Inclusive Employability Toolkit Evaluation

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Introduction

Inclusive Employability Toolkit

The Inclusive Employability Toolkit was developed to support the design and delivery of Inclusive Employability Development through Curriculum. The work was supported through QAA Collaborative Enhancement Project funding. The project was led by the University of London (The Careers Group and the Centre for Online and Distance Education) in partnership with City, University of London and King's College London. Developed between February 2023 and February 2024, the Toolkit is aimed at academic educators and to support careers educators who may be working with academic educators to develop employability through curriculum for the first time.

This report provides a review of a range of toolkit activities that were deployed in the autumn of 2023. The careers educators who developed the toolkit activities, were a mix of Careers Consultants centrally based in the City St George's Careers & Employability department and School-based Employability Lecturers. Colleagues utilised a combination of sector best practice, research, and their own experience in creating the draft resources, which initially went out for peer feedback before being tested in Autumn 2023 through the suite of embedded employability modules at City.

The report was prepared by two Centre for Online and Distance Education Student Fellows, working with the Director of the [Centre for Online and Distance Education](#).

Kirkpatrick's Model

The approach we have taken to reviewing the success and areas for improvement for the individual Inclusive Employability toolkit activities, is based on the Kirkpatrick's Model for assessing the results of training and learning programs. The Kirkpatrick's Model is a globally recognized method of evaluating the results of training and learning programs. It assesses training methods and rates them against four levels of criteria: reaction, learning, behaviour, and impact. Each of these levels has different emphases and is based on Kirkpatrick & Kirkpatrick (2006):

1. Reaction Level: measures participants' satisfaction with the program.
2. Learning Level: assesses acquired knowledge, skills, and values.
3. Behaviour Level: evaluates changes in work behaviour due to the program.
4. Impact Level: examines institutional outcomes and return on investment from the programme.

For each inclusive employability toolkit activity, we provide a detailed analysis of the evaluation data collected when the activity was deployed in Autumn 2023.

Who prepared this report

The University of London Centre for Online and Distance Education (CODE) brings together thought leaders in the practice, research, leadership and pedagogy of online and distance education. There are

currently 44 CODE Fellows drawn from across the globe. Each year a cohort of students are selected, via a competitive process, to work with CODE Fellows, in a range of projects. The Student Fellows support CODE projects by carrying out specific tasks in agreement with a CODE Fellow supervisor. This is an initiative whereby University of London online and distance learning students are given the opportunity to gain transferable skills through collaborating with CODE Fellows on projects funded by the Centre. Working with the Director of CODE, Dr Linda Amrane-Cooper, two CODE Student Fellows carried out a detailed analysis of the evaluation data, drawing on the Kilpatrick model.

Background to the Student Fellows involved

Sarah Freesia Sreelan

"I am an assurance professional based in Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates, and I've had the opportunity to intern with three of the Big Four assurance and consultancy firms: Deloitte, KPMG, and EY. I am an ACCA Affiliate since 2023 and have I recently graduated from the University of London with a Master of Science in Professional Accountancy degree. I'm now working toward becoming an ACCA member.

I really enjoyed my role in the CODE Fellowship Project, where I got to work alongside a friendly and supportive team and analyze both qualitative and quantitative data. This opportunity let me experiment different creative techniques of how to communicate the information analyzed to end users of the report through the use of illustrative representations and helped deepen my understanding on employability, the importance of fostering an inclusive environment in the workplace, creating open and safe spaces for discussions and feedback and how to receive them gracefully from the other end.

Besides my professional endeavours, I am a passionate artist and love catching up with friends and spending time with them."

Rong Ju:

"I am an ACCA affiliate with a master's degree in Accounting, Taxation, and Finance from Martin-Luther-Universität Halle-Wittenberg in Germany. My previous experience was related to client management in the banking industry, but I am now passionate about becoming a qualified accountant. Based in Frankfurt, I am currently pursuing an MSc in Professional Accountancy from the University of London. As a CODE Student Fellow, I greatly enjoyed the opportunity to work collaboratively within an international team. Our supervisor has been very supportive and encouraging, which has increased my confidence in applying new models and critically assessing feedback data. This role has honed my analytical skills and developed my ability to make informed, data-driven decisions, which will be essential for my future career as a professional accountant. In my spare time, I enjoy cooking, swimming, and walking in the woods."

Creating Psychologically Safe Spaces

Date of report: 23rd May, 2024
Prepared by: Rong Ju and Sarah Freesia Sreelan

Introduction

This report evaluates the effectiveness of the tool entitled 'Creating Psychologically Safe Spaces' from the QAA funded employability toolkit in meeting its expected learning outcomes. Based on the scope of the activities encompassed within this tool, this report evaluates, mainly, the reaction level and the learning level of the session in light of the Kirkpatrick's Model. Though behavioral and organizational impact cannot be measured accurately at this point, the reactions and learning outcomes of participants can be measured based on the their immediate responses at different confidence levels and subjective answers in the feed forward session.

This tool intends to support participants to:
1. Increase self-awareness and develop an enhanced sense of self-efficacy as they recognise and articulate their strengths, values, and personal narratives.
2. Contribute to sessions as they share their experiences and ideas to their peers in a positive and supportive environment.
3. Develop a mindset of inclusion and equity, appreciating and the diverse backgrounds and experiences of their peers.

Positive aspects of the tool

1. Reaction level: students satisfied with design and delivery of the session

Based on the immediate responses from participants, they had, generally speaking, a positive perception about design and delivery of the session.
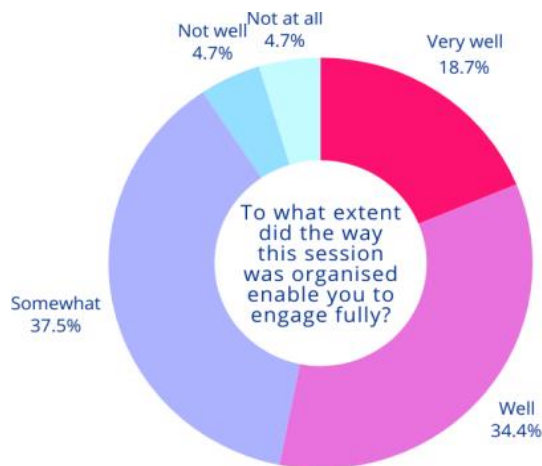
Above all, an adequate number of responses were received from 68 participants with an average engagement rate of 84%. Most participants actively responded to all the five questions, with engagement rates ranging from 54% to 100%. This indicates that they were actively engaged in the program and willing to give their feedback.

Particularly, 90.6% of respondents felt that the way this session was organised enabled them to engage fully, at least to some extent, while 18.7% of them thought it was very well done.
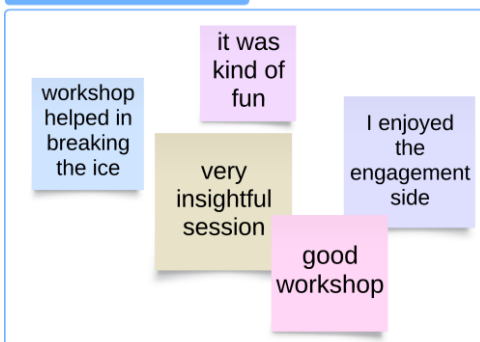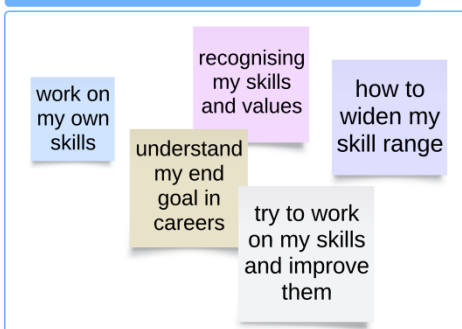

Besides, it can be seen from the subjective answers that the interaction activities were well designed. Many of the participants enjoyed the engagement and thought it was interesting.

2.   Learning level: expected learning outcomes achieved

In the context of this session, students were expected to appreciate different perspectives and build interpersonal and emotional skills necessary for success in diverse workplaces. Judging upon feedback from the participants, this expectation had basically been met while achieving the three expected learning outcomes.

The first learning outcome, which focused on the recognition of skills and values, was realized to some extent, as students reported increased awareness of their strengths and values and a greater drive to improve.
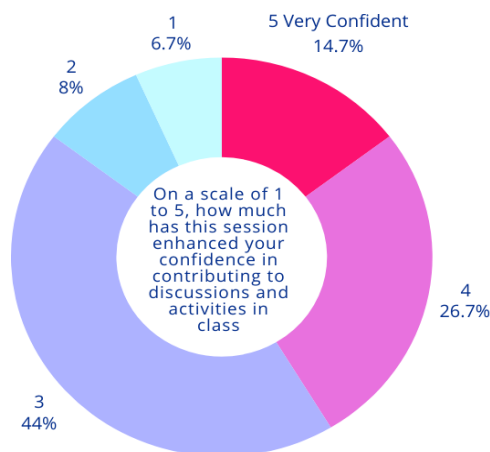
The second learning outcome, focusing on contributing in a supportive environment, was achieved, as 85.4% of participants reported notably increased confidence in class contributions, with 14.7% feeling very confident.
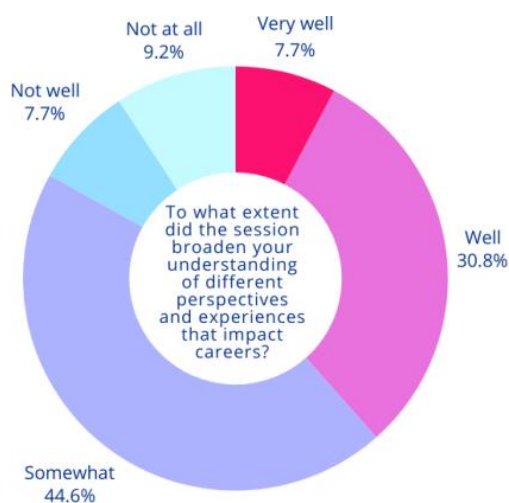
The third learning outcome, related to appreciating diverse perspectives, was realized, with approximately 83.1% of respondents noting a change and 7.7% feeling very confident, further

supported by subjective feedback highlighting increased appreciation of others' views and broader perspectives.

⬛ What can be improved

1. Duration of the session

   Feedback indicates that the two-hour sessions are too lengthy for participants to retain key points effectively. To keep participants active and engaged, it is suggested to shorten these sessions and focus on key takeaways.

2. Participant group size for activity sessions

   Some students felt that the group size was too small. With 68 participants divided into 17 groups of four, each student could only interact with and hear the story from three other members. It is, therefore, suggested that the group size is increased slightly to encourage more discussion and help students identify and appreciate a diverse range of skills and values, which is also one of the expected learning outcomes of the tool. A larger group might result in a longer session, which is why it is recommended to increase the group size slightly as seems appropriate.

⬛ Conclusion

To sum up, according to our evaluation in light of the Kirkpatrick's Model, this tool was successful both in its design and delivery, and in supporting participants to achieve the expected changes. Students engaged with the session were generally satisfied with the interaction activities and seem to have learnt to appreciate different perspectives of their peers. Some suggestions and recommendations are made, which if implemented in future sessions is likely to enhance the effectiveness of the tool.

Researching Organisations and Professions

Date of report: 7th June, 2024
Prepared by: Rong Ju
Reviewed by: Sarah Freesia Sreelan

Introduction

This report evaluates the effectiveness of the tool entitled 'Researching Organisations and Professions' from the QAA funded employability toolkit in meeting its expected learning outcomes. Based on the scope of the activities encompassed within this tool, this report evaluates, mainly, the reaction level and the learning level of the session in light of the Kirkpatrick's Model. Notably, the analysis is conducted based on a combination of 12 sets of valid feedback data gathered from 13 sessions.

This tool intends to support participants to:
1. Identify indicators of EDI commitment in organisations
2. Explore career options in line with their own intersectionality
3. Think critically about benefits of working for inclusive organisations

Positive aspects of the tool
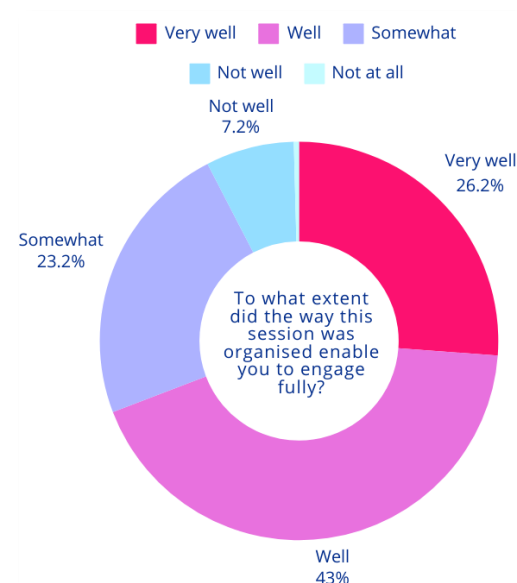
1. Reaction level: students mostly satisfied with design and delivery of the session

Based on the immediate responses from participants, they had, generally speaking, a positive perception about design and delivery of the session.

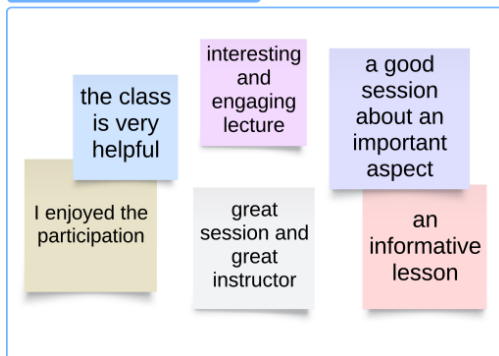Above all, 12 sets of feedback data to the sessions held were received from 249 participants with an overall active engagement. Among them, 92.4% of respondents felt that the way this session was organised enabled them to engage fully, at least to some extent, while 26.2% of them thought it was very well done.
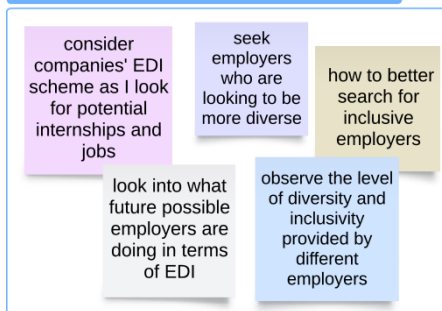
We value your feedback!

the class is very helpful

interesting and engaging lecture

a good session about an important aspect

I enjoyed the participation

great session and great instructor

an informative lesson

Besides, it can be seen from the subjective feedback that the content of instructions are well designed. Many of the participants enjoyed the participation and perceived it as a helpful and insightful session.

2. Learning level: expected learning outcomes achieved

What are you taking away from this session?

consider companies' EDI scheme as I look for potential internships and jobs

seek employers who are looking to be more diverse

how to better search for inclusive employers

look into what future possible employers are doing in terms of EDI

observe the level of diversity and inclusivity provided by different employers

The ultimate purpose of this tool is to empower students to make informed career choices aligned with their individuality. In the context of this session, students were expected to assess orgnisational values along with EDI commitment and how they align with their own identities and values. Judged upon feedback from the participants, this expectation had basically been met while achieving the three expected learning outcomes.
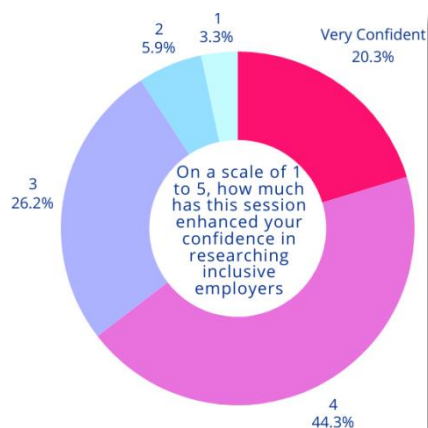
The first learning outcome, which focused on the identification of EDI commitment indicators, was realized to some extent, as students reported increased awareness and understanding of information of an orgnisation that is related to equity, diversity and inclusion. This is further evidenced by an increased confidence in researching inclusive employers, with approximately 90.8% of respondents noting a change above moderate level and 20.3% feeling very confident.

The second learning outcome, which is to support students to explore career options in line with their own intersectionality, was achieved. Participants were more driven to discover their own values and see how they align with those of the companies in job research.
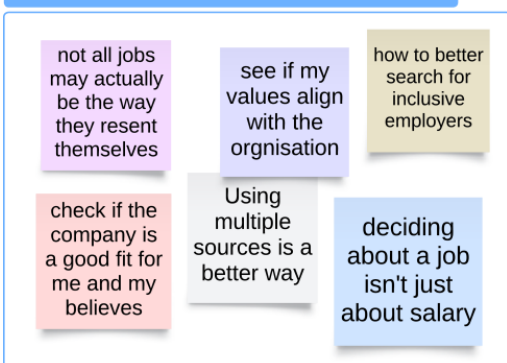
The third learning outcome, related to critical thinking about benefits of working for inclusive organisations, was to some extent realized, supported by subjective feedback highlighting increased intention to check for true commitment to EDI using multiple resources. Besides, they would like to consider various factors apart from salary when researching future employers.

➕ What can be improved

1. Engagement activities lacking interaction

Some participants, although only very few among the 249 respondents, pointed out that the session was boring and lack of fun. This is perhaps due to the fact that although students are organized into groups, most of the session is about lecturing and story-telling from the instructor her/himself.

Not well
2.8%

Very well
25.3%

Somewhat
22.9%

To what extent
did the session
broaden your
understanding
of different
perspectives
and
experiences
that impact
careers?

Well
48.2%
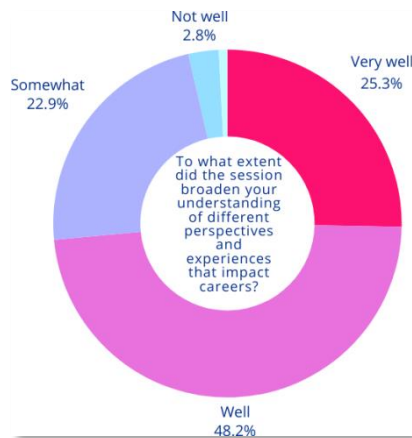
2. Vague feedback question

The second question in the feed forward session does not have a clear connection to the design and delivery nor the expected learning outcome of this tool in particular. Nonetheless, 96.4% of participants reported notably enhanced appreciation of diverse perspectives and experiences regarding employability.

Suggestions to enhance the tool

1. More interesting design of interaction activities

With reference to the creating psychologically safe spaces tool, it could be helpful to encourage students more to share their own stories and values within their groups, by providing some small incentives to those who are willing to speak up, and perhaps incorporating some form of illustrative games.

2. More specific feedback question

The questions for the feedback activities, could be advised in the tool to be designed in a more straightforward way, for instance, by directly asking "to what extent did the session helped you in identifying indicators for EDI commitment?", or "to what extent did the session enhanced your confidence in job research regarding value alignment?" This would help to encourage participants to provide more feedback tailored to the session's expected changes. In addition, this would make students more aware of what should be taken away from the session and help them to assess their gain.

Conclusion

Conclusively, according to evaluation in light of the Kirkpatrick's Model, this tool was successful both in its design and delivery, and in supporting participants to achieve the expected changes. Students engaged with the session were generally satisfied with the content of the session, they learned to better research an orgnisation with consideration of EDI factors while aligning their own individualities with the orgnisation's

values. Both the interaction activities and feedback questions could be areas for potential improvements. The suggestions might help to deliver a more interesting and attractive session and gather more valuable feedback from participants.

Giving and Receiving Inclusive Feedback

Date of the report: 22nd August, 2024
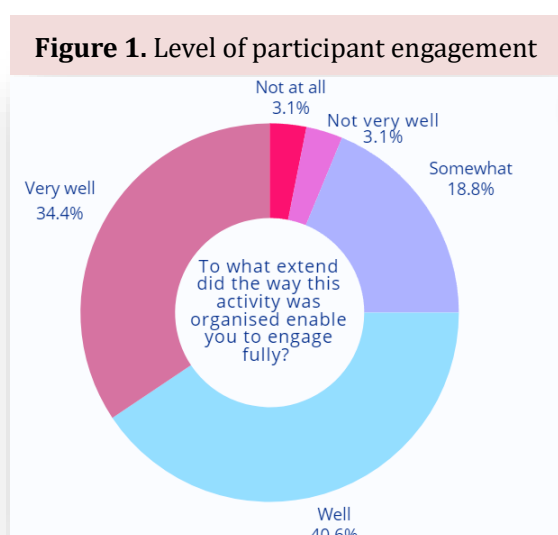**Prepared by:** Sarah Freesia Sreelan
Reviewed by: Rong Ju

⬦ Introduction

This report evaluates the effectiveness of the tool entitled 'Giving and Receiving Inclusive Feedback' from the QAA funded inclusive employability toolkit in meeting its expected learning outcomes. This report mainly assesses the reaction and learning levels of the participants, subject to the scope of activities covered by this tool, using the Kirkpatrick's Model. There were 34 participants in this workshop, and 28 in average responded to the survey, giving an average response rate of 77%.

This tool intends to support participants to:
1. _Explore the challenges and opportunities presented by feedback processes in a workplace context_
2. _Discuss and evaluate best-practice approaches to giving and receiving inclusive feedback and audit planned feedback for unconscious bias_
3. _Apply your learning in a safe space by participating in an interactive feedback exercise with your group_

⬦ Positive aspects of the tool

Figure 1. Level of participant engagement

Not at all 3.1%
Not very well 3.1%
Somewhat 18.8%
Very well 34.4%
Well 40.6%

To what extend did the way this activity was organised enable you to engage fully?

Level 1: Reaction

Figure 1 represents the extent to which the participants were able to engage in the session. 94% of the survey respondents indicated that this activity helped them engage. The high engagement level

achieved is backed by the following comments from participants:

"I am very happy about how well we were able to communicate with my team mates even though we were complete strangers a few weeks ago."

"I think this was a great way to finish the group project."

"It was good. Feedback made me think about the group chemistry."

Some participants indicated that they will continue to reflect on the topic and find ways of putting into practice what they have taken away from the session.

Overall, while most participants found this session to be an informative one, few participants noted that they needed more time for the in-session activities and that they experienced difficulty to think on the spot.

Figure 2. What are you taking away from the session?

Communication and confidence skills
Be more confident with other group members
I learnt a lot about myself
Being more open
Skills to deliver feedback in a not hurting way
Constructive criticism
Talk more when meeting new people
How to give positive and negative feedback
Improve based on feedback received

Level 2: Learning

Figure 2 is representative of common comments received from participants when asked about their key takeaways from the session.

They mentioned that the session helped them learn about how to give and receive feedback at work and matters to consider when critiquing someone's performance.

Some participants have noted that the session helped them learn about developing social skills like communication and confidence in providing and receiving feedbacks and the need to talk more and socialize when meeting new people. These are key skills necessary to connect with people in the workplace and any job industry.

Figure 3. Level of understanding participants gained of different perspectives and experiences that impact

Not at all
3.1%

Very well
25%

Somewhat
28.1%

To what extend has the activity broadened your understanding of different perspectives and experiences that impact careers?

Well
43.8%
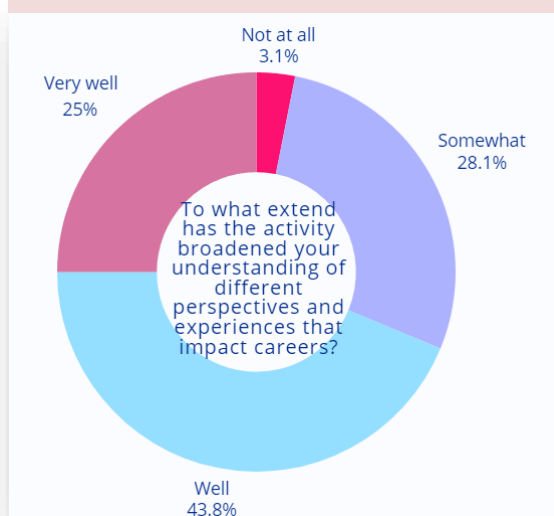
Furthermore, participants also indicated that the feedback received from their peers in the activity was an eye-opener, making them aware of areas of personal development and self-improvement. The activity has helped participants identify areas they need to devote more focus and work on which is likely to improve their chances of getting employed.

Comments also comprised of participants' learning on giving and receiving constructive criticism to and from their peers without having anyone get hurt or offended.

Figure 3 is a quantitative representation of the response of participants to the survey question with regards to the extent to which their understanding was broadened of different perspectives and experiences that impact careers. While majority of the participants said that this session has broadened their understanding, a few respondents commented that they were unsure of what to take away from the session.

Figure 4. Impact of activity on participants' confidence in providing and receiving inclusive feedback
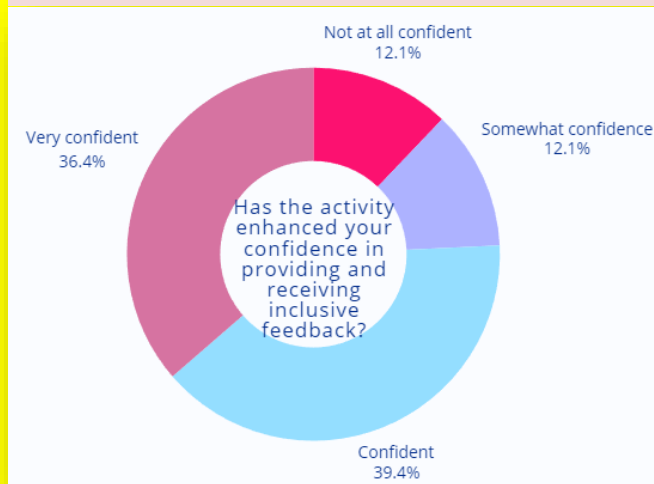
Responses received for the feedback Question: What you will do after this activity?

Many participants have stated that this session helped them reflect on the feedbacks they received from their peers and noted that after this activity they will work on the areas of personal development and self-improvement.

Based on the survey responses received and presented in Figure 4, a total of 88% of respondents feel confident in providing and receiving
inclusive feedback.

Participant comments also indicate that they are likely to embed this practice of giving and receiving feedback to team members in real life. Some of the common comments received from student imply potential behavioural change through the session:

"After this activity, I will take on board what was said and try polish up on the negatives."

"Work on self-improving based on the feedback and do more of this type of activity in future team-working environments."

"I'm taking away my constructive criticism."

Recommendation based on participant feedbacks

1. **Allocating more time for the activities in the session**

Some participants have expressed their need for more time to be allocated for the activities conducted during the session. This will give them more time to reflect and process the content that they have heard during the session.

♣ Conclusion

According to our evaluation based on the Kirkpatrick's Model, this tool was successful both in its design and delivery, and in supporting participants to achieve the intended learning outcomes of this session. Participants have shown a positive reaction to the session and have noted that it had been quite informative and an eye-opener.

The activity to apply the learning gained in a safe space through the interactive feedback exercise has helped participants reflect on themselves and identify areas for personal development based the constructive criticism and feedback they received from their peers. Many have also expressed that they will work on areas that need improvement and carry out similar feedback exercises while working with their teams implying potential change in behaviour.

This session has therefore been successful in attaining the Learning level of the Kirkpatrick's Model. Taking the participants' recommendation regarding the time issues into consideration is likely to enhance the session and help deliver it more efficiently.

Using Scenarios and Case Studies

Date of report: 22th August, 2024
Prepared by: Rong Ju
**Reviewed by**: Sarah Freesia Sreelan

🞣 Introduction

This report evaluates the effectiveness of the tool entitled 'Using Scenarios and Case Studies' from the QAA funded employability toolkit in meeting its expected learning outcomes. It evaluates, mainly, the reaction level and the learning level of the session in light of the Kirkpatrick's Model. The reactions and learning outcomes of participants can be measured based on their immediate responses to the survey. Among 45 participants in this session, 35 in average responded to the survey, giving an average response rate of 76%.

This tool intends to support participants to:
1. Identify and name different types of structural oppression, direct and indirect discrimination and micro-aggressions and inequitable workplace scenarios
2. Evaluate workplace and recruitment process situations that may be presented as normal practice and identify ethical questions and approaches to raising these safely
3. Consider the role of active bystander and its practical applications

🞣 Positive aspects of the tool

1. Reaction level: students satisfied with design and delivery of the session
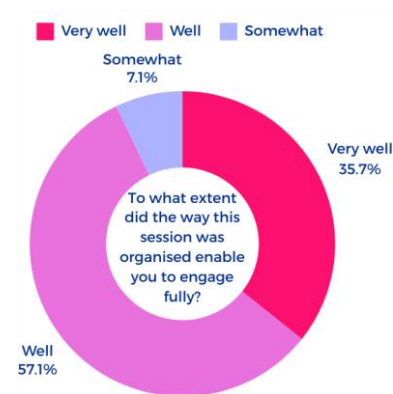
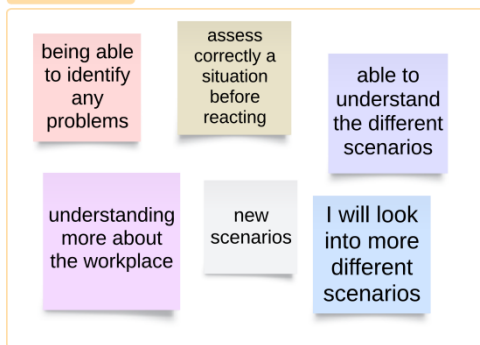Based on the immediate responses from participants, they had a positive perception about delivery of the session. All of the participants who responded felt that the way this session was organised enabled them to engage, while 35.7% of them thought it was very well done. Besides, it can be seen from the subjective feedback that the session was well presented. Participants had a great experience and perceived it as a helpful session.
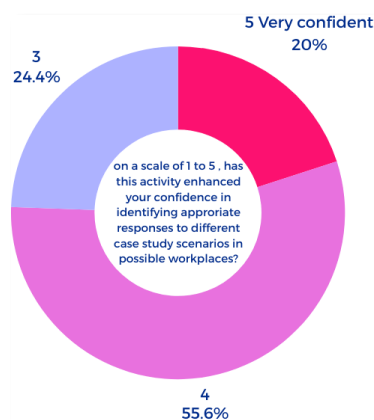
2. Learning level: expected learning outcomes partially achieved

The ultimate purpose of this tool is to empower students to identify and evaluate inequitable situations at workplaces. Participants were expected to consider the ethical problems and their roles in these situations, as well as approaches to safely deal with them. Judged upon feedback from the participants, this expectation had partially been met while achieving at least two of the three expected learning outcomes.
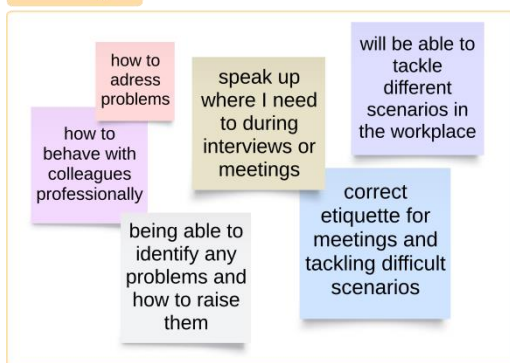
Takeaways?

being able to identify any problems

assess correctly a situation before reacting

able to understand the different scenarios

understanding more about the workplace

new scenarios

I will look into more different scenarios

The first learning outcome, which focused on the identification of different types of structural oppression, discrimination and inequitable workplace scenarios, has been achieved, as students reported increased awareness and understanding of these situations. They realised the importance of correctly assess a situation before taking actions, gained knowledge of new scenarios and the ability to identify problems at workplace.

5 Very confident
20%

3
24.4%

on a scale of 1 to 5 , has this activity enhanced your confidence in identifying approriate responses to different case study scenarios in possible workplaces?

4
55.6%

Takeaways?

how to adress problems

speak up where I need to during interviews or meetings

will be able to tackle different scenarios in the workplace

how to behave with colleagues professionally

being able to identify any problems and how to raise them

correct etiquette for meetings and tackling difficult scenarios

The second learning outcome, related to identification of ethical questions in workplace and recruitment process situations, along with approaches to raise them, has been realised. Many participants felt that they were able to identify different meeting/interview

scenarios and learned how to raise or tackle potential problems. This is further evidenced by an increased confidence in identifying appropriate responses to different workplace scenarios, with 100% of respondents noting a change above moderate level and 20% feeling very confident about the change.
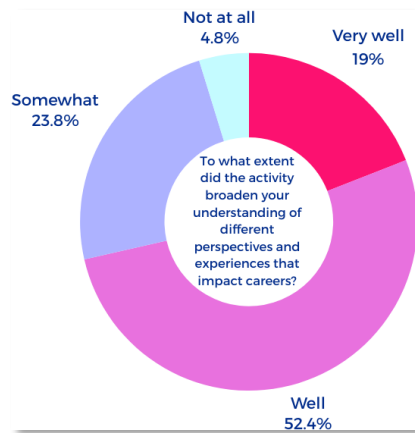
It is however hard to determine whether the third expectation, as for students to consider the role of active bystander, has been realised or not, since no respondent has reported on this issue in specific. Nonetheless, 95.3% of participants reported notably enhanced appreciation of diverse perspectives and experiences regarding employability.
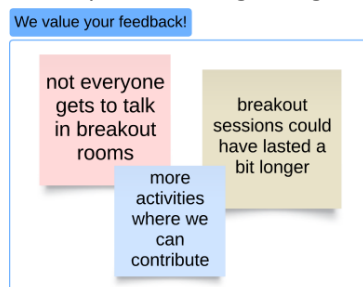
♣ What can be improved

1. Improper design of breakout group

   It is advised in the tool that students are broken into small discussion groups of up to a maximum of 5 students, where at least 10 minutes of group discussion time per scenario are allowed. This could be designed in a better way. Among 11 respondents in the open text feedback, 3 of them noted that the breakout session was a bit short and not every group member could contribute.

2. Lack of feedback on the third expected learning outcome.

   No student had reported on their learning experience about an active bystander, it could be caused by the fact that this part was not covered in any of the case studies provided in this particular session, it could also be attributed to lacking a question specific to this topic in the survey.

🞣 Suggestions to enhance the tool

1. Fewer members in each discussion group

   It could be helpful to reduce the maximum number of students to 4 or 3 in each group, allowing each member more time to share their lived experiences and exchange views on the given scenarios. Alternatively, longer group discussion time could be allowed to each scenario, for instance, at least 15 minutes.

2. Feedback question tailored to the expected change

   The questions for the feedback activities could be advised in the tool to be designed in a way that directly relates to the expected learning outcome, for instance, by asking "to what extent did the session enhanced your confidence in taking the role as an active bystander?" This would help to encourage participants to provide more feedback tailored to the session's expected changes. In addition, this would make students more aware of what should be taken away from the session and help them to assess their gain.

🞣 Conclusion

To sum up, according to evaluation in light of the Kirkpatrick's Model, this tool was successful both in its design and delivery, and in supporting participants to achieve most of the expected changes. This session had successfully instructed students on the etiquette to act and communicate when inequitable issues arise in their working lives and recruitment process. Design of the breakout groups and feedback questions could be areas for potential improvements. The suggestions might help to deliver a more effective and insightful session and gather more valuable feedback from participants.

Discussion of Structural Inequality Statistics

Date of the report: 22nd August, 2024
Prepared by: Sarah Freesia Sreelan
Reviewed by: Rong Ju

Introduction

This report evaluates the effectiveness of the tool entitled 'Discussion of Structural Inequality Statistics' from the QAA funded inclusive employability toolkit in meeting its expected learning outcomes. This report mainly assesses the reaction and learning levels of the participants, subject to the scope of activities covered by this tool, using the Kirkpatrick's Model.

Although the total number of participants cannot be determined based on the data provided for evaluation of this session responses from 24 participants have been recorded. On an average, we have received 19 responses for the survey questions resulting in an average response rate of 78%.
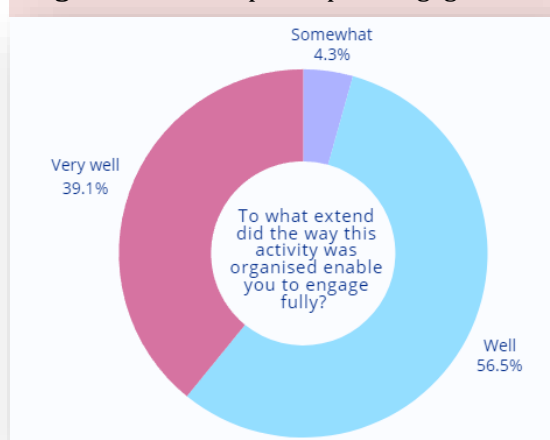
Intended learning outcomes of this session
To support educators to:
1. _Enhance facilitation skills in addressing sensitive topics_
2. _Increase awareness of intersectionality and contextual considerations_

Positive aspects of the tool

Figure 1. Level of participant engagement

To what extend did the way this activity was organised enable you to engage fully?

- Somewhat 4.3%
- Very well 39.1%
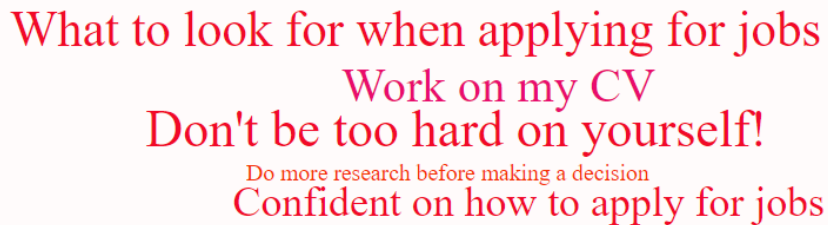- Well 56.5%

Level 1: Reaction

Figure 1 represents the extent to which the participants were able to engage in the session. 96% of the survey respondents indicated that this activity helped them engage. Due to a very low response to the

open text survey questions it is hard to determine how receptive participants were to this session.

Level 2: Learning

Figure 2. What are you taking away from the session?

Figure 2 is representative of common comments received from participants when asked about their key takeaways from the session.

We received a response rate of 75% for this survey question. Most participants said that the session helped them understand that they need to be more confident in applying for jobs, even if they feel like they haven't met all the criteria listed out in the job description. Some feedbacks indicate that they may book a career appointment to discuss their future career options and work on their CVs.

One participant noted that the session has helped her become more confident about 'how' to apply to jobs and internships and has learnt 'what' to look for when applying.

In general, respondents have stated that the session has helped encourage them to apply for jobs provided they have the "few necessary skills" required for the job rather than all that is listed.

All respondents to survey questions in Figure 3 and Figure 4 have said that the session has enhanced their confidence in critically analyzing statistics and that it has helped them gain understanding of different perspectives and experiences that impact careers.

Figure 4. Level of understanding participants gained of different perspectives and experiences that impact

Somewhat
21.7%

Very well
34.8%

To what extend has the activity broadened your understanding of different perspectives and experiences that impact careers?

Well
43.5%
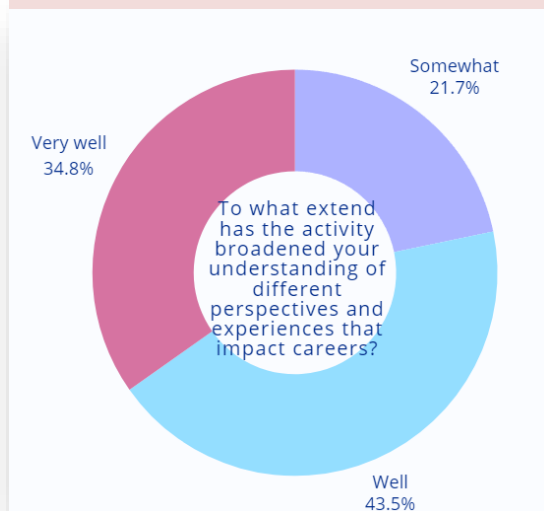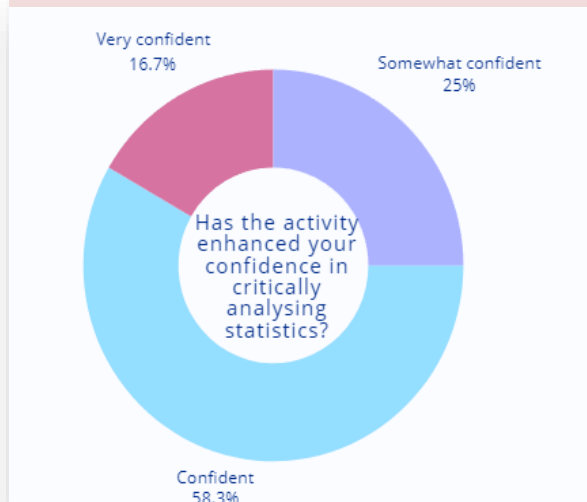
Figure 3. Impact of activity on participants' confidence in critically analysing statistics

Very confident
16.7%

Somewhat confident
25%

Has the activity enhanced your confidence in critically analysing statistics?

Confident
58.3%

However, no strong comments have been made by participants with regards to their learning in terms of facilitation skills, awareness of intersectionality and contextual considerations which are the intended learning outcomes of the session.

Recommendation based on participant feedbacks

1. Break into smaller groups

One of the participants recommended that it is better to have smaller groups as she feels this will help them have more discussion.

Conclusion

Based on the limited feedback received, the session seems to have helped encourage participants to be more confident in applying for jobs and not get overwhelmed by reading the job description.

However, we were unable establish a clear correlation between the intended learning outcomes of this session and the open-text feedback obtained from the participants. Therefore, we do not have strong grounds to conclude that this session was successful in its delivery.

Getting Alumni to Share Their Lived Experiences with Students

Date of report: 22th August, 2024
Prepared by: Rong Ju
Reviewed by: Sarah Freesia Sreelan

This report should evaluate the effectiveness of the tool entitled 'Getting alumni to share their lived experiences with students' from the QAA funded employability toolkit in meeting its expected learning outcomes in light of the Kirkpatrick's model.

This tool intends to support participants to:
1. Gain a representative picture of the personal experiences of different alumni in terms of inclusion/exclusion when participating in recruitment practices and in the workplace
2. Distinguish between appropriate and inappropriate behaviours of employers in relation to inclusion
3. Apply the knowledge gained from the alumni discussions when engaging in their own search for work and make informed career decisions

Unfortunately no students had responded to the survey, so no student feedback was gathered which would enable us to conduct a full analysis in order to determine whether the three expected changes have been realised or not.

Based on the reaction from one of the alumni who got invited and responded to the survey, he/she engaged very well with students and participants. This indicates that, the design and delivery of activities which focused on inclusion did help, at least from the perspective of this panelist, participants to engage with each other.

To help the session to obtain more feedback from the student side, it could be advised in the tool to provide small incentives to student participants who complete the evaluation form.

Inclusive Teamwork Workshop Session

Date of the report: 7th June, 2024
Prepared by: Sarah Freesia Sreelan
Reviewed by: Rong Ju

✦ Introduction

This report evaluates the effectiveness of the tool entitled 'Inclusive Teamwork Workshop Session' from the QAA funded inclusive employability toolkit in meeting its expected learning outcomes. This report mainly assesses the reaction, learning, and behavior levels of the participants, subject to the scope of activities covered by this tool, using the Kirkpatrick's Model.
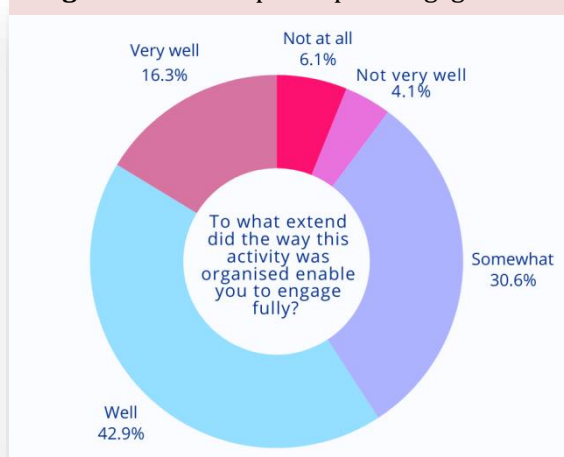
Intended learning outcomes of this session
To support students who are working in curriculum project teams to:

1. _Identify and understand behaviours and attitudes, which may lead team members to feel excluded and reflect on the impact this may have_
2. _Address stereotypes and cultural biases, which can act as a barrier to inclusion, productivity, and innovation_
3. _Explore allyship approaches which can support inclusive teamworking and better communication in diverse teams_

There were 57 participants in this workshop, and 42 responded to the survey, giving a response survey rate of 72%.

✦ Positive aspects of the tool

Figure 1. Level of participant engagement

Very well
16.3%

Not at all
6.1%

Not very well
4.1%

To what extend did the way this activity was organised enable you to engage fully?

Somewhat
30.6%

Well
42.9%

Level 1: Reaction

Student responses to the question asked in Figure 1 is used to determine the success of the session in supporting engagement by participants. 89.8% of those who responded to the survey indicated that the design of the activity helped them to engage. 10.2% stated that they were not able to engage.

Based on the open text feedback received, many found the session interesting and talked about what they got out of the session. However, there were mixed feelings about the content presented and some participants noted that they weren't learning anything "new" and that the presentation was lengthy. Overall, there seems to be reasonable level of interaction and engagement for this session.

Figure 2. What are you taking away from the session?

Inclusiveness has allowed me to see other people's perspectives
Make sure everyone has a voice
Team work and respect
Don't be too quick on dismissing others inputs
Being open and inclusive
Respect others' time and opinions
I will make sure that everyone in my group feels valued
Ensure everyone is included in group discussions
Different ways that someone can feel excluded while working in a team
To be considerate of different cultures

Level 2: Learning

To understand learning from this session we reviewed comments students made about what they were taking away from this session. This is illustrated in Figure 2. The comments in Figure 2 represent the common positive responses and takeaways from the session.

35 participants out of the 42 survey respondents responded to this open-text question. Based on the comments shown in Fig 2, the learning gained by understanding diverse perspectives is likely to foster empathy to their peers and colleagues from different cultures.

Figure 3. Level of understanding participants gained of different perspectives and experiences that

Not at all 5.9%
Not very well 5.9%
Very well 23.5%
Somewhat 25.5%
To what extend has the activity broadened your understanding of different perspectives and experiences that impact careers?
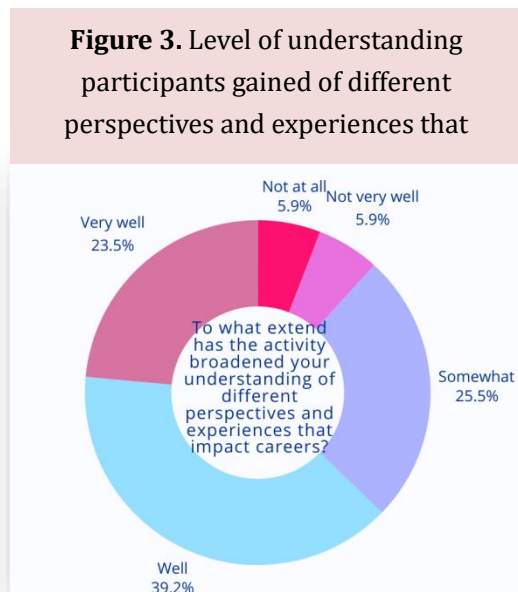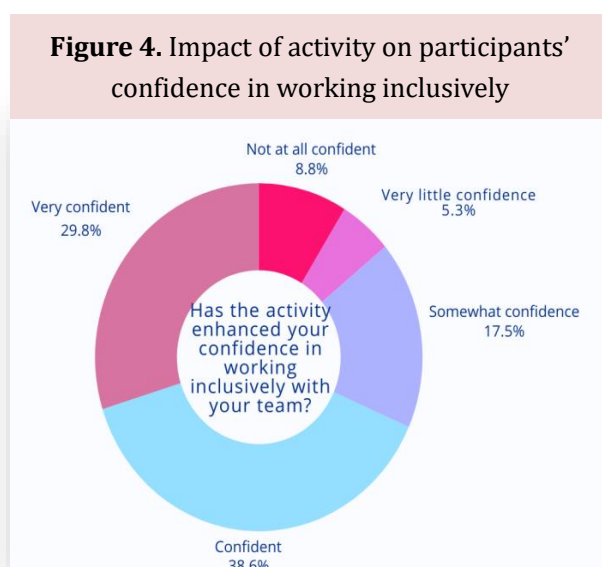Well 39.2%

Figure 3 shows the participant responses when asked about the level of understanding they gained in relation to   different perspectives and experiences that impact careers.

88% of the participants responded that this session helped broaden their understanding of different perspectives and experiences that impact careers.

Figure 4. Impact of activity on participants' confidence in working inclusively

Not at all confident 8.8%
Very little confidence 5.3%
Very confident 29.8%
Somewhat confidence 17.5%
Has the activity enhanced your confidence in working inclusively with your team?
Confident 38.6%

However,   around   12%   of   the   cohort expressed that they didn't gain as much out of the session. Some of the open-text negative comments indicate:, "The content taught was nothing new to me" and "Everything was self-explanatory".

Level 3: Behaviour level

We are able to start to understand the impact of the activity on behaviour through consideration of

enhanced confidence.

86% of survey respondents indicated that the activity had enhanced their confidence in working inclusively with their team.

The toolkit includes activities, like the team charter task, are designed to help participants reflect on their own behaviors and attitudes and for promoting long-term change. One of the participants, when asked the open-text question 'What will you do after this activity?' responded "Initiate team charter". This implies that the participant is likely to adopt a new practice to create a team charter for any future projects or teamwork.

🪁 Conclusion

In conclusion, the Inclusive Teamwork Workshop Session effectively engaged participants, imparting valuable knowledge on inclusivity and fostering enthusiasm to apply these concepts in the workplace.

Based on our evaluation above and feedback obtained from participants, the session was successful in achieving the intended learning objectives stated at the start of the report.

While most participants found this to be an informative session on inclusivity, a small percent noted that the session didn't have any significant impact on their perception towards inclusivity.

Recommendations to further enhance the toolkit

Further to suggestions pointed out by the participants of the employability sessions and based on practices that have benefited us personally in our student and career journeys we recommend the following suggestions which would help enhance the effectiveness of the toolkit.

1. *Brief and more frequent sessions*

We recommend conducting brief employability sessions throughout the year, for example, after each course module, instead of a single 2 hour long session at the end of the academic period. This approach is likely to enhance student feedback and ensure their concerns about the topic are addressed promptly.

2. *Setting-up localized/regional learning centers*

We recommend grouping students into smaller, course-based groups rather than having large groups of, for instance, 75 participants. This will likely make students feel more comfortable sharing their thoughts on employability related topics, and help educators address specific concerns with appropriate guidance.

Additionally, the employability program can be conducted in regional learning centers for remote students, including those outside the UK, to participate in this activity. This would allow them to engage in employability events, socialize, and build connections to support their employability journey.

3. *Providing employability sessions specific to their course*

Grouping participants by their selected course from the universities/colleges will help them discuss and understand industry-specific skills relevant to their future professions. This approach will enable them to identify and develop key skills, such as "attention to detail" for students pursuing accountancy, improving their employment prospects.

4. *Introduction and education on Emotional Intelligence in the workplace*

We recommend incorporating emotional intelligence education into the employability sessions and tools to highlight its importance in today's workplace. This is crucial in a work culture focused on productivity and targets, often at the expense of a healthy emotional work environment.

5. Follow-Up Activities

While the toolkit suggests initial engagement strategies, it could be strengthened by incorporating follow-up activities or mechanisms to track behavior change over time, such as periodic check-ins or follow-up workshops. Workshops/seminars/events can be organized on a periodic basis for students or alumni to take part, where they can discuss any inclusiveness related challenges they experience or witness in the real world. They can then have an open discussion with peers and educators on how to mitigate these issues.

6. Subscription emails

The inclusiveness toolkit can take a step forward by having periodic newsletter/subscription emails that can be sent out to students/alumni to support continuous learning and development with regards to inclusion. These can include helpful articles around the topic which could help provide a timely reminder for students and keep them informed to be emotionally intelligent of their peers in college or workplace who may have a culture different from theirs.

The emails can also contain inclusivity related surveys or a space where students can send their concerns related to inclusivity. This is likely to make them feel like they are being heard on a timely basis.

They could also be offered support from a help-desk where they can reach out for advice on any inclusivity related issues they may face.

Conclusion

We would like to thank the team for the development of this toolkit which, as per our evaluation, is successful in both in its design and delivery and in helping participants achieve the intended learning outcomes of the sessions.

Participants have shown an overall positive reaction and response with good levels of engagement rate. Feedbacks received from them indicate that the sessions were informative and therefore improved their understanding on key employability topics. They also feel confident that they will be able to implement practices such as giving and receiving feedback, initiating a team-charter, inclusive team-working and the likes of such in their workplaces. The employability tools include activities which allow participants to reflect on the topics being discussed and for self-evaluation which has helped them realize areas of strengths and areas that need improvement and personal development in terms of employability.

Although, the impact of the sessions on the behaviour level of the Kirkpatrick model could not be assessed in the scope of this report, feedbacks and takeaways from participants indicate that there could be a potential positive change in behaviour following attending these sessions.

However, it should be noted that whilst most participants feel benefited from the sessions and found key takeaway points that could help them in their career journey, a small percent of participants felt indifferent about the employability sessions. Making a few changes to future sessions based on the recommendations suggested by the participants and by the preparers of this report is likely to address this issue and further improve the effectiveness and the delivery of these sessions.

Reference

Kirkpatrick D. L, Kirkpatrick J. D. (2006). Evaluating training programs: The four levels (3rd ed.). San Francisco: Berrett-Koehler Publication.