3
Future-proofing placements: the importance of local opportunities for placement students
A case study from Brighton Business School, University of Brighton

Clare Forder and Julie Fowlie

University of Brighton
c.l.forder@brighton.ac.uk
j.fowlie@brighton.ac.uk

Abstract

The government's new Industrial Strategy (BEIS, 2017) and the business plan from the Office for Students (2018) include specific focus on universities' engagement with local economies and workplaces in the context of the graduate labour market. As placements provision in most higher education institutions (HEIs) has always featured roles in local companies, we suggest that switching the focus from graduates to placement students could offer a useful collaborative opportunity for local businesses to articulate what they want from future employees. Brighton Business School (BBS), University of Brighton has seen growing student demand for local placements and an increase in the number of placements offered by local companies, prompting academic and professional staff to consider a more systematic approach to expanding the school's portfolio of local placements and its engagement with local employers. This paper will present a case study centred on the steps taken at BBS to improve provision, respond to student demand, and engage more productively with local businesses. It will highlight the lack of literature on local placements and demonstrate findings which echo existing research. It will also explore original outcomes such as how for some students local placements offer a convenience value but for others they are part of committing to living and working locally after graduation. The paper concludes with a set of recommendations for replicable practice at other HEIs, including mapping the extent of relationships with local employers and building on successful placements to increase opportunities.

Introduction

A wide variety of industrial placements has always been on offer and in demand at Brighton Business School (BBS), University of Brighton. Students can apply for roles in large, well-known national or multinational firms, seek positions in small to medium enterprises, undertake a placement abroad, or volunteer. Providing their placement meets criteria set by the Business School, they are free to apply for the roles that appeal most. Typically, students are keen to work for household names and are often drawn to working in London, either by relocating or by commuting.

In recent years, however, there has been a small but noticeable increase in the number of BBS students seeking and securing placements in local companies (21% in 2016 rising to 32% in 2018). This positive upward trend is timely and benefits from further exploration within the context of new national strategies. Before looking more closely at the mechanisms of local placements at BBS, it is useful to explore the current discourse on localism.

Localism and the new UK Industrial Strategy

Given renewed attention in the government's recent Industrial Strategy (BEIS, 2017), the theme of localism, or prioritising the local, provides a foundation for the new initiatives and developments intended to revitalise the UK economy in the coming years. The document highlights local level skills development, productivity, and growth as priorities, and draws upon higher education as a cornerstone for improvements in these areas. Although not new roles, HEIs in particular are to play a key part in the provision of higher-level skills needed by employers in local areas, as well as in collaborations with businesses to help students understand the practical relevance of their courses (BEIS, 2017: 100). However, in view of the focus on harnessing local strengths (BEIS, 2017: 11), Ball (2018) argues that this requires a shift in thinking at institutional level, where it is imperative that awareness of our local economies and social contexts is increased in order to understand the contributions HEIs can make locally.

In response to the concept of 'place' as one of the main elements of the strategy (BEIS, 2017: 214), Ransom (2017) states that local growth can be promoted and strengthened by collaborations between employers, universities, and other stakeholders. The key facets of these partnerships, he argues, include increasing employer demand for graduate employment, and a better matching of graduate skills with employer demand at the local level. He recommends monitoring and addressing local skills gaps to ensure the best possible candidates are matched to available opportunities but makes no suggestion as to how this might be achieved. With HESA (2016) data from the Destination of Leavers of Higher Education (DLHE) survey indicating that nearly 60% of 2016 graduates went on to work in the geographical area in which they studied, and with the new business plan from the Office for Students listing as a strategic outcome that graduates leave higher education with the knowledge and skills that will contribute to their local economies (OfS, 2018:10), local employment appears much sought-after by students and much in demand by the government. The challenge, therefore, is twofold: how can HEIs help drive local employer demand for graduate employment, and how can they contribute to addressing local skills gaps?

Focus on placements

We suggest that one way of doing this is through applying these concepts to industrial placements (i.e. the year in industry students can undertake during the third year of their degree). Moving the focus back one step from graduates to placement students could offer a useful collaborative opportunity for businesses to articulate what they want from future employees, and for universities to produce eventual graduates who can match this. Placements can offer a vital period for employers to think about what is required locally *before* students enter the graduate labour market, and the placement year could therefore be designed, with support from the university, to help close local skills gaps, develop or improve links between HEIs and employers, and increase productivity and growth with a long-term goal of providing new roles for future graduates once their studies are complete. Such engagement with local business seems increasingly beneficial and may also go some way to answering the shift in thinking advocated by Ball (2018). We outline later in this paper some of the steps taken at BBS to help local companies consider placements more keenly and discuss what more could be done in this area.

In addition, notwithstanding the current national agenda on localism within which (under)graduate employment forms an important concern, we should not ignore changes in the context of industrial placements which may be propelling students to seek local opportunities. As the High Fliers (2014: 35) report indicates, a decade ago placements were offered as a means of helping students decide which career sectors they wanted to work in and what that might be like. Now, most employers offer placements with a view to recruiting graduates. Students are very aware of the importance of demonstrating their employability and endeavour to pursue options that best enable them to enhance this (Wilson, 2012). Therefore whilst attempting to further develop the university-employer dimension of the local context, we must also respond to the changing needs inherent in the student-university and student-employer relationships, as without these, the former becomes a moot point. As we will demonstrate below, as much as focusing on local placements can benefit local companies, this can also be of extreme value to students themselves. First though, we address the usual barriers to and drivers of industrial placements and provide a profile of placements at BBS.

Typical barriers to and drivers of industrial placements

To provide context, we first examined the existing literature on students' decisions to undertake an industrial placement, exploring whether or not local placements featured as either a barrier or driver to undertaking a year in industry. Starting with potential barriers, the literature reveals ample reasons as to why a student may decide not to do a placement. Morgan (2006: 11) finds that undergraduates already working part-time may not be interested in placements and that those who

want to graduate quickly are not keen to add a further year onto their studies. Echoing this, Bullock *et al* (2009) also find that many students want to continue their studies without a break and note a further barrier in the form of students believing they already have enough work experience through part-time work, summer internships, gap years or other. In addition, they discover (2009: 487-9) that lack of confidence, risk of fracturing friendship groups, student housing decisions, the demands of taught courses, and lack of information about placements all contribute towards students' decisions not to undertake a year in industry. Adding to this already extensive list, Aggett and Busby (2011: 109) cite, amongst similar factors already mentioned: unsuccessful applications, disinterest in available placements, doubt that a placement can be found, and being no longer interested in the industry.

Whilst referring to similar barriers, Balta *et al* (2012: 401) conversely find a variety of drivers or motivations for undertaking a placement year. These include employability and skills enhancement, the possibility of improving academic grades, gaining experience that may not be available from the course, testing or trying out particular roles or industries, and also the chance to take a break from academic life. In support of these findings, Smith *et al* (2015: 4) demonstrate that the students in their research also used 'career clarification', alongside earning money, as the main motivations for pursuing a placement. Allen *et al* (2013) also reveal that the students they interviewed understood that their career prospects may be damaged if they did not seek a placement. What is striking is that whether barrier or driver, local placements do not seem to feature.

These findings are not new but for the purposes of this paper they indicate an interesting gap in the literature. Aside from Morgan (2006) none of the studies mentioned above makes reference to how finding a local placement might mitigate some of the barriers indicated by students or how a local role itself might be a motivating factor in students' decision-making processes. Considering how at least three barriers (existing part-time work, housing concerns, social issues) could potentially be alleviated or even removed by opting to work locally, there is perhaps a great deal to be said for increasing and better promoting local links between universities and employers. Morgan (2006: 11) briefly touches upon local placements in stating that they have less stringent entry requirements in comparison to larger employers but while this may be true in the context of his research, we have found that this is not always the case.

Brighton Business School context

Providing their overall first year mark is 60% or above, all students at BBS are eligible to undertake a placement in their third year. Each year, approximately 40% of the second year cohort studies one of the four-year degree pathways which automatically include a placement year. If students in this

group do not wish to do a placement or do not end up securing one, they can transfer onto the three-year route. Similarly, students who are enrolled on a three-year degree can opt to undertake a placement if they desire. Additionally, those three-year route students who perform well in their first year will be invited by personal letter to change to the management pathway. In total around 40-55% of the eligible cohort typically succeeds in obtaining a placement.

BBS has a placements office which offers information, advice, and guidance to those looking for placements. An online platform (www.jobteaser.com) provides a 'one-stop shop' for second years, and includes a placements portal through which they can search and apply for placements in the UK (after roles are uploaded by members of the placements team) or beyond (typically roles uploaded by other companies using the site). Only paid positions are advertised. Users are encouraged to complete a profile, upload their CV, and make use of the resources area, which contains downloadable documents on how to write CVs and cover letters, prepare for interviews, create a LinkedIn profile, and practise psychometric tests. The platform also incorporates an appointment booking system whereby students can arrange meetings with the appropriate placements advisor for their course. In turn, placements advisors can make notes about the appointment and track students' attendance at the appointments.

Additionally, the placements office sustains direct links with a number of companies, both local and national. In some instances BBS is the preferred supplier of placement students to these companies. The overall portfolio of companies worked with and placements available to students reflects the wider university's core values well: *inclusivity* – all eligible BBS second years are supported in their placement search and there is a wide range of available roles; *sustainability* – the placements office maintains existing employer-university relationships whilst creating new ones in order to continually broaden the scope of opportunities for BBS students; *creativity* –displayed not only in the type of roles available but in the flexibility offered to students to help manage their placement year; *partnership* – the efforts made by the placements team to develop long-term, successful employer relationships that help make a positive difference.

Narrowing this further to the specific objectives set out by BBS, the placements office responds to the need to widen participation of the student cohort in the placements process by offering a broad and diverse range of employability-related activities and by establishing a team of placement mentors drawn from returning placement students. Furthermore, placements staff are fundamental in the early steps towards improving such graduate outcomes as measured by the DLHE survey. By striving to find and promote high quality placements which provide sufficient levels of leadership, responsibility and management, BBS students are increasingly better placed to use their placement experience as a stepping stone to a professional or managerial level career (Lowden *et al*, 2011).

By the end of the academic year 2017-18, 1,265 placements had been uploaded to the placements platform. Of these, just over 5% were local opportunities (with 'local' in this context defined as the geographical reach of the areas covered by Local Enterprise Partnerships). It is interesting that while this figure represents only a small proportion of the total roles advertised, students who have secured one of these opportunities represent 32% of the total number of those undertaking a placement in the 2018-19 academic year. This is up from 24% in 2017-18 and 21% in 2016-17. We explore later on in this article some of the drivers for this increase but turn first to one of the new interventions piloted by the placements team to support this growth in demand for local roles.

New local placements fair: responding to student demand

Prompted by the factors outlined above, as well as a relatively low turnout at the school's annual November placements fair featuring large, well-known companies, the placements team saw a gap in their usual provision of employability and placements activities. In February 2018 they piloted a new small-scale event aimed at increasing provision of local placements and encouraging students to further engage directly with local employers. Eight local companies offering a total of 18 placements were invited to participate. Seven of the eight agreed to attend, although unfortunately two dropped out on the day. Nonetheless, representatives from five companies offering 13 placements were available to discuss opportunities directly with students. Industries represented by the companies attending included recruitment, accounting, events, manufacturing, and digital marketing. The placement roles available included marketing, accounting, business development, web analyst, and account manager. It should be made clear at this point that the placements on offer were also advertised beyond BBS, meaning a student from any university could apply. Adopting a much more informal approach than previous events, this one differed in timing, location, and context. Rather than repeating the same all-day structure as the annual placements fair, this event was offered as a twilight session from 5-7pm, in the Business School itself as opposed to the across-campus building typically used for placements fairs. Refreshments were provided, which aided the sense of this being a more social occasion, potentially serving to create a more relaxed environment. Additionally, all students who had indicated to the placements team that they were looking to work locally were sent a personalised invitation to the event, although it was also open to anyone wishing to take part. Students were encouraged to dress smartly, bring fresh copies of their CVs, and to engage with the employers about their companies and their roles. Understanding that some may be reticent to do so, the school's team of placement mentors, some of whom had worked for the participating companies the previous year, were also on hand to chat with students or to make introductions.

University of Nottingham, Jubilee Campus, 4th - 6th September 2018

New local placements fair: benefits to employers

Of the 77 targeted invites sent to students who had expressed an interest in working locally, 50 students (65%) took part, making this one of the placements team's most well-attended events. Set against traditional placements fairs, where attendance can be unpredictable and smaller companies cannot always rely upon a steady supply of interested students, this event guaranteed employers a targeted and engaged audience. This meant that almost every employer-student interaction had the potential to result in a positive outcome for both parties.

In addition, at the end of the evening members of the placements team held a short debrief with each of the companies, during which submitted student CVs were reviewed and potential candidates identified. The knowledge of the students held by the placements team paired with the initial impressions gained by the companies aided this filtering process. In short, employers were able to draw upon much more information than just a CV before making decisions about whom to interview. Consequently, time spent on recruiting and ensuring that their chosen candidates were the best fit for the roles was reduced.

The success of this pilot activity is best measured by the final outcome: all 13 placements offered by the participating companies were eventually filled by BBS students who had attended the event. Whilst an achievement in and of itself, Wilson (2012) outlines the importance of university engagement with small and medium-sizes companies for a number of reasons: helping with recruitment, embedding a skills supply chain between universities and local businesses, and networking with the business community to maintain an "efficient innovation ecosystem" (2012: 2). Importantly, creating new placement destinations resulting in good experiences is also key to generating repeat placements and developing further collaboration (*ibid*, 38). The Business School's ability to match supply and demand in the local context provided an opportunity for local employers to meet a high volume of candidates specifically interested in local roles. Added benefits, including a more informal setting than usual and direct support from the placements team, proved equally beneficial. That all available positions were secured by BBS students suggests that the event could be the first in a number of steps taken by the Business School to future-proof local placements for our students. Looking to build on this success, we next conducted some further research into BBS students' attitudes towards local placements.

Research design

To further explore our students' thoughts on local placements a small-scale qualitative research project was conceived with the aim of trying to pinpoint why BBS was seeing an increase in the

University of Nottingham, Jubilee Campus, 4th - 6th September 2018

number of students looking for roles in local companies. Initially an online survey was considered as a way of capturing the necessary data for the research. However, concurrent projects revealed difficulty in gathering sufficient responses via this method, so it was decided that a written questionnaire sent by email might be more successful. One might be surprised as to why this would be the case but having questions appear directly in the body of an email rather than relying on participants to open an email and follow a link proved a more reliable instrument. After a pilot version, and following ethical approval, the questionnaire was sent, in accordance with convenience sampling methods (Denscombe, 2014: 41), to 56 students either on a local placement in the academic year 2017-18 or who had completed one the previous year.

A response rate of 39% was achieved with 22 students either answering a short, qualitative email questionnaire or asking to answer the same questions in a face-to-face interview. Of the 22 respondents, 18 replied by email, two attended individual interviews and two participated in a small group interview (this was intended as a larger focus group but three students dropped out on the day).

Data analysis

All interview data were transcribed *verbatim* and then in conjunction with the written responses were analysed in line with the thematic coding procedures as summarised in Glaser and Strauss' (1967) Grounded Theory approach. All comments and answers underwent an inductive process of coding during which emergent themes were identified. Following repeat analysis were codes were further refined, initial theory was constructed from the data, rather than attempting to fit them to any pre-defined hypothesis. Reliability of the study and validity of the process were assured by the authors performing coding and analysis procedures independently of each other yet arriving at comparable themes.

Results

Participants were asked the following questions:

- Why did you want to work locally?
- Did you look specifically for placements in/around Brighton and Sussex?
- What other locations did you consider, if any?
- Is working locally after graduation important to you?

The data gathered from responding students illuminate an array of reasons why they opted to secure a local placement. Individual motivations include, conversely to the literature already examined above: saving money, being able to concentrate on studies without having to travel far for

interviews, and viewing placement opportunities as exciting and high quality. However, some significant themes emerged across a more substantial number of responses. These can be categorised into two broad topics, *feeling settled* and *feeling connected.*

Taking the theme of *feeling settled* first, the key factors reflected in students' comments were characterised as follows in Table one. Each respondent was given a number to preserve anonymity; therefore "R1" stands for "Respondent 1" and so on.

Key Factors	Example comments
Wanting to remain in an attractive location	*Brighton was always my first choice of location…[it] is perfect between the coast and city life (R4).* *I love being so close to the seaside (R10).* *The location is a massive attraction (R17).*
Being able to work near home (although not as a result of particular commitments)	*It is only a 7 minute walk from my front door (R4).* *My placement is in a really convenient location (R1).*
Being able to continue with current way of life/not having to make substantial changes to lifestyle	*I don't have to change much as my only focus will be getting to/from work…nothing else changes (R1).* *I wanted to continue with my part-time job and carry on playing for my football team (R5).* *I wanted to work locally because it meant the only change I would experience was working 9-5 (R7).* *I live in Brighton, so it was a matter of convenience (R8).*
Retaining a sense of familiarity	*I am familiar with the area which helped me adjust to the working lifestyle (R6).* *I want to work locally….as I am more familiar with my surroundings (R9).* *I wanted to stay in a city which is familiar to me (R10).*
Mitigating anxiety (over commuting, moving, housing, making friends)	*I won't know what I'm doing. It would be pointless to start again (R2).* *I was quite anxious about the process of moving to a new city for a new job, especially not knowing anyone…(R6).* *Working in London, for example, would stress me as it is unfamiliar to me (R9).*

Table one: key factors of *feeling settled* theme

These factors can be drawn together to form a central driver we have termed "convenience value". For these students, a local placement means they can maintain their status quo and not make drastic changes in terms of relocating, commuting, navigating a new city and so on. They are steered

University of Nottingham, Jubilee Campus, 4th - 6th September 2018

by ease, familiarity, and the ability to alleviate the anxieties that could potentially prevent them from seeking or securing a placement at all.

Table two lists the key factors which determine our second theme of *feeling connected*:

Key Factors	Example comments
Being able to work near home (for family or specific commitments)	*I already live at home and commuting to work in a local area would be efficient for me (R5).* *[My] significant other was local to Brighton and I didn't want to put a strain on the relationship by moving (R6).* *I have my friends here, who are like my family (R12).* *I live with my partner so I have payment and housing commitments (R15).* *Working locally was the only option for me as I have built a life here with a partner, house and friends (R16).*
Planning to work locally after graduating	*In the early stages of my career I would like to work near to home (R3).* *Staying in Brighton would be amazing if possible after graduation (R4).* *I would still like to enjoy my time with my parents and family whilst I can as I live at home (R5).* *Working locally after graduation is important to me (R8).* *I would only consider working further out…if the company offers flexible working…(R15)* *I want to remain [in Brighton] for a least a couple of years (R16).*
Retaining a "support system"	*It would be ideal to spend my placement in a city that has taught me so much and a place I felt comfortable in (R11).* *I did not want to move away and lose this support system (R12).* *My partner moved here so we could be together and she has also built her life around work and friends here (R16).*

Table two: key factors of *feeling connected* theme

The factors comprising this theme reflect more of an active desire to work locally rather than it simply being a convenient option. For many, the motivations for finding a local role are linked to family or friendship ties, with only a brief hint at financial obligation. Interestingly, many of the participants whose responses prompted the "convenience value" driver did not express interest in working locally after graduation. Conversely those who demonstrated feeling more connected to their local area also tended to have plans to continue working there area after university. Essentially,

as well as feeling connected, the responses reveal a certain level of forward thinking hence we have termed this driver as "connected and committed".

Discussion and recommendations

In providing further insight into why students opt for local placements, our findings echo those found by other researchers such as Morgan, 2006, Heaton *et al*, 2008, and Balta *et al*, 2012 who state that placement students are often less willing to travel, take risks or relocate for their placement. In line with Bullock *et al's* (2009) findings about housing issues and fracturing friendships, our students also voiced similar concerns. These findings are typically located in the contexts of students choosing not to do placements. However, our research finds that students can use these negatively-framed reasons as positive drivers for seeking a placement, for example, if they do not want to commute they do not give up on the idea of a placement but instead focus their search on roles that are easily accessible. It is clear that the part "local" has to play when encouraging students to undertake a year in industry is important.

It is also evident however, that "local" as a mitigating factor is not without challenges. First, as we have referenced, a shift in thinking at institutional level is required in order to harness local strengths (Ball, 2018). At BBS we have started this process by refocusing our attention on our local placement providers as outlined above but this is just a first step. Second, fully understanding the needs of local employers is essential in order not only to meet supply and demand but to create it. Increased student demand for placements cannot be satisfied if local employers do not offer suitable or sufficient opportunities. As Atfield *et al* (2009) explain, HEIs must capitalise on successful placements and build lasting relationships with local businesses. Employers welcome pro-activity from HEIs as they can see the opportunities that exist if a greater connection between universities and local employers can be developed (*ibid*, 93). University placements teams must be ready to capitalise on this.

Nonetheless, we have also found a variety of additional drivers not identified in the existing literature. These range from relatively passive factors such as students enjoying their location and wanting to retain a sense of familiarity, through to active drivers such as being able to work near home and sowing the seeds for early career plans. We suggest that it is for these reasons that student demand for local placements is increasing. That the current agenda surrounding industry and local economy is focused on localism will work in our favour if we can, as Wilson (2012) reminds us, create new placement destinations and facilitate skills supply chains between universities and employers.

University of Nottingham, Jubilee Campus, 4th - 6th September 2018

We conclude by contending that there is real value to moving a step back to focus on placement students rather than graduates as a means of responding to the demands of localism and responding to the objectives laid out in the new Industrial Strategy (BEIS, 2017). Working to further embed local opportunities into HEIs' placements provision will therefore provide a platform for future-proofing placements. With limited research into the value of local placements, our initial findings go some way to potentially transforming students' perceived barriers to placements by using them as drivers to working locally. As such, we lay out below some recommendations for moving forward:

- Recommendation 1: in the context of placements, map the extent of the HEI's relationships with local businesses and how these may be further developed or even established for the first time;
- Recommendation 2: identify previous successful placements in order to maintain the existing HEI-employer relationship and grow the potential number of positions the company may offer;
- Recommendation 3: provide networking opportunities bringing local employers and students together to discuss available roles in a more informal setting;
- Recommendation 4: make explicit the ways in which students' perceived barriers to undertaking a placement can become drivers for finding local positions.

References

Aggett M. and Busby, G. (2011) Opting out of internship: Perceptions of hospitality, tourism and events management undergraduates at a British University, *Journal of Hospitality, Leisure, Sport and Tourism Education*, Vol. 10 No.1, pp 106-113.

Allen, K., Quinn, J., Hollingworth, S. and Rose, A. (2013) Becoming employable students and 'ideal' creative workers: exclusion and inequality in higher education work placements, *British Journal of Sociology of Education*, Vol. 34 No. 3, pp 431-452.

Atfield, G., Purcell, K., and Hogarth, T. (2009) *The Impact of Graduate Placements on Businesses in the South West of England: a longitudinal study to run alongside the Graduates for Business Project*, Warwick Institute for Employment Research.

Ball, C. (2018) *Local Heroes – why a focus on local graduate employability is vital*, Higher Education Academy (Accessed via https://www.heacademy.ac.uk/blog/local-heroes-why-focus-local-graduate-employability-vital 05/06/18)

Balta, M.E., Coughlan, J.L., and Hobson, P. (2012) Motivation and Barriers In Undergraduate Students' Decisions to Enrol in Placement Courses in the UK, *Journal of International Education Research*, Vol.8 No.4, pp. 399-414.

Bullock, K., Gould, V., Hejmadi, M., and Lock, G. (2009) Work placement experience: should I stay or should I go?, *Higher Education Research & Development*, Vol.28 No.5, pp. 481-494.
Denscombe, M. (2014) *The Good Research Guide: For Small-Scale Social Research Projects*, Maidenhead: Open University Press.

Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy (2017) *Industrial Strategy: building a Britain fit for the future*, London: BEIS.

University of Nottingham, Jubilee Campus, 4th - 6th September 2018

Glaser, B. and Strauss, A. (1967) *The Discovery of Grounded Theory: Strategies for Qualitative Research*, Chicago: Aldine.

Heaton, N., McCracken, M., and Harrison, J. (2008) Graduate recruitment and development: sector influence on a local market/regional economy, *Education + Training*, Vol. 50 No. 4, pp. 276-288.

High Fliers Research Limited (2014) *The Graduate Market in 2014*, London.
Higher Education Statistics Agency (2017) *Destination of Leavers from Higher Education 2015/16*, Cheltenham: HESA.

Lowden, K., Hall, S., Elliot, D. and Lewin, J. (2011) *Employers' perceptions of the employability skills of new graduates*, Glasgow: SCRE.

Morgan, H. (2006) Why students avoid sandwich placements, proceedings from *Education in a Changing Environment* conference, 12-13th January 2006, University of Salford.

Office for Students (2018) *Business plan 2018-19*, London: OfS.

Ransom, J. (2017) Universities, place and the industrial strategy, Universities UK (Accessed via https://www.universitiesuk.ac.uk/blog/Pages/Universities-place-and-the-industrial-strategy.aspx 20/07/18)

Smith, S., Smith, C. and Caddell, M. (2015) Can pay, should pay? Exploring employer and student perceptions of paid and unpaid placements, *Active Learning in Higher Education*, Vol. 16 No. 2, pp. 149-164.

Wilson, T. (2012) *A Review of Business-University Collaboration*, London: BIS.

University of Nottingham, Jubilee Campus, 4th - 6th September 2018