

SWANSEA UNIVERSITY EMPLOYABILITY ACADEMY (SEA)



Swansea University
Prifysgol Abertawe

Swansea Employability Academy
Academi Cyflogadwyedd Abertawe

2020 - 2021 Highlights Report



Introduction

This report highlights the successes of the Swansea University Employability Academy (SEA) over the 2020/2021 academic year. It is clear, within these pages, that the Academy has thrived, even in the most uncertain of times and whilst delivering our services virtually. This could not have been achieved without the hard work and creative collaboration of our University colleagues, external partners and alumni, across Wales, the UK and internationally. Thank you, all, especially Emma Dunbar, Swansea University's Head of Engagement, Innovation and Entrepreneurship, who also managed SEA during the 2020/2021 academic year, before handing over to myself.




I'm very pleased to have been appointed Head of SEA in November 2021, following an interim period as Head and firstly want to take this opportunity to celebrate the incredible dedication and resilience displayed by Swansea students and graduates, during the ongoing pandemic. With our support, many continued to achieve, securing virtual internships, graduate jobs and part-time jobs amidst fierce competition, as well as undertaking virtual training and networking, during lockdowns.

Swansea's employability endeavours were recognised, once again, in 20/21. **We ranked 10th in the UK for Job Prospects** as voted

within StudentCrowd. We also **moved up 195 places in the QS World Rankings**, for employability, as rated by our graduate recruiters.

In 21/22, we have begun consultation on a new SEA Strategy and are welcoming new SEA staff into management and marketing roles. We're continuing our highly fruitful partnerships, such as with Santander, that have enabled us to launch the new 'CPD500' (student training bursary fund), alongside the University's Enterprise team, as well as working in partnership with the University's Alumni Team to launch two new student mentoring programmes, based on a popular pilot scheme.

WE CONTINUE TO OFFER:

-  Funded internships
-  Student employability bursaries
-  A digital jobs board
-  Employability development and networking events/workshops, fairs, coaching and training
-  The Student Ambassador Scheme (on campus part-time jobs)
-  The Welsh Government funded (via HEFCW) Graduate Support Programme
-  Impartial careers information, advice and guidance delivered by qualified staff
-  A student and graduate Career Development Course
-  The ESF funded (via HEFCW) GO Wales Achieve through work experience programme for students with barriers to recruitment

We have just undertaken another round of recruitment for Student Ambassadors in the attempt to reach 500 Student Ambassadors – our pre-Covid-19 levels – including new Senior Student Ambassadors and returners to the scheme.

All of this is being delivered through working closely with our students, graduates/alumni, staff, industry and professional employability bodies (such as AGCAS, ASET, ISE and PlaceNet) to ensure that we are meeting needs at this most challenging of times.

Should you require any further information on our performance over 20/21 or delivery over 21/22, please contact us at:

Employmentzone@swansea.ac.uk

We look forward to collaborating with you, once again, and for those of you who don't know us yet, **here we are...**

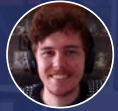


Lucy Griffiths,
Head of SEA

MEET THE TEAM



Helyn Taylor
Employability Specialist,
Graduate Support Programme



Rob Yarr
Graduate Support Programme
Delivery Assistant



Simeon Smith
Employability Specialist



Linda Palmer
Employer Events
Co-ordinator



Fiona Courtney
Work Placement &
Employment Administrator



Laura Hughes
GO Wales Senior
Delivery Officer



Clare Howes
GO Wales Delivery Officer



Michele Austin
GO Wales Delivery Officer



Alison Sandy
GO Wales Finance Officer



Lowri Walton
SEA Marketing Co-ordinator



Zdravka Kamenova
Careers Consultant



Paula Williams
Careers Consultant



Lucy Norman-Lewis
Careers Consultant



Jennie James
Careers Consultant



Gareth Hill
Careers Consultant



Katie Harris
Careers Consultancy
Services Administrator



Stephanie Leech
Student Ambassador
Scheme Manager



Ashley Holloway
Student Ambassador
Scheme Assistant



Milly Light
Student Ambassador
Scheme Assistant



Bev Jenkins
Senior Administrator

DELIVERING ON STRATEGY

Employment & Work Experience

669 WIDE-RANGING OPPORTUNITIES

advertised to Swansea students and graduates from **591 organisations**, including part-time jobs, graduate jobs, internships and work placements.

43,498 ADDITIONAL ROLES

were also available in the same system via links to external jobs boards.

6,939 SWANSEA STUDENTS AND GRADUATES

are registered to use our Employment Zone digital jobs board. (**3,494 new registrations** in 20/21 alone)

137 PAID 'SPIN' STUDENT INTERNSHIPS

were provided via a wide range of internship hosts – salaries were funded by SEA at the Living Wage Foundation rate of pay, up to **210 hours**.

38 'WOW' (WEEK OF WORK)

Student internships were provided via a wide range of internship hosts – voluntary work, up to **70 hours**, often subsidised with SEA employability bursaries to cover expenses.

64 GO WALES WORK EXPERIENCE OPPORTUNITIES

were provided to students requesting additional support e.g. care leavers, care givers and disabled students, over 1 day to 4 weeks, in addition to exiting **31 students** from the programme at a Reduced Risk of NEET (Not in Employment, Education or Training) and onboarding **62 new students** to the programme.

22 GRADUATE SUPPORT PROGRAMME PAID INTERNSHIPS

were provided - salaries funded at Living Wage Foundation rate of pay, up to **3 months**, which indirectly/directly led to graduate-level employment for **49 Swansea graduates**.

18,531 HOURS

of part-time, on campus work was completed by 364 Swansea University Student Ambassadors, supporting 174 in-house departments, over 433 departmental requests e.g. Open days and calling campaigns, making Swansea's one of the largest Student Ambassadors Schemes in the UK!

DELIVERING ON STRATEGY

Expanding Networks

1,272 students and graduates attended 93 SEA events including Careers Fairs, employer engagement events/workshops, skill development sessions and employability coaching/training sessions, including:

- SEA Centenary Careers Fair, featuring 11 Employers including Fortil, Transport for Wales, HM Revenue and Customs and Nuclear Graduates
- SEA Autumn Virtual Careers Fair, featuring 12 Employers including Network Rail, Confused.com, Office for National Statistics and Lidl
- SEA Graduate Careers Fair, featuring 22 Employers including Aldi, ICAEW, Admiral, TeachFirst and Cardiff Capital Region
- Successful Negotiation, The Negotiation Club
- Consulting - Making change happen, BASIS Consulting
- A Guide to Commercial Awareness – Equip Yourself with the Tools to Succeed, The Business Update
- Emotional Resilience, Training4Wales
- How to kick start your job search and get it organised, #ENTRYLEVELBOSS
- Preparing for a Virtual Careers Fair, #ENTRYLEVELBOSS
- Be Your Own Boss - International Women's Day Panel Discussion, Swansea University
- LGBTQ+ - "Being out in the workplace" Swansea University LGBTQ+ Staff Network
- Kickstart your Career in the New World, Tor Abrams
- Graduate LinkedIn Training, SEA
- iBroadcast, Aspire2Be & Sean Holley
- Presentation Skills for Graduates, Centre for Academic Success
- Digital Upskilling and Online Collaborative Working, Aspire2Be
- Gradfutures Series, GradConsult
 - » Think Like a Recruiter
 - » This Is Me: A Guide to Personal Branding
 - » The Art of Communicating Brilliantly
 - » Being Effective in Life and Work
 - » The Importance of Commercial Awareness
 - » Building a Growth Mindset
- The Confidence Series, Aimee Bateman
 - » Overcoming Imposter Syndrome
 - » Staying Motivated and Building Resilience Whilst Job-hunting
 - » Find Your Tribe: Building your 3 Network Pillars

STUDENT QUOTE: GO WALES PROGRAMME

" I feel that the scheme has increased my confidence and employability skills through practical experiences which I can apply within a formal work environment. "



DELIVERING ON STRATEGY

Advice and Financial Assistance

629 

Employability Bursaries (£100 - £300) were provided to students/graduates to cover expenses such as transport to interviews, equipment for home-working and interviewing, DBS checks, business attire and employability training.

2,429 

enquiries answered and resources provided via dedicated SEA inboxes supporting students, graduates, staff and graduate employers.

Employability Support, Development and Teaching

1,912 

students and graduates were in receipt of impartial Careers Information, Advice and Guidance by qualified SEA staff via guidance appointments (Zoom, email and telephone) and virtual drop-ins.

SEA staff taught within 61 modules (143 hours), reaching over 6,500 students. They also trained 119 staff to deliver employability training themselves.

3,516 

students completed 5-10 units within the new Career Development Course (CDC) and 39 modules were embedded with the CDC - leading to 21,543 individual CDC units completed! Units include developing self-awareness, mindset, commercial awareness and career action-planning.

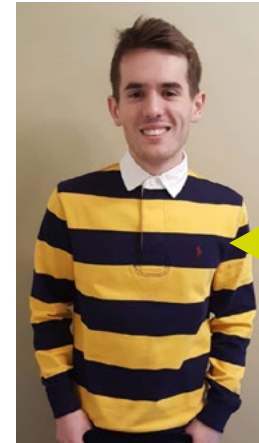
180 

graduates also accessed the new Graduate Career Development Course.

Leading SEA to deliver roughly **60,000** interactions with our target markets in the 20/21 academic year.

SEA CASE STUDIES

CAREERS CONSULTANCY TEAM



Elliott Studholme

Elliott Studholme is a 3rd Year Chemistry Student at Swansea University; he was applying for one of the six available Wellcome Biomedical Vacation Scholarship (BVS) positions offered at Oxford University in the summer of 2021. Elliott reached out to the Careers Consultancy Team for advice on his application form, CV and personal statement for the scholarship.

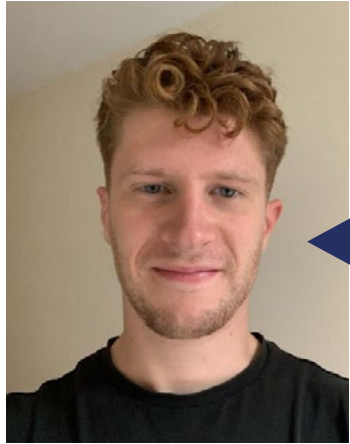
Upon our initial meeting, he had produced a draft version of his application form, and from there, Elliott took all offered advice on-board, clarifying the changes he had made along the way, and fine-tuning his documents until he produced a final draft that he was happy with. Elliott had also completed the Career Development Course as part of an academic module on his degree course, providing him with relevant careers insights.

He is of the first generation in his family to go to university and with the support from the careers team and a well-thought-out application, he secured his position for a research project on the Wellcome BVS Programme at Oxford University - setting him in a strong stance for a successful career in the future.



I just received news that I got the placement for Oxford this Summer! I'm extremely shocked and shaky at the moment, but, of course, like when we did the statement, I am very grateful for all of the help that you gave me with my personal statement and CV! The advice from Zdravka really was of great help - now I am going to take some time off after the end of exams and then heading up to Oxford to get-to-grips with what I'll need to know for the project.

GO WALES



Joseph Newton

Joseph engaged with the GO Wales scheme in 2021 whilst he was studying for his Environmental Dynamics and Climate Change MSc. Joe joined the programme as he was concerned about his ability to compete with other candidates when applying for jobs through conventional methods.

Due to his dyslexia, application forms and other assessments were a huge barrier. Other learning difficulties also caused obstacles which led to further anxieties around his graduate prospects; Joe was keen to build his confidence to ensure he was able to present himself to future employers.

Joe was interested in environmental science and conservation roles which involved data collection and analysis. However, Joe had no contacts who could help him secure work experience, and little knowledge of where these jobs would exist, and how he would cope with the work.

During 2021, GO Wales secured Joe a Sand Dune Habitat Management, Research and Monitoring opportunity with the Biodiversity Department at Swansea University. This role appealed to Joe's areas of interests and would help him gain an understanding of the environmental science and conservation sector and its employment opportunities. Joe's experience helped enhance his surveying and field work skills, whilst also enhancing his ability to work independently in a professional setting.



Through my experience, I learnt about employment routes and the skills required to gain employment in the industry. I particularly enjoyed the physicality of the role; the necessity to be practical, whilst also being mentally stimulating. I achieved my goals to the full extent and was able to develop my surveying skills. This has been a valuable opportunity and experience particularly during the coronavirus pandemic.

GRADUATE SUPPORT PROGRAMME



Alex Markovits

My name is Alex Markovits, and I recently graduated with a First in Business Management from Swansea University, and will be continuing at Swansea to study a Masters in Strategic Marketing from September. I am from Maidenhead in Berkshire, South-East England. I have experienced barriers to entering education and employment due to my Asperger Syndrome, which has meant that I have experienced a combination of prejudice and confidence issues, making access to employment more difficult.

I have previous experience in Marketing from a Placement working at Swansea University. I was looking for a 2021 summer internship to provide experience in Marketing, and I was struggling to find one before joining GSP. I was greatly lacking in confidence that I would be able to find an internship until I joined GSP, due to a combination of the pandemic and negative experiences in previous roles.

A lack of available jobs is the biggest obstacle. The staff running the Graduate Support Programme have contacts from a number of organisations, who they were able to get me in touch with, and gave me clear instructions as to what I needed to do to apply for an internship. I found the staff working for GSP to be kind, helpful, approachable and responsive, which made applying for a summer internship a seamless process. GSP gives graduates a gateway into employment by giving them an opportunity to obtain paid experience, which will enhance their prospects when applying for future roles. Through GSP, I obtained a marketing internship at Disability Wales.



I faced barriers post completion of my degree due to the pandemic. I could not relocate for my employment as I have a family to care for and finding somewhere I aspired to work was a bit challenging. (Discussing GSP opportunities) All of these boosted my confidence, made me commercially aware in the sector and more employable. The barriers were overcome and now I work as an employee at Disability Wales, what more can I ask for!

STUDENT AMBASSADOR SCHEME (SAS)



Chido Ranganayi

While being part of the Student Ambassador Scheme (SAS) I have learnt numerous skills that I used while completing my degree, and now as I work as an Economics and Policy Analyst at RSM UK.

Undertaking campus tours for Open Days taught me how to interact with different kinds of people by utilising good communication skills. It's these communication skills that landed me the opportunity within the Scheme to be a Digital Ambassador and help lay the foundations for how the university could increase its digital outreach. As a result of this, I was offered the opportunity to present alongside the Vice Chancellor, the university's Registrar, and the SAS Manager. These presentation skills helped me when doing group and individual presentations as part of my module assessments, as well as during my assessment centre for the role that I am currently working in.

Additionally, the skills and the network I built along the way allowed me to know the right people to speak to when it came to initiating the Scheme's Diversity and Inclusion Ambassador Committee (DIAC).



I was pleasantly surprised when my idea was taken seriously by members of the university's senior management team, but in them doing so I realised that not only was the SAS there to support me with job experience but I'd found a table of open ears. It was personally encouraging and gave the confidence to know that my ideas are able to create impact, and that for me, is truly priceless.



STUDENT QUOTE: #ENTRYLEVELBOSS

"It has been an amazing experience I will never forget, and I am so grateful for all that I've learnt."

PARTNERSHIP SUCCESSES



SANTANDER UNIVERSITIES

Our ongoing relationship with Santander Universities saw success through a number of initiatives throughout the 2020-21 academic year.

This academic year was the first in a 3 year contract of agreed funding which for SEA sees £20k per year funding for our extracurricular employability training, this year the # programme (detailed below).

We also continued to receive funding (£10k) for our internship programme through Santander Universities as well as participating in their online self-development courses, the Black Inclusion programme, and Freelancer grant scheme via REIS. We had excellent numbers of applications in each category and Swansea students were winners in both the online self-development course, with a student winning £10k for their professional development, and the Freelancer grant scheme with a student winning £1k towards their freelance work.

This excellent relationship with Santander led to Swansea University being offered an extra £20k funding to distribute as we saw fit amongst students for their self-development. Therefore, alongside the Enterprise team we developed the Student CPD500 fund, offering up-to £500 funding for CPD and professional courses that students wish to take alongside their university studies. This funding will be spent in the 2021/22 academic year.

ENTRY LEVEL BOSS

#ENTRYLEVELBOSS

Thanks to funding from Santander Universities, Swansea University Employability Academy was able to offer an Employability Skills Programme in partnership with #ENTRYLEVELBOSS.

The programme saw many student applicants and 12 were selected by #ENTRYLEVELBOSS, based on who they considered the programme would be most helpful to. Since completing the programme two of these students have already found their own internships and been back in touch with SEA to access funding for their internship providers.

We have also received the following excellent feedback from the participants:

"It completely changed my mind when thinking about my future career. I am so lucky to have two professional ladies who give me a lot of insights into industry. Sally is kind enough to give me a lot of great advice about my future career or about my life. Alexa helped me with my CV and it is really helpful for my future career!"

- Olivia, BSc Finance

"It has been an amazing experience I will never forget, and I am so grateful for all that I've learnt. Sally as well as Alexa were amazing, keeping a positive and welcome atmosphere that was also supportive. Their advice helped me a lot in discovering what I would like to do, but most importantly they encouraged me to get up and just do it."

- Victoria, BA Media and Communication

Funding from Santander Universities has been confirmed for the next two academic years, and we hope to work with ELB again to repeat this success.



BRIGHT NETWORK

Thanks to an ongoing relationship with the Bright Network and a promotional programme that encompassed the work of both SEA and many departments in Faculties, many more virtual internships were offered this year.

Please find a breakdown of Swansea University sign-ups below:

Total Bright Network Sign-ups	418
Professional Services & Consulting	34
Technology	25
Investment Banking and Asset Management	53
Public Sector, Policy & Charity	20
Business, Operations & Marketing	57
Audit, Tax & Corporate Finance	58
Engineering & Infrastructure	67
Commercial Law	38
On Demand*	66

* "On Demand" shows the number of students that have signed up to have access to the resources, without selecting a particular pathway.



Aspire2Be

iBroadcast sees students complete a week of intensive, hands-on media training delivered by Aspire2Be alongside sports media personality and former Head Ospreys Coach Sean Holley, followed by mentoring and support to complete individual and group work-based projects.

During the pandemic the project underwent a digital transformation. Students were trained using online collaborative working tools, and benefited from Sean's experiences in the pandemic media space, giving invaluable insights into live industrial changes, as they happened. Guest-speakers were brought in daily, participants were supported with interview skills training and encouraged to ask incisive questions. Not only did this help them to develop new skills and grow in confidence, but it also allowed participants to maximise their learning outcomes and learn from the best in the business.

Students graduated from iBroadcast with tangible skills and experience, and crucially, a project to add to their portfolio to help them to evidence their skills which was relevant to 'business as normal' and 'the new-normal' ways of working.

Nick Evans, from Aspire2Be said, "Working with the University has widened our perspective on future talent and opportunities in the digital sector for students. The iBroadcast programme itself has enabled us access to some of the University's best up-and-coming talent and we have benefited hugely from the plethora of students who have participated and subsequently fed into the iBroadcast programme development cycle.

Such is the talent of some of the students on the iBroadcast Programme, opportunities are often identified as to how we can utilise their skills to develop our offerings, allowing us to reflect as a business on our own processes and programmes."



JOBTEASER

Our continued partnership with JobTeaser (branded as Employment Zone at Swansea University) as our main digital employability platform enabled us to quickly pivot to a digital model for our Centenary Careers Fair, Autumn Careers Fair, our first Graduate Careers Fair in June, and other employer events.

We were also able to continue to offer our digital jobs board to students, graduates and employers throughout the difficult lockdowns to make sure that remote working opportunities were promoted during this time.

Thanks to this focus on digital-first we were able to record employer talks and upload these alongside other resources to the JobTeaser platform. We also used the platform to distribute our weekly newsletter which highlighted relevant opportunities and upcoming events alongside platform-generated content relevant to each student's preferences and profile. JobTeaser have continued to innovate in the employability software space, expanding their offer to include new innovation such as a motivations questionnaire.

Further innovations such as user-generated reviews of work opportunities are due to be introduced in the 2021/22 academic year.

SWANSEA UNIVERSITY'S ENTERPRISE TEAM

Developing entrepreneurial talent is a distinctive feature of the Swansea University student experience. Working collaboratively with the Enterprise Team enables SEA to provide students with skills that will benefit them in their career journeys, or with their goal of starting their own business. In 2021, 47 student businesses were created at Swansea University. Other highlights include:

- The Santander funded Annual Big Pitch Competition, where students pitch for funding from a £24,000 pot to fund their start-up businesses
- There are entrepreneurial modules within SEA's Career Development Course
- We currently have 75 Staff Enterprise Champions
- Swansea University was shortlisted for the 'Outstanding Entrepreneurial University of the Year Award' in the 2021 Times Higher Education Awards
- Through our incredible Alumni, such as Dr Ben Reynolds of Urban Foundry, our students and graduates sell at local markets, immersing them in our local community
- Students also have access to national and global initiatives such as the award-winning Summer Start-Up Week, Hack of Change which saw 75 of our students partake and we were the only UK university invited to Texas A&M University's "Invent for the Planet" Hackathon.

INTERNAL STAKEHOLDERS



EMPLOYABILITY ECO SYSTEM

EXTERNAL STAKEHOLDERS

PROUDLY WORKING WITH:



AND MANY MORE!

CONTACT US

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