

# Returning from a Year Abroad: Employability Workshop

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# Benefits of a Year Abroad

- The experience itself “rewarding” & “life-changing”
- Enduring friendships
- Extended network
- Enhanced cultural awareness
- Better prepared for further study
- Confidence
- Learnt more about me
- Improved planning and skills
- Language Skills
- And many more!



## Benefits of a Year Abroad – Survey Results

- You are unique!
- UK average of mobile students - 1.2%
  - 74% study placement
  - 23.5% work placement
  - 2.5% volunteering
- 57.5% Europe
- 42.5% Outside Europe

*Source: HESA Mobility data summary 2014*



## EMPLOYMENT AND CAREER DEVELOPMENT



Source: European Commission, 2014



## Aim of the Session

To be able to identify and demonstrate the skills and attributes that you have acquired from your time abroad to enhance your employability

### **What will we cover:**

- What our graduates say?
- Skills and Attributes gained (exercise)
- Selling your Year Abroad – CV Top Tips
- Selling your Year Abroad - Interviews (exercise)
- Action Points

## WHAT DO GRADUATES SAY?

*Whenever I have been to an interview they always ask me about my time in the States and never really anything about my time in the UK. Studying abroad demonstrates so much more about your character!*

**Nicole Logan, Drama, studied at UCSD, USA  
Press Assistant for Harmonia Mundi UK**

*I was told directly that [studying abroad] gave a certain edge and was interesting.... I am now managing two international accounts and I believe having that experience helped me into the role.*

**Chris Turley, European Legal Studies, studied at Maastricht University  
Business Development and International Accounts Manager, Inside Marketing**

*My experience has helped me very much as my employer was able to identify how adaptable I am to new environments and able to integrate and pick things up quickly. The fact I had knowledge of different languages was seen as a bonus.*

**Jessica Domingos-Pinto, Law, studied at Montreal  
Legal Secretary, Eversheds LLP**

# SKILLS AND ATTRIBUTES

**Communication**

**Adaptability**

**Energy**

**Leadership**

**Contextual/cultural awareness**

**Self awareness**

**Report writing**

**Numeracy**

**Problem Solving**

**Positive attitude**

**Reflection**

**Confidence**

**Integrity**

**Team working**

**Capacity to develop**

**Reliability**

**Drive and resilience**

**Project management**

**IT skills**

**Enthusiasm/passion**

**Business and  
customer awareness**

**Enterprise**

**Planning and organisation**

**Maturity**



# SKILLS AND ATTRIBUTES

## Activity

- What bureaucratic hoops did you have to jump through? Which part was most challenging? What skills did you demonstrate?
- Did you work abroad? What did you learn specifically because you were working in a foreign environment? What skills did you demonstrate?
- Did you ever have to think on your feet while you were abroad? What did you learn about yourself from this experience?



## SELLING YOUR YEAR ABROAD – CV

- Need to tailor your CV to each position you apply for
- No 'one size' fits all
- Do your research about the company
- 1 or 2 pages long, never a half page
- Use tools and approaches appropriate to the country you are applying in
- Applicant Tracking Systems
- Chronological vs Skill based CVs
- <http://www.kent.ac.uk/ces/student/cvs.html>
- <http://www.kent.ac.uk/careers/cv/cvexamples.htm>

# CV TOP TIPS

## Where should I list my Year Abroad?

Don't leave it to the bottom of your CV!

- Include under Education section. You should also include a few key details in bullet points such as:
  - What classes you took and the grades achieved
  - Whether you achieved fluency in another language
  - Skills acquired
- Could also list under 'Experience' section, including some of the skills acquired and any notable academic projects and achievements.
- For work placements, you may wish to list this under 'Employment'. Include what were your main responsibilities and the skills you developed in the role.

Consider having a 'Global Skills' section.



## SELLING YOUR YEAR ABROAD - INTERVIEW

- The interviewer is likely to ask you about your year abroad at interview
- Think of parts of the Year Abroad that make you smile
- This is your opportunity to highlight your skills/attributes and how you could be successful in the role
- It is easier to interview someone who is talking about something they are interested in



## SELLING YOUR YEAR ABROAD – STAR METHOD

### **S – Situation**

*explain the situation/context, e.g. while on my year abroad*

### **T – Task**

*say what was the task set*

### **A – Action**

*tell them what you did*

### **R – Result**

*what was the outcome, it can be successful or unsuccessful*





# SELLING YOUR YEAR ABROAD - INTERVIEW

## ACTIVITY

In your groups discuss the interview question(s) given and how you would answer using the STAR method

In pairs, try practising saying your answers aloud with one of you being the interviewer and the other the interviewee

# ACTION POINTS

- Be proud of what you achieved!
- Put together a CV while your year abroad is still fresh in your mind.
- Prepare responses to typical interview questions drawing on your year abroad.
- Stay in touch with people you met (LinkedIn, Twitter, Facebook etc.) These people are your network
- <https://globalgraduates.com/>
- <http://erasmusintern.org/>
- Make use of the Careers and Employability Service.  
[www.kent.ac.uk/ces](http://www.kent.ac.uk/ces)
- <http://www.kent.ac.uk/careers/degreein.htm>





ANY  
QUESTIONS  
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