University of **Reading**

Finalist Futures 2023/24

An evaluation

Alexandra Baker, Careers Consultant and Finalist Programme Lead

February 2025

Contents

Executive Summary

Finalist Futures is the University's careers programme designed specifically for final year students. With a range of activities on offer, option of taking part online or in person, and a welcoming and informal approach to career learning, there is something for everyone. By building a community our goal is to support our finalists to explore, plan and get ready for life after university.

The evaluation

Evaluation focuses on two concepts, goal clarity and confidence, and was conducted to Type 2 (according to the Office for Students' Standard of Evidence classification) for events and online learning (pre and post surveys).
For Instagram the evaluation is qualitative, based on responses gathered during focus groups.

Main findings

The mean responses were significantly higher in the post-survey compared with the pre-survey with all results statistically significant. The effect sizes for confidence are moderate while those for goal clarity are large. This indicates that Finalist Futures is having a positive impact on these concepts although the association is not causal.

Conclusion/recommendations

The Finalist Future programme appears to have a positive impact on the participants' self-reported confidence and goal clarity. In theory, this should allow students, including IMD Q1/2 students who participated at rates in line with or higher than those in the general university population, to secure graduate level employment.

We will be working to increase student engagement and participation in the activities and also explore how we can increase the number of students completing the before and after surveys. We recommend removing the Instagram channel from the specific activities we evaluate due to the difficulties in gathering any form of data. However, some qualitative data on this is likely to be collected from focus groups though going forwards the discussions will be centred on the programme as a whole.

Introduction

Report caveats

This report is part of the first cycle of more robust evaluation in line with our new Access and Participation Plan. Therefore, we acknowledge that the evaluation still has limitations and we do not intend to over-claim the strength of any conclusions.

In particular, it is noted that this evaluation is based primarily on self-reported data, which can be impacted by many factors. There were practical challenges to data collection, and it is acknowledged that the limited sample size of pre- and post-intervention data reduces the robustness of claims about the programme's effectiveness beyond immediate reactions. Nevertheless, the data here still provide valuable insights into engagement and the immediate perceived benefits of the programme. Future evaluations will aim to strengthen data collection, ensuring a more robust set of pre- and post-intervention measures, and include comparison groups where possible. Long-term data will also become available.

Rationale

Graduate outcomes gap
There is a continuing gap between white and 'BAME' (Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic) students, and IMD Q1/2 and IMD Q3/4/5 students in terms of the Positive Destinations of graduates as seen in the annual Graduate Outcomes survey (IMD = indices of multiple deprivation, with 1 being the most deprived and 5 being the least).

Table 1: Percentage of students progressing to positive graduate destinations, by ethnicity

Positive destinations graduate outcomes survey	White	'BAME'	Percentage point gap
2017/18	77.5%	81.4%	-3.9%
2018/19	76.3%	76.7%	-0.4%
2019/20	75.4%	72.1%	3.3%
2020/21	78.1%	74.1%	4%
2021/22	76.8%	74.8%	2%

NB: Data for cohort 2021/22 is the most recently available.

Table 2: Percentage of students progressing to positive graduate destinations, by IMD quintile grouping

Positive Destinations Graduate Outcomes Survey	IMD Q1/Q2	IMD Q3/Q4 /Q5	Percentage point gap
2017/18	75.4%	79.6%	4.2%
2018/19	76.1%	76.8%	0.7%
2019/20	70.6%	75.6%	5%

2020/21	76.3%	77.4%	1.1%
2021/22	73.7%	77.2%	3.5%

NB: Data for cohort 2021/22 is the most recently available.

.

Secured graduate job upon leaving University

The annual Careers Exit Survey completed in April-July of each year provides insight into the proportion of final year students who have secured a graduate job at the time of the survey. Despite interventions delivered under the previous finalist programme, High Fliers, the percentage has remained broadly the same since 2019.

Which statement best represents your plans for the next 6 months after your course?	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019
I have secured a job	20%	18%	17%	16%	19%
I am or will be looking for a job	39%	37%	38%	38%	38%
I'll be doing something else	6%	5%	3%	4%	5%
I'm not sure yet	14%	16%	15%	17%	13%
I am going on to further study	21%	25%	26%	25%	25%

NB: The results include all students and are not limited to only IMD Q1/2 and/or 'BAME' students.

Cost of Living Crisis

As a further consideration, the cost-of-living crisis has impacted students and seen an increase in students taking up part-time work or increasing their work hours, as well as students forgoing lectures and/or seminars due to work (Sutton Trust, 2023).

Intervention

Finalist Futures, replacing the previous High Fliers programme, was launched in September 2023 and offers cohesive and varied careers support to all undergraduate final year students to assist them in progressing with their job search, careers decisions and self-discovery. The objectives of the programme are:

- For students to feel capable, have the knowledge and agency to secure their first post-university role, and build their career from there, whatever their definition of career success.
- This includes enabling those who want to join a graduate programme straight after their degree as well as those who will be applying for direct entry roles, carrying on existing employment/endeavours and starting up a new enterprise.
- Designed to close outcome gaps for priority groups and priority departments and be accessible to the wider finalist student body.
- Responsive to the labour market, preparing students for what they will face.

The programme aims to be truly inclusive and accessible to all students with interventions designed to meet different learning styles and students' individual needs: students can choose between in-person and online events as well as asynchronous support through the online learning modules and social media. Over time we hope to build a finalist community to foster a sense of belonging for all students and thereby increase engagement with career activities supporting their career exploration and advancement (RAISE, 2024; Kerrigan & Manktelow, 2021).

During the 2023/24 academic year we have piloted the below interventions:

- Weekly careers drop-in held in library and students' union
- Finalist focused career events and workshops including careers pop-ups, weekly drop-ins and careers club
- Online learning modules covering key topics including graduate schemes and self-awareness
- Extension of University's part 2 mentoring programme 'Thrive' allowing students to take part in their final year (note, Thrive is evaluated as a separate activity)
- Instagram channel specifically for Finalist Futures.

Context

This evaluation covers the academic year 2023/24. Participants are those students who attended Finalist Futures events and workshops or completed the online learning modules.

Link to Access & Participation Plan (APP)

This activity contributes to one of the APP aims (Objective 5), to close the unexplained gaps in progression that correlate with disadvantaged backgrounds.

Methodology

Research questions

1. Does participation in Finalist Futures lead to an increase in self-reported confidence?
2. Does participation in Finalist Futures lead to an increase in self-reported goal clarity?
3. Does participation in Finalist Future lead to an increase in the percentage of students who have secured a graduate role by graduation.
    a. Does participation in Finalist Futures lead to a decrease in the graduate outcomes gap for 'BAME' and IMD Q1/2 students?

Participants

Events and workshops (including careers club and careers pop-ups)

Across the year there were a total of 242 attendances at Finalist Futures events and workshops by 167 unique students. Of these students, 23.8% were from IMD Q1/2[1] (University cohort 26.3%) and 64.9% were 'BAME' students[2] (University cohort 42.8%).

The workshops and events were advertised in weekly newsletters, via Blackboard announcements, social media posts and me@reading.

The 38 participants included in this report are those who have attended at least one event or workshop, have completed a before *and* after evaluation form and are UK-domiciled undergraduate students who are paying home fees. Of these 38 participants 7.9% were from IMD Q1/2[3] (University

---

[1] Based on only students with a home postcode in England.
[2] Statistics for BAME includes International students.
[3] Based on only students with a home postcode in England.

cohort 26.3%) and 38.5% were 'BAME' students[4] (University cohort 42.8%, although when excluding international students this percentage would be lower).

Online learning

During the academic year a total of 473 unique students have accessed the online learning on Blackboard. Of these students 28% were from IMD Q1/2[3] (University cohort 26.3%) and 45% 'BAME'[4] students (University cohort 42.8%).

The 33 participants included in this report are those who have completed at least one online learning module, have completed both the before *and* after evaluation and are UK-domiciled undergraduate students who are paying home fees. Of these 33 participants 55.9% were from IMD Q1/2 (University cohort 26.3%) and 47.1% were 'BAME' students (University cohort 42.8%).

Data collection

Evaluation forms

Students were asked to complete a short evaluation form at the start of the activity/online learning module and were asked to complete the same evaluation form at the end of the activity/online learning module (see appendix 2 for evaluation forms). The questions were asked on a 5-point Likert scale, 1 being 'Strongly disagree' to 5 being 'Strongly agree'.

Concept	Question
Confidence	• I am confident in my capacity to realise my graduate goals • I have or can develop skills to succeed in the job or course I am aiming for in the future
Goal Clarity	• I know the steps to take to progress in a career I am interested in • I can plan how I will achieve my goals

NB: These questions were taken or adapted from the NERUPI question bank.

The 'after' evaluation form also asked students to provide qualitative feedback about the intervention they had participated in:

• How did you find the new format? What could we improve?
• What will you do as a result of attending this session?

Careers Exit Survey

The annual Careers Exit Survey is what we are using to ascertain whether a higher proportion of finalists secure a graduate role at the point of completing the Careers Exit Survey following the introduction of the Finalist Futures programme.

---

[4] This percentage only refers to home students, not international students.

Graduate Outcomes Survey

To measure the graduate outcomes gap we are using the Graduate Positive Destination data collected via the Graduate Outcomes survey which is sent to graduates 15 months after the end of their course. This is not currently available for the 2023/24 cohort but is expected to be received from HESA in June 2026. We will follow the Office for Students guidance on the categorisation of positive destinations which is calculated using several questions from the Graduate Outcomes Survey.

We will be able to identify those graduates who have participated in the Finalist Futures programme via their student numbers.

Focus groups

Student focus groups have been used twice during the academic year to evaluate the use and impact of Finalist Futures Instagram account as well as gaining feedback about the programme as a whole. See appendix 3 for the questions.

Ethics and data security

All participants were over the age of 18 and were therefore able to give consent to take part in the research. Participants were informed that by completing the survey they consented for their data to be used for evaluation purposes and published in a report externally in an anonymised form.

Data analysis

Evaluation forms

Survey results were analysed using Paired T-tests, to ascertain whether average pre-activity scores differed significantly from post-activity scores. This was conducted for a total of 4 questions which have been combined into two concepts as defined in the data collection section of this report. Effect sizes were also calculated. This was not able to be broken down by IMD quintile, due to insufficient numbers of IMD Q1/2 students responding to both surveys.

Graduate Outcomes Survey

As mentioned above, we currently do not have access to the Graduate Outcomes data for the 2023/24 cohort as this data is only collected 15 months after the end of their course. However, once received we will be able to analyse the data to compare the proportion of Finalist Futures participants reporting a positive graduate destination with the proportion of non-participants in a reported positive graduation destination.
If possible, the comparator group will be matched on key demographics to control for the impact of this.

Careers Exit Survey

Analysis to calculate the proportion of finalists, broken down into key demographics (IMD quintile and ethnicity) who secure a graduate role at the point of completing the Careers Exit Survey following the introduction of Finalist Futures. This data is available the summer following the final year, i.e. for 2023/24 final year undergraduate students the data is available in July 2024.

Focus groups

Focus groups were used to evaluate the impact of the Finalist Future's Instagram channel but this also allowed us to gain feedback from students on the wider Finalist Futures programme. The focus group questions are provided in appendix 3.

Type of evaluation

Evaluation for events and online learning was conducted to Type 2, according to the Office for Students' Standard of Evidence classification. The short-term outcomes were measured pre- and post- activity, with the same participants.

The long-term outcome will be measured and analysed against a comparator group once we have received the data from the Graduate Outcomes Survey in Spring 2026.

For Instagram the evaluation is qualitative, based on responses gathered during focus groups.

Limitations

The nature of the evaluation type means that causal inferences cannot be made from the results as outcomes may have been influenced by other factors. Establishing a link between activity and outcome is often challenging, and even more so when considering that the interventions are taking place in the complex landscape of Higher Education.

A number of participants did not complete the before *and* after survey and therefore have not been included in this report, leading to a loss of data. This was particularly the case with IMD Q1/Q2 students, meaning we have less data on the impact for this group specifically.

As with all self-reported data, there is a risk of participants over- or underestimating their confidence and goal clarity: there is also a risk that participants report what they believe we want to know, rather than their genuine thoughts and feelings.

Evaluation of the impact of Instagram was always going to be very difficult as it is a social media channel we do not know who is following the channel or engaging with the posts.

It is going to be difficult to ascertain whether any positive effect from taking part in the Finalist Futures programme is sustained; using the data collected through the HEI wide Graduate Outcomes survey, we are hoping to gain some insight into the long-term outcomes.

Results

The mean scores, statistical significance test and effect sizes are shown below. The below tables analyse the before and after evaluation results from all UK-domiciled students who are paying home fees and participated in Finalist Futures. As noted above, it was not possible to break this down to IMD level.

Events and workshops

Concept	Before 'mean (SD)'	After 'mean (SD)'	Statistical test	Effect size
Confidence	3.67 (*0.65*)	4.12 (*0.52*)	*t* (38) = -3.82, *p*<.001 **	*d* = 0.69
Goal Clarity	3.32 (*0.80*)	4.05 (*0.58*)	*t* (38) = -6.55, *p*<.001 **	*d* = 0.91

* = significance at 0.05, ** = significance at 0.001

The table shows that mean responses were significantly higher for each item in the 'After' survey than the 'Before' survey. The results are all statistically significant at the 5% level. The effect sizes for confidence are moderate while those for goal clarity are large. This indicates that Finalist Futures is having a positive impact on these concepts although the association is not causal.

As part of the 'After' survey, we collected qualitative feedback about the activity, below are the questions asked, and examples of comments received (full comments in appendix 4).

What will you do as a result of attending this session?
How did you find the new format? What could we improve?

- *"Really helpful, welcoming/friendly, really open discussion format"*
- *"The session was run effectively, through inclusive discussion."*
- *"It was nicely executed, I especially enjoyed it being a group effort. It took off any pressure."*
- *"It was insightful and inspiring, very informative"*
- *"It was interesting and different from what I was used to, testing new grounds."*
- *"I think this session really helped because if I get stuck on what to do, I know what steps to take such as planning and visiting specific websites (mentioned in the session) that would help with finding career ideas."*
- *"I find the format very interesting, educative and engaging."*
- *"It was nice to communicate with others. Nothing to improve."*
- *"Please keep up the good work! These webinars are always lovely."*

Online learning

Concept	Before 'mean (SD)'	After 'mean (SD)'	Statistical test	Effect size
Confidence	3.91 (*0.68*)	4.32 (*0.51*)	*t* (33) = -3.94, *p*<.001 **	*d* = 0.61
Goal Clarity	3.63 (*0.78*)	4.32 (*0.47*)	*t* (33) = -5.70, *p*<.001 **	*d* = 0.89

* = significance at 0.05, ** = significance at 0.001

The table shows that mean responses were significantly higher for each item in the 'After' survey than the 'Before' survey. The results are all statistically significant at the 5% level. The effect sizes for confidence are moderate while those for goal clarity are large. This indicates that Finalist Futures is having a positive impact on these concepts although the association is not causal.

As part of the 'After' survey, we collected qualitative feedback about the activity, below are the questions asked and examples of comments received (full comments in appendix 4).

What did you like about the online learning module? What could we do to improve it?

- *"I found this module to be eye opening in ensuring I am self aware before stepping out to graduate roles and positions."*
- *"I found it particularly valuable in consolidating my understanding of my current skills, and where I need to improve in order to have the best chance of succeeding and progressing into my desired career of choice. I particularly found the ability to interact with others in a similar position valuable and useful for this module."*
- *"It was helpful and provides a good structure for guidance and resources to help develop my awareness surrounding post graduation and job seeking"*
- *"I liked how this course had tips from the recruiters perspective and informs us about the skills that they look for, which helped me understand which skills would be more valuable for employment."*
- *"Learning a new clear method to approach my life."*
- *"I found this pathway to be captivating yet I believe the inclusion of a table with a direct comparison to ensure a visual clarification of the differences. Only short key words would be needed but highlight the important differences."*
- *"More tips on how to choose."*
- *"Perhaps more examples of real-life situations of how certain individuals how progressed into a 'career job'. - I found this module really useful, so I can't think of many ways it could be improved."*

Instagram focus groups

Although all focus group participants are active on social media, and are users of Instagram, *none of the students had seen Finalist Futures on Instagram* prior to being shown the account at the focus group. Based on this evaluation only, we can conclude that the Instagram channel does not have a positive (or negative) impact on Finalist Futures. Students were however in agreement that the

content posted was useful, specifically liking the aesthetic and posts about events. Student suggestions were to make higher 'quality' and more professional-looking content, as well as content featuring recognisable people.

The focus groups also gave us the opportunity to ask questions about the wider programme which provided some insights about our other activities and awareness of Finalist Futures:

- Only 10% of focus group participants were aware of the newer activities Careers Club and Careers Pop-ups, but a majority of participants said that had they known, they might have attended.
  80% of participants were aware of the "You're the recruiter", our mock assessment centre event, but none had attended. Main reason was that the time invested to attend the event was not worth it as there is not a real job available (i.e. practicing and gaining insight and knowledge about assessment centres was not sufficient). For 2024/25 we have taken this feedback onboard and redesigned the event to be shorter.
- 40% of the focus group are aware of the online learning: participants felt it provided flexible access to careers information however; one participant said the information "*seemed quite basic*". Suggestions to improve engagement included asking academic colleagues to signpost to the resource in lectures and expand on the offering to include topics such as dealing with video interviews, Identifying skills in job descriptions and assessment centres.
- There was good awareness of the Thrive mentoring programme being available to all finalists from the start of their final year and this was seen as very positive.

Careers Exit Survey Results 2024

As seen in the table below, the Careers Exit Survey results show that the proportion of finalists with a secured job has not increased, however, it should be noted that Finalist Futures was only introduced in September 2023 and ran as a pilot during the 2023/24 academic year. On a separate note, the proportion of students who are or will be looking for a job is the highest we have seen since 2019, increasing 2 percentage points on last year.

2019 - 2024 Careers Exit Survey Results:

Which statement best represents your plans for the next 6 months after your course?	2024	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019
I have secured a job	20%	20%	18%	17%	16%	19%
I am or will be looking for a job	41%	39%	37%	38%	38%	38%
I'll be doing something else	5%	6%	5%	3%	4%	5%
I'm not sure yet	13%	14%	16%	15%	17%	13%
I am going on to further study	20%	21%	25%	26%	25%	25%

NB: The results include all students and are not limited to only IMD Q1/2 and/or 'BAME' students.

Conclusions and recommendations

Conclusions

The Finalist Future programme appears to have a significant, positive impact on the participants self-reported confidence and goal clarity. In theory, this should allow students, including IMD Q1/2 students who participated at rates in line with or higher than those in the general university population, to secure graduate level employment. This longer-term impact will be able to be assessed once Graduate Outcomes data becomes available. However, we should note the limitations stated above and in particular recognise that we are not able to make causal conclusions from the data available.

Recommendations

- During the 2023/24 academic year we have focused on trialling and developing the different interventions and our recommendation is that this work continues in the 2024/25 academic year with an aim of some interventions becoming 'business as usual' rather than project focused. We will continue to listen to and act on feedback received to help ensure that Finalist Futures remains relevant and fit for purpose.

- Engagement has been lower than hoped in terms of attendance at workshops and events (careers pop-ups, careers club and drop-ins): this is broadly in line with the wider university challenges on student engagement. We also recognise the Finalist Futures programme is still new and very different from previous careers programmes and opportunities at the University, particularly with its focus on building a community. It will take time to raise awareness among students and colleagues. We aim to work more closely with Reading Students' Union, building links with permanent members of staff in addition to sabbatical officers. We will also explore how we can collaborate with academic colleagues to help endorse the programme and increase engagement.

- Evaluation collection has been difficult, despite the use of incentives, and we will be working with Careers Student Ambassadors to understand how this can be improved. As of 2024/25 the Careers Registration data collected from all students at the start of the academic year will include the evaluation questions: where there is no pre-evaluation completed by the student, we will use the Careers Registration data. Furthermore, we also recommend removing the Instagram channel from the activities we evaluate due to the difficulties in gathering any form of data.

References

Kerrigan, M. and Manktelow, A. (2021) 'Extra-curricular activities in higher education: enhancing the student experience', *Widening Participation and Lifelong Learning*, 23(1), pp. 123-147
DOI: https://doi.org/10.5456/WPLL.23.1.123

Researching, Advancing and Inspiring Student Engagement (RAISE) (2024) *Student Belonging Good Practice Guide*. Available at: https://www.raise-network.com/student-belonging-guide (Accessed: 5 December 2024).

The Sutton Trust (2023) *Cost of Living and University Students*. Available at:
https://www.suttontrust.com/our-research/cost-of-living-and-university-students-2023/ (Accessed: 5 December 2024).
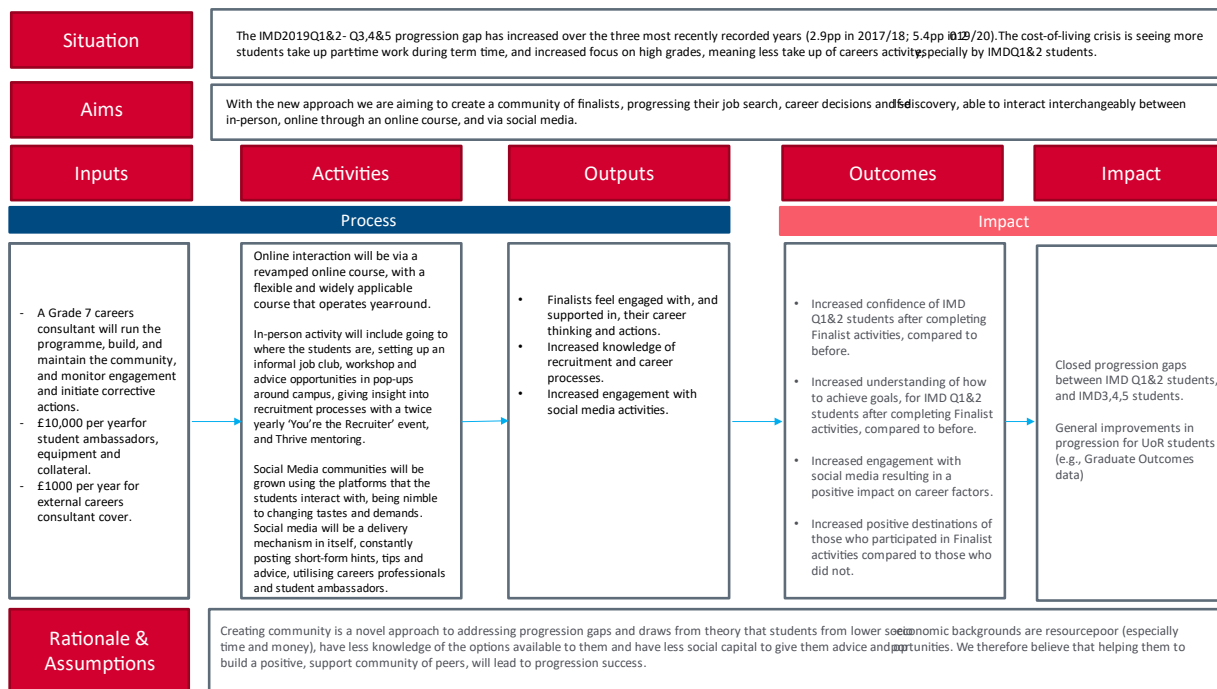
Acknowledgements

Notes

This report has been reviewed by members of the Access and Participation Evaluation Subcommittee (APES), with particular support from Lydia Fletcher and Louise Thomas-Burt on data analysis.

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Theory of Change

Situation	The IMD2019Q1&2- Q3,4&5 progression gap has increased over the three most recently recorded years (2.9pp in 2017/18; 5.4pp in 2019/20).The cost-of-living crisis is seeing more students take up part-time work during term time, and increased focus on high grades, meaning less take up of careers activity especially by IMDQ1&2 students.
Aims	With the new approach we are aiming to create a community of finalists, progressing their job search, career decisions and self-discovery, able to interact interchangeably between in-person, online through an online course, and via social media.

Inputs	Activities	Outputs	Outcomes	Impact
Process			**Impact**	
- A Grade 7 careers consultant will run the programme, build, and maintain the community, and monitor engagement and initiate corrective actions. - £10,000 per year for student ambassadors, equipment and collateral. - £1000 per year for external careers consultant cover.	Online interaction will be via a revamped online course, with a flexible and widely applicable course that operates year-round. In-person activity will include going to where the students are, setting up an informal job club, workshop and advice opportunities in pop-ups around campus, giving insight into recruitment processes with a twice yearly 'You're the Recruiter' event, and Thrive mentoring. Social Media communities will be grown using the platforms that the students interact with, being nimble to changing tastes and demands. Social media will be a delivery mechanism in itself, constantly posting short-form hints, tips and advice, utilising careers professionals and student ambassadors.	• Finalists feel engaged with, and supported in, their career thinking and actions. • Increased knowledge of recruitment and career processes. • Increased engagement with social media activities.	• Increased confidence of IMD Q1&2 students after completing Finalist activities, compared to before. • Increased understanding of how to achieve goals, for IMD Q1&2 students after completing Finalist activities, compared to before. • Increased engagement with social media resulting in a positive impact on career factors. • Increased positive destinations of those who participated in Finalist activities compared to those who did not.	Closed progression gaps between IMD Q1&2 students, and IMD3,4,5 students. General improvements in progression for UoR students (e.g., Graduate Outcomes data)

Rationale & Assumptions	Creating community is a novel approach to addressing progression gaps and draws from theory that students from lower socio-economic backgrounds are resource-poor (especially time and money), have less knowledge of the options available to them and have less social capital to give them advice and opportunities. We therefore believe that helping them to build a positive, support community of peers, will lead to progression success.

Appendix 2: Finalist Futures Evaluation Forms

FINALIST FUTURES - BEFORE

Your student number, e.g. 23009999:

	Strongly disagree ☹	Disagree	Not sure ☺	Agree	Strongly agree ☺
I am confident in my capacity to realise my graduate goals					
I have or can develop skills to succeed in the job or course I am aiming for in future					
I know the steps to take to progress in a career I am interested in.					
I can plan how I will achieve my goals.					

FINALIST FUTURES - AFTER

Your student number, e.g. 23009999:

	Strongly disagree ☹	Disagree	Not sure 😐	Agree	Strongly agree ☺
I am confident in my capacity to realise my graduate goals					
I have or can develop skills to succeed in the job or course I am aiming for in future					
I know the steps to take to progress in a career I am interested in.					
I can plan how I will achieve my goals.					

How did you find the new format? What could we improve?

What will you do as a result of attending this session?

Do you follow Finalist Futures on Instagram?   Yes   No
Please circle your answer.

Thank you!   UOR_FINALISTFUTURES

Appendix 3: Focus Group Questions

Engagement with social media

[*Control questions*]

- Do you use social media?
  - If so, which?
- Do you usually like or comment on posts?

[*Questions*]

1. Do you follow us on social media?
   a. Why/why not?
2. Do you like or comment on our posts?

[*Ask students to go on Instagram*]

3. What are your immediate thoughts about the posts on the account?
4. What is it that you like or dislike about the posts?
5. Does seeing the content impact how you would engage or not engage with us in the future?

Impact of social media

1. Have you taken any action as a result of a social media post from us?
2. What kinds of things have you done?

3. Which type of posts are most impactful in terms of you doing something?
   [*Information about upcoming events, providing advice or fun-focussed?*]
4. Has our social media content impacted your careers confidence in any way?
   a. If yes, how?
5. Has our social media content made you think / reflect about careers in a different way?
   a. If yes, how?
6. Has it raised your awareness of something related to careers?
   a. If yes, what?

If answers are 'no' to impact questions

1. What would make you more likely to take action from seeing a social media post?

Wider Finalist Futures Questions

[Explore why interest is high but participation has been low, in the new activities / strands that have been introduced this year.

- *Careers club*
- *Careers pop ups*
- *Online learning (Finalist futures)*
- *You're the recruiter*
- *Thrive]*

Careers club

1. Are you aware that this exists?
2. Have you attended?
   a. If yes, what did you think? What has the impact been? Has it been helpful?
   b. If no, what were the reasons for that?
3. How could we improve the activity to make you want to engage in future?
   How could it be of more use to you?
4. How could we raise awareness of this activity?
5. [*Potentially feedback on the name?*]

Careers pop ups

1. Are you aware that this exists?
- Are you aware of the different topics of the pop ups? [*Topics: CVs for finalists, Managing your time, how to identify inclusive* employers].
   a. Are they relevant?
   b. What other topics would you like to see?
2. Have you attended a pop up?
   a. If yes, what did you think? What has the impact been? Has it been helpful?
   b. If no, what were the reasons for that?
3. How could we raise awareness of this activity?

4. How could we improve the activity to make you want to engage in future? How could it be of more use to you?

Online learning
1. Are you aware that this exists?
2. Have you engaged with the online learning?
   a. If yes, what did you think? How has it been useful?
   b. How much time have you spent using the resource?
   c. If no, what were the reasons for that?
3. How could we raise awareness of this resource?
4. How could we improve the resource to make you want to engage in future? How could it be of more use to you?
5. What else would you like to see?

You're the recruiter
1. Are you aware that this exists?
2. Have you attended?
   a. If yes, what did you think? What has the impact been? Has it been helpful?
   b. If no, what were the reasons for that?
3. How could we raise awareness of this activity?
4. How could we improve the activity to make you want to engage in future? How could it be of more use to you?

Thrive
1. Are you aware that Thrive Mentoring was extended to finalist students this year?
   a. If so, did you take part?
   b. If you did know but didn't take part, what were the reasons for this?

Second part of the Focus Group – Optional
1. What ideas might you have for raising awareness about Careers? Making it easier to engage with us, attend appointments and events/workshops?

2. We know that male students/students who identify as male are less likely to attend a Careers appointment than female students/students who identify as female.

Appendix 4 – Qualitative Feedback from Event Evaluation Forms

Question: What did you like about the session? What could we improve?

Useful format -> was personal and easy to share opinions and feelings, as well as ask questions
Please keep up the good work! These webinars are always lovely.
Very helpful
Very helpful
Really helpful Welcoming/friendly Set action plan to improve my CV Really open discussion format
A lot of room for improvement
This format is better. There is the interaction.
The session was run effectively, through inclusive discussion.
I liked it. No recommendations.
More personal, which is nicer.
I really liked it. I enjoyed the samll group and getting to see other people's CVs - chat allowed more questions.
More of this! Maybe focusing on tests more.
It is very informative.
It was good, longer session next time around
Advice on how best to complete the tests and practice with feedback on tests completed
Highly satisfying!
It was nicely executed, I especially enjoyed it being a group effort. I t took off any pressure.
Good
Really good Make it 2hr session with more practice
Gave by lovely tutor. Some skills to pass the test
I found it informative.
This session was really helpful as well as insightful
Nice. Increase more time to explain more practice questions with you.
This session was useful and insightful.
Good. Longer and frequent session.
It's good
Useful format - was personal and easy to share opinions and feelings, as well as ask questions
Good - can be a bit shorter
Maybe ask what people are interested in before the event and cater the tasks to their ideal role.
Good

I liked it
It was good. I think a longer break would be better especially because of the length of the exercise.
Good.
The format was good and easy to understand.
Really nice. Learned a lot about the job market. Things to improve would be conducting specific graduate.
Clear, concise, informative.
Good
It was insightful and inspiring Very informative
Great - useful information
That was perfect.
Too short for such important topics. Please keep inviting
Very good and useful, maybe some practical examples of grad schemes would be useful
Helpful :)
I would enjoy having a list of notable employer graduate programs as well as industry grouped employer
It was very insightful.
Friends
It was great!
I didn't find this session helpful at all. Information presented does not relate to my real experience in job market.
It helps me to know what kind of experience I should find
Gave me guidance on where to find resources
Informative
I found the webinar very education and helpful
I found the webinar via My Jobonline website
I think this session really helped because if I get stuck on what to do, I know what steps to take such as planning and visiting specific websites (mentioned in the session) that would help with finding career ideas.
Groups were fun. Favourite part was assessment centre mock. Maybe a time to mingle/network with students & get to know them. :)
Very interactive and collaborative.
In my opinion it is complete and gives opportunity to participants to experience the real situation.
It was nice to communicate with others. Nothing to improve.
Very insightful, helpful, feel more confident navigating an assessment centre.
Yes. Exactly I found of some interesting points which recruiters observing candidates.
I find the format very interesting, educative and engaging.

It was interesting and different from what I was used to, testing new grounds.
The workshop was an excellent way to provide an experience of an interview environment.
The format was very engaging and helpful. Every part of it is on point and relevant.
It was quite fun and interactive. Could improve by maybe being able to introduce ourselves to everyone.
Yes I like this format.
Flexible
The format of the session was very informative and path showing.
More info for people who already have or are doing postgrads
Understanding I could improve my decisions on what to do after graduation and explore the options also available at HBS
I liked how the steps towards applying for careers were outlined for us.
I liked the relevant links that were shared and practical examples of where to search for jobs.
It was good.
I liked how the steps towards applying for careers were outlined for us.
The variety of methods for preparation and examples
Informative and interactive
The example questions and answers, the open-ended survey questions which helped us reflect on our confidence at the beginning of the session and compare it to the confidence we felt at the end.
more interactive polls
Good explanations with examples
The session went through layout of the slides, how to prepare for presentation
The examples given and the detail given on the Do's and Don'ts of presentation making and giving.
more interaction
Examples
The advice given on how to how to include the experience and qualifications we have in the correct format.
covered everything needed. good reintroduction to adapting a CV, very clear and concise.
I really enjoyed the webinar, especially the comprehensive overview of the topic presented. The speaker's expertise was evident, and I appreciated the clear explanations and insightful examples provided throughout the session. The visuals were engaging and helped to reinforce key points effectively. As for areas of improvement, I think providing more opportunities for interactive engagement could enhance the overall experience. Perhaps incorporating polls, Q&A sessions, or interactive exercises would encourage participation and make the content even more engaging. Additionally, ensuring that the webinar stays on schedule and allowing for sufficient time for questions and discussion at the end would be beneficial.
some tips are enlightening
Detailed

Examples
where informative and relevant session regarding cover letter and how to make an impact in the CV with strong cover letter
concise, covered many aspects, good broad overview, clear points covered, good top tips.
The detail and advice given on what goes in to making a good cover letter as well as how it helps us in the application process.
the specific tips for a cover letter to stand out
I enjoyed the comprehensive insights provided during the session, particularly the emphasis on making a meaningful impact with covering letters. To enhance future sessions, perhaps incorporating more interactive elements or real-life examples could further engage participants and illustrate key points effectively.
I enjoyed the almost 1-1 conversations and interactions. Nothing I can imagine to improve
I did enjoy the informal level of chat. 10/10

Appendix 5: Qualitative feedback from online learning

Question: What did you like about the online learning module? What could we improve?

I found this module to be eye opening in ensuring I am self aware before stepping out to graduate roles and positions.
I found it particularly valuable in consolidating my understanding of my current skills, and where I need to improve in order to have the best chance of succeeding and progressing into my desired career of choice. I particularly found the ability to interact with others in a similar position valuable and useful for this module.
It was helpful and provides a good structure for guidance and resources to help develop my awareness surrounding post graduation and job seeking
I liked how this course had tips from the recruiters perspective and informs us about the skills that they look for, which helped me understand which skills would be more valuable for employment.
I enjoyed the videos supplied explaining how to discover new career opportunities.
How interactive it was and the videos it had
touched on a range of topics and had good range of materials
I think the graduate example was a good insight into a possibility of what can happen after university. On top of this the job hunting websites gave an insight of where to look next.
Learning a new clear method to approach my life.
it was simple and clear and didnt use too much jargon, it also used a theory i was familiar with (maslow)
I liked the personal touch with Fatimas story and the part about Maslows theory
I found this pathway to be captivating yet I believe the inclusion of a table with a direct comparison to ensure a visual clarification of the differences. Only short key words would be needed but highlight the important differences.
More tips on how to choose.
Perhaps more examples of real-life situations of how certain individuals how progressed into a 'career job'. - I found this module really useful, so I can't think of many ways it could be improved.
Maybe make a little game or something to be a bit more interactive
I found them useful and they provided a lot of detailed information and advice on where I can look for future career options
Helpful and easy.
its nice, easy to understand
I enjoyed it I am to take the advice into my assessment centre tommorow.
I found it very useful in extending my understanding of my options beyond university and considering alternatives to my planned pathway after university. It was reassuring to learn that

graduate schemes value transferable skills from my pre-existing experience, as opposed to prioritising just grades.

The practical steps are simple yet effective.