



A brief history and background to the Career Conversations project

The Career Conversation project was an initiative set up in 2017 to help answer the questions that student nurses had related to post qualification, such as preceptorships, career options and CPD.

It is a collaboration setup by both the STEP and My Care Academy projects which are both based at Middlesex University.

The aim was to capture the real questions students have as well the lived experience of actual healthcare staff and wed the two together in a form that students could easily access and digest, given their busy academic and professional lives.

Reasons behind the project ranged from discussions students were having with their Personal and Professional Development Tutors to the 23% fall in nursing applications following the

withdrawal of the bursary and the almost 24,000 nursing vacancies across the UK.

There were six distinct stages of the project:

- Data Gathering
- Thematic Analysis of Results
- Analysis of Int. and Ext. Resources
- Mapping to Five Theme
- Planning Resources
- Creation of Resources

Audience Workshops were carried out with select groups of students. They were asked what questions of topics they wanted to know more about with regard to post qualification, CPD and careers.

The large amounts of findings from these workshops were then thematically analysed by the working group and 5 themes were agreed.



Alongside the thematic analysis a thorough search of Internal (to the university) and external resources was carried out.

These were resources that perhaps answered aspects of students career conversations but were not perfectly suited.

The types of resources ranged from events and face-to-face workshops to portals of resources and multimedia resources. This gave an idea of where Career Conversation resources would find themselves sitting.

The 5 Career Conversation Themes

- ➔ Opportunities and roles post qualification.
- ➔ Pre- employment preparation.
- ➔ Transition and support needs for NQNs.
- ➔ Post-registration CPD and educational progression.
- ➔ Future promotions and leadership roles.

The existing resources were mapped to the 5 themes to give an understanding of what resources were available that related to each theme.

The next stage was to plan new resources. Based upon the weighting of the students workshop questions, the availability of existing resources within each theme and an understanding of the lives of students, an initial set of resources was planned.

The final stage was the creation of resources. Colleagues from the university and partner organisations were asked to share their experiences. These were then captured on video so they could be used to create short videos and articles or possibly podcasts. You can find all currently available STEP resources as well a curated selection of external resources on the STEP website.

As the resources begin to be used and more are created and published, the working group will be monitoring the usefulness in supporting preparation for practice and employability. If you have any thoughts on a topic for Career Conversations or you would like to suggest or take part in future work, please contact us via our website.

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