

Developing skills via practical training: The Algerian Business Students' Experience

- Djessas Omar *

- Laaraf Faiza **

Abstract:

This study aims to evaluate the development of important set of skills during a period of practical training within Algerian Business College. A questionnaire-based survey was administrated to students doing master in their final year at college of business in University Farhat Abbas-Setif (UFAS). A comparison between three departments and genders was been done. As a result, both of the students' males and females in these departments agreed that they were effective in developing a set of skills.

Key word:(HEIs) Higher education institutes

ملخص:

تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى تقييم تنمية مجموعة مهمة من المهارات خلال فترة التدريب الميداني في كلية للعلوم الاقتصادية في الجزائر. حيث تم توزيع استبيان على طلبة الماستر الذين هم في السنة النهائية في كلية الاقتصاد جامعة فرحات بسطيف، والقيام بدراسة مقارنة ما بين الأقسام الثلاثة للكلية والجنس، وبينت النتائج أن كلا الجنسين في هذه الأقسام موافقين على أن هذه الأقسام كانت فعالة في تنمية مجموعة المهارات. الكلمات المفتاحية: مؤسسات التعليم العالي.

* Teacher at the Department of comerciale sciences univerty of M'sila

** Assistant professor at the Department of comerciale sciencesUniversity of M'sila.

INTRODUCTION

Practical training is one of work experience placement that is still be used by many universities and HEIs. It can be identified as an established academic and business practice observed by students in an organization within a given period [1- p 124]. It is also known as "co-operative education" or "internship", so, The aim of most tertiary institutions is how to make high employable students who are ready for working life and any failure in equipping them with employability skills has far-reaching effects [2- pp 41-52;3-4]. Most of the institutions organize and promote the placement of students in both private and public sectors in order to develop student's work experience and to know how gender differences of students can affect them in attaining employability skills during practical training period [5- pp. 31-39]. For that reason, studies on this area are clearly needed.

1.1 Problem Statement

As mentioned earlier, studies on development of transferable skills are needed in many developing countries, and Algeria is no exception. Algeria is one of the countries that are transferring its higher education system in order to produce a higher quality students required by employers. Currently Algeria produces 100 000 university graduates per annum. The total number of students in higher education is close to 1 million today and it is estimated to be around 1.4 million by the end of the decade [6- p4]. There are many challenges facing Algerian higher education as it was mentioned in the report that has been edited by African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM) on Algeria in how to ensure modernity of its education system in terms of its programs and the way of teaching. As well as, how to provide high quality training for labour market's demand in order to reduce the large number of unemployed graduates and to equip students with necessary skills for competition in the quasi-global labour market, thus, to reduce the risk of brain drain phenomenon.

1.2 Research objectives

The study is aimed at achieving the following objectives;

1. To identify the set of skills that can be developed by business student during the practical training.
2. To determine the students perceptions towards the benefits of acquiring university education.
3. To determine the students' perceptions towards the benefits for undertaking practical training.

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Development of Employability Skills via Practical Training

Employers required the employees to display competencies, for instance the ability to lead, teamwork, how to solve problems and initiative [7- pp 435-457].

Employers are looking for certain level of skills to be further developed and the opportunity to develop those skills. such as self-management skills; self-confidence ;ability to cope with uncertainty; ability to work under pressure; communication skills; action-planning skills; IT skills; proficiency in networking and team working; readiness to explore and create opportunities and willingness to learn''[8- p259-263].In addition, Watson [9- pp19] mentioned that there are many skills are required for an effective team, such as planning and goal setting, record keeping, time management and organization, the ability to lead, to communicate and to make decision. Zinser [10- pp402-410] categorize these skills into three categories as follows: academic, technical and social skills which include some challenges such as global economy, a high technology, and increasing social diversity. The most skills learned by students during their academic career are technical skills which refer to content-specific knowledge of studied subjects or within particular discipline like computer science or economics. However, non-technical skills are those skills that can be obtained through working or training in different jobs or professions [11- pp16-17].Enhancement of these skills is not solely the outcome of attending training courses. But the

combination of learning and development approaches can be beneficial, whilst both are seeking to improve employability skills.

Eraut [12- pp 22–29] determined six types of knowledge which can be arguably be developed at the time of doing work placement : situational knowledge (how to read real –life situations), knowledge of practice, knowledge of people , conceptual knowledge, process knowledge or knowledge of specific techniques, and control knowledge such as time management ,self-management ,and problem-solving skills. The four groups (male students, female, lecturers and employers) which have been chosen for collecting data on the importance of employability skills that was conducted by Wickramasinghe & Perera [13- pp 226-244],identified Problem solving, self-confidence, and team work as important requirements, also they Found that gender could influence employability skills based on the nature of the sample that was chosen for this study male and female having equal chances to study, to work and to apply skills to gain an appropriate job and so on, in contrast, the finding suggest that all the employability skills have been given an importance by female than male graduates except oral communication skills. In addition, gender was found correlated significantly with two skills which are ‘self confidence, and ‘learning skills’. A comparatively high level of ‘learning skills’ and self confidence were demonstrated by female compared to male graduates.

2.2 Practical Training and Reasons for Going to University

The prime motivation in attending university for the majority of students is not to study a particular subject in depth, but to enhance their employment prospects [14- pp 98-108]. In the one hand, when student decide to pursue his education rather than of joining work force means no income could be earned during the time of study and incurring the fees, on the other hand, it can be seen as a good decision in the expectation of later increase in earnings[15- pp122-8].

Students have to be aware of how their employability skills and why are being developed, at the same time they have to

recognize the importance of the approach. Then, they will be more responsible and take ownership of these initiatives, as a result, far more chance for success [16- pp63-78]. Producing employable graduates is becoming more important and more complex, at the same time the number of graduates diverse in age, social and motivation is expanding faster than the market. Usually students leave universities with a good knowledge of the subjects they studied during the previous few years. Although, these skills still not enough or fully meet labour market requirements and Graduates still need to develop their personal and professional skills relevant to this market in order to improve their chances of employment. This is because employers are looking for graduates, who have developed generic skills in many areas.

Universities have a big responsibility toward students' need to take an advantage of the opportunity to develop these skills during work placement or practical training.

2.3 Practical Training within Higher Education

The relationship between academia and industry are described by Neumann and Banghart [18- pp 7-11], as a “gap to be bridged “. Higher educationinstitutes (HEIs) attempt to bridge this gap through a variety of methods by involving employers in the assessment of courses after the design and delivery of those courses.French [19- pp 406–414] argued that such links are required for enhancing what students learn and from his view, ““educational institutions” teach you how to learn from your life, but “real life” itself, actual experience.

The key for the best preparing for students in managing their career expectations for work and how they can face future changes and challenges in labour market after finishing their studies is the emphasis on a collective approach by higher education and industry to provide structured programs in order to enhance the employability and effectiveness of students Whichis considered the best investment for managing stable transition of employment skills from the practice of lifelong learning techniques.For instance,an empirical study was done on the unemployment in Greek by Mihail

[20- pp28-41], where he found that unemployment percentage is very high among graduates; hence the ministry of higher education launched a program of internship with different organizations ranging from two to six months in order to improve transferable skills of students over the time of their training. Boyle and Crosby [21- pp81-85] suggest that for adequate evaluation of the quality of educational programs Internship should be required for both faculty and students.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Target population

Populations of this research are postgraduate students in college of business at University Farhat Abbas- Setif (UFAS) that is located in the east of Algeria.

3.2 Sample

A number of 230 postgraduate students were identified as Potential respondents. These students are doing different business programs in their final year under the new system applied in Algerian universities since 2004 which is called 'license, master et doctorate' (LMD) in French and it can be translated into English as degree, master and PhD. In UFAS all students are required to attend practical training as compulsory component before graduation. The 230 students were selected to answer the questions which are provided on the questionnaire.

3.3 Instrument

The instrument used in this study is structured questionnaire which came in the form of a modification from a study done by Catriona Paisey, Nicholas J. Paisey, [22- pp 89–108]. The questionnaire consists of four sections as follows: section A has 6 questions related to Demographic information; section B consists of 14 items about skills which students perceived to be developed during the period of practical training; section C includes 4 items on reasons for going to university; and section D include 4 perceived benefits of practical training.

3.4 Data collection

Questionnaires will be used by respondents after conducting pilot study to test the accuracy of the research instrument. After getting a good result from the pilot test questionnaire will be distributed directly to the sample of students that has been selected to answer the questions during the business English course in order to have meaningful responses from the respondents. After one month the data used in this study was collected via questionnaires completed by 230 students in order to maximize the response rate in three business departments undertaking different majors as part of their postgraduate studies at college of business in University Farhat Abbas Setif (UFAS).

The 230 questionnaires were distributed and collected directly from the respondents at each Class. After eliminating unusable questionnaires, an effective 183 responses (79.56% response rate) were used. Most of the unusable responses were due to the incompleteness of the Questionnaires.

3.5 Data Analysis

Software Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) program was used for statistical analyses. The requirements gathering process takes as its input the goals identified in the high-level requirements section of the project plan. Each goal will be refined into a set of one or more requirements. For this study the requirements gathering will occur through distributed questionnaire directly to the business students in college of business at UFAS Algeria. Data was analysed predominantly by t-test as well as one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA)

DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

4.1 Descriptive study

Table 4.1: Gender and Age

	Respondents	Number of respondents	Total mean
Gender	Female	133	
	Male	50	
	Total	183	

Age	23-25years old	183	24
------------	----------------	-----	----

From the Table 4.1 it can be seen that the majority of the respondents are female making a share of 133 from 183; while the respondents' age is between 23-25 years old.

Table4.2: Current Programmes and High School Qualification

	PROGRAMMES	NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS	
		NTS	%
Department of Economics	Islamic Banking	25	14
	Money & Banking	30	16
	Insurance & Finance	40	22
	Finance & Accounting	30	16
Department of Commerce	Audit & Accounting	16	8.7
	Marketing	13	7.1
	Management of SMEs	18	9.8
Department of Management	Audit & Management	11	6
	Total	183	100
Respondents High School Qualification	Economic	47	26
	Science	128	70
	Technical	7	3.8
	Other	1	0.5
	Total	183	100

Table 4.2 shows that there are three groups of students related to their departments, the number of respondents is different because the real number is different as it was mentioned in chapter three and also the unusable responses that have been received is different but sufficient for the study. As well as, there are 128 respondents (69.9%) coming from science background related to their high school qualification, and 47 respondents (25.7%) coming from economic background while the rest coming from technical and one from mathematics background.

Table 4.3 Analysis of respondents by gender, place of practical training and work experience

Table4.3: Places where students attended their practical training

Place of Practical Training	Total		Male		Female	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Audit Firm-Big Four	1	0.5	1	2	0	0
Audit Firm International Non Big Four	2	1.1	0	0	2	1
Audit Firm Local	5	2.7	0	0	5	4
Commercial Company	81	44.3	24	48	57	43
Government Department	66	36.1	17	34	49	37
International Bank	24	13	6	12	18	13
Local Bank	4	2.3	2	4	2	2
Total	183	100	50	100	133	100
Part –Timer	15	8	10	20	5	4
Not Part Timer	168	92	40	80	128	96
Total	183	100	50	100	133	100

Table 4.3 shows that majority of the students (81or 44.3%) join commercial companies for practical training followed by government companies (66 or 36.1%) and other like international banks and local banks by (28 or 15.3%).While the rest join audit firms.

Generally in Algeria students work after they graduated, hence table 4.3 shows most of respondents (168 or 91.8%) have no part-time job. However, 15 respondents or 8.2% are working part- time.

Table4.4 students' views of development skills (N= number of students)

				Departments								
Total				Economics Department (ED)		Commerce Department (CD)		Management Department (MD)				
	believing strongly developed (N)	Rank	believing strongly developed or moderately developed (N)	believing strongly developed (N)	Rank	Believing strongly developed or moderately developed (N)	Believing strongly developed (N)	Rank	believing strongly developed or moderately developed (N)	believing strongly developed (N)	Rank	Believing strongly developed or moderately developed (N)
-Listening	108	1	171	53	1	86	36	1	59	19	2	28
-Working in group	97	2	149	48	2	92	35	2	46	19	1	30
-Computer ability	94	3	167	45	3	78	27	3	45	17	3	27
-Coping with stress	64	4	146	32	4	75	21	4	51	16	4	27
-Meeting deadlines	63	5	139	31	6	70	18	5	51	15	5	25
-Oral communication	62	6	157	31	5	75	17	6	40	14	6	25
-Time management	49	7	118	28	7	83	17	7	40	11	8	22
-Written communication	49	8	144	23	8	66	14	8	50	11	7	28
-Critical thinking	41	9	150	21	9	56	12	9	45	8	9	29
-Ability to interpret financial information	37	11	113	19	10	73	11	12	41	6	11	26
-Problem solving skills	37	10	146	18	11	69	11	10	47	6	10	29
-ability to extract an analyse information from a variety sources	33	13	145	17	12	82	11	11	49	5	12	25
-Ability to generate practical ideas	33	12	154	15	13	73	10	13	48	4	13	24
-Creative thinking	23	14	110	9	14	49	10	14	39	3	14	25

Table 4.5 Students' Views of Development Skills –Mean Scores

- For each of the following skills, students were asked to indicate whether they felt that the skills had been strongly developed, moderately developed, or not developed. There were ranked 1, 2, and 3, respectively and mean score are calculated

Skills	Total		Departments							
	Mean score	Rank	Mal	Fem	(ED)	Rank	(CD)	Rank	(MD)	Rank
Listening	1.47	1	1.38	1.51	**1.53	2	**1.36	1	**1.41	2
Computer ability	1.57	2	**1.74	**1.51	1.54	1	1.61	3	1.52	1
Working in group	1.66	3	1.66	1.65	1.7	3	1.73	2	1.59	3
Oral communication	1.8	4	1.76	1.82	1.83	4	1.8	4	1.62	5
Coping with stress	1.85	5	1.84	1.86	1.87	6	1.83	5	1.69	10
Meeting deadlines	1.9	6	2	1.86	1.88	7	1.92	8	1.72	6
Written communication	1.95	7	2.02	1.92	1.94	5	1.98	13	1.72	4
Critical thinking	1.96	8	*1.82	*2.01	*1.96	9	*1.98	9	*1.79	8
Ability to generate practical ideas	1.98	9	1.98	1.98	2.03	8	2.01	6	1.86	11
Problem solving skills	2	10	1.94	2.02	2.06	12	2.02	11	1.97	13
Ability to extract and analyse information from a variety sources	2.03	11	1.96	2.05	2.07	10	2.03	10	1.97	7
Ability to interpret financial information	2.08	12	1.96	2.12	2.08	11	2.03	7	2.03	9
Time management	2.09	13	2.02	2.11	2.19	13	2.1	12	2.07	12
Creative thinking	2.27	14	**2.08	**2.35	**2.39	14	**2.17	14	**2.1	14

*Development of skill is significant at the 0.05 level (T-Test, 2-tailed).

** Development of skill is significant at the 0.01 level (T-Test, 2-tailed).

Note:

Comparison between Male and Female was done by independent sample T-test.

Comparison between Departments was done by one –way Anova.

4.2 perceived development of important job skills

Students were asked about the extent of development of a list of fourteen skills. These skills were selected as they were commonly cited in the literature review earlier. Table 4.4 displays the number of students ranking these skills as being ‘strongly developed’ and ‘moderately developed’, while Table 4.5 provides full details on the students’ perception on the development of employability skills during practical training period, reporting mean scores. Taken together, these tables show that the internship appeared to be most successful at developing listening, computer ability, working in group, oral communication, coping with stress and meeting deadlines skills, but by coming to students in different departments the results for the four first skills are highly developed with small difference in ranking except students in management department ranked written communication skill as the fourth one. Therefore, they show that other skills are not developed to the same extent during practical training period.

Table 4. 6 Reasons for going to university: Student ranked four reasons as follows: 1= most important reason, 4= least important reason. Mean scores were then calculated.

Reasons	Total		Departments				
	Mean score	Rank	Male	female	(ED)	(CD)	(MD)
career reasons	1.55	1	1.54	1.56	1.51	1.63	1.55
personal development	1.64	2	1.58	1.67	1.6	1.61	1.86
encouragement by parents	2.07	3	2.16	2.03	**1.82	3	**2.76
encouragement by school	2.83	4	2.83	2.83	**2.61	**2.12	3.17

* Reason is significant at the 0.05 level (T-Test, 2-tailed).

** Reason is significant at the 0.01 level (T-Test, 2-tailed).

Note:

Comparison between Male and Female was done by independent sample T-test.

Comparison between Departments was done by one –way Anova.

4.3 Reasons for Going to University

When student were asked to rank their reasons for entering higher education, they regarded career reasons as the most important, followed by personal development reasons. Encouragement, by either parents or school, was of lesser importance as it is shown in Table 4.6 from students perspective in the two departments (ED) and (MD) there was one significant difference relating to the importance of encouragement by parent and encouragement by school in the decision to go to university for (ED) and (MD). In contrast, all the students agreed that encouragement by school was the least important reason for going to university.

Table4.7 Perceived Benefits of Practical Training: Students ranked four reasons as follows: 1=most important reason, 4= least important reason.

Benefits	Total				Departments		
	mean score	Rank	Female	Male	(ED)	(CD)	(MD)
getting a real life experience making you more employable chance to tray business work before committing yourself to a permanent job opportunity to earn money	1.5	1	1.47	1.6	1.52	1.56	1.34
	*2.14	2	2.24	**1.9	2.35	2.29	2.34
	2.28	3	2.31	2.2	2.04	2.14	2.21
	2.97	4	3.01	2.86	2.89	3.07	3.03

* Benefit is significant at the 0.05 level(T-Test, 2-tailed).

** Benefit is significant at the 0.01 level (T-Test, 2-tailed).

Note:

Comparison between Male and Female was done by independent sample T-test.

Comparison between Departments was done by one –wayAnov

4.4 Perceived Benefits of Practical training

Students considered that the main benefit of a work placement was getting ‘real life’ experience as it is shown in Table 7. The opportunity to earn money was the lowest ranked reason.

Male students felt that enhanced employability was more important than female who felt that was moderately developed. There was no significant difference between perceived benefits from students' perspective in the three departments.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

5.1 Discussion

5.1.1 Development of skills during the period of practical training

The results in chapter four show that, listening, computer ability, working in group and oral communication skills are highly developed by all students that have undergone practical training. "coping with stress" was also ranked high by students in those departments. However, students in management department ranked written communication more highly than the other two departments because of practical training's kind they undergone and which is more related to their programme (management).

It is interesting to note that female students have acquired better computer ability skills. It was the only skill that females ranked differently from males at a statistically significant level. On the other hand, males ranked critical thinking and creative thinking at statistically significant level different from females, thus, showing that the perception of this skill remains constant by gender over different types of programmes.

5.1.2 Reasons for going to university

Students at three departments ranked their reasons for going to university in the same order. There were two statistically significant department's differences in reasons for going to university were evident. Students at (ED) Economic Department and (MD) management Department ranked encouragement by parents before encouragement by school differently from students at (CD) commercial sciences Department, because school play a main role in encouraging students for going to university and choosing professional business programmes like accounting and audit, hence it is very required by labour market in Algeria .

5.1.3 Perceived benefits of practical training

Students considered that the main benefit of a work placement was “getting a real life experience”. There was a significant difference between male and female students regarding the enhancement of employability; male students felt that enhanced employability was more important than females. For the other perceived benefits there were no significant difference between male and female students and they ranked opportunity to earn money as the least important reason, even though, males regarded this reason more strongly than females. There was no significant difference between perceptions of students in the three departments.

5.2 Conclusion

The above findings show that the postgraduate students in a final year at college of business in UFAS -Algeria were highly career-orientated. Students perceived the gaining of ‘real life’ experience to be an important benefit of undertaking a practical training. There was considerable satisfaction with the practical training and the participation in this program had influenced the career plans of most students. The career-orientated nature of the students involved in this program is important in any interpretation of student perceptions of the development of skills on the postgraduate program. There was considerable agreement among students in the three departments (department of economics, department of commerce, and department of management) about the development of a wide variety of skills. In contrast, other skills still need to being developed especially ability to extract and analyse from a variety of sources, and ability to interpret financial information for accounting& finance students, insurance & finance, and banking students in two departments(ED) and (CD) related to their programmes.

Males ranked the development of critical thinking and creative thinking significantly differs than female students. However, female ranked computer ability skill significantly highly than male. This finding lends weight to the view that the sexes do hold differing views about aspects of their own abilities, while this relates to perceptions and not to the development of skills. On the one hand, the male and

female students play different roles within companies. But based on the job descriptions of the different posts held by students suggest that no difference in the role between gender.

5.3 Recommendations

The findings that have been discussed above would be useful to business colleges in Algerian universities in order to know at what extent some employability skills were developed by students during practical training period. It is also important to identify reasons of less development of other skills which considered very important to business students such as, the ability to extract and analyse information, ability to interpret financial information and time management. Furthermore, the finding of perceived benefits of practical training from students' perspective and reasons for going to university could be useful for measuring career orientation for students which help them to improve some technical skills which they have already acquired from the university. In addition, the university might also introduce a course on career orientation and employability skills that will prepare students for working life and Students should also be taught how to write curriculum vitae (CV) with techniques of interviews.

The findings of this study would be useful to other Business colleges in the worldwide and especially in the Arab countries in order to put a good and effective career plans for business students. As a result, these institutions will produce a highly employable graduate who can compete in the global labour market.

REFERENCES

1. APRM Country Review Report of the People's Democratic Republic of Algeria. (July 2007).Country Review Report N 4. Retrieved from
2. Bhaerman, R. and Spill, R. (1988), "A dialogue on employability skills: how can they be taught?" Journal of Career Development, Vol. 15 No. 1.
3. Boyle, M.A. and Crosby, R. (1997), "Academic program evaluation: Lessons from business and industry", Journal of Industrial Teacher Education, Vol. 34 No. 3, pp. 81-85.
4. Catriona Paisey; &Nicholas J. Paisey, (2010). "Developing skills via work placements in accounting: Student and employer."Accounting Forum,34, pp 89.

5. Central Bank of Sri Lanka (2003), Central Bank Annual Report 2000, available at: www.lanka.net/centralbank (accessed January 2005).
6. Cotton, K. (1993), Developing Employability Skills, Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory, available at: www.nwrel.org/scpd/sirs/8/c015.html (accessed April 2005)
7. Cottrell, S. (2003), Skills for Success: the Personal Development Planning Handbook, PalgraveMacmillan, London.
8. Druskat, V., & Wheeler, J. V. (2003). Managing from the boundary: The effective leadership of self-managing work teams. *Academy of Management Journal*, 46(4).
9. Ellis, N. (2000, 124).Developing graduate sales professionals through co-operative education and work placements: a relationship marketing approach. *Journal of European Industrial*(0309-059).
10. Eraut, M. (1990).Identifying the knowledge which underpins performance. In H. Black, &K.Wolf (Eds.), *Knowledge and competence: current issues in trainingand education* (pp. 22–29). London: Career and Occupational Information Centre, HMSO.
11. French, R. B. (1993). Allwork is a placement:An analysis of assumptions about learning possibilities associated withwork placements. *Management Education and Development*, 24(4),pp 406–414.
12. Gammie, B., Gammie, E. and Cargill, E. (2002), “Personal skills development in the accountingcurriculum”, *Accounting Education*, Vol. 11 No. 1, pp. 63-78.
13. http://www.eisa.org.za/aprm/pdf/Countries_Algeria_APRM_Re...
14. Mihail, D. M. (2006). Internships at Greek universities:an exploratory study. *Journal of Workplace Learning*, 18, pp. 28-41.
15. Nabi, G.R. and Bagley, D. (1998), “Graduates’ perceptions of transferable personal skills and future career preparation in the UK”, *Career Development International*, Vol. 3 No. 1.
16. Neumann, B.R. and Banghart, S. (2001), “Industry-university ‘consulternships’: an implementation guide”, *International Journal of Educational Management*, Vol. 15 No. 1,pp. 7-11.
17. Raybould, J;& Sheedy, V;. (2005). Are graduates equipped with the right skills in the employability stakes? *Industrial And Commercial Training*.
18. Sherer, M. &Eadie, R. (1987), “Employability skills: key to success”, *Thrust*, Vol. 17 No.
19. Stewart, J. & Knowles, V. (2001), “Graduate recruitment: implications for business and management courses in HE”, *Journal of European Industrial Training*, Vol. 25 No. 2,
20. Watson, P. (2002), “Innovative teaching, teamwork and generic skills in the university environment”, *Celebrating Teaching at Macquarie*, Macquarie University, Sydney, pp.19.

21. Wickramasinghe, V; & Perera, L. (2010). Graduates', university lecturers' and employers' perceptions towards employability skills. *Education + Training*, 52(3), pp. 226-244.
22. Woodley, A (2001) Learning and earning: measuring rates of return among mature graduates from part-time distance courses, *Higher Education Quarterly*, 55(1), pp122-8.
23. Zinser, R. (2003). developing career and employability skills: a US case study. *Education+Training*, 45, pp402-410.