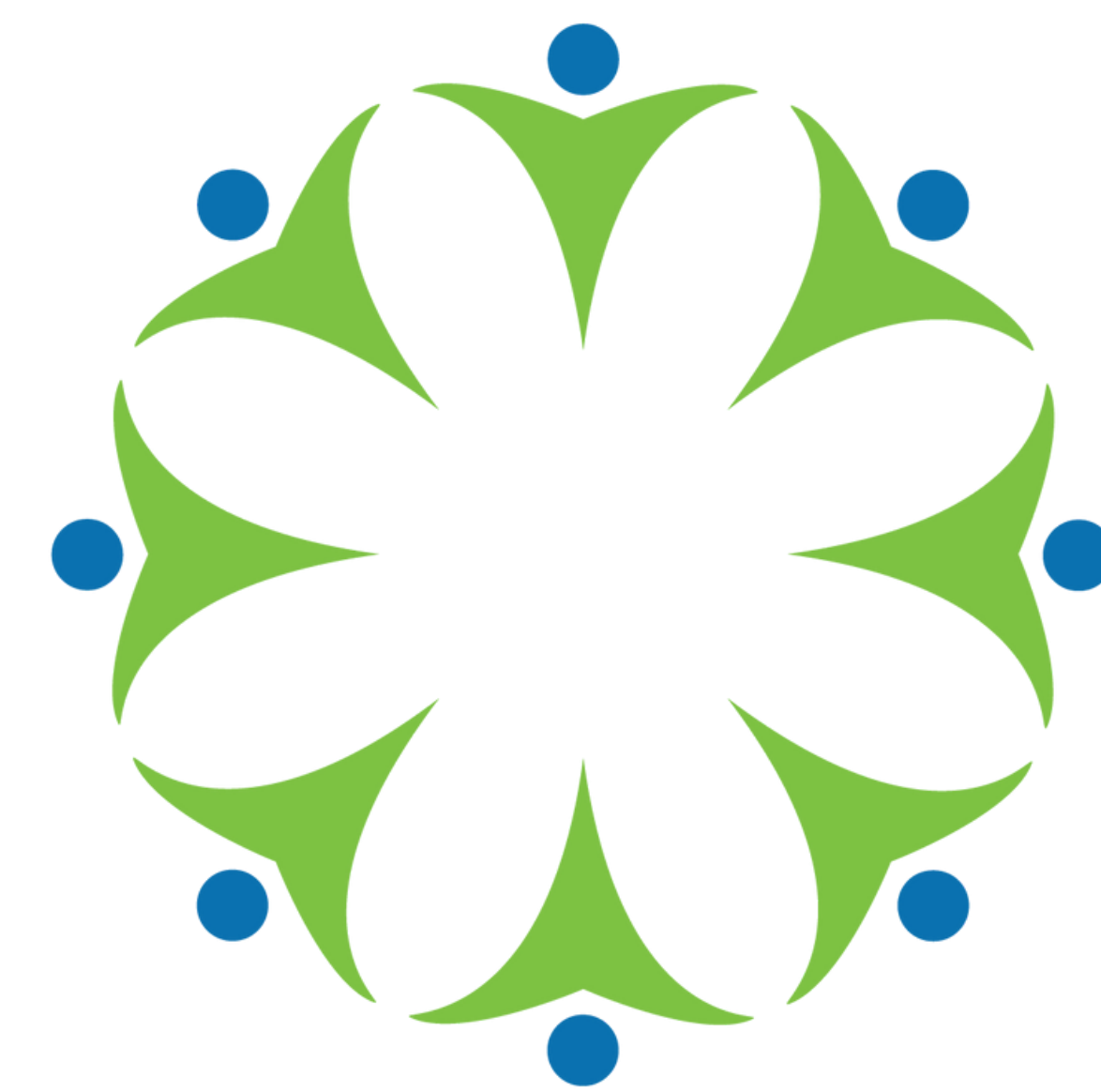


# Universities as Employers



*University of*  
**HUDDERSFIELD**  
Inspiring global professionals

Government funding became available to deliver Kickstart programmes to reduce unemployment within the region. The University signed up to the scheme in October 2020 initially taking 30 Kickstart placements across the University, for a period of 6 months. The aims behind this project were: to identify unemployed graduates, to provide in-depth employability training and work experience, and to identify a talent pipeline for the university.

These were candidates that were often facing barriers to employment and had significant periods of time out of work. Roles spanned HR and IT departments, academic schools, student services and the international office. The University of Huddersfield saw an opportunity to support the local community and create a foundation to leapfrog the individuals into work as evidenced in the data this was a success.

## ACTION & APPROACH

Collaboration took place with the local Job Centre investing time in being present to discuss the roles with work coaches and onsite activity to speak to job searchers.

The project was managed centrally by the careers and employability team and all recruiting managers had shared responsibility with careers to provide an intensive period of training and development.

Weekly training schedules were delivered covering all aspects of employability with some key remits to have a quality CV, professional linked in and complete LinkedIn learning.

The placements were grouped into cohorts with each cohort operating as a peer support system. Weekly check in meetings took place to understand what employability activity had taken place and how effective it was and this was shared with the cohort.

Celebration events took place upon each person securing a role. Key subject matter experts provided insights into a variety of roles. Some candidates opted for further study routes.

## IMPACT

By the end of the scheme the University of Huddersfield had taken 66 placements in total, of which:

- 29 were offered permanent contracts with the University;
- 48 secured permanent employed roles; and,
- 17 had an EDI category, of whom 9 were recruited.

Both recruiting managers and placement colleagues rated the project as a positive experience.

One candidate has commenced post graduate study in Careers guidance and has had two progressions up the salary scales. The Job Centre were delighted with the results.

We were able to evaluate prior to the programme levels of confidence and post placement and saw a significant increase.

## CONCLUSIONS & LESSONS LEARNT

As a result of this project funding ending we could not re-model the exact programme, however internal opportunities have been created under a 'lend a hand scheme' we identified a need for the University to fill short term vacancies and these are now advertised to international students seeking work. The process for advertising vacancies has been improved and uses digital forms part of the learning from the Kickstart project.

Lessons learnt are that with a dedicated schedule of training and development, a peer support network and funding offered to organisations those that have been unemployed can gain successful employment.