PART I

Facilitating and Achieving Graduate Employability

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BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

This Handbook represents a wide range of research into graduate employability, from higher education institutions, employer destination organisations, policy makers, and, of course, the students and graduates themselves.

The first obvious starting point is the graduates themselves, and the education, organisation, and society contexts which may facilitate or obstruct their journeys to employability. A second starting point is the historical (such as already seen from Adam Smith (1819 ed.)) and contemporary criticisms of graduate work readiness. These are the underlying themes of Part I of the Handbook.

In a comprehensive review of graduate readiness for employment in Australia, Pennington and Stanford (2019) set out the opportunities, but considerable challenges, facing Australian graduates (even before Covid 19 global disruption). They comment on the demands for universities to produce candidates who are ready for roles, but challenge the 'distortions' caused by employers' expectations of graduates to be 'fully formed' from the day they start work (p. 99).

This observation appears to be replicated elsewhere. For example, in the UK, the Institute of Student Employers (2021) observed a perceived lack of graduate employability skills. Even so, human resource managers might observe that some of those perceived deficient skills, such as lack of self career management, poor team skills, and poor upward management of the manager, were not confined to graduates, recent or otherwise. Of concern, the same report noted that 78% of employers regarded post placement/internship graduates as better prepared, but that such opportunities had reduced by 25% and 29%. Whilst this illustrates the position in only two countries, the research for the Handbook and many of the chapters suggests that the continued mismatch of expectations are replicated in many other graduate labour markets.

Therefore, this Part I of the Handbook will consider a range of work undertaken to facilitate, achieve, and sustain graduate employability.

The first two chapters (Gaggiotti et al. and Shumilova and Cai) look at work undertaken to develop entrepreneurial skills (and related competences) in future graduates, how this is integrated into the university curriculum, and how research on capital-based employability frameworks may be used and reinterpreted.

For those who might aspire to postgraduate roles, Prescott's chapter examines the employment challenges which still exist for PhD graduates.

Two chapters consider the student voice in employability. The first of these chapters comes from research on the quality of careers services at the UK Open University, whose students study mainly through distance learning. In the second chapter, Harvey looks at employment capital, including the psychology of graduate employability for business and management graduates.

A Handbook of employability cannot ignore the impact of social media on employment. Dale's chapter provides a practical review of how graduates should

prepare themselves, and in some cases reposition their social media profiles, for post-university recruitment.

The final two chapters are about transition for university to the workplace. Durão et al. research benefits – and identify gaps – in student work experience in the Portuguese hospitality sector. In the final chapter in this part, Chen looks at a more generalisable model of student transition from university to the workplace.

Each chapter is summarised in more detail below.

Learning through Uncertainty: Team Learning and the Development of an Entrepreneurial Mindset, **Hugo Gaggiotti, Selen Kars-Unluoglu and Carol Jarvis**

This chapter opens with the recognition of the increasingly complex dimensions of work, including attributes such as resilience, adaptability, and proactivity, which the authors see as facets of an entrepreneurial mindset. The attributes also closely relate to the future of work as envisaged by the World Economic Forum (2020).

They follow Lundqvist et al. (2015) to contend that developing these in the context of a higher education programme requires process work that aims to develop these qualities, alongside content work associated with the subject matter of the programme. The chapter explores the influence of team learning on the process of development of entrepreneurial qualities, arising from the learning needs of the students.

Gaggiotti, Kars-Unluoglu and Jarvis identify three key benefits arising from this approach. First, critical independence, and the development of the qualities of an entrepreneurial mindset. Second, learning allows students to operate at the intersection of intellectual and social capital. Third, the contribution of the community of practice to heutagogic learning is underpinned by friendship as an organising principle, encouraging students to prioritise working effectively with others on the (learning) task at hand.

Employability Entrepreneurship for Leveraging Employability Capital, **Yulia Shumilova and Yuzhuo Cai**

Shumilova and Cai observe that the literature seeking to help graduate employability can seem overwhelming. To address this, they suggest moving from the research focus on the skills agenda to capital-based employability frameworks, and the role of agency in graduate transitions.

The chapter recognises conceptual gaps in capital-based frameworks. To mitigate these gaps, the chapter synthesises research literature in order to reinterpret the emerging capital-based employability frameworks in the light of Bourdieu's capital theory, and offers an operational tool for understanding graduate transitions through the concept of employability entrepreneurship.

Beyond the Data: Navigating the Struggles of Post-PhD Employability, **Holly Prescott**

Holly Prescott looks at UK, EU, and North American experiences of employability for holders of PhDs, and the emerging PhD-specific career guidance literature on barriers that PhD graduates encounter with their first post-doctoral jobs.

Prescott finds a clash between PhD career expectations and reality; a need to revise professional identity post-PhD; a danger of being ‘over-qualified’ *and* ‘under-experienced’; and challenges in articulating doctoral skills to employers.

Using research evidence and her own experience as a careers adviser and mentor, Prescott suggests how practitioners, institutions, and PhD graduates can address these employability issues.

Quality Assurance in University Careers Guidance – a Student Voice Case Study from the Open University, **Lydia Lauder and Victoria Crowe**

Alongside the integration of employability with university curricula, universities have had long experience of working with dedicated and integrated careers adviser services.

The chapter recognises that higher education careers providers face unprecedented demands to demonstrate value for public investment, with pressures heightened by the covid pandemic. Lauder and Crowe argue that narrow interpretations of ‘employability’ inadequately determine the full impact of careers guidance. Their study looks at the Open University’s Careers and Employability Service (CES), which has adopted holistic evaluation models to determine the effects of its provision upon students and alumni.

They suggest that evaluative practice at CES against Robertson’s (2020) integrative model provides scope for generating multilevel evidence, which is more reflective of the nuanced and complex realities of students’ employability. The collateral benefits of advancing an evidence-based organisational culture and thus building the professional and scholastic reputation of careers services across academia and the careers sector are noted. This is achieved through an iterative approach to evaluation, underpinned by a continuous improvement strategy in the evidencing of employability.

The Student Voice in Employability within Tertiary Business and Management Education, **Vicki Harvey**

Developing the theme of the student voice in employability, Harvey’s chapter analysis seeks to close the research gap at micro-level concerning the opinions of undergraduates on the topic of employability. The chapter discusses the meaning of employability for business and management undergraduate students from the University of Salford. The focus is to understand the impact of employability skills and the role and influences of various forms of capital, in particular psychological impacts.

LinkedIn and beyond – Social Media and Employability, **Gemma Dale**

Recognising the importance of social media in securing employment, this section includes a practical chapter which is a timely reminder of the practicalities of having the right social media presence as a cornerstone to attract potential recruiters.

Dale’s chapter explores the benefits of using social media in a professional context as well as possible pitfalls and challenges. It provides practical information and guidance for those who wish to use social media either personally or

to support the use of social media in enabling graduate employability. Beyond LinkedIn, the chapter also discusses the various social media platforms through which professional social networking can take place

Transitions from Education to Work: Impacts on Perceived Employability in Tourism and Hospitality, **Marília Durão, Carlos Costa, Maria João Carneiro and Mónica Segovia-Pérez**

This study explores internships and graduate employment in the hotel and tourism sector from a perspective of higher education in Portugal. With first-hand accounts from 56 hotel and tourism undergraduates' academic paths and practical learning experiences, and with understanding of the factors influencing career construction and employability, the authors aim to smooth the transition to the labour market and to make full use of their potential upon graduation.

Ready to Get on Board? Facilitating Role Transition of New Graduates, **Jenny Chen**

The final chapter in this section recognises the abundant evidence that student–professional role transition can be problematic and stressful for graduates. Chen analyses how graduates go from the role of a student to that of a professional. The chapter starts by clarifying the key concept of role transition, followed by discussions on the distinguishing characteristics between students and professionals. Drawing on the literature from pedagogical learning, organisational socialisation and role identity, the author proposes a process model for preparing, entering, transforming, and identifying (PETI) to extend our understanding of the student–professional role transition.

CONCLUSION

This section has introduced readers to some of the complexities addressed in the supply side of employability of university graduates, and longer term needs for adaptability to changes in the workplace.

These chapters illustrate the design of university/academic-led activities which contribute towards graduate employability. In some cases, they show that a proportion of undergraduates require greater commitment and engagement with life after university than is evident in the early years at university. The research demonstrates how that engagement can be realised in time for life after university.

Universities will continue to need an agile, robust, and continuously evolving approach to employability. They need to balance some very specific requirements from employer requirements of today, and the more nebulous, but equally demanding world of work, and new competences and skills required for economies, societies, and the world of work as envisaged by organisations such as the World Economic Forum.

Dialogue, knowledge sharing, and partnerships between universities and employers will be key to informing the required preparation. The evidence that

this is being undertaken on a consistent basis across all potential graduate destinations is uneven. For some employers and sectors, there is undoubtedly co-operation with the efforts of universities and higher education institutions to balance future needs and preparation. Where other employers and graduate destinations rely on access to a more general graduate market without previous needs analysis and engagement, the results are, predictably, more mixed.

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Learning through Uncertainty: Team Learning and the Development of an Entrepreneurial Mindset

Hugo Gaggiotti, Selen Kars-Unluoglu and Carol Jarvis

INTRODUCTION

Relations between humans and work have always been complex. However, the speed, volatility and unpredictability of these relations have been increasing (Stacey, 2010). Consequently, attributes such as resilience, adaptability and pro-activity, facets of a growth or entrepreneurial mindset, are highly prized (Dweck, 2012; Sidhu et al., 2016). The accelerating pace of change places increasing demands on workers to adapt quickly and effectively to project-based work. It requires reaching repetitive milestones and deadlines and working in teams with relatively short lifespans, a practice that has been defined as 'necromanagement' (Gaggiotti and Cicmil, 2019).

This environment calls for *competency* as well as *capability* ('the capacity to use one's competence in novel as well as familiar circumstances') to thrive (Blaschke and Hase, 2015: 26). Developing these in a degree programme requires *process work* to develop personal qualities, alongside *content work* associated with the subject matter of the programme (Lundqvist et al., 2015). The process work involves students in future-oriented thinking, to develop narratives that build from the present to their desired future (Lindberg and Schwartz, 2018). This stands in contrast with traditional approaches that build from the past, applying knowledge from extant theory to experience.

Requiring students to dwell in complexity, future-oriented thinking involves ways of learning that are collaborative, critically reflective and that emerge from

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informal learning from real-world experience (Blaschke and Hase, 2015). In formal, accredited learning environments, this learning approach can provoke and amplify levels of anxiety that, if not contained, discourage learning (Vince, 1998). Gaggiotti et al. (2020) note the importance of the texture of the learning space in offering a 'safety net', 'that protects against the damage of a hard fall, without limiting movement' (p. 256). In this chapter, we explore how a programme based on team learning seeks to weave this texture whilst preparing graduates for employment, by contributing to the development of an entrepreneurial mindset and the practice of collaboration.

Our research site is a UK-based undergraduate degree programme with a practice-led, project-based, emancipatory pedagogy (Freire, 1972). Based on team learning through doing and team coaching, it evolved from the Tiimiakatemia (Team Academy) model pioneered in Finland (Partanen, 2012). Students (known as teampreneurs or TEs) are active participants responsible for shaping their own learning and project opportunities. The chapter draws on qualitative research conducted amongst students and staff of the programme, as well as with staff on similar programmes.

THE ORIGINS AND PHILOSOPHY OF TEAM ENTREPRENEURSHIP

In 1993 Johannes Partanen, at Jyväskylä University of Applied Sciences, developed the Tiimiakatemia (henceforth TA) approach to learning by doing in teams. His aim was to develop an undergraduate programme that would provide students with the skills and attributes to create their own jobs. As more institutions have worked with the TA approach, the programme has been adapted to the nuances of local context, however the underpinning philosophy and processes have remained in place.

Forming team companies soon after they start, teampreneurs (henceforth TEs) remain in them throughout their degree. They are set 'company key performance indicators (KPIs)' alongside their academic assignments. Each TE has their own learning contract, and these contribute to a team learning contract. Roles in the team company rotate through the course of the programme. A commitment to the development and well-being of the individual, team, community and ecosystem is a cornerstone of the philosophy.

In contributing to KPIs and learning contracts, TEs seek out and negotiate live projects from external organisations in smaller, often cross-team company, teams. Prospective projects are agreed with the team, reviewed and critically reflected on. Whilst there are assessment points to evidence TEs have met learning outcomes, the programme does not follow a predetermined, classroom-based curriculum, centring instead on twice-weekly coached training sessions in team companies. Training sessions provide a space for what Canning and Callan (2010: 74) describe as 'collaborative reflection'. They are held in a circle and

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follow the principles of dialogue (Isaacs, 1999). TEs lead the sessions, reflecting on their current learning needs and projects, and engaging with relevant literature to support their learning. The role of the team coach is to facilitate dialogue that will foster a learning culture amongst peers.

ENTREPRENEURIAL LEARNING AND A SHIFT IN MINDSET

Graduates are emerging into a 'learning economy' (Lundvall and Rasmussen, 2016), rather than a 'knowledge economy', that to thrive and enhance employability, requires *capability* – 'the capacity to use one's competence in novel as well as familiar circumstances' (Blaschke and Hase, 2015: 26). Capability development involves *process work* aimed at developing personal qualities, alongside *content work* associated with the subject matter (Lundqvist et al., 2015). Process work requires critical engagement with practice that is both risky and offers the potential for deep learning (Barnett, 2007) when approached with an 'open minded, reflective appraisal that takes account of different perspectives, experiences and assumptions' (Brechin et al., 2000: 26).

The presence of a growth or entrepreneurial mindset (Dweck, 2012; Sidhu et al., 2016) facilitates critical engagement with practice. Mindset is not something that is innate and stable, rather it is influenced by experiences and interactions with others. Dweck (2012: 6) argues a growth mindset 'is based on the belief that your basic qualities are things you can cultivate through your efforts'; valuing challenge and effort are characterised by a desire to improve. Naumann (2017) notes, in the literature, an entrepreneurial mindset is commonly interpreted 'as a way of adaptable thinking and decision-making in complex, uncertain and dynamic environments' (p. 159) yet 'currently no commonly shared concept exists' (p. 169), with authors focussing instead on individual attributes. Like Dweck (2012), Naumann (2017) highlights the importance of awareness, feedback, learning and adaptation in developing two attributes: meta-cognition and cognitive adaptability, noting their importance for inexperienced entrepreneurs in counter-balancing a lack of experience in the field.

Lackéus and Williams Middleton (2015) note the growing interest in experiential learning that emphasises doing entrepreneurship reflexively, aiming to foster the development of meta-cognitive attributes. This approach may be experienced as risky and ambiguous by learners, with heightened anxiety and stress levels by an assumed laissez-faire approach to teaching (Tomkins and Ulus, 2016). However, it is precisely the process of dealing with ambiguity and making meaning out of it that fosters an entrepreneurial mindset and develops meta-cognitive attributes.

Gherardi (2006) argues it is the connectivity produced by the organisational texture that opens up the space to learn. The texture becomes a 'field of practices', capable of producing its own organisational devices to favour, protect,

encourage and promote other practices and learning. Practices are connected and interwoven and 'this texture is held together by a certain number of practices which provide anchorage for others' (Gherardi, 2006: 47). An example is the 'safety net' described by Gaggiotti et al. (2020) a device created in the texture of a team-based venture creation programme to 'protect against the damage of a hard fall, without limiting movement' (p. 256).

The 'field of practices' is at the heart of heutagogy to offer a texture for student development as autonomous and self-directed, perceived to be core competencies integral to increasing employability and transition from education to work (Botha, 2012). Hase and Kenyon (2007: 12) describe heutagogy as 'learner-centred learning that sees the learner as the major agent in their own learning, which occurs as a result of personal experiences'. Introducing heutagogy in pedagogical environments involves fundamentally rethinking how students learn, and educators 'teach' in the classroom. It requires students and educators to cross epistemic boundaries as they engage in the challenge of developing autonomy, capability and competency whilst inhabiting an environment structured, to some extent, with a programme curriculum, module lists and specifications. For the student, having full responsibility for their learning is often unfamiliar and experienced as intimidating and uncomfortable; working through this discomfort in a safe environment is, though, important preparation for the world of work. For the instructor, the need to relinquish the desire for control and to flex the learning process and resources to the changing needs of students calls for a change in how they take up their role (Blaschke and Hase, 2015), from an 'expert' with absolute knowledge to a 'coach' and 'co-learner' collaborating with students.

Team Learning and Communities of Practice

In professional contexts people think about real-life problems in highly social situations, as part of communities of practice (Pyrko et al., 2019). Their learning in this social context drives learning in practice, and contributes to becoming a competent professional. Similarly, when a student joins a new educational context, they join a micro-cosmos of knowledge, a 'community of practice' (CoP) who share a common stock of knowledge, a sense of identity and values.

Wenger (1998), who formulated the CoP concept, places emphasis on learning interactions in local situated practices, cohering through mutual engagement to create a common repertoire. Engaging with other members, individuals gradually enact their membership of the community. Lave and Wenger (1991) use the term 'legitimate peripheral participation' to characterise the process during which people move from peripheral members to become more central and legitimate members by gradually increasing the degree of meaningful interaction with other members. As they move from the periphery to the core, members also increase their engagement with the 'situated curriculum' (Gherardi et al., 1998) constituted by a defined, yet not rigid, trajectory of activities to increase capability and

competency in practices. CoP membership is multi-layered, with differences in people's 'tenure' in the CoP, time investment in engaging with the curriculum and competence built through engagement. CoPs typically constitute old-timers, who engage regularly with the curriculum and people at the periphery who either aspire to full membership, or for whom less involved participation is sufficient.

CoP members evaluate the practices and conditions of other members, as well as their own, learning through dialoguing in a process of cyclical inquiry (Gajda and Koliba, 2007). Cyclical inquiry implies reflexivity through which members collectively reflect on individual and collective objectives, processes and practices, and their wider environment, adapting their activities accordingly. CoPs, then, exist at the intersection of intellectual and social capital (Snyder et al., 2003). Mastery is a collectively achieved property of the CoP, that is deepened by ongoing interactions, not merely an individual achievement (Lave and Wenger, 1991). With these characteristics, the concept of CoP can allow students to engage with heutagogy as self-directed learners through a situated, relational, communicative and reflexive approach to learning, and can increase the success of transition from education to work through interacting with CoPs in their future workplaces more effectively.

Friendship as an Organising Principle

When we conceptualise enterprise education as situated practices, the student transforms from a passive recipient of knowledge into a committed thinker and actor who develops, tests and evaluates ideas and action in relationship with others (Ramsey, 2014). This has implications for how power and expertise is shared in the classroom and where the leadership and accountability for learning and development resides.

However, as French and Thomas (1999: 5) argue 'instead of the promotion of critical independence, education for tutelage still rules the world'. The student permits others 'to think for [them], direct [them], take responsibility for [them] because, so often, it is simply easier'. The implications of this for learning has been explored, in detail, by Adorno and Becker (1999). Adorno (1969, cited in French and Thomas, 1999) suggests an alternative would be to imagine other relations, such as camaraderie or friendship.

Friendship has always been elusive to study and theorise. Anthropologists Desai and Killick (2010) have suggested that the multiple ways of referring to friendship constitute its major benefit. The possibility of not having to encapsulate friendship into one definition and appreciating its organisational dimension, makes it valuable in explaining heutagogic learning experiences. Experiencing friendship in a learning environment could help to reimagine alternatives usually undermined by old conventions. One example is *friend leadership* (Toivanen, 2014), a term associated with coaching and shared leadership.

Discussing friendship as an organising principle of relations in the classroom, we can unravel different dynamics beyond the traditional understanding of what

happens in the classroom amongst students. Friend leadership signals the existence of a community with a sense of us, a close tribe with accompanying norms and rituals (Turner, 1977), a form of 'friendship-in-role' (French and Moore, 2004) that prioritises working together effectively, irrespective of our personal relationship and whether we *like* each other or not. It gives primacy to the relational, bringing to light both the interests of self and other (French and Moore, 2004), highlighting learning as a mutual achievement in the CoP.

As students try to think for themselves, they take faltering steps and fall, like a child learning to walk unaided (French and Thomas, 1999). But with friendship as an organising principle, they have others to help along the way. On their learning journey, friendship enables holding self and others to account – not for the sake of exerting control and surveillance but in line with friends' commitment to each other's development and well-being. This emanates from friendship's capacity to contain conflict and disagreement. The 'readiness to air in public a private argument – the juxtaposition of disagreement and animosity with playful competitiveness and mutual exploration' (French and Thomas, 1999: 10) creates an openness to new insights, ideas, possibilities and to mutual challenges which may facilitate the development of high-performing teams (Katzenbach and Smith, 2015).

METHODOLOGY

Our research took place with students (TEs) and educators (team coaches and external entrepreneurship educators) in an undergraduate entrepreneurship programme developed in partnership between the University of the West of England (UWE) and the Bristol City Robins Foundation, a community-based educational trust established by Bristol City Football Club. The first cohort of TEs joined the programme in September 2017. Our research was conducted from October 2019–November 2020 during the first year that the programme had all three year groups. There were 34 TEs and five team coaches on the programme; all coaches and 25 TEs participated in the research.

In this paper we draw data from three sources. First, we organised two co-creation workshops with TEs (November 2019 and January 2020; named as TE DG1 and 2). They were collaborative and offered space for TEs to reflect on their learning and entrepreneurial development. We utilised creative methods, specifically story-writing and asset-mapping. Second, we conducted three focussed discussion groups with the team coaches (November 2019, January 2020 and May 2020; named as SDG 1, 2 and 3) to seek insight into the role of learning and teaching in the development of an entrepreneurial mindset and its implications for employability. Third, we conducted interviews with five team coaches who were not members of the programme team but were familiar with the programme and the TA approach. These interviews were conducted between September and

October 2020 (named as Ext1–5), after we had completed preliminary analysis of our findings from the other two elements. They provided us with an external view of how the programme was both similar to, and different from, other TA programmes, and explored challenges and enablers for educators working with these methods that enhance employability-relevant student skills and attributes.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Heutagogic Learning: from Tutelage to Critical Independence

Whilst TEs chose to enrol on the programme, excited by the prospect of this different way of learning, many were taken aback when faced with the reality of independent learning:

> it's a completely different style of learning, even though that's probably the appeal of choosing the course, it's quite difficult and it's a challenge for some of them sometimes to realise that nobody is going to stand in front of them and lecture them for an hour. (SDG1)

Coaches too needed to cross epistemic boundaries and 'to completely un-learn the last 15 years of work experience' (SDG1), to move from expert to co-learner (Blaschke and Hase, 2015). To support this, team coaches work as a 'team company', role modelling the process to TEs, and experiencing similar struggles. Team coaches emphasised the importance of earning 'reciprocal respect', of contracting with the team company about their role, having the courage to stay in role and not rush to 'rescue' when faced with TEs anxiety that they are not learning anything:

> because their development is day to day, continually small amounts, they don't see that they are learning stuff every day, they don't see their personal development. (SDG2)

This was recognised as a slow process, requiring the team coach to judge and work at a pace appropriate to the needs of TEs:

> Nothing's quick, and you almost think sort of nothing's happening, and then you realise so much has happened. And if you try and make stuff happen too quickly you miss the point of the methodology. (Ext5)

Holding training sessions in a circle helped reinforce that staff were co-learners:

> You're in education but you're not sitting at a desk and you're not in a lecture and you're not doing the traditional stuff, you know? You're sat in a circle and your coach is on the same level as you, and they're not an expert. You're empowered by that setting and by that relationship. (Ext5)

This dialogic approach (Isaacs, 1999) provided space for critical reflection that team coaches described as 'the penny drop moment' when TEs realise 'we're responsible for creating our own course of action'. (SDG3). As one TE described it:

> That was almost a confusion for some people, we were like 'why aren't we learning any business at all?' And then it was the case of, actually, we ran all of our own sessions, so we're in charge of what we want to learn. So, if you want to learn marketing, then someone's got to research, plan this session, and come in the next day and teach everyone. And then you teaching everyone makes you know it better as well, and that's the idea (TE, DG1)

Having a number and variety of projects to learn from was important. By 'failing at different things' TEs learned to respond proactively when things didn't go as planned. They began to think differently about failure, to be able 'to be honest about why you've failed and how' (TE DG1):

> I think failing and learning are two different things. You can fail where you don't learn anything and you lose money and vision, that is failing. And then there's learning above that, as long as you learn something from not that ideal [situation] which you had in mind, it's not failing. (TE DG1)

This was viewed as an important attribute of an entrepreneurial mindset, promoting 'positivity, confidence, drive, creativity' (SDG2), requiring TEs to move

> from traditional education to, actually, 'what have I got to lose here? What's the risk involved in this?' 'Potentially just my time. And a dent to my ego if I'm going to take it the wrong way, if I do fail'. (SDG1)

The emphasis placed on acknowledging and reflecting on failure to inform progress is instrumental in future-proofing students for the world of work (QAA, 2018). The assessment placed equal value on learning, whether it emerged from perceived failure or success, providing additional encouragement to take risks. As one TE put it:

> The assignments are targeted for giving us that knowledge, to actually understand it. So, they're not just pointless assignments, these assignments teach you mindset and teach you entrepreneurial activities. Without the assignments, I don't think I'd have the knowledge I do today. (TE, DG1)

It is this ability to transfer learning from one situation to another that defines capability (Blaschke and Hase, 2015) and fosters the ability to thrive in complex working environments. Combining 'the academics' through critical reflection on real-life projects, they felt, meant 'you then learn it forever, rather than just reading it off a board in a lesson' (TE DG1). The formal qualification itself contributes to the 'safety net' (Gaggiotti et al., 2020) as 'at least I have a degree to fall back on'. (TE DG1).

TEs may transform from passive recipients of knowledge into committed thinkers and actors. However, what we observed in this first phase of development is

that TEs remain focussed on their own individual learning and have not yet fully connected with the learning and performance of others.

Team Learning and a Community of Practice

If heutagogy 'almost accelerates them into adult life whilst they're still in education', (SDG1), transitioning to understanding the team company as a CoP (Wenger, 1998) was an equally big step.

The team company may start its life as a 'functionalist' entity – stable, run by a range of set mechanisms (training sessions, learning contracts, assignments and externally imposed projects and milestones) instrumental in gaining the degree. As TEs start engaging with heutagogic learning they start building a learning community, recognising the need to identify with each other and recognising that they are similar in things they value. This mutual recognition is crucial in transitioning into a CoP member.

> Colleagues, comrades, people to do the doing with …The team gives you that. It gives you a wider network of skills, knowledge, abilities, manpower … The team learning really kind of comes into its own, where it means that the learning's not just about that doing … We have to engage with other people. (Ext5)

In training sessions TEs were discussing their live projects, considering difficulties, sharing potential solutions from theory and practice in a friendly environment. As Gherardi (2006) observed, connection is fundamental at this stage. Connection is enhanced through dialoguing, allowing TEs to develop confidence and trust in their peers and co-learners, their knowledge and capabilities.

> They're not competitors. There's something about collaboration which I think is particularly unique, whether it's how the TEs work together, whether it's how institutions work together who use the methodology, or anybody who's involved in the methodology, there's something about … collaboration and co-creation with others that is at the heart of it. (Ext5)

TEs became aware of one another's knowledge and capabilities and turned to the CoP when faced with difficulties: 'We just bounce knowledge and we help each other learn' (TE, DG1) as 'they can pass that down. And maybe we know something that they haven't done yet'. (TE, DG1)

Jack and Anderson (2002: 203) contend that this stage involves more than 'becoming informed' and 'becoming known' issues. It allows TEs to do more than tap into external resources or knowledge held by others, to create a learning community that enables co-creation of new resources and knowledge. As their engagement with the 'situated curriculum' deepened, both they and their entrepreneurial ventures developed:

> I didn't know how to start a project, I wouldn't even think about where to start or what to do it about. But, over the years, I've learnt how to think about projects, do ideation sessions and create ideas and how to use ideas and what to do if I had an idea. My thinking has

> completely changed, if I see something, I'll almost analyse it now, instead of just going straight past it, I'll look at it and process it more. So, my creativity and thinking has improved massively … I'm looking at everything with an open mindset, thinking how I can turn it into an opportunity? (TE, DG1)

In using the CoP to discuss issues specific to their entrepreneurial and 'student' experience, to share learning resources, knowledge and advice, to give one another help or to jointly initiate projects, TEs started to engage with it as a process of reflexive inquiry, translating dialogues into individual and team actions. In this dialogic relationship, affective learning requirements – seeking encouragement, support and feedback – are as important as cognitive learning expectations, seeking to understand subject knowledge:

> You can get clarification, you can get feedback, validation from teammates, do things together (TE, DG1)

The key learning processes occurring were role modelling and working together with other CoP members that extended beyond the team company. Newcomers learnt from 'old hands' (older year groups) and from the broader TA community through international learning journeys, as well as externals in their ecosystem.

> When you talk about the TE community, their peers are also their role models. The Year 2s and 3s who have gone on and done some amazing projects and stuff. You can see the Year 1s aspire to be some of those, and then you've also got some of the module leaders and team coaches who run their own businesses successfully, are again role models. Whether it's the links with the TEs at UWE or whether it's the ones when they go out to Bilbao or on the learning journeys, there's so much role modelling … They're all role-modelling for each other, which is really special. (SDG1)

Of course, members made extensive use of other more canonical learning processes, such as academic reading and writing:

> You learn a lot from the books, which you genuinely do apply as well. It's the doing. It's the people. It goes hand in hand. (TE, DG1)

However, the non-canonical learning through shared practice became a source of coherence for the community through a process of mutual engagement, the emergence of a sense of joint interest, goal and values, and the generation of a shared repertoire of resources:

> We struggled … We genuinely didn't do any projects for like a year … We had so many good ideas, but we just didn't have the minerals to actually go do it … As soon as everyone's on board and everyone is trying things continuously, I was not scared of saying 'ooh, no, I couldn't do this'. (TE, DG1)

TEs didn't spend time in classrooms. The dedicated co-working space was significant, reinforcing the CoP's community 'intimacy' which allowed members to work at the intersection of intellectual and social capital:

> We work with each other. There's always conversations. You're not sat in an office on your own. We're all in here. The discussions are always about what's going on in the team, not necessarily just what individual people are doing. (SDG1)

These conversations and discussions had a latent, arguably more important, function, contributing to a sense of belonging, and allowing participants to interact and learn together. TEs built a common vocabulary, creating roles and norms, sharing them with newcomers, thus generating a shared history. This is the moment when TEs start to think about what it means to be a 'teampreneur', a member of the wider TA community.

During this process, accommodating the different layers of CoP membership is perhaps one of the greatest struggles for TEs. Some preferred to stay on the periphery, engaging with the learning experiences in the situated curriculum in a limited way:

> I think, certainly me, I'm holding back this year, which is a really bad move. But hopefully I'm going to make that breakthrough soon and just say 'what have I got to lose'. And just go through everything. (TE, DG1)

A threshold came when they moved from worrying about those who were not there and how they can be forced to engage, to focussing on how best those who are present can work together to meet their goals. Focussing 'on the projects and the things that I can influence, whether that be individual, whether that be team or academic' (SDG3), helps them to build self-confidence and resilience, key enterprising competencies that improve employability:

> [Resilience] is not just the bounce back from failure … Resilience is keep getting projects further, or keep developing that relationship with that individual who either annoys the hell out of them, or is just really quiet and won't contribute … Resilience can look like a lot of different things on this programme. (SDG2)

The shift in attention from a deficit mindset (whose contribution I'm missing) to an appreciative, or growth, mindset (how can I best capitalise on the contributions I've got) allowed the CoP to evolve both in terms of relational dynamics amongst members and of the learning expectations explicitly articulated by its members, formally in learning contracts and informally in daily interactions. It evolved according to the TEs' affective, cognitive and learning needs, enabling holding self and others to account.

> In our teams, we talk about accountability a lot. You can say someone else had let you down or hadn't, but at the end of the day you can only help yourself most of the time. It's too easy to rely on your team and your network, and then blame them for the things that happen. But what role did you play in that? … You've got to be honest about why you've failed and how. (TE, DG1)

We perceived this as a strong indicator of the emergence of a shared in-group identity, supporting a key assumption of the concept of CoP, that learning is not

only an individual cognitive process but also the result of a social trajectory within a group. In preparing graduates for work in the 'learning economy' (Lundvall and Rasmussen, 2016), this understanding may foster a commitment to collaboration and shared learning.

Towards Friendship as an Organising Principle

Desai and Killick (2010) refer to the multiple ways of using friendship owing to its elusiveness as a concept that defies a single definition. When our TEs embarked on the programme, they typically had a more partial view of friendship, confined by how much they liked the other person. They aimed to first build bonds through social activities outside the programme:

> The more you socialise with your teammates, the more you get to know them, the stronger bond you'll have, so the more … you'll want to work together. (TE DG1)

Escaping from confining friendship to those we like is central to the CoP. If enterprise education means providing tools to students for lifetime employability (instead of lifetime employment), to cultivate motivation and readiness to engage in relationship-building and skills to use relationships in a productive way is integral to the employability agenda (Parker, 2008). As one team coach put it:

> What I feel is important within the team and with the team coach is to push, push relationships within the team, within the peers. The more they, not like each other, but the more they have those relationships, the more accountable they'll be, the better they'll work together, the more they'll care about other people coming in. (SDG3)

The concept of 'friend leadership' (Toivanen, 2014) is shared across the TA community, suggesting the 'members of the organisation are friends with each other, more than acquaintances, but less than a close friend in the traditional sense'. (p. 7).

'Friendship as an organising principle' (French and Moore, 2004) encouraged TEs to hold themselves and others to account as 'if you've got a good friendship with them, you're not going to want to let them down'. (TE DG1). It fostered a commitment to each other's continuous development and well-being:

> I have seen the shift this year … their mindset has developed from first year, from, 'I am an individual on this course', to actually, 'I have got ten people around me that I can help and I can use for my benefit'. Their mindset develops in terms of the ethos of the 'team-ness'. (SDG2)

In this way TEs became 'partners in the building of their own society' (Ext1), learning to embrace differences and prioritise working effectively with others (French and Thomas, 1999), to 'collaborate well with people' (TE DG1). There was a recognition of 'collectiveness' that held out the possibility of achieving more collectively than alone (Cope et al., 2007); they began to think beyond 'what is best for me', to reflect on 'how can I make my best contribution to this community?'.

As an organising principle, friendship offered a safe space to practise and to learn. In containing disagreement, conflict and contradiction, friendship contributed to the 'good enough' holding of anxiety (Stacey, 2010), so that 'putting themselves in a vulnerable position' (SDG2) felt less risky. Its appreciative mindset encouraged the embracing of difference, to remain open to learning wherever it may come from:

> It's not only the learning of skills but the actual dialogue we have. If I have a project idea and I can put it out there, people will criticise it. Different points of view that I probably didn't see myself. I can look at things different then, in terms of if it was just me by myself, I wouldn't see the strengths and weaknesses from different points of view. (TE, DG1)

As one team coach summed it up:

> They've worked in a team for three years, they might like the people in their team, they may not like the people in their team, they've managed conflict, they've developed relationships, they've led sessions, they're ready to go into a business with practical employability skills. (SDG3)

CONCLUSION

In exploring the development of personal qualities associated with an entrepreneurial mindset through the lens of team learning, we paid particular attention to three elements that we believe contribute to personal and professional development and employability.

First, a *heutagogic approach* encouraging students to develop critical independence can accelerate learning and the confidence to hold oneself and others to account. The texture of the learning environment is woven from a field of *connected* practices (Gherardi, 2006) that support students' personal, as well as academic, development. For example, the lecturer standing at the front of the class is replaced by the team coach as co-learner; the classroom is replaced by a co-working space; and peers can be role models just as well as experienced professionals and team coaches. The learning experiences on the programme demand reframing of how we view failure, which encourages experimentation, critical reflection and reflexivity. This texture has parallels with the world of work and enhances employability. However, as TEs adapt to this way of learning, their learning remains largely centred on and vested in the individual.

Second, this approach to team learning may encourage realising the potential of a community of practice (CoP) (Wenger, 1998) to co-create new resources and knowledge (Jack and Anderson, 2002). Through dialogue in training sessions, TEs become more aware of and confident in one another's knowledge and capabilities; the cliché that we 'learn more and faster together' becomes imbued with meaning, with the team company, wider cohort and TA community perceived as a vehicle for learning. Just as important in this dialogic relationship is the social capital they build, the encouragement, support and feedback they receive.

Operating at the intersection of intellectual and social capital, the CoP and its members develop mastery. And whilst peripheral CoP membership is not without cost (the team will deduct marks from team assignments for individuals who make a lesser contribution), it is accommodated. Thus, as the CoP develops, TEs develop an appreciative mindset that emphasises what can be achieved by the members who are there and with the available resources. They engage with broad and deep internal networks in formal and informal activities to enhance employability by providing support, transmitting reputation or affording access to knowledge and resources. Learning and professional development then is not only an individual cognitive process but also the result of a social trajectory within a group.

Third, this approach to learning is underpinned by *friendship as an organising principle*, fostering a commitment to the well-being and development of others. It encourages TEs to think beyond their personal needs to prioritise working effectively with others on the (learning) task at hand (French and Moore, 2004). When undertaken in the spirit of friendship, giving and receiving feedback and holding self and others to account, it encourages the development of cognitive adaptability and the ability to develop mutually enhancing relationships with unlike others. Taking friendship as an organising principle offers a safe space to practise and learn, to transition from tutelage to autonomy that underpins a growth mindset (Dweck, 2012) and self-directedness in employability competencies.

Our study has limitations. We presented here the potential of the TA approach and its underpinning principles and processes. However, we do not wish to suggest this approach suits all learners or all learning environments. TEs embark on the programme at different points, travel at different speeds and leave at the end of three years in different places, not all having achieved their aspirations; their voyage is far from linear. It is a distinctive and holistic approach, and it would be unwise to assume that different aspects would be effective in isolation from each other. Nonetheless, we would encourage educators to explore how heutagogic learning, team learning as a community of practice and friendship as an organising principle, might be explored in their own learning environments.

Whilst we made a small contribution, the concept of friendship as an organising principle remains under-researched and offers scope for further development in different educational and organisational contexts. What we hope we have highlighted is how it can support learners to develop competency and capability to enhance their employability and to thrive in the complex world of work. After all,

> We have to work with others to make things happen. If we don't learn about how we meet the world and how others meet us and how we can do that better, or maybe we can't do it better, but we can at least understand how it then affects others. (Ext5)

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