

# **Employability and advertising education**

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1. Landscape: What kind of market are we in?
2. Competition: What kind of observations can we make?
3. Reflection: How to embed employability in the curriculum and to go beyond just having guest speakers?

# Employability discourse in HE

- Employability is not a new issue for HE. **Robbins Report (1963)** highlighted the need for graduates to make an effective contribution to the labour market.
- Since the 90s, unprecedented level of external pressure for HEs to prove their graduates are 'adding value' to the economy: **Dearing Report (1997)**

- Dearing (1997) and Wilson (2012) recommend that work experience should be an integral part of university education to equip students with skills, knowledge and abilities to enhance employment prospects upon completing their degree (Brooks and Youngson, 2016).
- Graduate employability has thus become a priority for UK HE (Clarke, 2017).

## The Graduate Outcomes survey...

- contacts graduates
- 15 months after graduation
- by email or phone
- to learn about your activities and views

Find out more [www.graduateoutcomes.ac.uk](http://www.graduateoutcomes.ac.uk)

# Definition

- “a set of achievements, understanding and personal attributes that make individuals more likely to gain employment and be successful in their chosen occupation” (Yorke and Knight, 2007: 158)

## Criticism and ongoing debate

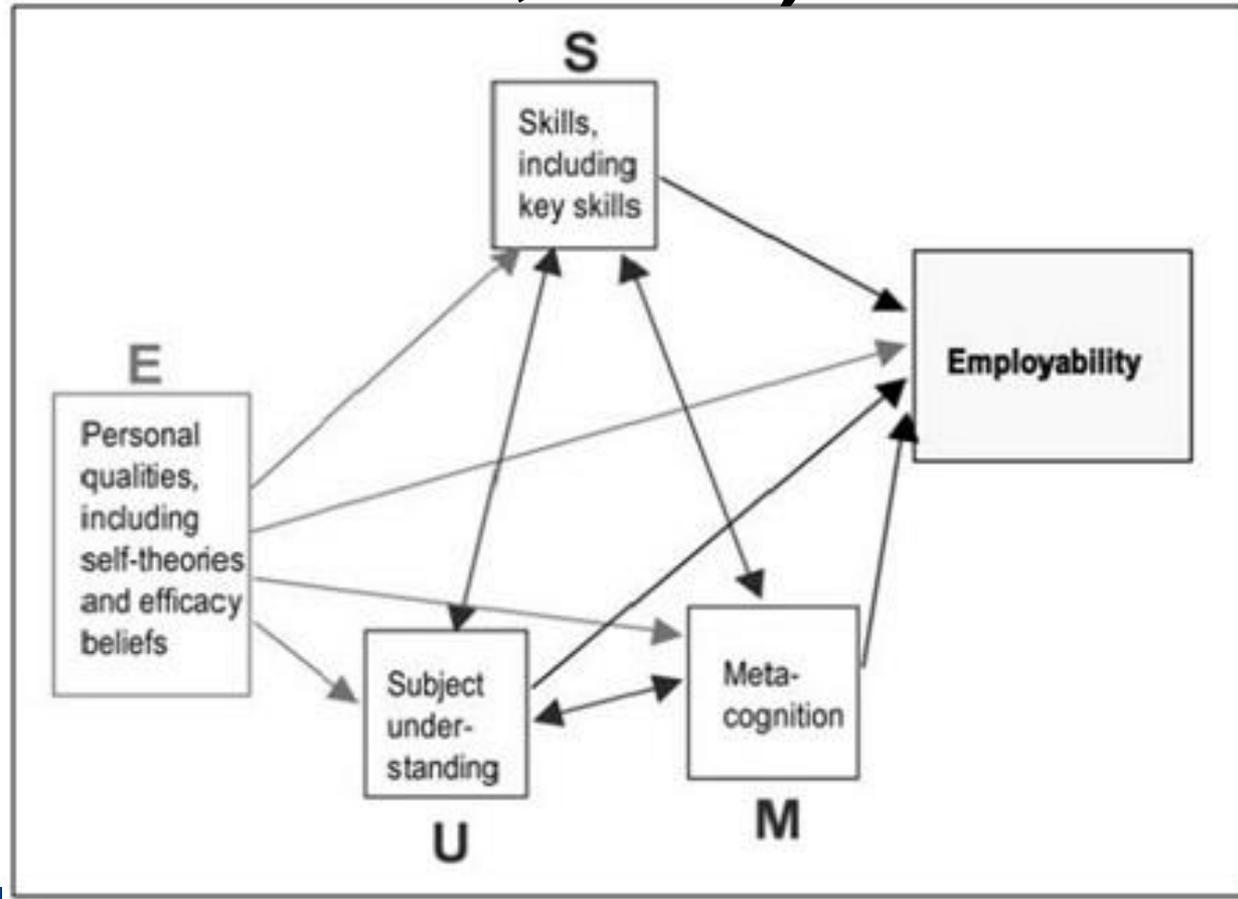
- Only the end result of job realisation matters?

The HEI employability agenda seems to be rather less concerned with developing employable graduates as it is with employed graduates (Lee et al., 2016: 97)

- Ongoing debate which must move and develop with the market, society and the global situation (Helyer and Lee, 2014: 348).

- Many within the university sector increasingly see the 'skills agenda' as 'narrowly conceived, relatively mechanical, and inimical to the purposes of higher education (Yorke and Knight, 2006: 567)

# USEM model of employability (Knight and Yorke, 2004)



# Peculiarities of advertising education

Have no natural pathway



**A-LEVELS**



**BTEC**

Taught in various disciplines

- Art/design
- Business
- Media, culture and communication
- Creative industries
- Architecture and design
- ...

As of June 2019, there are 44 universities offering 129 degree programmes (UCAS listed) of which the degree title includes Advertising.



- **Employers** are increasingly looking for graduates with broad knowledge, as well as specific expertise in one aspect of the marketing mix. Our Marketing Communications courses have been designed to not only **meet the needs of employers**, but to also help you stand out from the crowd with **additional professional qualifications**.



- This course, which benefits from **EPAS and Chartered Institute of Marketing accreditation**, is aimed at students with an interest in advertising and marketing **from the creative to the analytical** – whether that is advertising and branding, consumer behaviour, digital and social media marketing, or new product development and market research. It provides a solid foundation in marketing and advertising, with a specific focus on marketing communications across different media and contexts.

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- This course places equal emphasis on mastering **practical skills** and developing your **academic potential**. You will receive intensive professional training provided by active practitioners, and will analyse the role PR and Advertising play in society and their relationship to the media. You will also develop a critical understanding of the media industries, their products and their audiences.



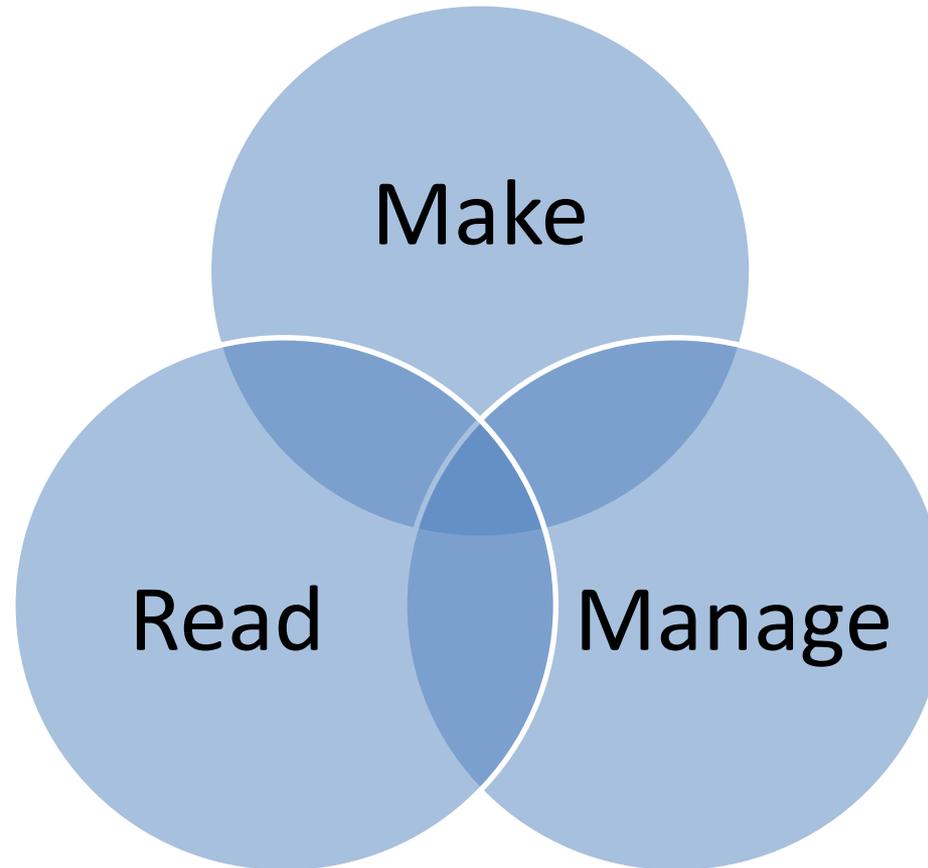
- BA (Hons) Advertising is a **multi-award winning course** with students gaining accolades at Cannes Young Lions and Future Lions, D&AD UK and The One Show New York amongst others. It has been crafted to help you realise those essential **skills** you'll need for a successful career in the advertising industry.



# Observations

- Having less text, more visuals
- Embedding virtual tour
- Flagging scholarship opportunity
- Highlighting industry networks (local and global)
- Showcasing students' works
- **Focusing on employability**

# Typology of advertising degrees in UK HE



# 2017-18



# 2018-19



# Guest speakers' sessions: Lessons from 2017-19

- Novelty, rarity and hype come from the company's reputation
- Academics are not popular!
- Timing is key for bigger audience and better engagement
- Social media is key for promotion/learning/networking

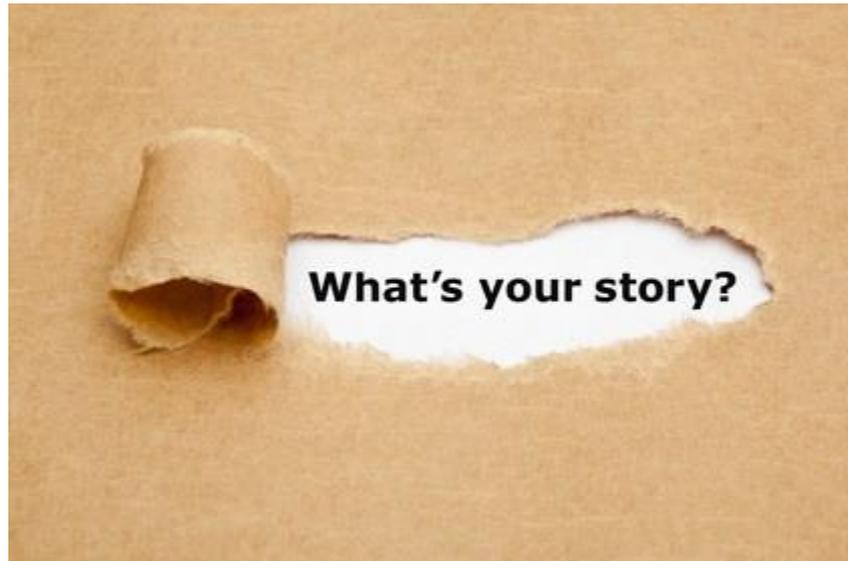


# Beyond guest speakers

- Mentor
- Work experience/placement/internship
- Co-teaching team (Brief/activity/dissertation topics proposer)
- Assessor (Presentation/pitch)
- Cost effective solution: cross-module/level session, Big Picture Seminar (GEP)

# Strategies to enhance graduate employability prospects

- Incorporate employability skills into programme curricula, linked to a set of institutionally specific graduate attributes (Harvey 2005) and opportunities for: internships, placements, work-integrated learning (WIL), and overseas exchanges.



# Concluding thought:

- 3 competing perspectives on employability:  
Is it possession, position or process? (Holmes, 2011)

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