

Institution:	School of Biological and Environmental Sciences, University of Ulster
Programmes:	BSc (Hons) Environmental Science BSc (Hons) Environmental Science with Diploma in Industrial Studies BSc (Hons) Geography BSc (Hons) Geography with Diploma in Industrial Studies
Module:	Enterprise and Employability (ENS328C2)
Activity:	Enterprise training module to develop business ideas
Level/Year:	2
Student hours:	100 (10 credit points)

Work-related learning outcome(s)

By the end of this module, the students will have:

- developed a knowledge of important areas of business and management with respect to the new product development process and the entrepreneurial business plan, including:
 - key sources of business support and finance,
 - the steps required to research a market and protect the intellectual property for a business opportunity,
 - the management of people and operations, and
 - financial forecasts;
- gained an understanding of the context in which new products or services are developed within Environmental Science and Geography;
- developed an awareness of a range of environmental and geographical career opportunities;
- reflected on their own career choices and developed action plans to support them;
- developed the skills necessary for applying for work placements and employment.

In addition, this module will further develop the following skills:

- Innovative thinking and creativity** - through the formulation of a business proposition based on a market need.
- Intellectual skills** - through evaluation and analysis of a business proposition.
- Communication skills** - through the preparation of written reports, oral presentation and interview experience.
- Group working skills** - through class discussion, and group development from forming to performing within the group feasibility study assignment.
- Project planning and management skills** - through the development of the group feasibility study for a business proposition.
- Self management skills** - through meeting deadlines and working independently on assessments.

Description of the learning activity which achieves the learning outcome(s)

Teaching takes the form of lectures, workshops and tutorials where students are expected to engage in active discussions. A core of materials is delivered by the Faculty of Life and Health Sciences' Co-ordinator of Academic-Enterprise who has over five years experience in enterprise training. The three teaching staff mentor groups in the creation and development of their business ideas. Field work and guest speakers are used to enhance the real world context of the students' learning experience. Private study is supported by extensive study notes and sign posting to the web-sites of organisations involved in aspects of business planning. Students are expected to work independently as individuals and groups.

The module is organised into two sections, both of which have six two-hour workshops. The enterprise section covers topics such as:

- Introducing enterprise
 - What is it? Why should you study it? What is its context within your subject?
 - Finding business ideas
 - Business support networks
 - Business planning
 - Feasibility study assignment
- Visit to a Science Innovation Centre
- Innovation and technology transfer
- Marketing
- Operations
- Managing People
- Managing Finance
- Group work on the feasibility study.

The employability section covers:

- Introducing employability
- Graduate destinations and skills review
- Employer presentations
- CVs and applications
- Interview techniques.

Rationale for the selection of the learning activity

There is a need for students to understand how businesses can exploit scientific practices, and how they can lead such exploitation through entrepreneurial activity. It is also important for students to develop skills and business awareness when approaching work experience and graduate employment. This module aims to provide students with a range of environmentally orientated business and management skills and practices so they can integrate more successfully into a particular company or set up their own business. In particular, recognition of future business opportunities is an important goal. This module will also assist students in the development of their own career paths.

Assessment – approach and detail

1. Job application and interview (50%)

Students are provided with a number of job scenarios. This assessment requires them to select one, to research what the job entails, and to submit an application for it by Week 4 (25%). They also undergo a simulated interview for this job during Week 6 (25%). Interviews are assessed using the following criteria relating to students' ability to answer the interview questions:

Mark range	Criteria
7+	A highly relevant and full answer illustrated by examples to demonstrate knowledge, skills, experience and awareness of current issues.
5-6	A reasonable answer largely relevant with some examples.
4-5	A weak answer, may be less relevant or brief with few illustrative examples.
fail	An inadequate answer of little relevance or with no examples.

This assessment tests learning outcomes 3-5 (see above).

2. Group Feasibility Study report and presentation (50%)

Each group of four or five students produces and submits an outline plan (feasibility study) on Week 6 (35%) which summarises the nature of their business idea within the context of Environmental Science. The feasibility study should cover the main features of the business, and should be as specific as possible. The feasibility study needs to be clear, persuasive and as convincing as possible. In addition, each group is

required to give a presentation of their feasibility study lasting 6 to 8 minutes, and to answer questions for 3 to 4 minutes on their business proposition (15%). This assessment tests learning outcomes 1-2.

Future developments

Funding from the FDTL, 'Real World' project has enabled the project team to assemble career profiles of a number of environmental science and geography graduates as well as accounts of students work placement experiences. These will be integrated into the module in 2003 by providing a paper-based and an electronic resource of information to support students when preparing for assignment 1 and when deciding which placement to apply for.

Contact details

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