Suggested Question Topics for Delegates:

• Job-readiness of 2012/2013 graduates entering the future workplace
• Employer expectations of graduate skills & training development
• Recruitment & selection (e.g. assessment centres, psychometric tests, interviews)
• Collaborative working with employers to make better use of industry insight
• Relevance and interpretation of the Greenwich Graduate Attributes initiative
• Effectiveness of embedding employability into teaching (e.g. PDP/PPD)
• Innovative and creative methods for engaging students to become more employable
• Key characteristics of the ideal graduate from an employer’s perspective

Please Remember:

• Before asking a question, provide an introduction with your name, job title and department/School
• Avoid asking consecutive questions, to allow other delegates a chance to engage as well
• Use the suggested question topics to engage the panel in as many different discussion threads as possible

Draw upon your own experiences with students – either through PDP/PPD, employability-geared courses, sandwich placements, postgraduate coaching, graduate applications etc to ask the panel for their feedback, suggestions & recommendations on how we might improve what we do.

Effective Engagement: straight from the employer’s mouth

“The skills gap remains a key concern of graduate employers. This year, a CBI survey found that over half of employers were concerned that they wouldn’t be able to fill all of the graduate roles in the next few years due to the skills gap.”

(Graduate Market Trends Winter 2011 report)
Samantha Paul
Talent Acquisition Specialist, Enterprise Rent-A-Car

Samantha graduated from University a degree in French; however, she really wanted to gain some business experience. She found the opportunity at Enterprise very appealing; a company that would teach employees how to run their own business and that would provide support every step of the way. Samantha started her career as a Management Trainee in 2006 and in just four short years, she was promoted five times. As Branch Manager at the Reading location, the position of Talent Acquisition Specialist became available. Throughout her career Samantha has always enjoyed helping others grow and develop, so when the position became available, she grabbed it with both hands. She wanted to be part of the team that finds the best talent for the future, and ensure that Enterprise continues to grow and provide progression opportunities for the leaders of the future.

Dermot O’Brien, Chief Executive, Adab Trust

Dermot O’Brien has had a very varied career to date started by serving traditional apprenticeship building racing engines. This led to a range of manufacturing and sales roles in high technology engineering/aerospace companies. Dermot has also started and subsequently sold a marine charter business. For the last fifteen years he has been working to promote corporate social responsibility with a particular interest in supporting the long term unemployed. This has lead to a number of roles including the post of senior business advisor to the Government Office for London and a ministerial task force on youth crime. In 2007 Dermot set up a new charity Adab to create employment opportunities into blue chip companies for BAME students studying in post 1992 universities. The Adab Trust has created an unique employer led selection and training programme resulting so far in over 100 hires with top employers. Currently the trust is facilitating employers to work on campus to improve student’s employability skills as part of the curriculum.

Nicole Smart, Student Recruitment Manager, CIMA

Nicole Smart is the Student Recruitment Manager for The Chartered Institute of Management Accountants. CIMA is the world’s largest and leading professional body of management accountants. The CIMA qualification provides more strategy, more management accounting and more relevance across a broad business perspective, than any other professional accountability qualification.

Nicole has worked with CIMA since 2007 within both employer and student Recruitment. With this comprehensive background it has given her a clear understanding on what employers are looking for in their ideal candidate and how to develop programme within employers to support the need of their graduates.

Beverley Milner, Corporate HR Manager, EDF Energy

Beverley was born in the north east of England, left school at sixteen and worked in construction, IT project management and as a tea lady before and graduating from the University of Greenwich in 2001 with a First Class Honours degree in Operations Management. She had a very fulfilling time at London Underground on their graduate programme before being head hunted to join EDF Energy. She is a career HR generalist working at across sites around London and in Gloucester. She looks after a senior, professional customer group – dispensing pragmatic, business focused HR advice with a smile (most of the time). She gets a real buzz helping people make career decisions and sees mentoring and coaching as an essential part of day-to-day business. She is a regular columnist in G3 magazine and lives in Somerset with her wife.

Eleanor Kehoe, Deputy Director OSA, University of Greenwich

Eleanor’s early career was primarily focused on working with disadvantaged young people, employer/business engagement and inner city regeneration projects in both Dublin and London. Eleanor graduated as a mature student with a degree in Politics and a postgraduate qualification in Careers Guidance & Counselling. She moved from working with the estimable NGO Save the Children in the nineties into Higher Education, working in London South Bank as part of their Careers Service where she set up one of the first UK university JobShop before moving on to manage an integrated Careers & Placement service for the university. Her next move was to the University of Greenwich in 2006 where she integrated the Careers, JobShop and Volunteering & Mentoring services into the Guidance & Employability Team (GET). Eleanor has the privilege of still heading up this team and is now also lead on the Welfare & Student Support services at the university as the Deputy Director for the Office of Student Affairs.