

# Partnering with business

to improve the employability of  
underrepresented students in  
STEM

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# How can we best build the employability of underrepresented groups in HE?

# Embedding + Targeting

“All students, regardless of location, situation, programme or mode of study, should have **equitable access to opportunities** to enhance their employability...”

“...added value can be gained by facilitating students to engage [] by multiple means and in a range of contexts”

AdvanceHE (Success Framework)

## Five strategic objectives

<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
Embed employability into the curriculum	Communicate a coherent career development programme	Co-create to maximise engagement	Seek and respond to evidence	Expand real world opportunities
Throughout and within the curriculum, our students will explore, refine, develop and reflect on skills and strengths, supporting their ability to grow, realise and articulate their talents for our ever-changing world.	Every student will have the opportunity to experience real world learning. We will anchor and support this by offering a helpful, clear, varied and informed programme of career development and employability/ entrepreneurship topics to empower, inspire and inform decisions and personal choices.	Students will be active agents in furthering their own world readiness by designing, co-creating and leading activity for their peers and each other. This will be recognised and celebrated through the Spirit of Sussex Award.	We will be informed by our data and our students' stories about how prepared they feel and what they need for future careers throughout their student journey and beyond. We will be focussed on their needs, adapt, realise impact and see progress.	Building on our stor and diverse external relationships, we will continue to increase volume and variety c opportunities on off throughout and beyc the student experier

# Inclusivity and policy drivers

OfS targets to close graduate outcomes gaps for:

- Disabled students
- Black students
- Mature students
- Students domiciled in IMDQ1 postcodes



# Enablers

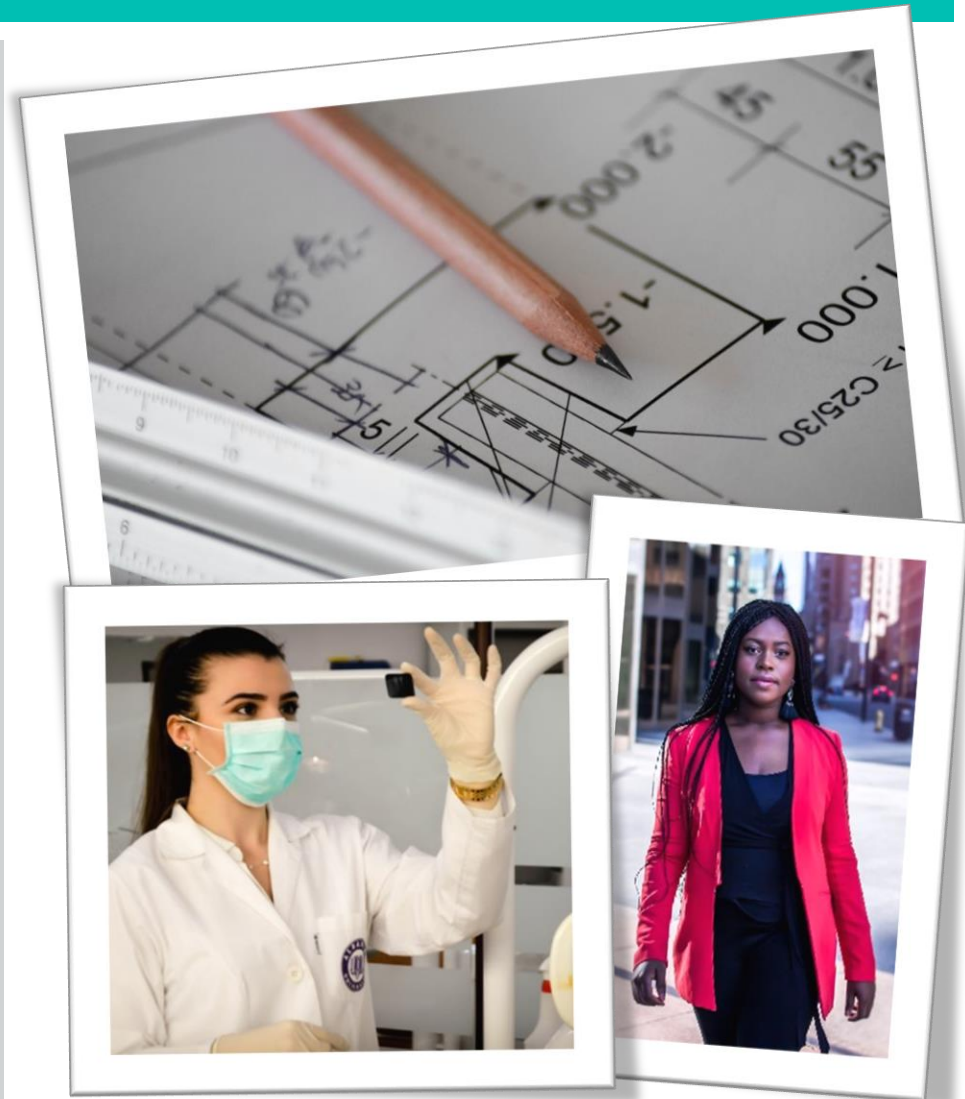
- Access and Participation Plan (Progress) funding
- SEPnet opps (Emma H)
- Specialist partners e.g. EmployAbility
- Student Connectors
- **Employer partnerships**



# What role can employers play to support in-curricular embedding?

# By providing in-curricular challenges

- Reimagine local green spaces for Council
- Identify markets for start-up
- Recommend improvements to SME's sustainability practice
- Analyse school science policy
- Design furniture for University's Student Centre
- Assessed on funding application to conservation charity



# Other in-curricular contributions

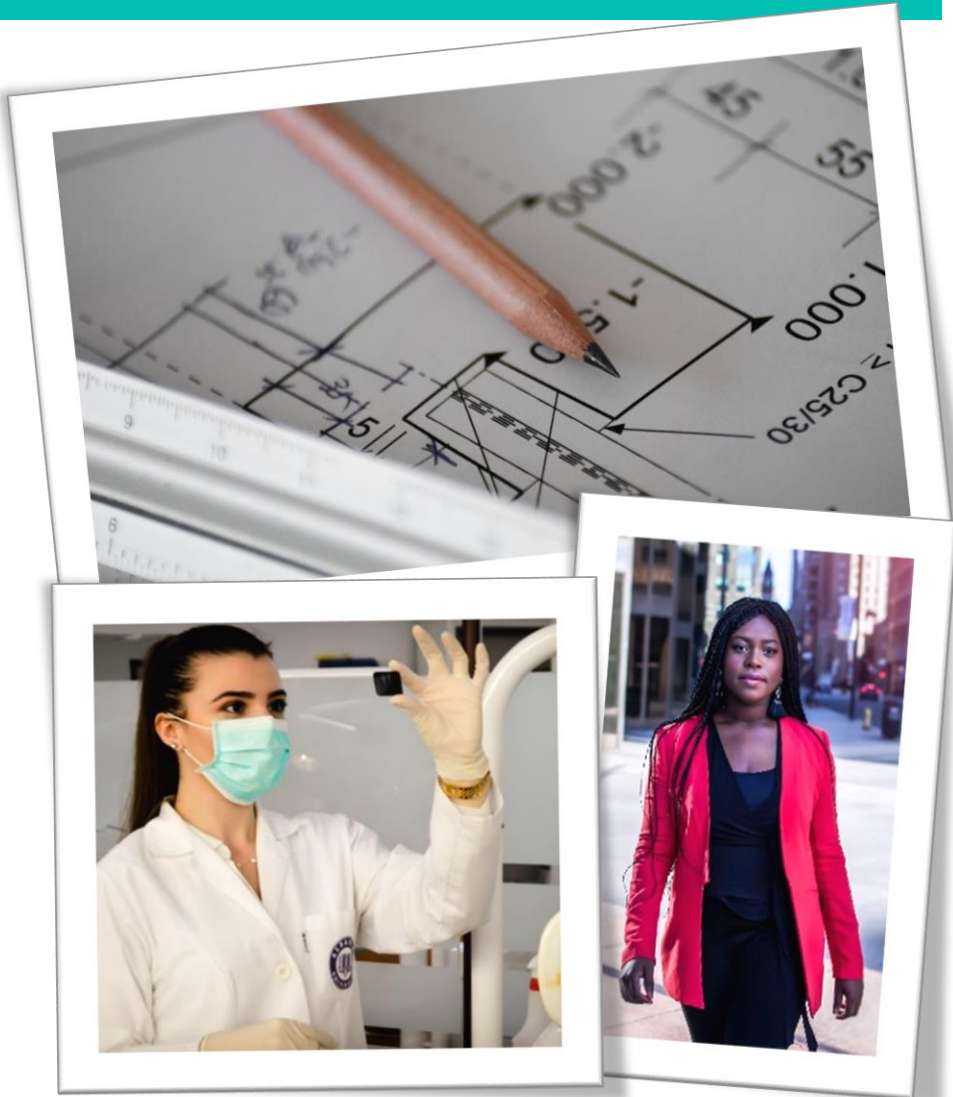
- Content co-creation
- Co-teaching
- Guest speakers
- Discursive panels
- Video storytelling
- Case studies





# Careers sub-module

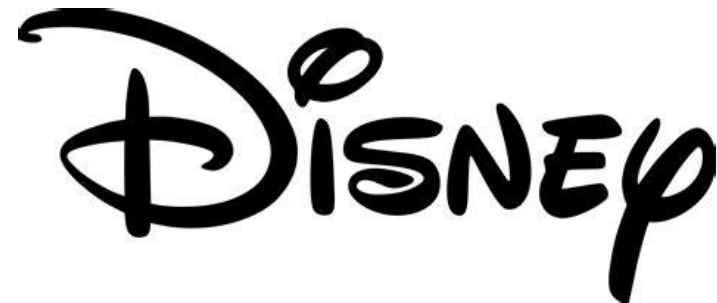
- Compulsory sub-module, Y2 Physics
- 10% of overall module mark
- 11 weeks over autumn
- Co-designed with alumni
- How to build experience (case studies Change 100, Civil Service Diversity)
- Explore options via alumni videos
- CV360 and GraduatesFirst
- Workshop 'Understand more about Equality in the workplace'
- When/how to disclose a disability
- Students take Autism test



# Employer partners



**WARNER BROS.**



# 500+ regional partners

- University helps employers diversify talent pipeline, build capability and capacity
- Employers provide opportunities for students to apply their knowledge, build skills and confidence in their value to the job market

Shoreham Port

Custom Pharma

Glyndebourne

Silicon Brighton

Rubymoon

Hastings Direct

The image features a teal-tinted background showing a multi-level office or library space. In the upper level, several people are seated at desks with computers. In the lower level, a grid of cubicles is visible, with people working at their desks. The University of Sussex logo, consisting of the letters 'US' in a stylized font, is positioned at the top center. Below the logo, the text 'UNIVERSITY OF SUSSEX' is written in a smaller, sans-serif font.

US  
UNIVERSITY  
OF SUSSEX

What role can  
employers play in  
extra-curricular  
provision?

# Career Lab

1000 opportunities for underrepresented groups

- ❖ Paid flexi internships (some trained by Employ Autism)
- ❖ Paid flexi virtual internships with businesses out of UK
- ❖ Paid flexi consultancy with community and business
- ❖ Paid flexi research internships at the University
- ❖ Wrap-around learning in digital skills and CVs
- ❖ Inclusive leadership training (representation is key)
- ❖ Career mentoring (representation is key)

# Success indicators



Students from underrepresented groups who have completed Career Lab achieve higher rates of career readiness and attainment than their peers.

# Create your own experience



Startup partners co-deliver:

Weekly Startup Lab  
Entrepreneurs-in-Residence

Inspirational 'Change the Face of' speaker events

Seed funding and prizes

Podcast interviews

Summer accelerator

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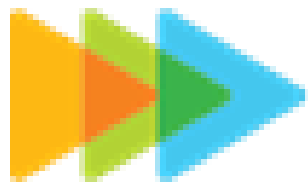
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# Connectors — advise on how to target and engage



# Student A



**Ambitious  
about Autism**

Autistic Maths Student

Worked with Maths Careers  
Consultant to identify  
employers of interest

Consultant approached EPM  
on student's behalf as part of  
the Career Lab Programme

EPM received autism training

Student interned successfully

# Student B



Visually impaired Physics student

Supported by  
Entrepreneurship team to  
set up business which turns  
scientific data into an  
accessible format

Interned with Sussex  
spinout

# Student C

Female Physics student

Completed a SEPnet  
internship in 2020 with NPL

Kept in touch and completed  
her final year dissertation  
project in collaboration with  
NPL

Offered a position at NPL as a  
research scientist





**By learning how to better support underrepresented groups, we – and our employer partners – are finding we improve support for all students/hires**

**US**

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I know there's great practice  
across the sector. Please do get  
in touch to share what's working  
at your university to support  
underrepresented groups.

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