UON Undergraduate Students' Engagement with LinkedIn
Harry Price & Faith Tucker

BACKGROUND

- This project extends an URB@N project carried out last year by student Kanishka Sharma.

- LinkedIn is the most commonly used professional social networking tool with 44+ million users in the UK in January 2025 (Statista, 2024).

- However, many undergraduates do not have a profile (Lexis et al., 2023). No data exists on how many UON students have a LinkedIn profile before or during their undergraduate studies.

- In the 2024/25 academic year Student Career Coaches have been recruited by Student Futures. This project would provide some insight into whether undergraduate students are using this peer support for LinkedIn.

PROJECT AIM:

To explore undergraduate students' engagement with LinkedIn to identify ways of reducing the graduate outcomes gap.

Method

- **Online Survey** to Undergraduate Students at UON **ONLY**

- **28** Respondents to date

- Survey distributed via QR Codes (in person) and Social Media

- Respondent Characteristics:

  - 64% men and 32% women

  - 57% White and 43% GEM

  - 14% in Year 1; 14% in Year 2; 71% in Year 3

  - The majority of respondents were studying Geography

Research Results

"What things make it challenging for you to spend time doing career planning?"

"Not sure where to start"

"Working around my job and assignments"

"Don't have time"

"What support would you like from UON to help with your career planning?

"How best to find jobs on LinkedIn"

"Designated slot at the end of university for a meeting or a class where someone goes round to help"

"More in 1st year"

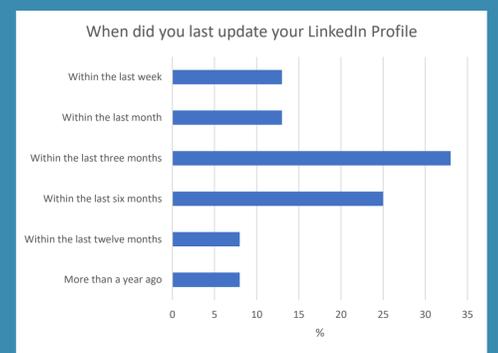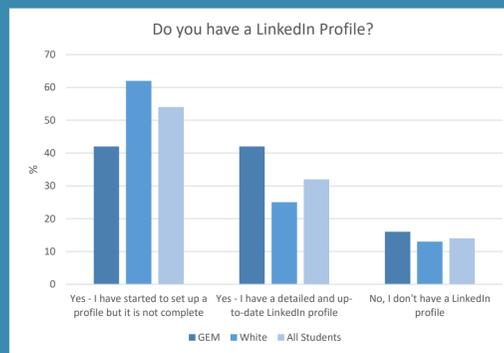"Using LinkedIn"

Figure 5, How UON Students would seek help with LinkedIn

Figure 1, Percentage of UON Students with LinkedIn Profiles

Figure 3, When UON Students setup their LinkedIn Profiles
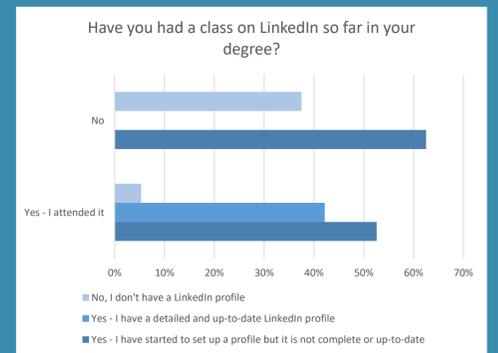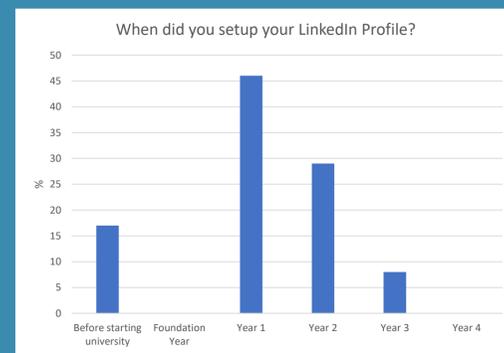

Figure 2, When UON Students last updated their LinkedIn Profiles

Figure 4, If UON Students had a class on LinkedIn and If they have a LinkedIn Profile
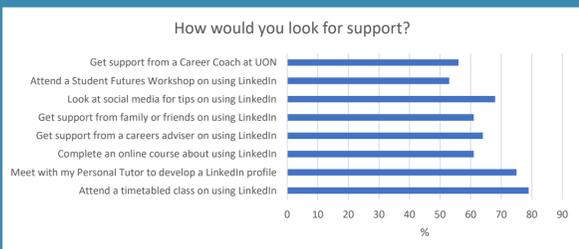
RECOMMENDATIONS

- Provide some **careers and LinkedIn support** during students' first year of study.
- **Offer timetabled classes** at the end of the academic year when assignments are out of the way.
- **Set aside time in classes** for students to update their LinkedIn Profiles.
- **Create LinkedIn alumni groups** to allow for networking amongst past and present students for job opportunities or mentorship.

REFERENCES

- Lexis, L., Weaver, D. and Julien, B.L. (2023) STEM students see the value of LinkedIn as a career development tool and continue to use it in the long-term post-assignment. *The Journal of Teaching and Learning for Graduate Employability* 14(1), pp.53-70.
- Statista (2025) Number of LinkedIn users in the United Kingdom (UK) from March 2020 to July 2024. *Statista* [Online]. Available at: https://www.statista.com/statistics/1314310/uk-linkedin-users/#:~:text=In%20June%202023%2C%20there%20were,in%20users%20since%20June%202022 Accessed 28.05.25