

Background

Three universities and some national work

- **Liverpool Hope University** 1991-2009 included secondment to develop Outlook Diversity Mentoring Scheme 1999/2000 (across 4 institutions). High numbers of local mature students..esp women returners
- **University of Chester** 2009-2015 included work on collaborative (7 institutions) graduate retention project which evolved into OFFA funded programme. Careers and Employability Service: own devolved OFFA budget
- **University of Liverpool** 2015-present (one of best performing Russell Group HEIs for WP)
- **AGCAS** (Association of Graduate Careers Advisory Services) Board of Directors with responsibility for Diversity 2004-2007)



Challenges

“The thing is, where I come from you don't want to blow your own trumpet, you know? It's just not done. The other day, when I was picking the kids up, I made the mistake of saying I went to 'uni' rather than 'college' and you want to hear the flak!

One of the mums said, 'You used to be alright, but since you started on that bloody degree you've become a right snobby cow!' It was my fault for talking about it”

BA QTS Student, Liverpool Hope University, quoted in ‘Outcasts on the Inside’ Paul Redmond



Some of the challenges

- Own family/community expectations
- Family education and work history
- Financial circumstances
- Choice of University attended
- Unpaid internships
- Employer recruitment and selection practices (e.g. psychometric tests)
- Dominant focus on ‘access to university’ rather than ‘access from...’



Access agreements and graduate employability: a shift

In 2015/16:

- 83% of access agreements mention activities to develop employability skills, including:
- 67% of access agreements mention career development, advice and guidance, including:
- 88% of access agreements mention placements, internships and work experience, including

Rachel Tooth OFFA Bridge Group Report Feb 2016



Graduate Employers and Social Mobility; another shift

- Two years ago only 15% of AGR members were measuring the social background of their graduate intakes.
- Now 25% are.
- And 35% now have measures in place to increase the proportion of people hired from socially disadvantaged backgrounds.
- Over 70% of law firms have programmes in place to address social mobility.

Stephen Isherwood, Association of Graduate Recruiters



Question

What connects a 'Lean Manufacturing Course' at Jaguar Land Rover in Liverpool, a work placement at the US Antarctica Programme, and attendance at a Jellyfish Symposium in Barcelona?



Two HEIs-current initiatives

Liverpool

- Employability Bursary Award
- Online alumni Mentoring
- UpReach partnership

www.upreach.org.uk

Chester

- Employability Bursary
- Graduate Head Start
- Chester Difference Award



Costa Coffee vs the Jungle Trek: experience counts?



Thank You.....questions and discussion

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NEON Summer Symposium 10th

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UNIVERSITY OF
LIVERPOOL

CAREERS &
EMPLOYABILITY SERVICE



What needs to happen?

- **Universities (and schools)**
- **Employers**
- **Students and graduates**
- **Govt**

