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**Abstract**

Many new graduates are finding it difficult to obtain graduate-level work and impossible to break into the sectors they were aiming at. In order to address this, higher education institutions are examining the methods they use to enhance student employability and deploying various measures to grow and strengthen this activity, with an increasing focus on providing work experience. One popular way of doing this is via internships (placements). This paper examines the context in which work experience has come to the fore as an approach to enhancing employability by interrogating recent research and policy related to this agenda. Employability is presented as an on-going debate that cannot be viewed as a finite entity but must move and develop with the market, society and the global situation. In addition the paper closely examines a graduate internship programme in a university in North East England. Comparing and contrasting findings from this scheme, with other examples of experiential learning through work experience, provides some evidence to suggest the value of internships and

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furthermore supports some formative ideas about how internships might be developed to best serve those taking part in them: interns; employers and universities..(HRK / Abstract übernommen)