



Careers and Employability Service

Business Innovation Programme

Client Handbook 2017/18

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1. INTRODUCTION

The Business Innovation Programme enables local businesses and not-for-profit organisations to task ambitious students with a business issue or need and receive inspiring solutions to overcome these. For students, it offers an opportunity to gain invaluable experience of working on a real-life business issue put forward by a local business or not-for-profit organisations. We work with organisations of various sizes, **across all sectors**.

Students from a range of faculties and year groups will work in teams of 4 to come up with innovative solutions to the business problem. Projects run twice a year and last for 8 weeks during either Semester 1 or 2.

Hosting a project through the Business Innovation Programme will enable you to enjoy a number of benefits including:

- Access to high calibre students from a Russell Group University ranked among the top 1% of universities worldwide
- Receiving insightful recommendations produced by the students through a final presentation and report
- Exploring fresh approaches to organisational needs through enthusiastic students
- Capitalising on theoretical knowledge from a range of disciplines
- Enjoying an additional resource to provide dedicated consulting skills to a business issue or need

What the Business Innovation Team will do for you:

- Select a group of students to work on the Project
- Arrange for students to attend a mandatory training course before the Project commences
- Provide for students to receive support during the course of the Project from the University's Careers and Employability Service
- Use all reasonable endeavours to ensure that the students complete the Project
- Contribute £150 towards expenses for all students who take part on completion of the project
- Invite you to the prestigious annual Employability Excellence Awards

At the University of Southampton, we recognise that enhancing our students' employability is key to the success of our graduates. By providing a worthwhile project that offers good work experience, clients will enhance a student's CV and help to support their long-term career goals.

2. HOW THE BUSINESS INNOVATION PROGRAMME WORKS

2.1 What Defines a Business Innovation Programme project?

- A Business Innovation Programme lasts **8 weeks** during either semester 1 or semester 2
- The programme is coordinated by the Careers and Employability Service and all student applications are submitted via the Business Innovation Team
- The project should provide the student with the opportunity to develop or work on a project of importance to the employer. This project should be embedded within the long-term strategy of the employer
- The project should be a '**research and recommendation**' project. Students will research the business issue/need and come up with recommendations to overcome this.
- Students will be put into teams of 4 from a range of faculties. They will not be aligned to a specific project because of their degree discipline.
- The Business Innovation Programme is available to all undergraduate and postgraduate taught students from any discipline.

2.2 Client & Project Eligibility

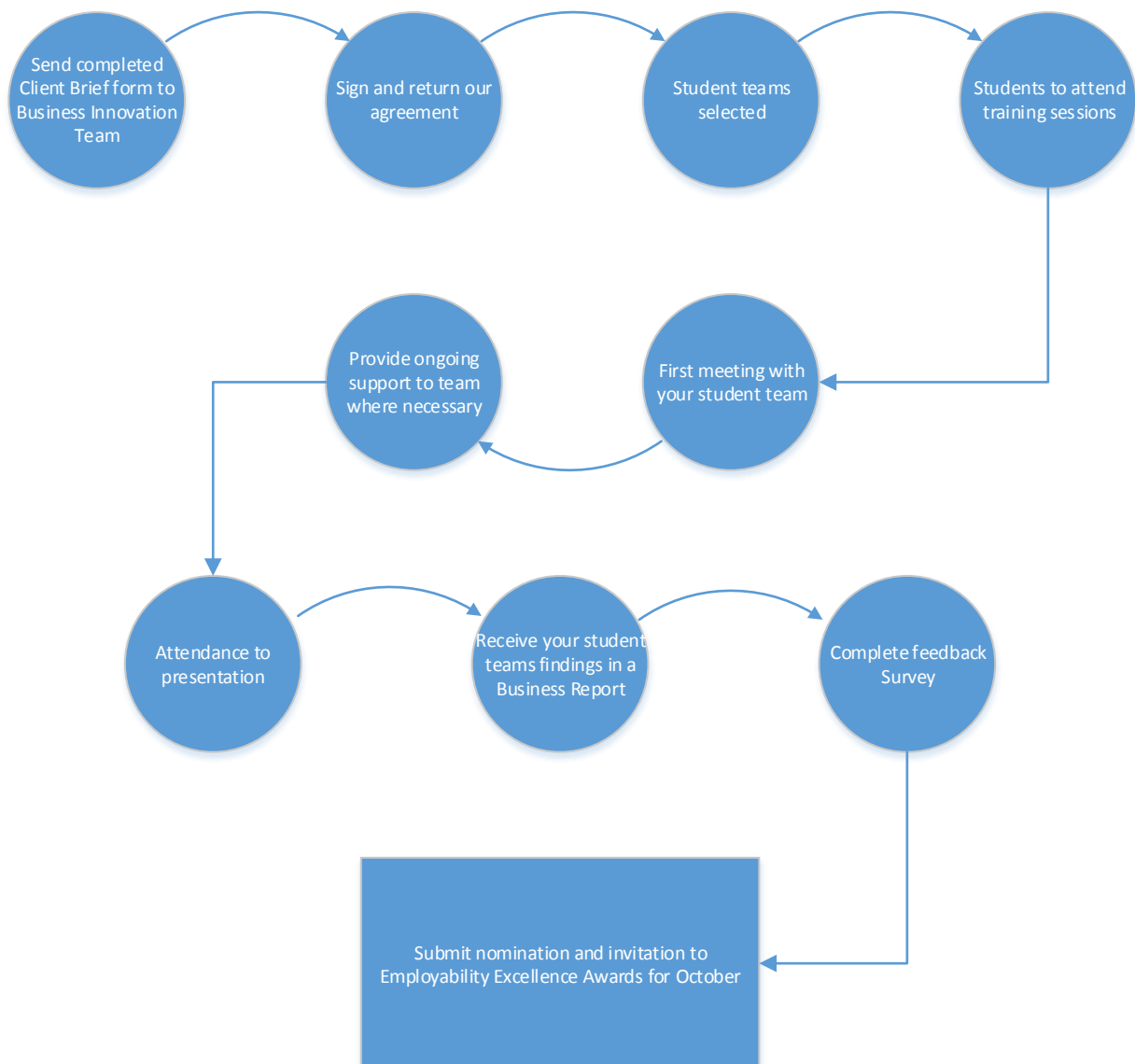
- ✓ The project offered must be based in the south of the UK
- ✓ Employers must ensure students work on a project of importance to the organisation. For examples of previous projects, please see our website.
- ✓ Project must be exclusive to University of Southampton students
- ✓ Projects must be suitable for students from any degree discipline

2.3 Dates and Duration of Programme

The Business Innovation Programme runs twice a year. Students will work for 8 weeks on a project part time (around 5 hours per week).

- **Semester 1 projects** - October
- **Semester 2 projects** - February

2.4 Timeline of Programme



2.5 How to apply to the Business Innovation Programme

The Business Innovation Programme welcomes applications from a wide variety of businesses and charities. All employers wishing to apply to the Business Innovation Programme must download a client form from our website and send this to the Business Innovation Team for approval.

To apply to the Business Innovation Programme, please follow the steps below:

Step 1

Download and complete the 'Client Brief' found on our website

Step 2

Email the completed 'Client Brief' to the Business Innovation Team for approval
employ@southampton.ac.uk

Step 3

The team will send you an agreement form to sign and return

Within the client brief, clients should;

- Give the project a suitable title
- Explain the background of the project/company
- Outline the business need or issue in detail – this will form the basis of the project
- Highlight the project aims and what you hope to achieve from it
- Fill in all the required information

The information provided here will be used directly to explain the project to students. Students will be assigned a project by the Business Innovation Team – they will not be able to choose which project they work on. Please ensure the content on your brief is clear and outlines the project in detail. The students will be able to ask further questions about the project when they have their initial meeting with you on week 1.

Please note, we require separate briefs for different projects. Therefore, if clients wish to appoint multiple students to work on different projects, multiple briefs must be submitted.

Due to the necessity to provide students with a wide range of opportunities as well as limited funding, we cannot guarantee that each completed application form will be approved onto the Business Innovation Programme.

2.6 Recruitment Process for Students

Students will apply to the Business Innovation Programme through 'MyCareer' our online Careers platform. Student applications consist of a CV and application form asking them the following generic questions:

- Why do you wish to be part of the Business Innovation Programme?
- What skills and experience can you bring to the programme?

After the closing date, applications will be shortlisted and suitable students will be selected by the Business Innovation Team.

Students will be put into teams of 4, and they will be from a range of faculties. They will not be aligned to a specific project because of their degree discipline.

2.7 Training Session

Students, who have accepted a place on the Business Innovation Programme during one of the two semesters, are expected to attend the Training Session coordinated by the Careers and Employability Service.

We will provide the students with 2 half day Training Sessions to prepare them for work on the projects. We have developed a programme of activities, organised to help give students the best possible foundation to commence their project. Training is mandatory for all students and those that do not attend will not be able to take part in the programme.

This will be an opportunity for the students to gain information on a variety of topics before the project commences. This includes:

- Building a relationship with a client
- Being innovative and creative towards a client solutions
- Research skills
- Building credibility and professionalism
- Writing a Business Case
- Working effectively as a team
- Project management principles

2.8 Reflection Activity and Excel Southampton Awards Ceremony

After the projects have been completed, students are required to attend a Reflection Session. The session will take the form of unique workshops and is considered extremely important to help students identify the work-based skills they have acquired during the programme. Dates are as follows:

- **Semester 1** – January
- **Semester 2** – May

During October 2018 we will be holding our annual Employability Excellence awards for all work experience opportunities held during the 2017/18 academic year. We will be taking this opportunity to celebrate the unique and valuable contribution our students have made during their internships and also recognise the fantastic opportunities provided by employers, with employers and students having the opportunity to nominate each other for prestigious.

If you apply to the programme and your project is accepted, we advise that you pencil this date into your calendar as soon as possible. Invitations and further information on how to nominate your student for an award will be sent out during the summer vacation.

2.9 Our Agreement

A Business Innovation agreement will need to be completed and signed on approval of your client brief. These outline what is expected from you as a client as well as what the University will do. Students will also sign an agreement form before commencing on the project.

Any changes to a project

If for any reason a student team is unable to complete the project, there are any changes to the project, or business, the Business Innovation Team must be informed immediately. Any other issues or queries please do not hesitate to get in contact and a member of the team will be more than happy to help.

3. FUNDING

3.1 Student Contribution

All students who participate in the Business Innovation Programme will be given a contribution towards expenses of £150 at the conclusion of the project following completion and presentation of the final report. This contribution is funded by the University and Santander and comes at no extra cost to the client.

4. FEEDBACK

4.1 Feedback

Every year we look to improve our processes and service to both students and clients. To help us achieve this we send out feedback emails to all students and clients who have engaged with the programme to gauge areas that we can improve. Therefore, it is crucial that we receive this feedback to allow us to provide the best service possible, so please spare time to help influence our decision making.

