**Postgraduate Project Management: An evaluation of student employability skills development**

Kay

Hello, I'm Kay. As tutors and authors, we think M815, Project management, offers many opportunities for development of professional, technical and behavioural skills, but our experience suggests some students misunderstand this or just don't see the many aspects of project related employability within the module.

A key part of our project is to ask recent cohorts about their perceived competence, but we're finding this more difficult than we expected. Previous studies surveying students found in our literature review, acknowledge the challenge of students assessing their own competence especially when comparing before study to after study. Joan is leading on the questionnaire design.

Joan

Hello, I'm Joan. My first task was the identification and definition of competences relating to project management and general employability. Our module refers to the APM competence framework which concentrates mostly on technical competences and module material is also tailored to the needs of our postgraduate students in terms of developing behavioural skills, which support our grade criteria and the OU employability framework.

For example, reflective practice is emphasised as important for developing self-awareness and career resilience and in terms of project management encourages continuous Improvement. We have identified 23 core techniques and behaviours which relates to improved employability in project roles. It is also clear that competence relates not just to knowledge, which may be acquired through study, but also to experience in implying and practicing the various techniques and behaviours.

The questionnaire has been designed to capture both aspects of competence before and during study. We've had useful feedback from student reviewers and our questionnaire will be circulated shortly following the SRPP process.