



Resources for international students seeking work in the UK and overseas

Database of Employers



**Prime Minister's Initiative 2 (PMI2)
Final report, January 2011**

Executive summary

The PMI2-funded *Resources for international students seeking work in the UK and overseas: Database of Employers* project has been successful. Although having taken longer than anticipated, all outcomes have been achieved and considerable 'additionality' achieved via the use of PMI2 resources at a time of website development in both partner organisations. The resulting services for international students and graduates have thus been enhanced to a greater extent than was planned for. See at, http://www.prospects.ac.uk/international_graduate_jobs.htm

The number of visitors to international jobs delivered by the Careers Group, University of London and the PROSPECTS website, has increased exponentially, from 908 in the eight months October 2009 – May 2010 to 19,905 between June 2010 and January 2011. This increase in usage cannot be simply accounted for by timing differences and is suggested to be the result of the work of the project in making resources more accessible.

The project has sought to meet a diverse range of needs. International students are assumed to want:- to work in the UK permanently, to work in the UK temporarily, to work in the UK whilst studying, to work in countries other than the UK and to return to work in their country of origin. The diversity of need led the project team to consider the broader needs of international students for information about working and working life, as well as employment and training opportunities and thus deliver 'more than a database' that is accessible from the PROSPECTS homepage in 'two clicks'.

During the period of the project, the number of employers posting to the international job online database was 3,419 and the number of vacancies posted was 7,779.

There is clear commitment to sustainability beyond the life of the project. The partner organizations are currently working together to deliver an additional PMI2-funded project, the 'Web-based Employer/Student Database' which will: provide and market a central contact point for employment opportunities both while studying and after graduation, utilise existing products, help match international students with employment opportunities and enable employers to better access the pool of talent represented by international students in the UK.

Introduction

The 'Data base of Employers' project was initiated following the previous work on country-specific labour market information for international students, which had identified a need for students to have access to current employment opportunities. On behalf of AGCAS, NASES & HECSU, HECSU was agreed to be the lead organisation for this project working in collaboration with the Careers Group (University of London). The original aims and objectives (08/PMI2/SE&E/01 grant letter refers) were as follows:

Aim:

The establishment of a database of employing organisations within the UK and overseas designed to include recruiting organisations and those likely to offer other forms of education and training such as work experience, internship or voluntary work. This will be for both students and graduates. The existing Careers Group (University of London) will link to the system.

Objectives:

1. To assist international students and graduates to find work experience and training that enhances their employability by providing information on employers, recruiting organisations and others offering other forms of education and training both within and without the UK in a web-based database.
2. To make the database of employers accessible and useful to international students and graduates.
3. To explore, develop and finalise options to make this database self financing by the end of the period of PMI funding.

Outputs:

1. A web-based database available to international students and graduates with details of employers, recruiting organisations and others offering forms of education and training.

2. A publicity campaign to advise potential service users (employer organisations, international students and graduates and professionals advising international students and graduates) of the service.
3. A concrete funding model that ensures the database is self sustaining following the period of PMI funding.
4. A final report to the PMI Programme Board.

Project Outcomes

1. Web-based database

The first and major outcome of the project has been the establishment and development of;

A web-based database available to international students and graduates with details of employers, recruiting organisations and others offering forms of education and training.

This was achieved by Graduate Prospects (the commercial subsidiary of HECSU) and the Careers Group (University of London) working collaboratively to make accessible resources for international students on a UK-wide basis.

Meeting diverse needs

The first steps taken in this work, entailed the integration of Careers Group's 'International job online' (IJOL) micro-site, with the PROSPECTS website (www.prospects.ac.uk). The rationale for this was that international students from any UK university would be likely to visit the national PROSPECTS site where arguably they would not have necessarily visited a site of the University of London. The technical work to launch achieve the visibility of IJOL was completed during 2008/09 and its availability was publicized to UK university careers services in August 2009. See http://www.prospects.ac.uk/international_graduate_jobs.htm

During this period of time, both the PROSPECTS and the Careers Group web resources were undergoing review and development; in the case of the former the work entailed making (an estimated) million plus web-pages more readily searchable and in the case of the latter, the development of 'Careers Tagged' which again was aimed at an improved user-interface. Both these initiatives have made searching more speedy and accurate in all respects, not least for international students.

The development work on the PROSPECTS site proved to be more time-consuming and difficult than anticipated and this caused major delays to this project. Whilst access to the IJOL site was made available from August 2009, it was not until August 2010 that the improvements to the PROSPECTS site were completed and thus, access to the IJOL resource made *easily* available to international students.

Another part of the rationale for developing UK-wide web resources for international students was the finding (PMI2 phase 1 refers) that most international students studying in the UK anticipate (plan and hope for) employment in the UK, either whilst studying and following graduation (or both), in order to enhance their long term job prospects. Thus the immediate need of international students was perceived to be for easy access to information about jobs, job and work experience vacancies and also access to more general employment related information. A great deal of UK-wide job, and employment related information for international students already existed in the PROSPECTS website; similarly university careers services (connected to PROSPECTS and independently) provided access to more localized information via university careers websites. Thus there was some need to clarify what sort of web-based resources would be most apt for international students. International students' needs were reported as being diverse; some were assumed to want:

- to work in the UK permanently
- to work in the UK temporarily
- to work in the UK whilst studying
- to work in countries other than the UK
- to return to work in their country of origin

Thus the web-based data base was needed to provide access to employers (and sources of employment) as well as current job and work experience vacancies both in the UK and overseas. See also, http://www.prospects.ac.uk/international_students.htm

Getting there in two clicks from PROSPECTS homepage

The resulting development is illustrated via the exhibits in appendix 1. It had been made accessible to international students on the basis of finding the relevant information, within 'two clicks' of the mouse. (However, usability testing reported below, suggests that this aspiration whilst designed in, is not being experienced by the students themselves).

International students visiting the PROSPECTS website at the homepage will see a navigation bar (green) which includes the tab 'International students'. One click, takes students to an international page (exhibit 1) providing four major options, one of which is 'International graduate jobs' (which is the IJOL) and thus the second click takes students

directly into IJOL (exhibit 2) where access to a wide range of employer information and job/work experience vacancies is searchable from drop-down menus.

International students visiting the PROSPECTS website and noticing the tab 'jobs and work experience' on the homepage can in one click from the drop-down menu, access 'Working Abroad' and/or 'Graduate Jobsearch' ; in one more click, the former provides access a very wide range of materials and information resources (exhibit 5) including how to begin finding suitable vacancies, issues to consider in working overseas, country profiles, visa and financial information and sources of employment, etc, and the latter provides direct job search that can be targeted by region of the UK as well as Europe and world-wide (exhibit 4)

More than a database

Thus by making available a very wide range of potential answers to the kinds of questions posed by international students, the collaboration between Graduate Prospects and the Careers Group, has achieved more than a web-based database of employers (although this is included). It has sought to enable international student access to information about:

- cultural or procedural issues (e.g. visas) in the UK
- personal planning and lifestyle considerations
- sources of information about opportunities and work conditions outside the UK
- countries other than their country of origin or the UK and their labour markets

2. Publicity campaign

The second outcome anticipated was

A publicity campaign to advise potential service users (employer organisations, international students and graduates and professionals advising international students and graduates) of the service

This has been achieved via email notices sent to careers advisers, and also by contribution to AGCAS conferences and events.

Publicity amongst employers has been achieved via the on-going work of both partner organisations in seeking out opportunities for inclusion in the web resource. On-going liaison with employers via sales and marketing teams is a central function of both Graduate Prospects and Careers Group.

International students' attention to the resource has been brought about by direct mailing from the Graduate Prospects registrants' database (over 600,000 international students) and also via the work of individual university careers services.

3. Funding model and sustainability

The PMI2 funding has been used to create new and enhance existing facilities for international students. At the outset it was understood that funding would not continue indefinitely and plans were put in place to establish,

A concrete funding model that ensures the database is self sustaining following the period of PMI funding.

The employer database (and additional resources) are now firmly embedded in the PROSPECTS website and will remain so for the foreseeable future; no situation is envisaged where this resource will not be available to international students. Similarly there is commitment from the Careers Group to maintain International job online indefinitely.

It is planned that the on-going costs associated the maintenance of these resources will be borne from revenue-generating activities elsewhere in the respective organisations; notably charging employers/employing organisations for advertising space.

It is not planned that students will be charged for any, all or partial access to these resources.

Where extensive new development work is planned, it may be done so on the basis of attracting additional resources from stakeholders or partners.

New knowledge

In order to track progress on the project it has been necessary to track both volume of students accessing the web-based data and also to learn more about the ways international student interact with it.

Use made of the sites

As the data base went live during 2009, it has been possible to track use, albeit this is likely to be an under-representation as when the revised PROSPECTS site became available in August 2010 the site became more readily accessible to all PROSPECTS unique users (over 1 million).

Data from the Careers Group, University of London suggest that approximately 35,000 visits were made to International Jobs Online (IJOL) between May 2009 and May 2010; there were 24,997 unique users who viewed an average of seven pages each and remained on the site for approximately four minutes. The 'bounce' rate, which is the extent to which visitors arrive on the site and then leave quickly is 35% which is judged to be low by comparison with other sites. The 'exit' rate is 38% which means that nearly four out of ten visitors find something useful to move on to (in this case a job advertisement) during their visit. This is judged as successful. Visits reached a peak in October 2009 although there been a fairly constant level of visits throughout the year.

The number of visitors who reached the IJOL site via PROSPECTS, between October 2009 and January 2011 is as follows. The data in the table 1 below evidence a dramatic increase in visits to IJOL via PROSPECTS during the summer of 2010 when the 'new' and more accessible PROSPECTS site was launched.

It was reported in June 2010 that the number of international jobs available during 2009/10 and included in the data base had ranged from has varied between 350 – 550 and the number of employer organisations is 1,021. It is now possible to report that during the whole period of the project, the number of employers posting to the international job online database was 3,419 and the number of vacancies posted was 7,779.

Table 1.1 Access to International job online via PROSPECTS, Oct 2009 – Jan 2011

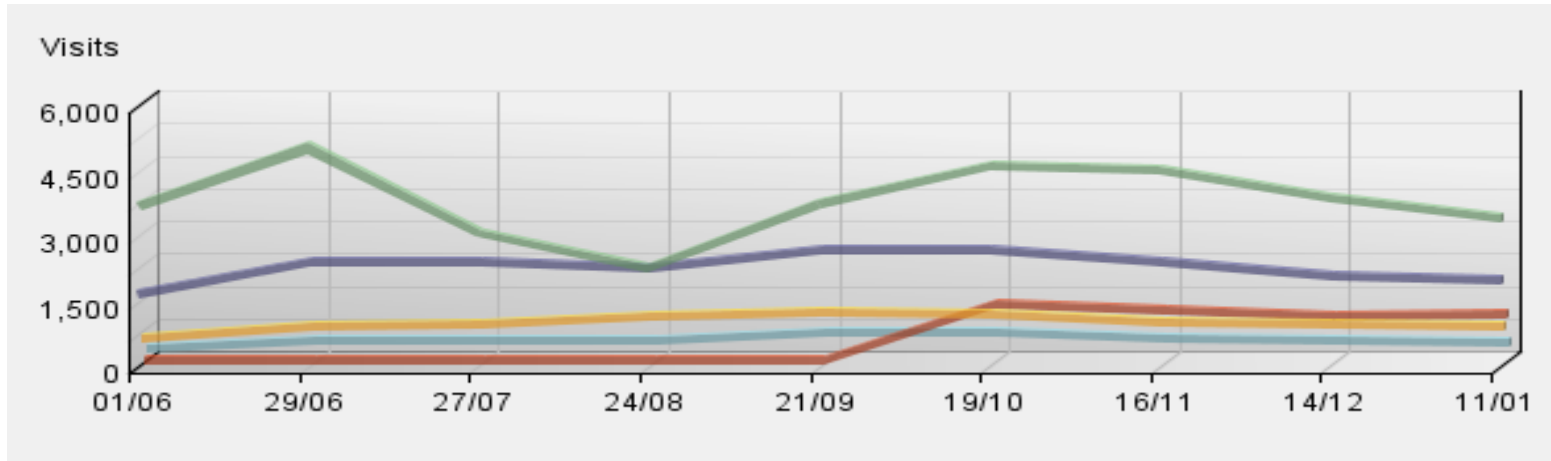
October 2009	104	June 2010	1765
November 2009	93	July 2010	2643
December 2009	47	August 2010	2442
January 2010	119	September 2010	2444
February 2010	145	October 2010	3040
March 2010	175	November 2010	2630
April 2010	141	December 2010	2164
May 2010	84	January 2011	2777
Totals	908		19,905

User behaviour

The data in Figure 1.1 expands the above and reveals that the IJOL page is the second most frequently visited page within PROSPECTS international pages; the first being the 'international students' page. Table 1.2 shows the relative position of international pages amongst pages viewed in the PROSPECTS site overall. Here it is possible to see that the most viewed international page is ranked at just 48 and the IJOL at 77.

Similarly, when views for Working Abroad (in Jobs and Work Experience) are identified (Table 1.3) it can be seen that searching for vacancies is the second in the ranking. It can be inferred therefore that large numbers of students are searching actively amongst these web-based resources for information on jobs and work experience opportunities. It is not unreasonable to assume that as these pages become better known by students and their advisers the number of visits is likely to continue to increase.

Figure 1.1 Visits to PROSPECTS pages including 'international' in the page title between 1st June 2010 – 31st January 2011



	Visits
1. International students Prospects.ac.uk http://www.prospects.ac.uk/international_students.htm	33,969
2. International graduate jobs Prospects.ac.uk http://www.prospects.ac.uk/international_graduate_jobs.htm	19,905
3. International relations : Your skills Prospects.ac.uk http://www.prospects.ac.uk/options_international_relations_your_skills.htm	8,203
4. International aid/development worker: Job description and activities Prospects.ac.uk http://ww2.prospects.ac.uk/p/types_of_job/international_aid_development_worker_job_description.jsp	4,582
5. International relations : Job options Prospects.ac.uk http://www.prospects.ac.uk/options_international_relations_job_options.htm	4,047

Table 1.2 Ranking of the top five PROSPECTS pages including 'international' in the page title between 1st June 2010 and 31st January 2011

Pages: Search Results for International	
1	International students Prospects.ac.uk http://www.prospects.ac.uk/international_students.htm Overall Rank: 48
2	International graduate jobs Prospects.ac.uk http://www.prospects.ac.uk/international_graduate_jobs.htm Overall Rank: 77
3	International relations : Your skills Prospects.ac.uk http://www.prospects.ac.uk/options_international_relations_your_skills.htm Overall Rank: 229
4	International aid/development worker: Job description and activities Prospects.ac.uk http://ww2.prospects.ac.uk/p/types_of_job/international_aid_development_worker_job_description.jsp Overall Rank: 436
5	International relations : Job options Prospects.ac.uk http://www.prospects.ac.uk/options_international_relations_job_options.htm Overall Rank: 512

Table 1.3 Visits to the five top PROSPECTS pages where Working Abroad is in the title page from 1st June 2010 to January 31st 2011

Pages	
1.	Working abroad Prospects.ac.uk http://www.prospects.ac.uk/working_abroad.htm Overall Rank: 51
2.	Working abroad: Vacancies abroad Prospects.ac.uk http://www.prospects.ac.uk/working_abroad_vacancies_abroad.htm Overall Rank: 125
3.	Working abroad: Where can I go? Prospects.ac.uk http://www.prospects.ac.uk/working_abroad_where_can_i_go.htm Overall Rank: 213
4.	Working abroad: Types of work Prospects.ac.uk http://www.prospects.ac.uk/working_abroad_types_of_work.htm Overall Rank: 243
5.	Working abroad: Finding employers Prospects.ac.uk http://www.prospects.ac.uk/working_abroad_finding_employers.htm Overall Rank: 365

Graduate Prospects undertakes a regular programme of usability testing for all areas in the PROSPECTS site. The report appended below at 2 is of a usability session conducted with a small group of international students in November 2010. It is clear that whilst the students do have some general knowledge about what might be found on the international pages, their search and retrieval skills need more support and the task of refining the user experience is an on-going need for Graduate Prospects if the full potential of recent developments is to be realised.

Key findings are:

- *Job search strategies on the internet:* All users went to Google. Three also used their university careers service website.
- *Prospects homepage:* Users thought the site was about 'graduate jobs'; jobs, education and careers for graduates; international students and courses.
- *Interests:* The international students had a diverse range of areas of interest, not only those areas designed for international students.
- *Graduate job search:* The postgraduates struggled to find the job search because they did not think that a graduate job search would have anything of relevance for them. Only one user was able to use the search to find a job of interest to them.
- *International graduate jobs search:* There were significant usability problems. Only one of the users was able to search the database to find an international job suitable for their requirements.
- *Already in the UK:* Three of the users asked could use the prospects site to find information about whether they could stay on to work after their studies. However, most would have clicked on one of the links to government websites. One user said that she would not think to look for this information on Prospects.
- *Country profiles:* The users asked considered that the country profiles were aimed at UK/EU students trying to find a job abroad

Future developments

There are two future developments that relate to this project:

1. the web-based employer/student database project (on-going) and
2. the Planner Integration Project (on-going)

Firstly, a complementary PMI2-funded project (appended at 3 below) with the objectives,

- to, provide and market a central contact point for employment opportunities both while studying and after graduation, utilising existing products
- to help match international students with employment opportunities
- to enable employers to better access the pool of talent represented by international students in the UK

is currently being undertaken by a second collaboration between Graduate Prospects and the Careers Group. It will build upon the achievements of this project and take forward some of the issues identified here. The continuation of collaborative working is also a concrete manifestation of both partners' commitment to sustaining and developing this resource.

Secondly, one of the successful features of the development work carried out to the PROSPECTS website in 2008/9/10 is the capacity that is now available to further enhance the student experience of all areas of the site by enabling the constituent micro-sites and career development services to become fully integrated. Plans are already well-established for a development of PROSPECTS as a web 3.0 site in which the student experience is made yet more central and searches/retrievals targeted on student preferences and behaviours. A brief outline of the proposed modifications described as a notice to careers advisory services, is appended at 4 below. Whilst not exclusively aimed at the support of international students, it is likely to make the user-interaction with PROSPECTS simpler and thus is likely to enable those from diverse backgrounds and with diverse information needs to find what they need quickly.

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Appendices

Appendix 1 – Exhibits of pages in the Prospects website

Exhibit 1

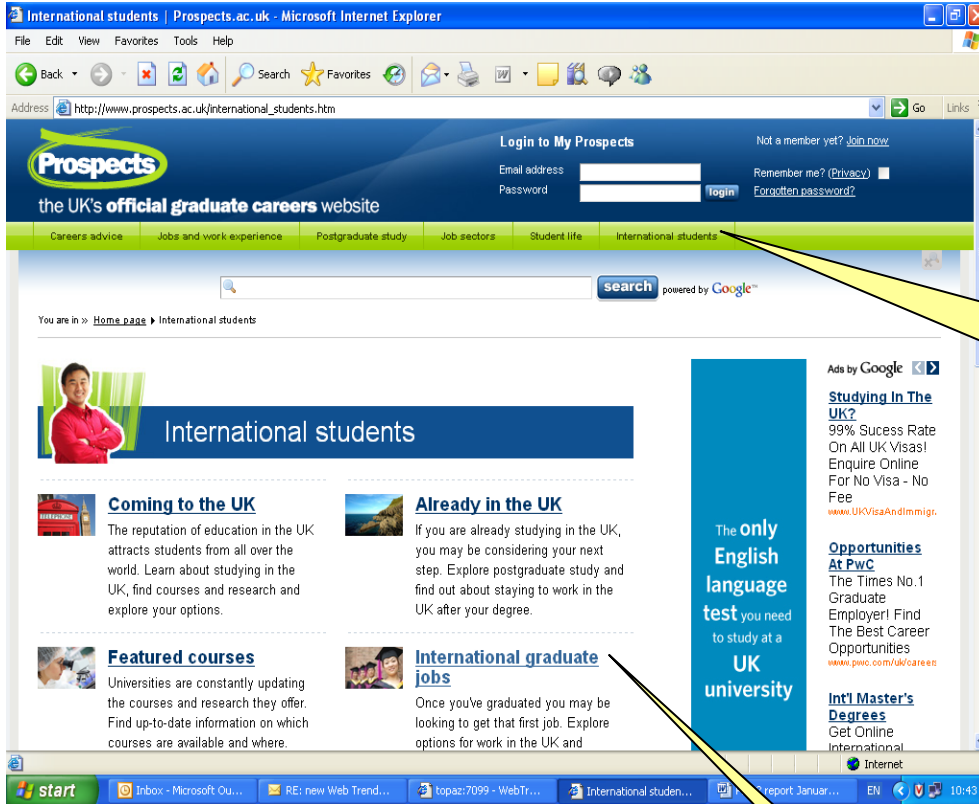


Exhibit 2

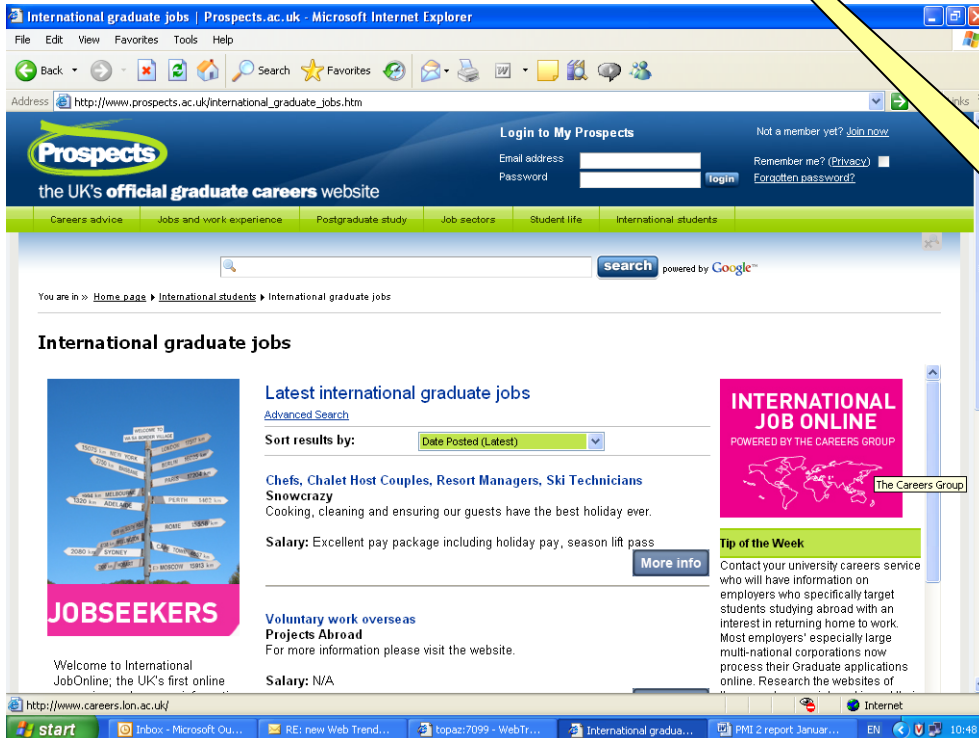


Exhibit 3

The screenshot shows the Prospects website interface in Microsoft Internet Explorer. The browser's address bar displays http://www.prospects.ac.uk/jobs_and_work_experience.htm. The website header includes the Prospects logo and the tagline "the UK's official graduate careers website". A navigation menu at the top lists categories: Careers advice, Jobs and work experience, Postgraduate study, Job sectors, Student life, and International students. The "Jobs and work experience" category is selected, and a dropdown menu is visible with options: Graduate job search, Graduate employers, Work experience and internships, What jobs would suit me?, Working abroad, Industry insights, Self-employment, Flexible working, Teaching advice, Equal opportunities, and Types of jobs. The main content area is titled "Jobs and work experience" and features several sections: "Graduate job search" (Use our job search engine to find a job in the UK that matches what you're looking for.), "Work experience and internships" (Find work experience vacancies, get careers advice and view details of work experience fairs.), "What jobs would suit me?" (Build up a profile of yourself to find jobs that), "Graduate employers" (Find out more about companies with graduate recruitment programmes.), "Working abroad" (Essential information and advice for graduates interested in living and working abroad.), and "Self-employment" (Guidance, support and further contacts for). The right sidebar contains "Ads by Google" with three advertisements: "Start your career now", "Looking for your perfect job?", and "Occupational Therapy Jobs". The browser's taskbar at the bottom shows several open applications, including "Inbox - Microsoft Ou...", "RE: new Web Trend...", "topaz:7099 - WebTr...", "Jobs and w...", and "PMI 2 report: Januar...". The system clock shows 10:55.

Job opportunities and information about 'Working Abroad' accessible from the 'Jobs and Work Experience' tab on the PROSPECTS homepage

Exhibit 4

Graduate Prospects Job Search - Microsoft Internet Explorer

File Edit View Favorites Tools Help

Address http://ww2.prospects.ac.uk/cms/ShowPage/Home_page/Graduate_jobs/p1edcaefX

the UK's official graduate careers website

powered by Google

Careers advice Jobs and work experience Postgraduate study Job sectors Student life International students

YOU ARE IN Home page

Graduate job search
Graduate employers
Work experience
What jobs would suit me?
Working abroad
Industry insights
Self-employment
Flexible working
Teaching advice
Equal opportunities
Types of jobs

Work sector

All

Animals, plants and food

Banking and financial services

Business and management

Charities and voluntary work

Creative arts and culture

Energy and utilities

Engineering and manufacturing

Environment and conservation

Health and social care

Hospitality, tourism and sport

IT and information services

Law

Marketing, advertising and PR

Media

Property and construction

West Midlands
East of England
Greater London
North East
North West
Northern Ireland
Scotland
South East
South West
Wales
West Midlands
Yorkshire and the Humber
Europe
Worldwide

Type of work

All

Immediate vacancies

Graduate schemes

Internships

Voluntary work

Keyword

search

Clear all

Tips on searching

Browse all graduate job openings

Take part in the UK's biggest survey on graduate employment

P&G

ofgem

KPMG
ASSURE + TAX + ADVISORY
Graduate Opportunities
All degree disciplines

Big on...
You

RBS
The Royal Bank of Scotland Group

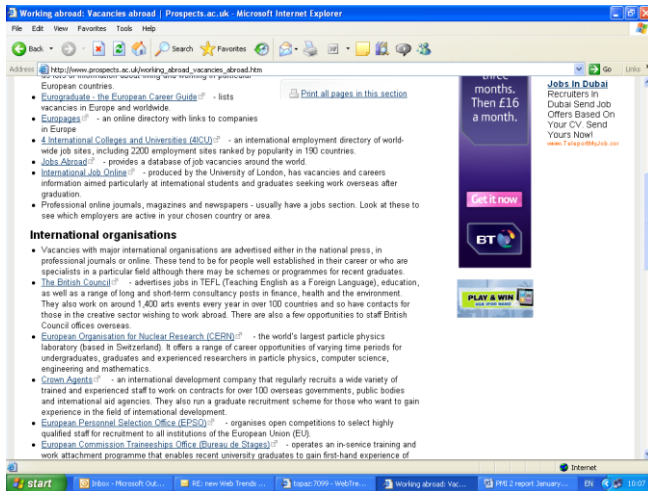
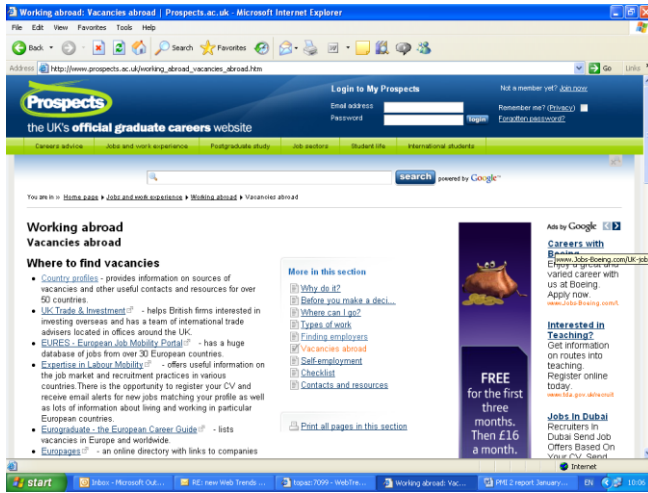
http://ww2.prospects.ac.uk/graduate_job_search.htm

start

Inbox - Microsoft Out... RE: new Web Trends ... topaz:7099 - WebTre... Graduate Prospects J... PMI 2 report January... EN 11:27

Also accessible from the 'Jobs and Work Experience' tab is a Graduate Jobsearch that includes 'Europe' and 'world-wide'

Exhibit 5



'Working Abroad' is a multi-layered information resource for any student requiring detailed information, links to specific items such as country profiles, visas, finance etc as well as sources of employment. This shot of a long, initial page provides a glimpse of the depth of information available.

Appendix 2

Usability testing 10th November 2010 International students.

What was tested:

- Job search strategies on the internet.
- Prospects.ac.uk homepage
- Areas of interest on the prospects site for international students
- Job search on prospects.ac.uk
- International graduate jobs search
- 'Already in the UK' section for international students
- Country profiles

User profiles

All international students:

User 1 – Year 2 BA (Hons) Accounting and Finance student.

User 2 - Undertaking an MSc in Events Management.

User 3 – Just finished an MSc in Design Ethnography

User 4 – Year 1 BA (Hons) Architecture.

Key findings

- **Job search strategies on the internet:** All users went to Google. Three also used their university careers service website.
- **Prospects homepage:** Users thought the site was about 'graduate jobs'; jobs, education and careers for graduates; international students and courses.
- **Interests:** The international students had a diverse range of areas of interest, not only those areas designed for international students.
- **Graduate job search:** The postgraduates struggled to find the job search because they did not think that a graduate job search would have anything of relevance for them. Only one user was able to use the search to find a job of interest to them.
- **International graduate jobs search:** There were significant usability problems. Only one of the users was able to search the database to find an international job suitable for their requirements.
- **Already in the UK:** Three of the users asked could use the prospects site to find information about whether they could stay on to work after their studies. However, most would have clicked on one of the links to government websites. One user said that she would not think to look for this information on Prospects.
- **Country profiles:** The users asked considered that the country profiles were aimed at UK/EU students trying to find a job abroad.

More detailed findings

Job search strategies on the internet

Task: You have decided that you would like to find a job. Use the internet to find a job that is of interest to you.

All of the users used Google to search for jobs. Search terms used combined job title with location. Three of the users also looked at their university careers service website (two MMU, one Manchester University).

What are they interested in on the site?

- Two of the users went straight to the search function and used search terms related to their course. Neither of them found information of relevance to them as a result.
- User 2 spent most of the time clicking around the site and did not find anything of interest.

Specific areas of interest:

- International students section
- Student life: One student (undergraduate) expressed an interest in the student life section, another (postgraduate) commented: *'...you see it [student life] on every website, they all contradict each other, maybe if I was planning to come here [UK], but I wouldn't expect to find it on a job site'*.
- What jobs would suit me?
- CVs and covering letters.
- Two of the users went to My Prospects.

Finding a job on the prospects site

Task: Find a job on the prospects site that you are interested in applying for.

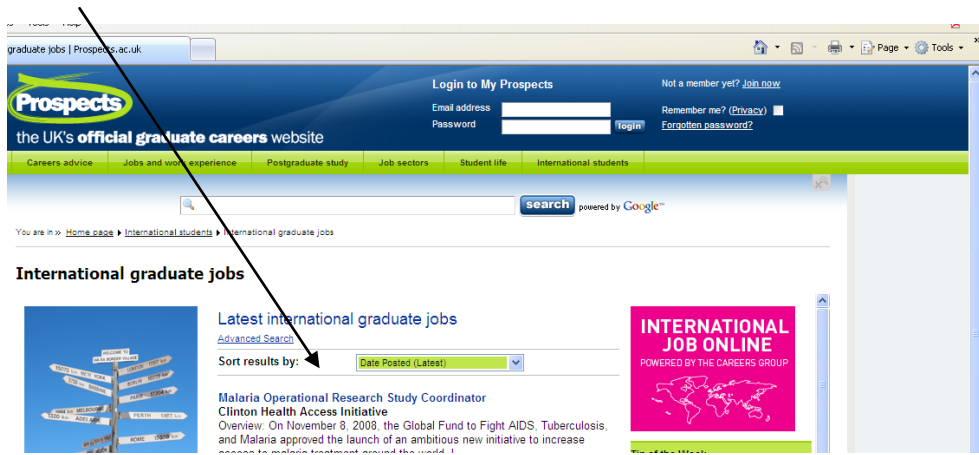
- **Finding the graduate job search:** The two postgraduates struggled to find the job search because they did not think there would be anything of relevance to them in the 'graduate job search'. User 3 went to 'types of jobs' and thought that they had found a job advert. The two undergraduates found the job search easily.
- **Search results:**
 - Only User 1 was able to find a job of interest to them on the site. *'I don't see much on this [search results]'* User 2. User 2 then went on to comment that given the results of her search she would have left the site to look elsewhere.
 - User 2 commented that she found the immediate vacancy result returned was a course *'In my opinion immediate vacancy means job position'*.
 - User 3 commented that he found it confusing to have 'date posted' under the 'closing date' heading. He thought that the job advert had expired when he first saw it.

Finding 'international graduate jobs'

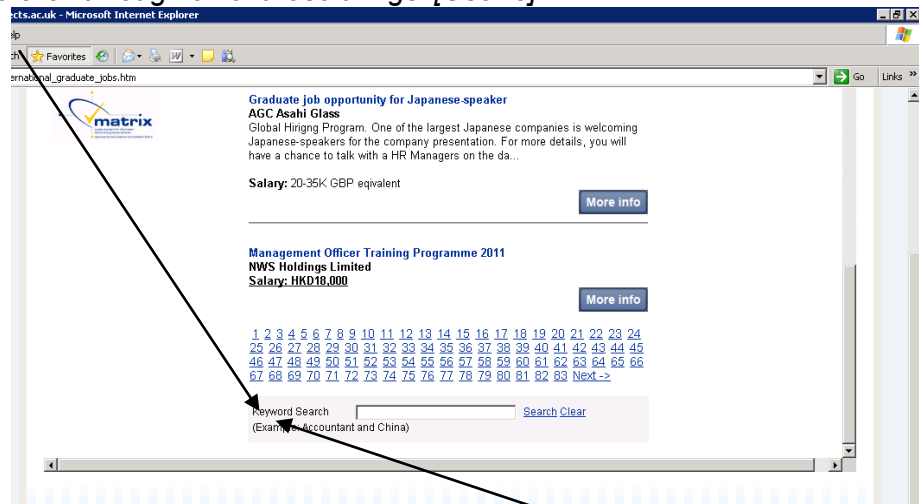
Task: Find a non-UK job that you would be interested in applying for.

- **How did they find the ‘international graduate jobs’ section on the site?**
 Three of the users looked at the ‘jobs and work experience’ section to find this. Two of them then clicked on ‘Working Abroad’ but failed to find the section without being shown. User 3 stated that he was very ‘disheartened’. User 4 went to ‘jobs and work experience’ and then clicked on the graduate job search and then clicked on ‘worldwide’ (he did not find anything of interest). User 1 who had used the ‘international students’ section in her free search of the site went straight to the international students’ section and clicked straight through.

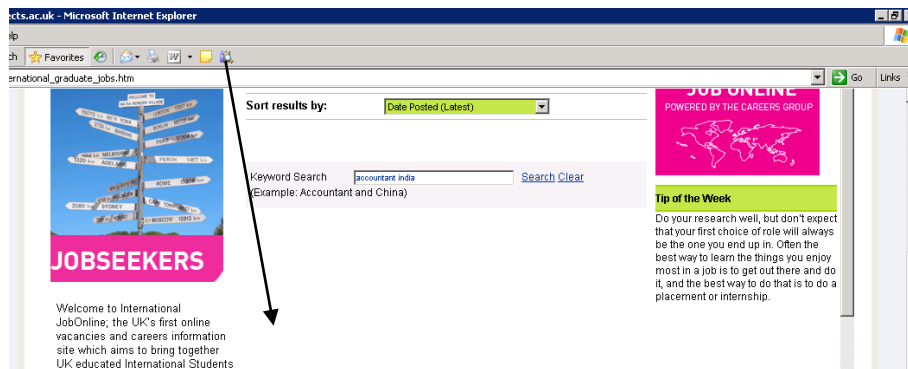
- **Using the job search**
 - **Sort by results:** Three of the users tried to use ‘sort results by’. None of them found this an effective method to refine the results. User 2 commented *‘Here it would be difficult for me to find a job’*.



- **Paging:** Three of the users were very surprised at the amount of paging *'What I was expecting there was some sort of search because I wouldn't want to click through all of these things' [User 3]*



- **Keyword search:** The keyword search was not readily apparent to the users. *'I find it not very useful because on this page I cannot type the keywords I'm looking for' [User 4]* Only one user spotted it without prompting. Two of the users specifically stated that the keyword search should be at the top of the page. Even when they found the keyword search they were not able to use it to refine the search as they wished. Two of the users thought they'd got a technical problem when they got no results and this just returned a blank page.



- **Advanced search:** None of the students saw the advanced search option. When guided towards the 'advanced search' User 4 stated that it still didn't help him to get any results. User 4 also assumed that the sectors in the 'international graduate jobs' search would be the same as those used in the 'graduate job search'. He found it confusing that they were not. User 4 also commented that the 'Available jobs sector' box was too small because it took him a long time to scroll down the list.

Using information in 'Already in the UK' section

Task: You have decided that you want to work in the UK after you have finished your course. Find some information on the prospects website to help you to decide whether it is an option.

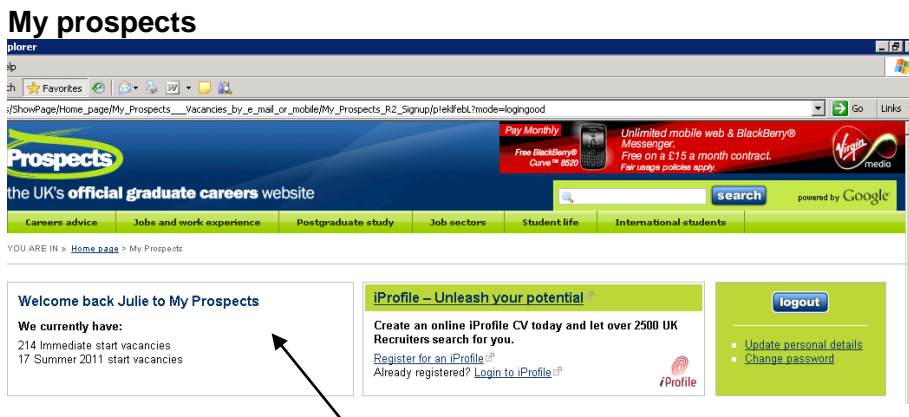
Three of the users found the relevant section. Two of the users would have clicked on the 'UK Border Agency' link rather than carry on and read the rest of the information on the page.

Country profiles

Users were asked who the information was for and what the purpose of the country profiles was.

All of the users asked to complete this task recognised the audience for the country profiles i.e. UK/EU students and graduates. The country profiles were regarded as a place for these groups to find work. They did not comment that it could be used to find out about studying or work experience. Further testing is required to ascertain whether users are seeing the intrasectional navigation.

Other observations



Two users logged in to My Prospects. Both expected there to be a live link to the vacancies listed.

Course search –

Whilst this was not a central focus for this round of testing a couple of the users used the course search. It became clear that they did not see the 'refine search' options at the side of the page. This contradicts the evidence from the last round of testing. Iterative testing will allow for a clearer understanding of how users view this page. Eyetracking this page would also enhance understanding of what users see.

Institution profiles

One user commented that she would not think to look for this information on prospects and said that she would use a Google search to find this information.

Actions:

- Make the vacancies listed on 'my prospects' live links. **(MC end of December)**
- Re-test course search, job search and pages with intrasectional navigation. **(JM end of November and on-going)**
- Investigate the use of eyetracking on the prospects website. **(JM end of November – open evening at MMU usability labs).**

Recommendations:

The international graduate jobs search had significant usability problems. The search either needs significant work to ensure that it is usable, in which case it would need to be located under 'jobs and work' or it should be integrated into the 'graduate job search', thus overcoming the problem of confusing the user with two very different jobs searches on the same site.

Appendix 3

1 Web based Employer/Student Database

1.1 Cost:

£0 in 2009/10 financial year

£42,000 in 2010/11 financial year

The total indicative project costs are £42,000 over 1 standard financial year.

1.2 Summary

This project is to develop and implement an on-line resource for employers to advertise job vacancies suitable for international students and graduates to this community. It is intended that the resource makes use of an existing platform rather than creating a new one from scratch. Based on employer research requesting easy recruitment routes for international students and graduates, AGCAS, HECSU & NASES shall work together to develop and market a central contact point for employment opportunities. A number of products already exist to assist employers find International students and graduates within the UK and to assist International Employers recruit both UK and international students and graduates to work overseas. These products shall be reviewed to ensure compatibility and any amendments required shall be undertaken. These services shall then be marketed to employers, students and graduates.

1.3 Objectives:

- To provide and market a central contact point for employment opportunities both while studying and after graduation, utilising existing products.
- To help match international students with employment opportunities.
- To enable employers to better access the pool of talent represented by international students in the UK.

1.4 Outputs:

- A web-based method for advertising employment opportunities to the community of international students and graduates in the UK using existing platforms.
- A review of current products that are available and if required, a new front portal to direct employers and students or graduates to appropriate pages.
- A promotion campaign to FE and HE institutions and to employers
- A self sustaining model for the continuation of the project beyond PMI2 funding through charging employers to post vacancies.
- A final report giving a summary of the project and how it met its objectives.

1.5 Key Milestones:

Review of existing on-line vacancy posting resources and identification of development needs.	By 30 April 2010
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Development of new elements of the on-line resource	By 31 May 2010
Testing of on-line resource completed	By 31 May 2010
Promotional campaign to employers, international student community and employment and careers professionals working with international students and graduates planned and implemented	By 31 May 2010
Go-live of on-line resource	By 30 June 2010
Self sustaining model of charging employers completed ready for implementation from 1 April 2011	By 30 June 2010
Review of performance of on-line resource	By 30 June 2010
Final project report to PMI Project Board	By 30 June 2010

1.6 **Delivery:**

Through AGCAS

1.7 **Rationale:**

Employability is a key concern of international students when considering their satisfaction with a UK education. Students want to gain work experience during their studies and have the opportunity to work in fulfilling roles after completing their courses. However, international students frequently have difficulty in finding employment opportunities that make best use of their individual skills and situation. A system to match international students with employment opportunities is likely to provide real results, enabling them to find suitable employment, allowing employers to better utilise the resource that international students and graduates represents in the UK and enhancing students' satisfaction with their experience in the UK.

Much work has been undertaken to enhance the employability of international students and graduates, but this project aims to help them practically by matching them with employment opportunities to provide real results. Sustainability shall be achieved by charging employers to post vacancies.

1.8 **Evaluation**

Evaluation will be carried out via an online evaluation survey on the usage and value of the services and recommendations made for future development.



Appendix 4

To: all careers service colleagues.

January 27th 2011

Dear Colleague,

Prospects Planner Integration Project (PIP) or Web 3.0

We are delighted to announce that on January 25th the HECSU/GP Board approved that work be undertaken on a major development of Prospects Planner within the PROSPECTS website.

You may be aware that HECSU undertook research last summer to investigate careers advisers' uses of and needs for computer-mediated information, advice and guidance systems (report available). If you responded to that survey – thank you very much for taking part. In response to the findings, a proposal to update Prospects Planner has now been devised which will provide a fully integrated approach to providing careers information and guidance, careers planning, communications and engagement services to students/graduates, careers services and employers.

In brief it will enable access to all the careers information and guidance processes within PROSPECTS as an integrated suite of services which will include:

Enhanced Community engagement

One-Stop Shop careers information and guidance Portal

Appointments and Events

Podcasts, Chats and Fairs

Social Network Integration

Newsletters and Alerting

Feedback

Enhanced Career Planning

Intelligent Living Matching

Personal Development Planning

eCareers information and guidance and Contact

Virtual learning

Dynamic Personalised Content

Virtual Adviser

Interactive hints and tips

Context Sensitive Help

Knowledge base

Survey and Questionnaire

Knowledge Management

Digital portfolio

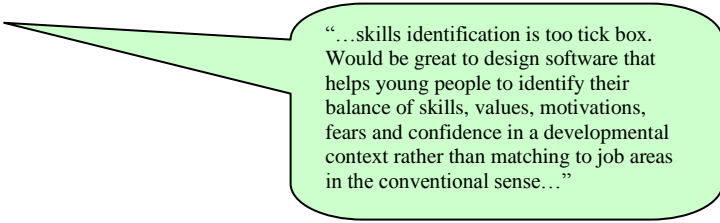
“...we use twitter and facebook very heavily, including email shots to students/graduates, regular tweets and daily notices on facebook pages. We also have 2 blogs...”

Here are a few careers adviser comments – see the full research report for more detail ...

“...eCareers information and guidance can be helpful, and provides an element of careers information and guidance content, but it is dependant on the insight and self-awareness of the student...”

“... With no dialogue, you answer what is presented to you which may not be that helpful....”

Student Profile
Student CV
Portfolio Management
Into work
Personalised Job / Course Matching
CV and Profile Matching
Portfolio and Vacancy Integration
Employment Tracking and Statistics



“...skills identification is too tick box. Would be great to design software that helps young people to identify their balance of skills, values, motivations, fears and confidence in a developmental context rather than matching to job areas in the conventional sense...”

We feel this will produce a range of benefits for students/graduates and institutions, including:

- improved student experience – faster, more focused
- enable targeting of resources and referral
- management information statistics
- track impact and student usage
- enhanced employability and services for employers
- coordinate with institutional sites and mechanisms already in use
- respond to students’ needs and ways of accessing information

All of the above features will be capable of being ‘branded’ with institutional logos and may be tailored to take account of existing systems and practices.

Our target is to have the new system in place by September 2011, ready for the new academic year.

If you would like more information and to join in the development work, please contact me on 0161 277 5208 or j.artess@prospects.ac.uk

Best wishes

Jane Artess
Director of Research