# The Aberdeen Employability Boost Award:

Engaging students with employability and career development skills in an online world

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## Background

- The new Aberdeen Employability Boost Award was launched in May 2020, to help students across our campuses, directly after the Covid-19 pandemic forced closure of our campuses
- Additional support was needed for students at a time of severe labour market disruption and career uncertainty
- The 'always on' aspects of the Boost Award Programme can be completed anytime throughout the year including:
  - 16 new online courses using Rise Articulate technology
  - 4 self-awareness assessments
  - 7 "tiny bites" videos
- The 'live' aspects of the Boost Award Programme are offered during three key months (May | Oct | Feb) including:
  - 141 live events
  - 15 live "career bites" seminars, each topic is run multiple times
- The "Pathways" functionality within the University Target Connect system enabled students to track their own progress through the 3 award levels award and was efficient to administer – 857 students have completed an award so far
- A gamification approach was adopted as a mechanism to enhance engagement in the programme
- Each Boost Programme was developed in an agile way using labour market and Student Career Ambassador insights to align with market trends and meet the needs of students and graduates at that specific time
- This agility has enabled the building of a resilient programme that can adapt and flex to meet future stakeholder requirements and needs

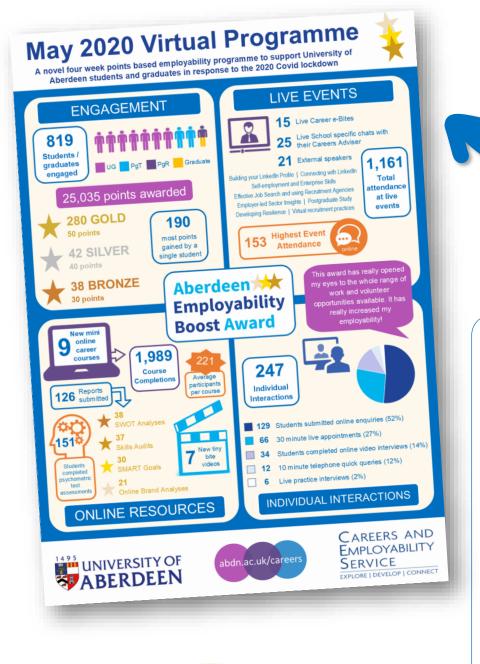
### What is the Boost Award?

Topics covered across the various programmes, informed by employer data insights via ISE survey results on the impact of Covid-19:

- Building resilience
- Navigating online recruitment and selection
- Sector insights (e.g. energy, digital, life sciences, finance, tourism and culture)

See below for a snapshot of the varied and wide-ranging programme of events and topics covered so far...





Click on the infographic to see all three infographics for May, October and February Boost **Programmes** 

#### **Evaluation**

- Each Boost Award Programme event that was run so far has participant data insights, which are summarised in the infographics above
- Participant and employer evaluation garnered feedback with some selected responses shown below

Jitka Drahotská (MA History Student) Click me to see more student comments!

What actions have you taken

because of the event?

"This online initiative

more confident and

directions in which

and knowledge.!"

has allowed me became

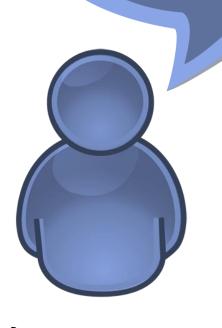
curious about different

could go with my skills

"It's fantastic to see Aberdeen University adapt so quickly to the new environment with such great response from the student community.."

**Stoyan Djourov** 

(JP Morgan)



What have you gained from your involvement?

gained knowledge employability CVS pandemic linkedin jobs cover letter insight

Participant evaluation was conducted via a survey

linkedin

A snapshot of survey responses to three survey questions is shown above as word clouds of the 20 most frequent words/statements from the free-text responses (taken from 124 respondents from the May Boost Programme)

#### Discussion

linkedin account

linkedin profile

skills

cover letter

- Very positive response from each Boost Programme that has ran to date
- Very clear actions and knowledge has been gained from participation in the events, especially linked to professional development of students for profile building (e.g. LinkedIn), CV's, cover letter writing and gaining a better overall understanding of the careers and employability landscape