

industry in action

*Equipping the graduates of tomorrow
with the business skills of the future*

Dr. Graeme Jones & Professor Mark Ormerod

**School of Chemistry and Physics
Lennard-Jones Laboratories
Keele University**



K E E L E
UNIVERSITY



Background

- Came out of ideas of wanting to show students what business, particularly manufacturing, was really like
- Liked the idea of a mini-Lord Stafford Awards
- Built around work related learning objectives in HEROBaC
- Thought possible to achieve with the help of the Work Related Learning Co-ordinator



industry
in
action



KEELE
UNIVERSITY



The Student Experience

liA gives students the opportunity to;

- develop team working skills
- work with Business and gain experience
- build on existing communication skills and develop new ones
- have responsibility and be trusted with a project of direct relevance and application
- begin to develop professional working skills
- do something different once a week



industry
in
action



K E E L E
UNIVERSITY



Who else benefits ?

- The Business
 - *New links with a University*
 - *The chance to have a problem solved*
 - *The opportunity of press coverage*
- The University
 - *Motivated and creative students*
 - *New links with a company*
 - *The possibility of fostering new business*
 - *A high profile scheme with press coverage*



industry
in
action



KEELE
UNIVERSITY



Course Outline

- Team working exercises
- Presentations from course tutors, Careers and Staffordshire Business Link
- Students contact Companies by telephone and persuade them to take them on
- Undertake a project assigned by the company
- Progress monitored through team interviews
- Students present projects at a Presentation and Prize Giving to which the companies are invited
- Modules assessed through individual portfolios



industry
in
action



KEELE
UNIVERSITY



Course Statistics

- All 30 places taken in the first 20 minutes of registration
- After two weeks 2 people left the course
- After Christmas another person left the course after consultation with the course leaders
- All groups found a company and presented at the Presentations evening
- One person left the University the week before the presentations but still gave a presentation
- Two people failed to submit a portfolio



industry
in
action



K E E L E
U N I V E R S I T Y



Course delivery

- Outside speakers Gordon Rowlands from Staffordshire Business Link and Holly Hardy, Careers
- Topics covered
 - Knowing yourself and SWOT analysis
 - Your CV
 - Team working
 - Presenting yourself to business
 - Selling an idea
 - Interacting with business people
 - Poster and PowerPoint presentation
 - Compiling a portfolio
- Project work
- Presentation and Prize giving in Keele Hall

industry
in
action



K E E L E
U N I V E R S I T Y



Companies On-board

- Trans Air Vac International – *EU quality marks*
- Agrati UK – *customer survey*
- Heathcote Plastics – *product survey*
- Silent Power Systems – *redesign office layout*
- JP Ceramics - *product satisfaction survey*
- NcNeil Associates - *website design*
- Creation – *customer survey*
- Scottish & London Bank - *website design*
- Veljan Hydraulic Pumps - *marketing*



industry
in
action



KEELE
UNIVERSITY



Student Evaluation

- Best Session – CV writing with Holly Hardy
- Enjoyed team working despite the problems
- Enjoyed working with Company – demanding
- Solving real problems not made up exercises
- Improved IT in particular with PowerPoint
- Presentation and Prize Giving– professional and impressive
- Course well organised
- Spent between 30 and 60 hours on the course. Felt that this was about right.



industry
in
action



KEELE
UNIVERSITY



Student Evaluation

Transferable Skills

- Improved IT
- Presentation skills
- Problem solving
- Team work
- Organising work
- How to talk to others
- Need for effective communication
- Accepting criticism from peers and tutors
- Decision making by consensus
- Confidence in work environments

industry
in
action



K E E L E
U N I V E R S I T Y



Business Evaluation

- Written feedback on the student visits was positive with Keele students being described as
 - *Well prepared and organised*
 - *Interested*
 - *Questioning and responsive*
 - *Rated above average to excellent*
- Verbal feedback at Presentation and Prize Giving complimented the students on their high degree of professionalism and the quality of their presentations



industry
in
action



K E E L E
UNIVERSITY



Successes

- Shown that there is a strong desire amongst students for this type of course
- Proved that students have the capability of persuading companies to work with them
- Students adapt well to team working
- Demonstrated that students can produce high quality posters and PowerPoint presentations and effectively present in front of academics and business people
- Proved that companies believe that students can be a useful resource
- Press Coverage



industry
in
action



KEELE
UNIVERSITY

Sentinel SUNDAY

Business

Students survive degrees of frost

By David Elks

FIRST year students at Keele University have been given a taste of business life as part of their degree studies.

Groups of students on the new Industry in Action course were required to cold-call and persuade local businesses to take them on to provide a service within the firm.

Each team was then asked to make a presentation to explain their projects with companies

including Creation nightclub, JP Ceramics and Veljan Hydraulic Pumps.

Professor Mark Ormerod said: "Keele is unique within the UK in giving students the opportunity to study outside their main subject areas during their first year."

The course is one of a number of initiatives in work-related learning aiming to give students business experience. The students, working in teams of three, had to find the companies themselves.

The nine companies participating were Transairvac International (Newcastle), Agrati UK (Newcastle), London Scottish Bank (Manchester), Heathcotes Industrial Plastics (Newcastle), Veljan Hydraulic Pumps (Newcastle), McNeill Media (Sandycroft), JP Ceramics (Stoke-on-Trent), Silent Power Systems (Burslem) and Creation Nightclub (Hanley).

Dr Graeme Jones, the other course leader, said: "It is vital for the future prosperity of the

region that Keele produces high-quality entrepreneurial graduates who stay within the North Staffordshire area."

Anna Steenson, Gemma Moon and Rebecca Spencer won first prize for their project with Heathcotes Industrial Plastics, which involved them redesigning a company brochure.

Professor Tony Dugdale, Pro Vice-Chancellor for Teaching, said: "The quality of the presentations made me very proud of Keele."



KEELE
UNIVERSITY

industry
in
action



It wasn't all roses

- Getting this course approved by the Course Development Sub-Committee and ARC was a nightmare
- Two teams had serious problem with team members leading to breakdowns in relations.
- One company responded positively but then appeared to lose interest
- Two teams found it difficult to persuade a company to take them on
- One team was given an unsuitable project concerning marketing a testing kit for Ecstasy to students



industry
in
action



KEELE
UNIVERSITY



Recommendations for 2002/3

- General course structure works and should be kept
- Need to have larger groups to accommodate 80+ students
- Students should begin work on their projects earlier, before Christmas
- Need a tightening of the Health and Safety guidelines
- Sponsorship needs to be found to fund the Keele Hall Presentation and Prize Giving
- A new format for the Presentation and Prize Giving needs to be found



industry
in
action



KEELE
UNIVERSITY



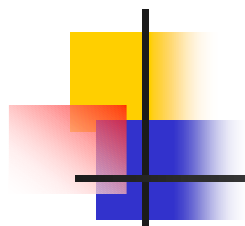
Future directions

- How can we turn current student activities into learning opportunities?
 - develop collaborative courses with student societies?
 - develop new modules that give students already taking PT work to become reflective workers?
- The proposed changes to the structure of the first year should be able to accommodate WRL courses
- Build more Work Related Learning into principal courses – History
- Apply for £10K of funding from the Mercia Institute of Enterprise to establish a new module in Enterprise

industry
in
action



KEELE
UNIVERSITY



industry in action

*Equipping the graduates of tomorrow
with the business skills of the future*

Dr. Graeme Jones & Professor Mark Ormerod

**School of Chemistry and Physics
Lennard-Jones Laboratories
Keele University**



K E E L E
UNIVERSITY