Yorkshire Universities Virtual Roundtable: Opportunities for students and graduates within local government organisations

Tuesday 25th April
Analysis of HE and LG input

Input was gathered from:

• Careers staff from all 12 YU member Higher Education Institutions (HEIs)
• A survey of Local Government organisations – 11 responses from 1 Combined Authority and 7 Local Authorities (4 without a university, 3 with a university), covering 3 sub-regions

Overview of presentation

• Existing activity
• Dedicated Routes for Graduate Recruitment
• Local Government Organisation Skills Gaps
• What works well about existing activities and relationships
• ‘Key Asks’
### Existing Activities – Types of Engagement

| Promoting opportunities and vacancies to students and graduates |
| Placements and internships |
| Apprenticeships |
| Volunteering |
| HE careers events e.g. careers fairs |
| Community engaged learning and research |
| Course involvement e.g. guest lectures, live briefs |
| Curriculum development |
| Graduate Recruitment |
| Promoting LA/CA/LEP events and support to students |
| Representation on Groups and Boards |
| Advice and support on talent pipelines and hard to fill vacancies |
| Upskilling and CPD |
| Enterprise support |
| Business engagement |
| Mapping of careers provision |
| EDI and inclusive recruitment |
| Place marketing |
Existing Activities – Examples

• 40 summer internships at Leeds City Council in 2023
• ‘In Leeds’ place marketing for graduate retention
• HEY LEP placements for BA Politics students
• Bradford Social Work Teaching Partnership upskilling pilot
• SkillsHouse Bradford and Graduate Workforce Bradford
• Make it York – internships
• Community engaged learning projects, plans to become credit bearing module at the University of York
• Made Together Campaign – University of Sheffield
• RISE – supporting graduate recruitment into SMEs
Geographic focus of activities to engage with students and graduates

Survey respondents were asked to identify the level of geography that they **primarily** focus each activity on.
Dedicated Routes for Graduate Recruitment

3 - no dedicated route
3 - LGA National Graduate Development Programme
2 - own dedicated route

Areas of work: Across the whole organization
• Future leaders of local government
• ‘service led’ approach
• Projects and Change Officers & Digital Content Officers
• Children and Adult Care, Economic Development Communications, Financial Services, IT and HR.
Dedicated Routes for Graduate Recruitment –

LGA National Graduate Development Programme in Yorkshire & Humber

• LGA partner with 9 LAs and SYMCA in Yorkshire & Humber

• This year there were applicants from 10 YU member institutions

• There were 677 applicants from YU members out of 6050 applicants nationally

• 376 YU applicants passed situational judgement test (56%)

• 161 YU applicants passed video interview (43%)
Dedicated Routes for Graduate Recruitment – Offer to Graduates

Bespoke development offer, including training and mentoring.
Access to a peer networking groups and memberships.
Access to internal vacancies and progression.

**LGA National Graduate Development Programme**

- 2-year contract
- £28k minimum salary
- Fully funded level 7 qualification in Leadership and Management
- Rotate through placements in different directorates
- Networking – within organisation and nationally
- All degree backgrounds
Dedicated Routes for Graduate Recruitment – What works well?

• Attracting diverse future leaders.
• Promotion on a national scale via the LGA.
• Internal support mechanisms - peer learning and support, mentoring, induction and progression
• Most graduates progress to permanent roles and increased salary.
• Good retention rate and positive feedback
Dedicated Routes for Graduate Recruitment – What could be improved?

• Striving to increase retention and ensure future employment for all graduates.
• Increase line manager knowledge and skills to improve support.
• Linking with Organisational Development colleagues to assess new opportunities that may be conducive to the graduate programme experience.
• Looking to increase our cohort of graduates into the local authority, and are currently working on creating more graduate roles.
Dedicated Routes for Graduate Recruitment – Key Barriers

• Staff capacity
• Budget and cost pressures
• Resources to get this off the ground
• Infrastructure support
What works well overall?

Local government comments:
• A dedicated contact and regular communication and meetings
• Long term relationships
• Update bulletins
• Involvement in Careers Fairs
• Advertising opportunities
• Social work teaching partnership
• Familiarity with each others support offers
• Clarity of roles around supporting graduate employment
What works well overall?

University comments:

• Broad range of engagement and partnerships
• Quick responses
• Strategic engagement through centralised teams
• Statutory placement provision and apprenticeships
• Creative and cultural life briefs, and community-based projects
• In curriculum work experience across all formats
• Work based learning opportunities
• Summer internships
• Focused joint delivery activities
• Opportunities for student volunteers to receive professional training
‘Key Asks’ – both sectors

• Need to develop a more consistent and strategic approach.
• Longer timeframes to plan and develop activities
• Forward planning and sharing information of upcoming opportunities early
• Up to date contact points.
• Clear one page overview of offer from both sides.
• A clearer understanding of the HE offer within LAs/CAs
• Opportunities to develop a deeper understanding of the challenges LAs and CAs face with recruitment and engaging with students.
‘Key Asks’ – from local government

• **Improved communication**
  - clearer entry points to engage with HE.
  - suggestion of a regular forum focused on outcomes and actions.

• **More balanced collaboration** – HEI understanding of LA/CA/LEP needs and also their support offers and also promoting this to students and graduates and through their business engagement as appropriate.

• **More employer involvement within the curriculum** (not just additional/optional talks)
‘Key Asks’ – from Universities

• Consistent broader engagement with students and graduates
• More opportunities for student and graduates particularly dedicated graduate schemes and placement years
• More funded opportunities and streamlined application processes to support EDI.
• Co-ordination and connectivity (within LAs and CAs) across departments and roles.
• Joint working on promoting inclusive recruitment.
• Strategic engagement with universities as anchor institutions.
• Improved sharing of LMI data and trends, and skills and employment needs and planning.
• More support for portfolio careers and the transition into freelance/self-employment, particularly for creatives.
Overview of ‘Key Asks’ – Discussion prompts

• Development of a **consistent and strategic approach**
• Longer timeframes and **forward planning**
• **Clear entry/contact points** and better communication
• A clearer **understanding of the offer and needs** of both sides – one page overview
• **Consistent broader engagement** – in curriculum, events etc.
• **More opportunities** for student and graduates particularly dedicated graduate schemes and placement years
• More **funded opportunities** and **streamlined application** processes to support EDI.
If you have any questions please contact
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