

AUTHENTIC LEARNING FOR UNCERTAIN FUTURES: DESIGNING ACTIVE AND PROBLEM-BASED LEARNING TO PREPARE UNDERGRADUATES FOR EMPLOYMENT AND CITIZENSHIP

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Abstract: This paper is based on the author's experience of designing and researching problem-based team learning activities for more than 20 years. It draws on the evidence of research into building effective team skills (Livingstone & Lynch, 2000) and engaging students with "realworld" problems with the intention of building learner confidence, promoting the development of soft skills and appreciation of the relevance of their knowledge and skills based learning to external community based enterprises (Mason O'Conner et al, 2011; Johnson, 2013). The paper will focus on recent analysis student experiences of community based research working with a range of public, private and third sector organisations. It finds that students initially find these learning activities daunting, but with appropriate support and skills they find that they have knowledge and skills that can be useful to local organisations. This can result in powerful learning opportunities that can raise student confidence and prepare them for future life as an employee and a citizen.

Keywords: Authentic learning, teamwork, problem based learning, community based learning.

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