

Title: Developing Industry ready Environmental Health graduates – A reflection of a collaborative teaching innovation towards assessment for learning

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Abstract

There is an apparent gap that exists between higher education and industry employment which necessitate equipping graduates with necessary skills required to thrive within the world of work. This paper reflects on a collaborative teaching innovation aimed to develop industry ready environmental health graduates. In line with module curriculum within Environmental Health undergraduate degree, an innovation to offer contact presentations on career development in partnership with Centre for Psychological Services and Career Development (PsyCaD) unit and have a panel of external environmental health experts to conduct mock interviews was developed. The presentations by PsyCad were divided into three sessions namely, curriculum vitae (CV) and cover letter writing; job search strategies and digital career footprints; and interview skills. The innovation included an assessment component which required students to submit their CV and undergo the mock interview, with both components scored for an assessment mark. Students were given assessment feedback in class. Post-graduation, students were asked to voluntarily provide individual feedback via WhatsApp to the module facilitator on their experience of the innovation. The feedback reflected aspects including “getting real life experience”; “self confidence boost”; “now knowing to tailor their CV for specific job requirements” and that “the exercise should be continued as it will benefit future students”. This affirms that with collaborative approaches, involving industry experts, we may design experiences for students to learn and be confidently prepared for the workplace. The innovation was published in the Teaching Innovation of the 21st century booklet which can be accessed at: https://www.uj.ac.za/wp-content/uploads/2024/11/teaching-innovation-2024_final.pdf.