



## AHECS Connect Newsletter - May 2022

Welcome to the latest edition of the AHECS newsletter. After what has been a busy couple of months, with the AHECS Employability Awards, the Gradireland Awards night in the Mansion House, the 2 Day Project Management Training Course and the AHECS Conference we can look forward to a few quieter summer months ahead, and hopefully some proper summer weather also!

In this edition you will find an update on the newest of the AHECS Communities of Practice and a feature on one of the current AHECS Co-Chairs, Trevor Johnston.

## Communities of Practice - Work Placement

Marie and Oonagh can be contacted at [marie.laffey@nuigalway.ie](mailto:marie.laffey@nuigalway.ie) and [oonagh.sweeney@ucd.ie](mailto:oonagh.sweeney@ucd.ie) if you have any queries or would like to register your interest.

- Over 50 have registered to become members of the Placement CoP
- We held the first kick off meeting on 26<sup>th</sup> April with 35 attendees. The meeting was recorded for members who were unable to attend.
- We have identified the following key themes based on feedback from the group;
  - Supporting International Placement (Both international students and domestic students going abroad)
  - Placement Policies and Best Practices
  - Placement models and Assessments
  - Technologies supporting Placement
  - Employer Engagement – future of work and adapting placement needs
  - Careers Education for placement
  - Compliance and Risk Assessment
  - Student Engagement
  - Data – Value of data, research
- We are hoping to meet every 6 weeks and will identify an information session for the wider AHECS community once we are established and have run through some of the topics above.



## Lunch n Learn Series

Our very popular and successful Lunch n Learn series can be viewed on our Youtube Channel, click on the icon above. We are already planning for our next series which will commence in September. Please get in touch if you have any suggestions for what you like to see.

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## Questions and Answers with a Careers Advisor

Trevor Johnston, Head of Careers, Employability & Skills at Queen's University Belfast and current AHECS Co Chair, features this month.

### Name

Trevor Johnston

### Length of time and route into careers

I joined Queen's in 2013 and I was new to Higher Education when I joined Queen's. Prior to that I was in a number of Business Development and Project Manager roles in the private sector and also led the development of an all island INTERREG project on renewable energy technologies. Prior to joining Queen's I also led the development of a National Skills Academy in England. I was recruited into Queen's to set up the Employer Engagement team and it has been quite a journey over the last decade!

### What is the best piece of advice you have been given when you started in Careers?

I have been given lots of advice over the years. Someone said to me "everybody is brilliant at one thing". As I have been part of teams and led teams over the years I have always been amazed at the hidden potential that is inside people, especially the quiet ones!

### What has been your most exciting project you have been involved in?

I have been involved in many projects over the last decade at Queen's. Perhaps the most exciting and also the most recent is over the last year, leading the team of student and academic services as we prepare to move into a new purpose built, state of the art building One Elmwood, bringing all of the student services together under one roof, with the Careers Cube front and centre of the new building. It will give us so many opportunities moving forward. It has been an exciting and challenging project but one that will improve the student experience and create a vibrant student community at the heart of the campus.

### What is the best experience you have had in your role?

I've had many great experiences in my role from trying new innovative ways to engage students, to growing the Graduate Recruitment fairs, and meeting many great colleagues from around the world at the Global Careers Summit in Toronto. I also have had many great times with AHECS colleagues and have many fond memories of the last few years!

### What do you love to do in your spare time?

I am a massive football fan, supporting the most successful club in England - Liverpool FC. I also have a dog called Bobby. PS I don't have a favourite Liverpool player but my dog is called Bobby! Some of you have no idea what that means and that's ok!

**What you're your favourite holiday destination?**

The best holiday I have ever had was spending a month in Australia and visiting the Whitsunday Islands and Great Barrier Reef. It has to be the most beautiful place on earth. However most years we holiday in the same place in San Pedro in Spain!

**What is something you want to learn or wish you were better at?**

I am a frustrated golfer as I would love to be better. I just don't have the time to practice and even if I did play more, it seems the more I play the worse I get!

**What would you love to do when you retire?**

I would love to travel when I retire, and buy a motor home and tour around Europe and Ireland of course, if my AHECS friends will let me across the border!



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