

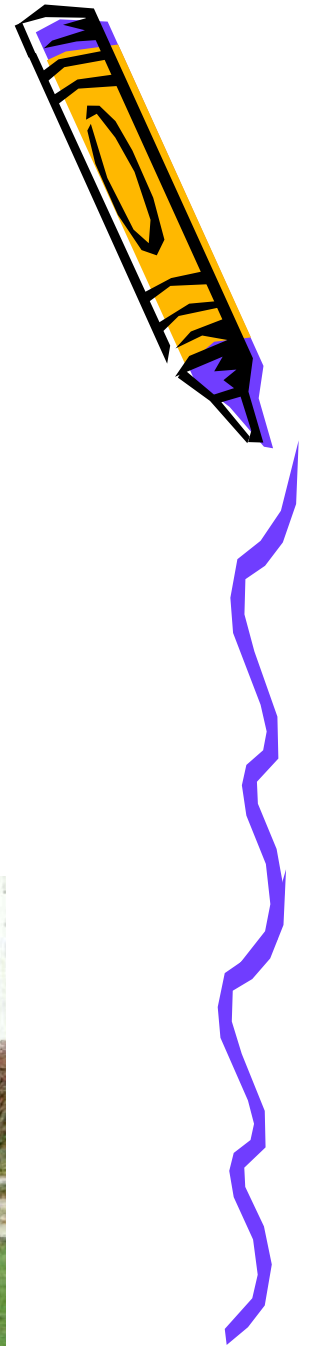
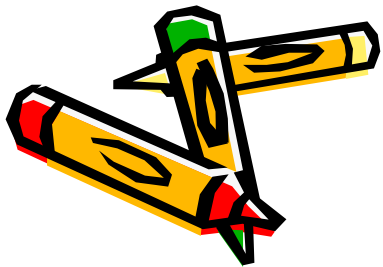


The Role of Employers in Assessment Design and Feedback

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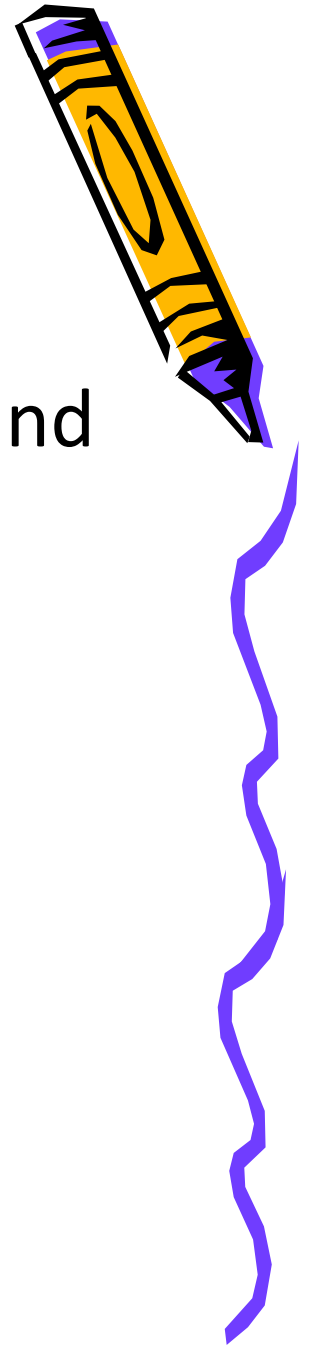
HE Delivery at KMC

- FdSc Animal Behaviour & Welfare
- FdSc Equine Behaviour & Welfare
- BSc (Hon) Animal Behaviour & Welfare (Top-up)



The Programmes

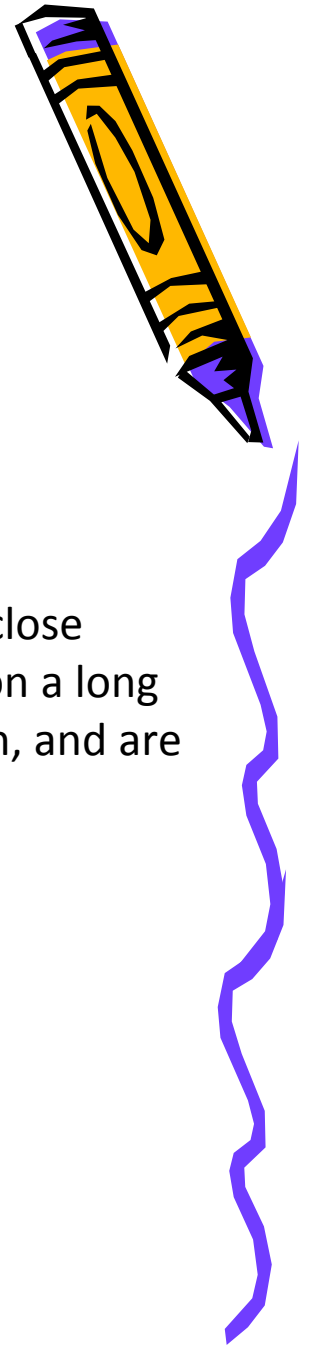
- Students develop the relevant practical and professional skills with underpinning knowledge to enable them to gain employment within the animal industry



The role of the employer

- QAA Benchmark Statements

“Foundation Degrees integrate academic and work-based learning through close collaboration between employers and programme providers. They build upon a long history of design and delivery of vocational qualifications in higher education, and are intended to equip learners with the skills and knowledge relevant to their employment, so satisfying the needs of employees **and employers.**”

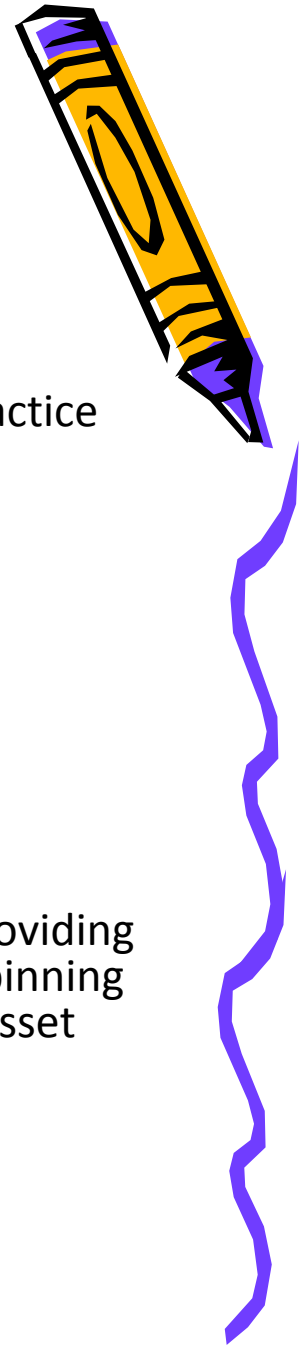


Work Based Learning

- The 'obvious' and most immediate route to integrating theory into practice

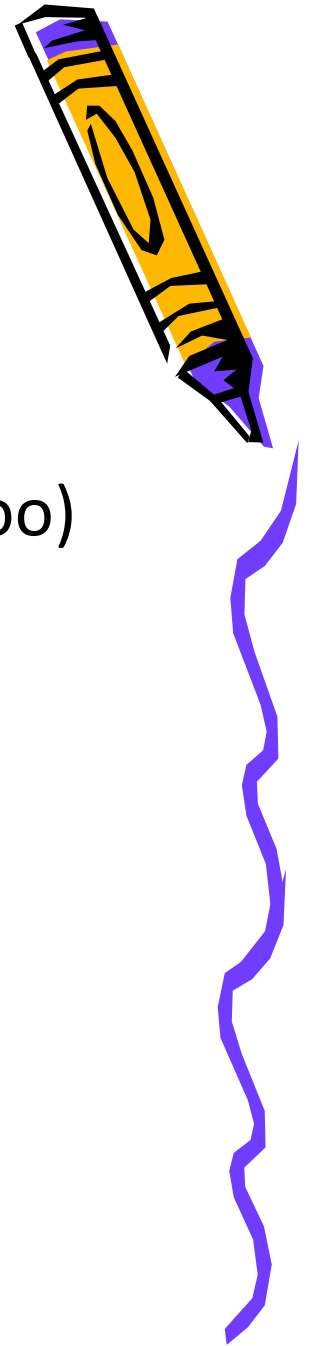
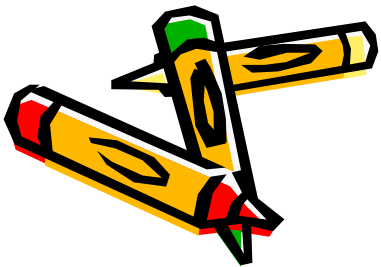


- Employer engagement is (comparatively) straightforward to secure providing the programme of study has equipped students with sufficient underpinning knowledge and the relevant practical and transferable skills to be an asset rather than a liability in the workplace



ABW industry Links:

- Cricket St. Thomas Wildlife Park
- Durrell Wildlife Conservation Trust (Jersey Zoo)
- The Atlantic Whale Foundation
- The Sea Life Centre
- Dorset Wildlife Trust
- Cedar Veterinary Group
- The Canine Hydrotherapy Centre
- Chilport UK Ltd



The Outcomes

- Aside from potential difficulties in terms of ensuring the work placement engenders 'learning' as opposed to merely 'experience' the role of the employer (in HE) in this specific context has been generally very successful
- BUT assessment of WBL (at KMC) has specifically been 'removed' from the employer remit and is based on submission of portfolio evidence and an evaluative project demonstrating application of 'theory into practice'



However WBL alone may not be enough ...

“Foundation Degrees are intended to provide students with the knowledge, understanding and skills that employers need. In order to achieve this it is important that employers are fully involved in the design and regular review of Foundation Degree programmes. **It is beneficial if employers are involved, where possible, in the delivery and assessment of the programme** and the monitoring of students, particularly within the workplace”

Given the difficulties experienced with employer assessment of students in the context of WBL could we nevertheless envisage ways of incorporating employer delivery and assessment within the programme as a whole?



Problems and Constraints

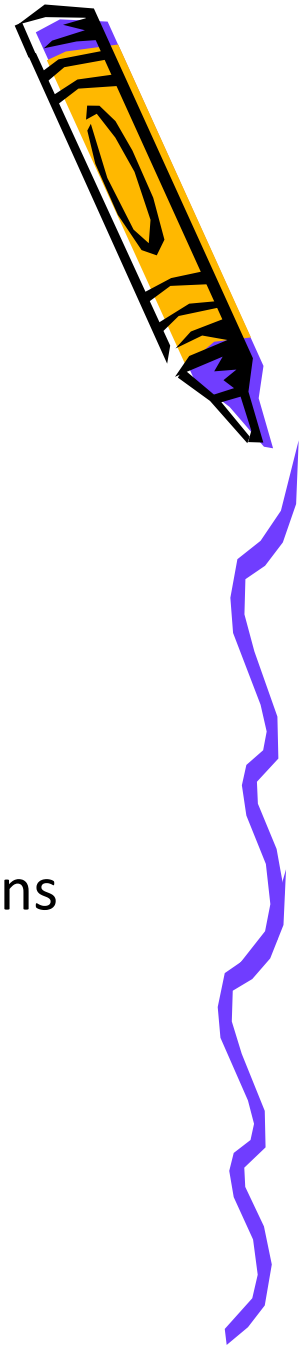
- HEI

- Employer



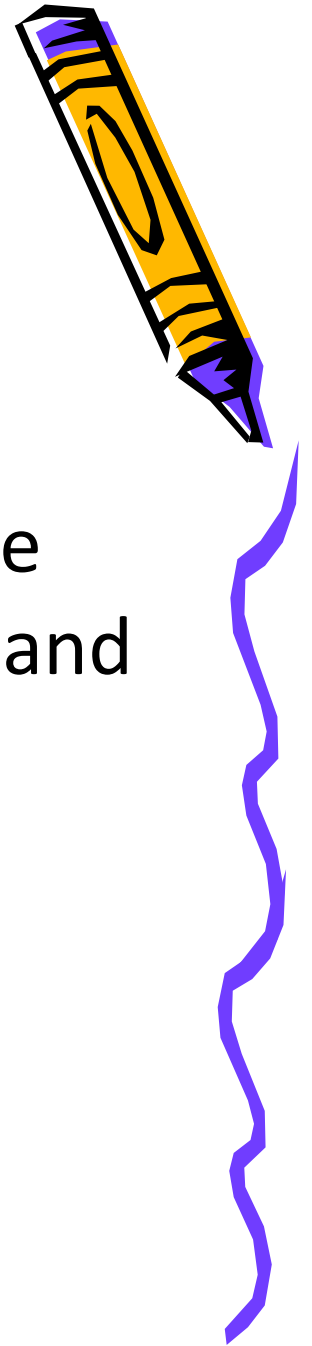
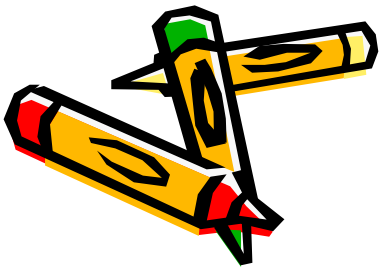
- Academic rigour and robustness
- (HOW?)

- Resourcing and returns
- (WHY?)



Reflection:

- Drawing on experiences from your own sector identify potential 'issues' with the use of employers in programme design and assessment
- How might these be overcome?



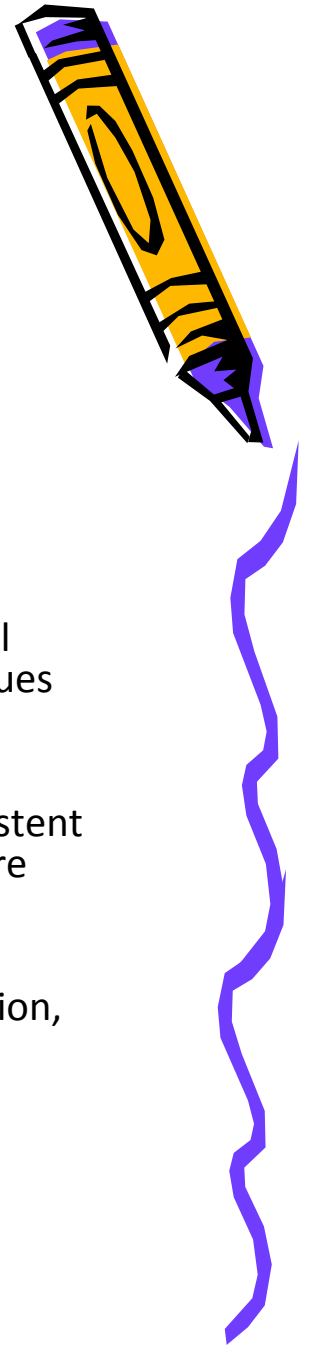
A case study

- Cricket St. Thomas Wildlife Park
- Unit 2.4 Management of Animal Collections

- ILOs
- O1. Demonstrate effective knowledge of the main legislation relevant to animal collections in the EU and the world, with particular reference to the specific issues surrounding Zoo licensing and the implementation of best practice guidelines

- O4. Consider and critically evaluate the management techniques that are consistent with running a commercial and safe establishment and attendant animal welfare requirements

- O5. Design an animal collection that would function for the purposes of education, recreation, conservation and animal welfare



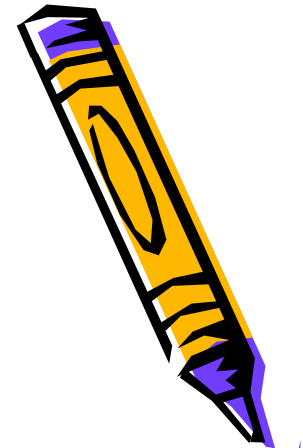
The enclosure design task 2008 (Cheetah)

- Restrictions - Budget £50,000 (including labour)
- **Working in teams (of no more than 4) students were required to:**
 - Produce a design proposal with appropriate visual representation (plans, 'artists impressions', models etc)
 - Produce a written report that clearly illustrates the rationale for your design with reference to species, keeper, public and health requirements
 - Summarise the legislative constraints and requirements that impact on the design
 - Justify the choice of construction materials
 - Product a 'basic' budget demonstrating that the project can be completed for the stated £50,000
 - Provide details of the educational strategy that will be incorporated into the display (this could include samples of age specific educational materials)
- **Present a 10 minute (max) seminar presentation which gives a broad overview of the above elements and submit an accompanying written portfolio**



NOTE: Students presented to a panel of experts from CSTWP

The Balance

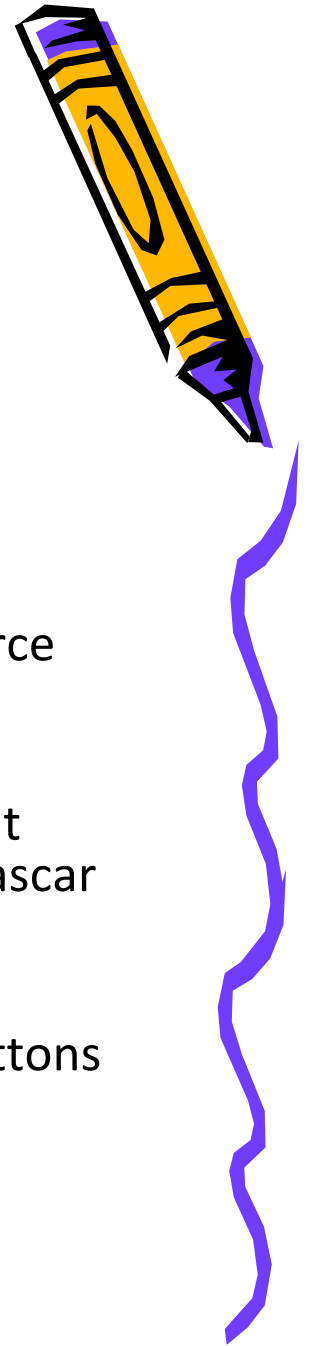


- **HEI (HOW?)**
- Assessment designed by CSTWP (education officer – previously experienced in delivery of FE/HE curricula)
- Subject specific delivery undertaken by section keepers and on a cross-college basis (budgeting, materials and procurement)
- **Employer (WHY?)**
- Zoo licensing criteria ('educational engagement')
- Coherence with Zoo development plans (i.e. actually 'needs' to be done)
- Validity of supporting research (can be utilised in practise)



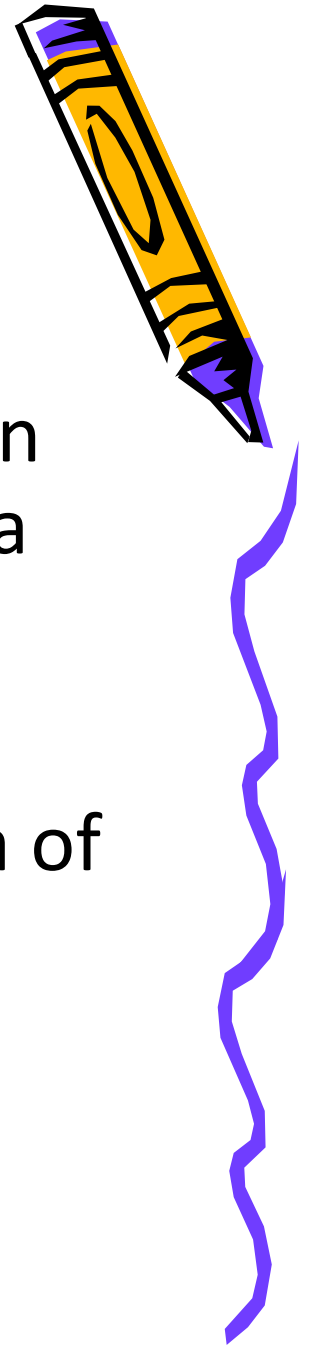
Continued

- Assessment undertaken by senior staff at CSTWP in conjunction with unit leader
- Formal nature of presentation and competitive element ensures exceptionally high standard of student submissions
- Demonstrable quality of student work
- High net value return for comparatively low resource input
- 'Added value' e.g. student fundraising – the Madagascar Appeal
- Commercial gain (e.g. Suttons seeds)



The Outcomes

- Students consistently achieve distinction level passes in this element and report a high level of engagement in the tasks
- Activity specifically identified as an area of good practice within QAA IQER pilot programme in 2007



Why does it work?

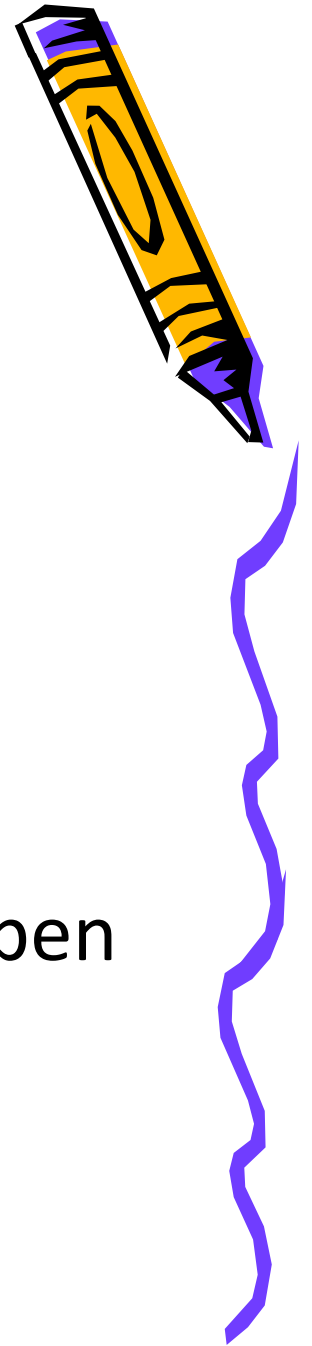
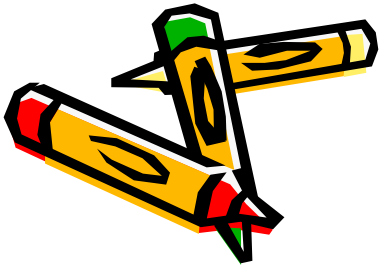
- The employer has as much to gain (if not more) than the HE provider
- The employer is familiar with educational/academic procedures and practice
- Ongoing liason and collaboration between employer and HE provider



Or to quote a colleague...



- You were already ‘pushing against an open door’ with that one.



- This may be true but the challenge is to identify more of these ‘open doors’ and find ways of utilising them in innovative assessment design in the future

