

International Student Employee of the Year

Evaluation

September 2010

Executive Summary

PMI2 provided funding to enable NASES to introduce an additional category to our Student Employee of the Year Awards.

- Entries to the category have grown year on year, total of 115 nominations within the lifetime of the project from universities and colleges throughout the UK
- Positive feedback from students, employers and jobshops
- Valuable press coverage has been gained in the UK and winners' home countries
- Valuable case study material, press stories gleaned from nomination data
- Through this seed funding this new category will remain and additional employer sponsorship has been secured

Overview

Many international students seek to secure part-time employment while studying in the UK, partly to supplement their income and partly to complement their studies and increase their employability upon course completion. There are increasing examples of international students who successfully combine work and study, who are considered to be very valued employees by their employer, and as such should be recognised for their contribution and efforts.

Each year the National Association of Student Employment Services (NASES) organise The Student Employee of the Year Awards (SEOTY) to recognise and promote the outstanding contributions and achievements of students who effectively combine part-time work with their study commitments. PMI2 provided sponsorship for the awards to introduce a new international category.

The total indicative project costs are £16,000 over 3 standard financial years.

- £4,000 in 2007/08 financial year
- £8,000 in 2008/09 financial year
- £4,000 in 2009/10 financial year

Why do we celebrate SEOTY?

SEOTY recognises students who have gone that extra step and this is clearly demonstrated by international students who overcome significant barriers in securing such employment, including resistance from employers to recruiting from this community.

The awards

- give recognition for student employees
- give recognition to student employee/employee relationships
- give recognition to student friendly employers
- give recognition to campus based Student Employment Services and the role they play in student development
- acknowledge that part-time employment enhances future employability prospects

Promotional materials were prepared annually and distributed to each Jobshop in January (110 throughout the UK) A SEOTY website with specific branding carried details about the international category and case study information, the on-line nomination form opens during National Student Employment week late February each year. E-updates are distributed on a weekly basis in the run up to the closing date, end March. Students or their employers make an on-line nomination, with the relevant supporting documentation. Following the closing date NASES returns all on-line nominations to each institution who decide their institutional winner, the institutional winner is put forward to represent their university or college at the NASES regional finals, six regional winners are then put forward to the national finals and the Awards are presented at the NASES Annual Conference in July.

Objectives

The objectives of the project were:

- To encourage international students to aspire to winning the award

Leaflets were produced and distributed direct to international students via, Job Shops, International offices, Careers services, and international societies. E-shots and electronic communications such as text reminders, e-leaflets and e-newsletters were also distributed direct to students via job shops. Year on year case study materials have built up encouraging international students to apply for the awards.

- To promote, perceive and enhance international students' reputation as good employees

International profiles were included on employer information and marketing materials, Case study information was used and press stories released by institutions highlighting the achievements of their international students.

- To promote, perceive and enhance the reputation of employers of international students as good employees

Case study materials made available, Employers invited to institutional, regional and national events to profile their organisations and employment opportunities within.

- To counter the reluctance employers may have towards employing international students

Press coverage was secured annually, case study material provided and the profile of international students generally rising.

- To improve employer awareness of international students' capabilities within the part-time job sector and beyond

Demonstrated by the increasing number of nominations year on year, wide base of case study material (over 40 case studies available from 2010 nominations)

Outputs

The following outputs have been achieved:

- A national competition to identify the International Student Employee of the Year with local and regional winners identified and the overall national winner announced at the NASES annual national conference held each year in July.

The table below shows an increased interest in the award as the years progress.

Year	No. of categories	Total Nominations	Total International Nominations
2008	2	91	25
2009	3	120	33
2010	7	395	57

The winners from each year are shown below. In 2008 there were two joint winners for the International Student Employee of the Year Award.

Year	Winner	Institute
2008	Tanja Hillberg (Sweden) Emmanuel Amoah (Ghana)	University of Birmingham (PhD in Psychology) University of Hull (Accountancy)
2009	Michel Bartosik (Poland)	University of Edinburgh
2010	Saskia Wischnewski (German)	University of Aberdeen (Marine Biology)

- A series of positive case studies of international students working part-time in the UK for dissemination to international students and employers.
- A final report giving a summary of the project and how it met its objectives.

Evaluation

Each year, students, employers and job shops take part in an on-line survey to gain feedback in order to improve the quality of the event. Feedback was positive regarding the category and the impact of winning was perceived as a greater achievement for an international student.

Conclusions and Recommendations

The Category has proved popular with students, employers and institutions and will continue to run in the overall Student Employee of the Year Awards.

Additional funding has been secured from a student employer for the 2011 awards.

Further attention on highlighting positive employers.

A useful exercise would be to track the progress of previous winners to ascertain and profile their career development providing inspirational material for international students.