
Survey of the Student Employment Sector 2011

Key Findings

- The trend of an increasing number of student employment services being managed by careers services continues with an increase from 57% in the 2009 survey to 68% in 2011.
- Job centre style of operation continues to be the most popular model; however it is often combined with another mode of operation with internal agency being the most popular.
- Student employment services continue to be predominantly funded by their institution rising from 63% in 2009 to 79% in 2011.
- There has been a slight decrease in the number of student employment services which charge for the services they provide, from 50% in 2009 to 44% in 2011.
- There has been a change in composition of full-time and part-time staff in services; 82% now have a full-time staff member, an increase from 78% in 2009; however the number of part-time staff has decreased from 58% to 50%.
- Despite a decrease from 89% in 2009 to 86% in 2011 the internet continues to be the most popular way of advertising vacancies, email has increased from 62% in 2009 to 77% in 2011.
- Recruitment fairs are still a popular event with services and employers, two thirds of services hold fairs an increase from 58% of services in 2009 to 64% in 2011.
- 66% of services reported on the provision of activities to improve the employability of students, and 42% now run their own employability award.
- In 2009 89% of services felt they had been effected by the recession, this fell to 71% in 2011.

Overview

There are 92 student employment services operating in HE and FE institutions throughout the UK. This is a reduction since the last survey when there were 120 student employment services. The two years since the last survey have seen a period of change with services undergoing restructuring and mergers with other departments in the institution. Only one service has been set up during this period which was in the HE sector.

NASES conducts this bi-annual survey of student employment services who are NASES members to provide an overview of the sector and identify and industry trends. The survey was conducted late June/early July, 92 surveys were distributed with a response rate of 58%.

Methodology

The survey data was collected using SurveyMonkey, an online survey system used by NASES for collecting feedback on various topics. The survey ran from 21/6/11 and closed at 2.00 PM 7/7/11, it included a total of 35 questions, a copy of the survey questions is available from NASES. An initial email was sent out on 21/6/11 via SurveyMonkey, this was followed up by eight email reminders.

There were 58 respondents, however not all respondents answered every question, each question was skipped by at least one respondent. Two respondents indicated that they do not have a student employment service.

The number of respondents is lower than for the 2009 survey which received 60 responses, however there were 54 completed responses in 2011 which is an increase of one over 2009. There are 92 service members of NASES, so 58 responses equates to 58% of the membership.

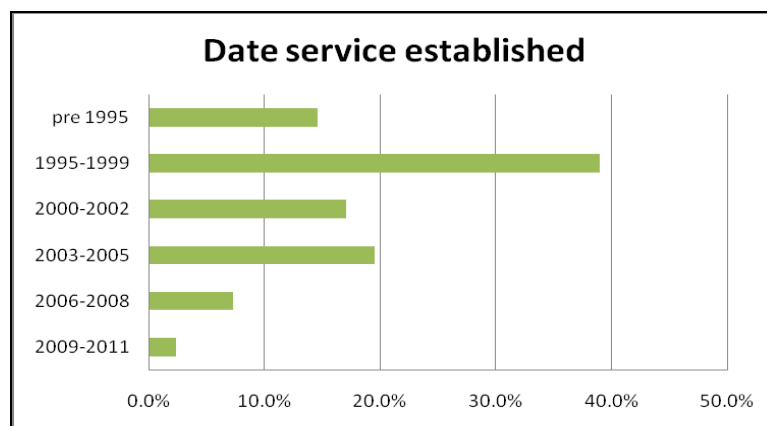
The NASES membership comprises 60% based in careers services however the number of respondents to the survey who were managed by careers services was 69%. This might need to be borne in mind when considering the findings of the data.

Number of Services

There are 92 student employment services operating within further and higher education institutions within the UK which are members of NASES. Using student figures from 2010 this means that 1.7 million students have direct access to an on-campus job shop in a NASES member institution.

Service Establishment

As indicated in the 2009 survey the first service opened in 1990 and the number of new services peaks between 1995 and 1999. One service has been set up since the last survey and is in the higher education sector.



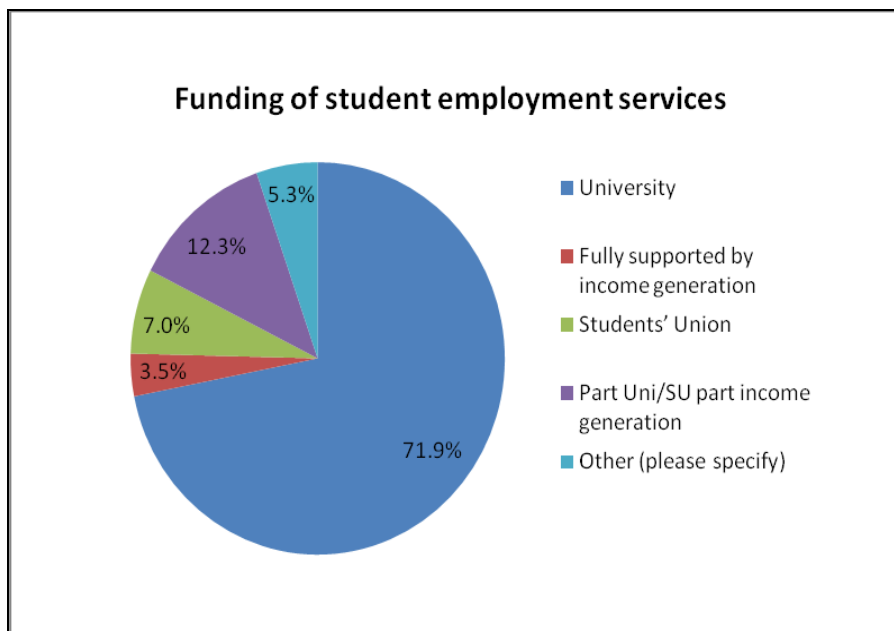
Style of Service Operation

In the 2009 survey three main methods of operation were identified: job centre style, agency style and dual service where job centre and agency style services are offered simultaneously. More information has been gathered in the 2011 survey enabling a more detailed breakdown of the mode of operation. The job centre operating style continues to be the most popular mode of service. However the 2011 survey has found a greater mix in the composition of dual service operation as detailed below:

- 56% job centre style only;
- 21% job centre and internal agency;
- 9% internal only;
- 7% internal and external agency;
- 5% job centre, internal agency and external agency;
- 2% external only.

Funding

Services continue to be predominantly funded by their institution or student union; this has in fact increased from 63% in 2009 to 79% in 2011, 14% are funded jointly through the university/students union and income generation, 4% purely through income generation with the remaining 3% through other funding such as special projects.



In the 2009 survey 20% of services had noticed a change in funding whereas in the 2011 survey this has dropped to 9% with 91% experiencing no change.

Those that had experienced change made comments such as:

- change of focus from part time employment to work experience opportunities;
- more graduate jobs being advertised;
- structural changes such as the move from a student's union based job shop to a careers based service;
- currently undergoing restructuring so unsure of changes.

There was an almost equal split in 2009 between those services which made charges for services they provided and those which didn't. While 2009 saw a small increase in the number of services making charges, from 47% in 2007 to 50% in 2009, there has been a slight decrease in 2011 in the number of services which do charge down to 44%.

Typical services which are charged for include:

- job/recruitment fairs and other events;
- vacancy services such as sending emails, online advertising;
- providing agency services to employers;
- one service reported making charges to other institutional departments.

The majority of services do not receive sponsorship, 84% as opposed to 16% which do. Sponsorship was received for the production of information leaflets, brochures and fairs, one services was receiving sponsorship for its Passport to Work initiative.

The 2011 survey has provided little information about the percentage of revenue received by student employment services as a result of charging, but ranged from 0% to 100%.

Similarly limited data is available regarding annual running costs as only six services were able to provide this information. In many cases this was because the student employment service budget is part of a larger budget such as that of a careers service. Operational costs (including staff costs) ranged from £1,000 to £450,000. The services with the highest running costs tended to be those operating on an income generation model.

Location and Management of the Service

Physical Location

The number of services located in careers, student services or similar departments such as student affairs has increased slightly at 75% as compared with 70% in 2009 with 23% being based in student unions. One service reported being located in a prime location such as the central atrium.

There is a degree of correlation between the management and physical location of the student employment service. The majority of those managed by careers services are physically located within the careers service or a similar department - 61%; of the remainder 12% are in student unions and 6% in student services. Those services which are jointly run by careers and the student union are located in the student union, and all services run by the student union are located within the student union. Only one student employment service was located in a commercial department.

Service Management

Most student employment services, 68%, are managed by careers services, 13% are managed by the student union, 3% jointly by the careers service and student union, and 7% by student services. One service was managed in a commercial department, one in student affairs and one in a careers and placement department.

There has been an increase in the number of services which have a management or steering group from only 19% in 2009 to 35% in 2011.

Services continue to be run with minimal staffing levels:

- 82% have at least 1 full-time staff member, an increase from 78% in 2009;
- 50% have part-time staff, a decrease from 58% in 2009;
- the number of service which have student helpers has also decreased from 58% in 2009 to 45% in 2011;
- 70% have between one and four full-time staff members, while 10% have between 5 and up to 20 staff members, 15% do not have a full-time staff member and are run by between one and three part-time staff;
- 38% of services have part-time staff as well as full-time staff;
- 31% of services have assistance from student helpers with hours varying significantly from between four and 30 hours a week. However three services commented that they had until recently been able to employ student helpers and this had been withdrawn.

Those services with higher staff levels generally have additional areas of responsibility, however there are also services with staffing levels of 1 -2 which are also expected to provide additional services. Some of the additional services and areas of responsibility reported include:

- Student employability
- Volunteer positions
- Graduate jobs
- Vacation jobs
- Part-time work
- Summer internships
- Work experience
- Placements
- Work tasters
- Careers advice
- Clerical support for career advisers - programmes - workshops
- Skills programmes
- Development of franchise network
- Managing awards
- Web page work
- Print service for organisation
- Customer service
- Information Desk service for all student enquiries, sale of bus passes, tickets, student union card

Advertising Vacancies

Numbers of Registrants and Vacancies

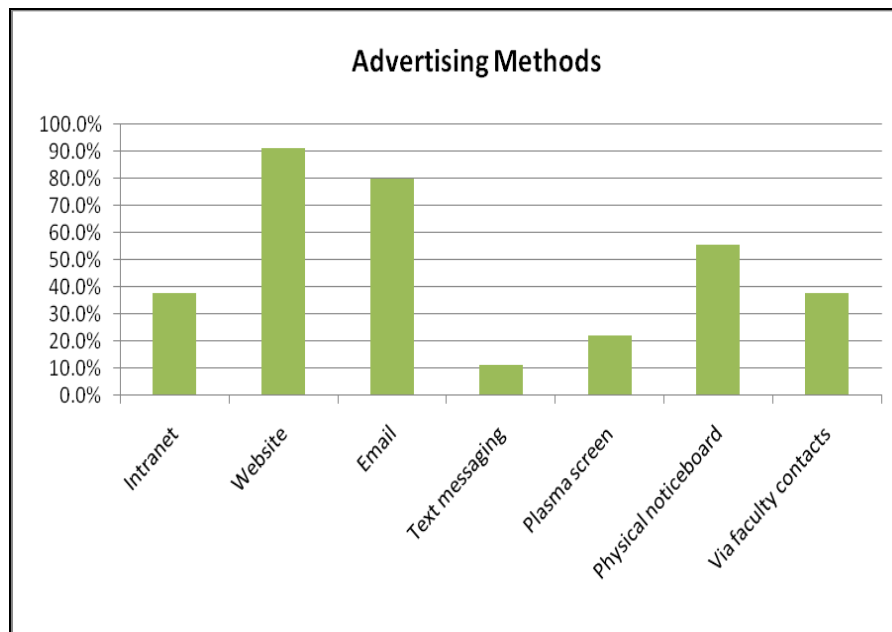
It continues to be increasingly difficult to gather information about the numbers of vacancies which are advertised to students, 64% of respondents answered this query but many had details of numbers of adverts rather than numbers of vacancies. The highest number of vacancies advertised was over 14,630 at one institution, with 54% recording job vacancy numbers in excess of 1,000.

Only 59% of the survey respondents were able to provide numbers of registered students, many reported that students do not have to specifically register with the service as all students have access. Because of this there was a huge range in the numbers registered, from 200 where students registered specifically with the job shop to in excess of 20,000 where all students were registered.

Advertising Methods

Despite a decrease from 89% in 2009 to 86% in 2011 the internet continues to be the most popular way of advertising vacancies, closely followed by email which has seen an increase from 62% in 2009 to 77% in 2011.

Additional information has been collected in the 2011 survey and now 39% of student employment services also use faculty contacts to advertise vacancies to students.



Databases Used

A number of databases are used to manage vacancies, a couple of services use more than one system to manage their vacancies. The most popular system by a considerable margin is Prospects Net at 68%. The second most popular is the BAM system with 16% of student employment services using it, closely followed by 14% of services which use the Eploy system and 5% who use Microdec. Twenty services use other systems including in-house and bespoke systems, Oracle and MS Access databases, three services mentioned Target Connect. The majority of the services using the BAM system were managed by or located in student unions, and the majority of services using Prospects Net were managed by or located in careers services.

Sharing Vacancies

The majority, 77%, of student employment services don't share their vacancies with other services. Of the 21% who do this is done on an informal basis, through local networks or by using Prospects Net. One service indicated that they plan to share their vacancies in 2012.

Student Wages

The number of services which impose their own minimum wage level has increased from 25% in 2009 to 36% in the 2011 survey. All of those who responded to the question of the level they would recommend indicated that it would be at least at the level of the National Minimum Wage, and some services made recommendations regarding additional payments to cover holiday pay.

Recruitment Fairs

Recruitment fairs are still a popular event with services and employers with two thirds of services holding fairs, there has been an increase from 58% of services in 2009 to 64% in 2011. In 2009 October was the preferred month with 41% of services holding their fairs then. In 2011, of the services which held a fair, 48% were in October followed closely by 41% holding a fair in February. It is interesting to note that 34% of services are holding more than one fair during the year with a few holding three or four during the year.

A detailed breakdown covering all months is below:

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
1	15	3	2	2	3	1	0	2	18	7	1
3%	41%	8%	5%	5%	8%	3%	0%	5%	48%	19%	3%

The number of services charging companies for fair attendance remains fairly stable with 58% charging in 2011 compared with 56% who charged in 2009. The figures quoted vary from £50 to £350, some services vary their charges depending on the time of year, and also charge a discounted rate for not-for-profit organisations.

For the 37 services who answered this question a total of 25,801 students and 1,052 companies attended the fairs. Although the numbers of students attending the fairs had dropped from 39,361 in 2009 the number of companies attending had increased from 947 in 2009.

All services who responded to this question indicated that they would be holding a fair again next year. One service indicated that they would be moving their fair from February to October next year.

University Relations

The value of student employment services in attracting prospective students continues to be recognised in most institutions, with 93% of institutions including them in the marketing materials such as prospectuses. The 2009 survey saw a decrease to 86% from 89% in 2006 so it is reassuring that this downward trend has been reversed.

There has been a significant increase in the number of student employment services which have formal or informal agreements with the HR department within the institution to advertise all suitable vacancies through their service first. This number has increased from 34% in 2006 to 45% in 2009 and now stands at 56%.

Combining Work with Study

Limiting hours

In 2009 91% of student employment services recommended a limit to the number of part-time hours a student should work a week during term-time, the most popular being between 15 and 20 hours. The 2011 survey has seen a slight reduction to 89% of services recommending a limit; however the most popular recommendation of between 15 and 20 hours remains the same, as does the maximum of 20 hours and the minimum of 10 hours. The decrease from 91% to 89% reverses a trend which had been increasing over recent years.

Number of hours	2009 Number of services	2011 Number of services
20	9	14
16	20	16
15	17	15
12	4	3
10	3	0

Support Provided to Students Combining Work and Study

In addition to recommending limits to the numbers of hours students should work to enable them to effectively combine part-time work with their studies student employment services offer various other types of support, and stress the importance of a work/life/study balance.

Some of the methods by which advice and support is provided include:

- actively sourcing and advertising a wide range of suitable, student friendly part-time opportunities;
- liaising with HR to ensure all part-time opportunities are advertised through the student employment service;

- working with employers to persuade them to be flexible with the hours they expect students to work;
- advice on balancing work and study through proper time management;
- one-to-one drop in sessions, workshops, training sessions etc;
- provision of information leaflets, handouts and online through the website;
- encouraging students to make the most of the skills they gain from their work experience.

Employability

Since the last survey in 2009 employability has risen up the agenda, and the importance of part-time work in improving a student's employability is increasingly recognised. Details of a wide range of activities undertaken to support students in developing their employability skills was given by 66% of the survey respondents. These included:

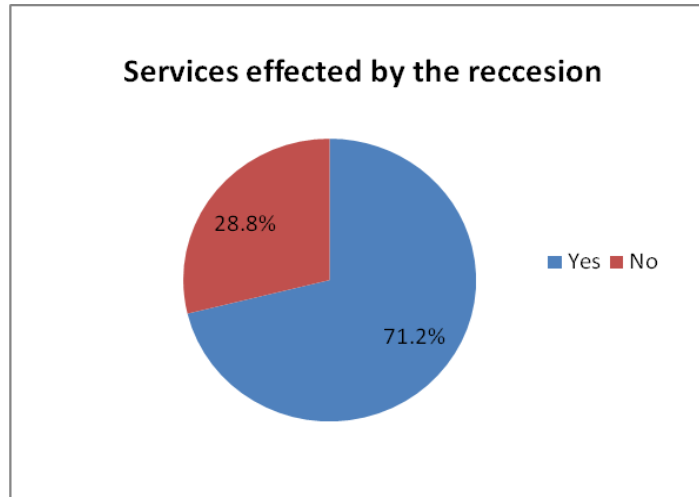
- CV advice and interview skill workshops, mock interviews, providing feedback;
- one to one and drop in sessions specifically for part-time work;
- employer visits, fairs, presentations and mentoring schemes;
- developing relationships with internal stakeholders such as the careers centre where the student employment service is not a part of it, faculties and external stakeholders such as the Job Centre;
- workshops on skills development such as marketing, entrepreneurship, self employment, employability and job search;
- managing and providing paid work placements, work tasters, work shadowing, volunteering opportunities and short periods of unpaid work experience;
- participation in internal and external awards such as SEOTY.

There are now 42% of student employment services in institutions which run their own employability award, several services mentioned their involvement with the institution's award when responding to the question on support for employability.

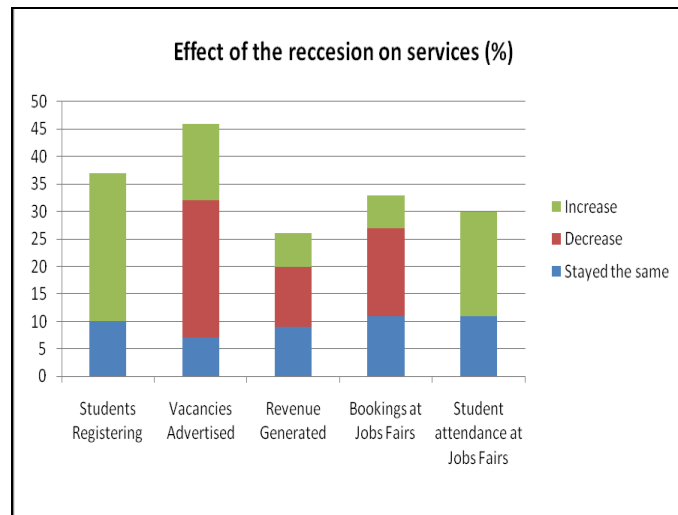
There has also been an increase in the number of services involved in the NASES SEOTY award and the nominations for the various categories of awards over the past three years from 120 in 2009, 395 in 2010 to 405 in 2011.

The Effects of the Recession

The 2011 survey found that 71% of services felt that they had been effected by the recession, which is a decrease from 89% in the 2009 survey.



The effect on specific activities is indicated below.



Changes planned for 2012

Services were asked to indicate if they had any changes planned for 2012, and 50% indicated that some changes were planned. These included:

- 8 which were undergoing or about to undergo major changes such as mergers, restructuring, changes in location and rebranding;
- 4 services who are planning increased employer engagement, however 1 service thought they might have to reduce this because of staff reductions;
- 5 services plan to develop the area of on campus opportunities.

Other areas mentioned were business development and income generation, funded projects, mentoring, switching the emphasis to the wider student experience such as volunteering and work related experience opportunities i.e. internships, summer work etc. as opposed to just part-time jobs, sharing of vacancies and technical developments including website and Prospects Net upgrades.

The survey will be undertaken again in 2013.

For further information please contact:

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