



UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS

### ICLP Alumni 1999-2007 Questionnaire - Results

Number of ICLP Alumni Questionnaire Sent To (All 2001-2007 graduates): **181**

Number of ICLP Alumni Questionnaires Returned Addressee Unknown: **8**

Number of ICLP Alumni Completing ICLP Questionnaire: (37/173) **21.4%**

We regard this as a very good response rate particularly given as we were working with contact details which were up to 10 years old and which also involved a significant number of international students. As such, we have no accurate way of knowing how many students actually received the questionnaire. Therefore, the measured response rate of 21.4% is probably lower than the actuality in the sense that it does not accurately reflect the smaller number of those who actually received the questionnaire.

Ten questions were asked as follows:

**1. Looking back, how far would you say ICLP met its aim of providing you with quality practical engineering, business and 'soft skills' development?**

a. Engineering

<i>Exceeded Expectations</i>	<i>Excellent</i>	<i>Highly Satisfactory</i>	<i>Satisfactory</i>	<i>Unsatisfactory</i>	<i>Highly Unsatisfactory</i>
<b>21%</b>	<b>38%</b>	<b>22%</b>	<b>16%</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>3%</b>

b. Business

<i>Exceeded Expectations</i>	<i>Excellent</i>	<i>Highly Satisfactory</i>	<i>Satisfactory</i>	<i>Unsatisfactory</i>	<i>Highly Unsatisfactory</i>
<b>19%</b>	<b>27%</b>	<b>32%</b>	<b>19%</b>	<b>3%</b>	<b>0%</b>

c. 'Soft Skills' (Leadership, Team working, Communication/Presentation Skills etc)

<i>Exceeded Expectations</i>	<i>Excellent</i>	<i>Highly Satisfactory</i>	<i>Satisfactory</i>	<i>Unsatisfactory</i>	<i>Highly Unsatisfactory</i>
<b>27%</b>	<b>38%</b>	<b>19%</b>	<b>16%</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>0%</b>

**Conclusion:** Overall a very strong set of results. Essentially only 3% (one student each) for Engineering and Business had an Unsatisfactory/Highly Unsatisfactory experience whilst 46% and 59% had an Excellent/ Exceeded Expectations experience in the same areas. For 'Soft Skills' the figures were even better with 0% having an Unsatisfactory/Highly Unsatisfactory experience whilst 65% had an Excellent/ Exceeded Expectations experience.

**2. Looking back on ICLP please rate the following in terms of their benefit to your development:**

a. Work Placements during Summer

<i>Exceeded Expectations</i>	<i>Excellent</i>	<i>Highly Satisfactory</i>	<i>Satisfactory</i>	<i>Unsatisfactory</i>	<i>Highly Unsatisfactory</i>
<b>29%</b>	<b>46%</b>	<b>19%</b>	<b>3%</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>3%</b>

b. Company Project during Academic year (if undertaken)

<i>Exceeded Expectations</i>	<i>Excellent</i>	<i>Highly Satisfactory</i>	<i>Satisfactory</i>	<i>Unsatisfactory</i>	<i>Highly Unsatisfactory</i>
<b>22%</b>	<b>22%</b>	<b>25%</b>	<b>22%</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>9%</b>

c. ICLP Modules during Academic year

<i>Exceeded Expectations</i>	<i>Excellent</i>	<i>Highly Satisfactory</i>	<i>Satisfactory</i>	<i>Unsatisfactory</i>	<i>Highly Unsatisfactory</i>
<b>18%</b>	<b>41%</b>	<b>22%</b>	<b>16%</b>	<b>3%</b>	<b>0%</b>

**Conclusion:** Overall another good set of results but with 9% (3 students) for Company Project during Academic Year had an Unsatisfactory/Highly Unsatisfactory experience with 3% having one in the other 2 categories. However, 65%, 44% and 59% had an Excellent/ Exceeded Expectations in the same areas.

3. **Looking back at ICLP in its entirety, how would you rate the whole programme in terms of developing ‘*Graduates ready for business*’?**

<i>Exceeded Expectations</i>	<i>Excellent</i>	<i>Highly Satisfactory</i>	<i>Satisfactory</i>	<i>Unsatisfactory</i>	<i>Highly Unsatisfactory</i>
<b>24%</b>	<b>38%</b>	<b>33%</b>	<b>5%</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>0%</b>

**Conclusion:** Overall a terrific result with no students having an Unsatisfactory/Highly Unsatisfactory experience in terms of the whole programme whilst 62% had an Excellent/ Exceeded Expectations experience.

4. **Looking back, what was the one most useful thing you got from ICLP?**

- Varied experience in real projects.
- Understanding of myself and the type of company I wanted to work for.
- The confidence to go out there and do a proper career job.
- A standout entry on my CV that helped hugely in getting job interviews after University.
- The opportunity to diversify from technical engineering modules to include broader business based theory.
- Chance to run a project that made a real difference to the company.
- Gaining experience with a world class company.
- Structured Internships.
- Undoubtedly the placements and everything that came with it. I.e. interview experience and then industry experience doing real jobs in a real company. In the current climate graduate Engineers with industrial experience will go right to the top of the pile when looking for employment.
- Working within a small engineering company, responsible for understanding and solving problems in relation to a business.
- Priceless project experience.
- Arranging the work placement.
- Business analysis skills and introduction to topics such as change and knowledge management.
- Business writing skills.
- Opportunity for a placement of a high standard.
- The guest lectures, in particular an incredible presentation from Mike Rix of NTP Meridian which I still remember to this day!
- Self-confidence.
- The opportunity and chance to experience a different working culture for international students who are used to the different working culture back home.
- I got to know myself better e.g. strengths/weaknesses, type of team player etc. Useful as a benchmark and for highlighting areas of improvements.

- Tangible business knowledge that can be demonstrated and proven at interview upon graduation.
- An insight in to the business world, how they work and the expectations they have of their employees
- Integrating the academic knowledge and how it can be applied in the practical manner in a real company.
- Experience of industrial research.
- The ability to understand how businesses work in \the real world.
- The real connection between University and business, i.e. application of knowledge and skills.
- Learning the best methods for team communication to overcome distance working, different time zones and cultural boundaries.
- A direct link to the respective companies.
- Giving an appreciation of what skills you need other than technical ones in a working environment
- The real world experience that gave me the edge in job interviews as I had some relevant work experience
- How a company operates with processes and projects.
- Having a work placement on my CV, which I could discuss during interviews.
- Leadership/management skills.
- Foot in the door at major international companies.
- Exposure to an engineering environment in the UK was an an eye opener.
- It gives you a unique selling point to distinguish you from other graduates when applying and being interviewed for your first job. My CV now reads "Leeds University with ICLP & Federal-Mogul; Rolls-Royce; Millbrook Proving Ground; Delphi Powertrain.
- Confidence. I loved the project work, dealing with management and summer placements.
- Actual CV worthy experience.

**Conclusion:** An interesting list which we can discuss at our meeting(s).

In broad terms the responses state:

- Gaining experience and applying knowledge and skills - demonstrable on CV and at interview.
- Developing technical, business, leadership and management skills.
- Understanding self/ work expectations/ companies/ business culture/
- Gaining confidence!

##### 5. Looking back, what was the one most useful thing ICLP could have covered (but didn't)?

- Nothing
- Business etiquette particularly international working.
- Ethics.
- Training / prep for graduate assessment centres.
- Perhaps a greater emphasis on company finance/accounting.
- An insight into actually working within a company, especially a large organisation. When large companies get involved with schemes such as ICLP the students are often given a "bolt-on" or "stand alone" project mainly to minimise business risk. This doesn't always give a representative view of working within an organisation to aggressive schedules.
- None. I feel the ICLP programme offered me everything I needed in terms of the leadership/business theory through to the industry experience with a global company.
- Accounting.
- The modules were too theoretical and didn't really teach much. It would have been more useful I think to do modules on things like economics in business and contracts. Things that many Engineers need to know in their companies but would not learn during their Engineering studies.
- More help with company / student project planning and expectations. This may have been different with a 2 year placement.
- NA
- I can't think of anything which I expected ICLP to cover but didn't. I know ICLP was aiming to give engineering students soft skills and this was definitely 'covered'. However, I feel that the engineering experience gained as part of the work placement was the main thing I got out of the course, and not the soft skills. I remember my impression of the lectures were that they were a bit of a break from the technical subjects, rather than a means to teach me soft skills. It may be that I did gain a lot of useful business skills from the lectures, perhaps subconsciously, and may be I did not. But if I were to be asked to describe ICLP in two words, they'd be 'work placement'.

- Basic finance knowledge - e.g. interpretation of financial reports - what the key points need and why they are important.
- The role of online communication tools e.g. website development
- It is a given that the second industrial placement would take place with the same company, (a) this was not explained on joining ICLP and (b) option to change company should be available.
- In my experience of industry sooner or later you will come across the principles of Lean or Six Sigma etc. Maybe a short introduction to some of these ideas / principles. I appreciate it would need to be brief as this is quite an extensive area.
- Pure business aspects like project financing, basic accounting, etc rather than all technical
- ICLP could have covered some project management modules or some best practices of project planning.
- Can't think of anything right now!
- Health and Safety.
- An understanding of company structures.
- One year placement, instead of only summer one.
- Contract law and negotiations.
- An integrated module with more engineering theory as well as the business understanding.
- Introduction to basic level business law.
- Not sure - It was a long time ago!
- One of the biggest parts of my job I have to do is to prioritise work as there simply isn't time to do everything as required. A talk on planning/prioritising work would be beneficial. Not sure you can teach this so easily but, certainly an awareness of this would be good.
- Perhaps more depth around working in a business; managing stakeholders, how to plan and manage your career, and influencing.
- How to make the most of the experience offered when working with a company in the UK or abroad.
- More commercial exposure.
- How to deliver feedback to people, particularly constructive feedback, rather than negative feedback. This can be a very useful skill in getting the most out of people in industry
- NA
- Practical visits to businesses (where possible) and involvement in real business problems. e.g. a small team project from an actual business as part of one of the module of study
- More talks/classes in ICLP module 2 on how to take the lead in situations. Although by nature engineers are not too keen on psychology in the work place a few tools that could give graduates the edge would have been useful.
- I have found (at 3 different companies) that the Quality Management System is often poorly communicated to engineers – even the concept is alien to most. I have also found that the information is available at the company if required but no-one is actually aware. Whilst this is a failing on the part of the company (normally determining that the requirements can be handled by a small number of people) perhaps the ICLP, with its engineering-business slant, could start the education process. In attempting to help graduates gain a wider understanding of industry; customer requirements; the supply chain; how a given company fits into that; company policy & objectives; business planning & targets; leading to engineers' individual responsibilities in contributing to the above, I would suggest that an overview of Quality Management Systems could be added. These principles are very similar whether the QMS is ISO9001 or TS16949, and these 2 systems cover about 99% of the businesses that an engineering graduate is likely to enter. Whilst I must admit my view here may be slightly jaundiced as I am currently a Quality Engineer, in my previous company as a Production Engineer I set about creating these things to communicate procedures to operators and ensure our focus was on customer requirements. I later found out that they already existed and a process was supposedly in place. At the time I had no idea what a Quality Management System was, although my company was certified and registered.
- Pairing you with the right company at the start. I was sent to a company and they offered the opportunity to work in France and I didn't take it because I didn't want to work in a factory not speaking French. So I could have been paired with a better company from the start. It would have been great for someone else.
- Career mapping (2, 5, 10+ years of you might achieve long-term ambitions. Even if just to get chartered).

**Conclusion:** Another interesting list which we can also discuss at our meeting(s).

In broad terms the responses state:

- Nothing missing (gratifying but possibly complacency inducing!)
- Some possible 'hard' skills development missing – accountancy, finance, law, lean manufacturing, six sigma, project management, health & safety, contracts, website development, quality.
- Some possible 'soft' skills development missing – ethics, leading, taking initiative, managing stakeholders, influencing, business etiquette internationally, giving feedback, prioritising work.
- Some possible ICLP 'process' improvements: changing companies after one year, one year placement instead of a summer placement, a real business problem as a part of the ICLP Module.
- A longer term perspective: career mapping and career management.
- Miscellaneous – preparing for graduate recruitment centres.

## 6. What Company are you working for now? (Optional)

**Company** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Location** \_\_\_\_\_

British Energy	Gloucester
Bombardier	Derby
Grontmij	Reading
A A Thornton.	London
Cadbury	Bourneville (UK) & Ireland
Cameron	Leeds
Cameron	Leeds
Shell	Aberdeen
CNR International	Aberdeen
Buro Happold	Leeds
Jacobs	Reading
Mechtronic	Leeds
Accenture	London
EDF Energy	London
Procter & Gamble	Brussels, Belgium
Doncasters Bramah	Sheffield
Gulf International Bank	Bahrain
ST Electronics	Singapore
GHA Livigunn	Frodsham, Cheshire
Amalgamatred Construction	Barnsley
Nestle	Castleford
Jaffari Consultants	Bahrain
Pera	United Kingdom
Balfour Beatty	Basingstoke
Hilson Moran Partnership	Farnborough/London
Audit Commission	Exeter
Shell	Oman
John Crane MEA	UAE
Aston Martin Lagonda	Gaydon, Warwickshire and worldwide
Orange PCS	Bristol
Shell	Stanlow, Cheshire
Techniker	London
Bentley Motors	Crewe
Cameron	Leeds
Delphi Powertrain	Gillingham
Pine Consulting (my own)	Birmingham
GEA Barr-Rosin	Maidenhead

**Conclusion:** Only 16% (6 in total) of the companies have been involved in ICLP – AMCO Construction, Balfour Beatty, Bentley Motor Cars Nestle, Shell and Mechtronic. Clearly some scope to spread the uptake of ICLP – although question 8 is also relevant to this answer.

Some other points to note:

84% are working in industry – with only 16% in consultancy, banking, public sector (as far as one can judge from the company/organisation names).

21% are working in Yorkshire & Humber – with 11% in Leeds (including 3 in one company (Cameron) that has never been involved in ICLP!)

21% are working outside the UK or with a worldwide element to their work.

11% are working in London.

#### 7. What are your contact details? (Optional)

**Telephone** 60% (22/37) provided a contact telephone number.

**E-mail** 97% (36/37) provided an e-mail address

**Conclusion:** A great willingness to receive e-mails which is very helpful! A more understandable reluctance to provide telephone contact details. (I appreciate that the thought of a sudden voice from the past catching you 'on the hop' is a bit scary – particularly if it's me!)

#### 8. If you feel your Company HR people might be interested in ICLP, could we e-mail you a flyer regarding the programme for you to forward to them? (Optional)

Yes 49% (18/37)

No 51% (19/37)

**Conclusion:** A goodish response. Some indicated it was not appropriate, others that they already mentioned ICLP regularly!

#### 9. We are also interested in companies wishing to link with the University's research themes. Could we e-mail you a list of these for you to forward to your research (or other appropriate) staff? (Optional)

Yes 40% (15/37)

No 60% (22/37)

**Conclusion:** A good response. We will be running some research events in partnership with the Faculty Research Groups so will send invitations via our ICLP Alumni for them to pass on.

#### 10. Would you like us to pass your updated contact details to the University of Leeds Alumni Office? (Optional)

Yes 54% (20/37)

No 46% (17/37)

**Conclusion:** A good response. As a University we are looking to get a better links with our alumni – and the Alumni Office will be delighted with this response! We are also hoping that they will be reciprocating with some promotional work with ICLP – and KTP. I have already given a presentation to their team which is 10+ people strong to help them do this.