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Placements enhancing employability and enterprise at Aston University

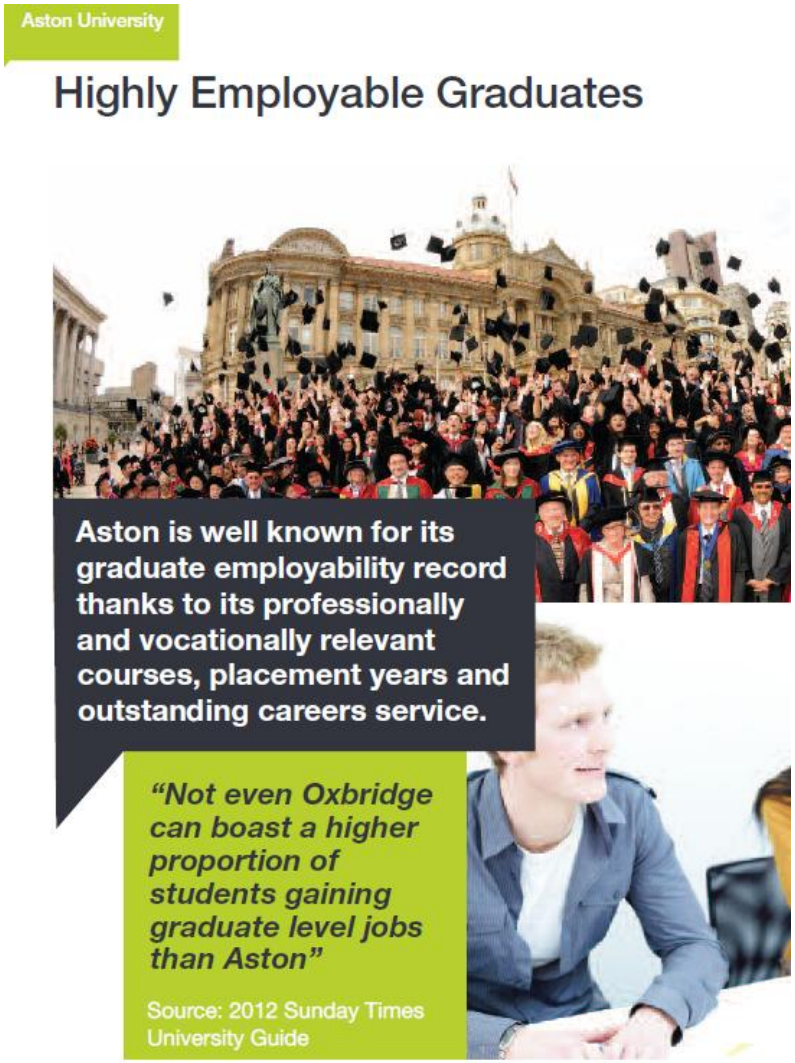
- *Established reputation for industry focussed programmes & employable graduates*

- *Consistently excellent league table rankings for graduate employability*

Nicola Turner,
Director of Employability

What’s coming up

- **Intro to Aston University**
- **Placements and Internships**
- **Enterprise and Entrepreneurship**



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Aston at a glance

- Birmingham city centre location
- 10,000 UG students
- 15+ Research Centres
- 8th in the UK (Sunday Times) for Employability - 89.2% grad level employment

4 Schools of Study

- Aston Business School
- Life and Health Sciences
- Languages and Social Sciences
- Engineering and Applied Science

Founded in 1895; College of Advanced Technology in 1956; University since 1966

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Engagement with business starts at the top

Professor Dame Julia King, CBE, DBE

- Rolls Royce (1994-2002)
  - Director of Advanced Engineering
  - Engineering Director for Rolls-Royce Marine Business
- Chair of Employability, Business and Industry Policy Network (Universities UK)
- Non-executive Director, Dept. of Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS)
- Chair of Defence Scientific Advisory Council (MoD)
- UK's Low Carbon Business Ambassador
- Author of 'King Review' – reduction on carbon emissions to be achieved by vehicle and fuel technologies.
- Board of Angel Trains

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The Aston USP?

“Aston's high employability rating comes from being one of the few universities that offers students a placement year” **The Times, Feb 27 2008**

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Sandwich placements: 12 months, 10% of degree

Over 60% of Aston's undergraduate students take 'sandwich' courses

International work placements in 30 + countries

1/3 of students are offered grad job by their placement provider

Employers advertised 4152 placement vacancies to Aston students in 2011/12

Research proves that students doing placements achieve higher degree results

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Preparing for Placement

Placement support in Careers Centre	2011-12 Total Cumulative
Documents checked (CVs and applications)	1596
One-2-One appointments including Mock Interviews	1482

Open Days and Pre-Entry promotion of placements in UK and abroad

1st year campaigns to keep interest alive amongst those for whom placement is "optional"

2nd year preparation for placement weekly skills workshops, employer events, 121s and CV checking

Resource intensive: 50+ staff employed in Careers, Placements, Enterprise and Internships at Aston

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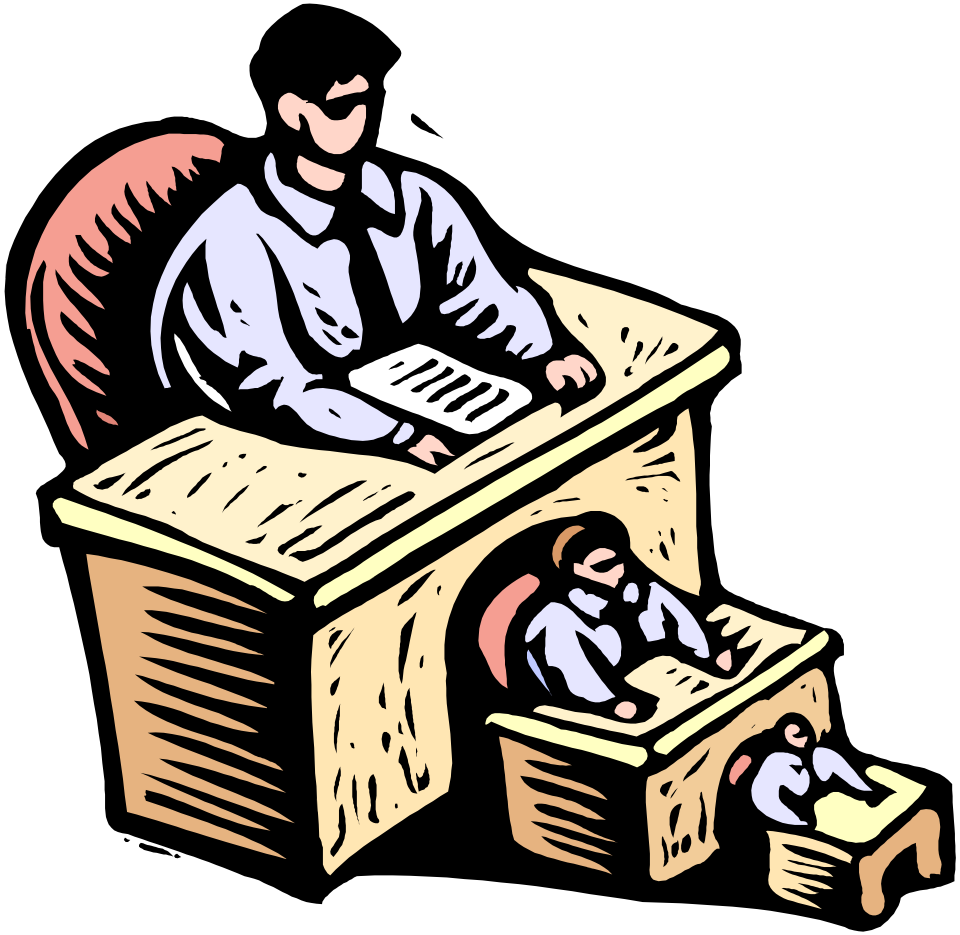
Internships in SMEs



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Graduate Advantage (GA)

Growth in graduate internships at Aston between 2008 - 2013

921 graduates

2008-2011

1100 graduates

2010 - 2011

1400 graduates

£ERDF
High growth SMEs
Aston-led project
HEI partnership

2011 - 2013

25,000 local employers on GA database

35% of interns go into full time job after internship

GA established 2003 and employs team of 17 staff from Aston

Successful model of partnership working – Aston led consortiums

Finalist *Times Higher Award* for Outstanding Employer Engagement 2010

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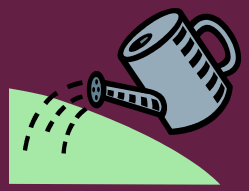
Developing Enterprising Graduates
Case study: BSEEN



- Started November 2009
- Wide variety of business 'types' with several successfully trading
- Practical encouragement to grow, each business given 6 months incubation, including a fully tailored training, mentoring and support programme

Social Enterprise

Simon McCann

Start Ups

•BSEEN was the turning point, we weren't going to give up but running the company was getting harder and harder. BSEEN came along and put us amongst other companies with the same problems and allowed us to share tips with the other businesses, take a different approach, and grow." **firstcarfinder**

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Developing Enterprising Graduates
Case study: BSEEN

Over 350 Students and Graduates supported through the project

→

Aston leads **BSEEN. Other Partners,** University of Birmingham and Birmingham City University

→

Aston one of four universities selected to run the new **Start Up** programme by **Young Enterprise**, sponsored by Goldman Sachs

→

Aston partnered with **UnLtd** to provide grants of £500 to £5000 to establish a Social Enterprise

→

Aston University has joined the Santander University Network and sponsors UG and PG entrants into the **Santander Universities Entrepreneurship Awards**.

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Student satisfaction regarding career prospects and careers advice

- NSS - Those graduating in 2011 were asked for the first time about their experience of the careers support on offer at their University
- Aston students results: above upper quartile in both these areas
- High Fliers 2012 Aston students amongst the most confident about prospects of getting a grad job
- We think placements give students lot of career confidence.

B1.1 As a result of my course, I believe that I have improved my career prospects.	**89%**
B1.2 Good advice is available for making career choices.	79%

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In summary

- **Placements**
- **Internships in SMEs**
- **HEIs in partnership**
- **Enterprise, social enterprise and entrepreneurship**

"Aston amongst Top Ten Universities for producing millionaires" says research by Skandia (published in The Telegraph 2012)

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Links to placement related research

- **Placements and degree performance: Do placements lead to better marks, or do better students choose placements?** Driffield, N.L, Foster, C.S., and Higson, H.E. Aston Business School, Aston University

- **No regrets? Measuring the career benefits of a psychology placement year** Moores, E. and Reddy, P. Psychology, School of Life and Health Sciences, Aston University

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