**Employer Advisory Boards Guidance**

**How to identify and nominate employers**

To deliver a successful and valid Employer Advisory Board, it is important you have a diversity of views represented. You should aim to invite members that will have the most to offer the board in terms of direct experience of the issues you want to explore; it will not always be the most senior staff that will have the most useful contribution to make (e.g. a Chief Technical Officer is unlikely to offer good advice about graduate recruitment and a Graduate Recruiter can offer little to a research focussed conversation).

**1. Membership basis**

You will need to decide if an invitation to become a member of the board is individual (role moves with the person as they move) or organisational (the organisation are members and send various staff).

**2. Sourcing nominations**

Your colleagues within Faculty will be your first and best source of nominations. Asking them for informal nominations (no need for a complex nomination form or process) from existing relationships is an excellent way to provide a long list of nominees from which you can then shortlist. Sourcing nominees from across the Faculty enables you to harness and develop existing relationships further and build on good will towards the University.

If you want to invite employers to join the board who you do not currently have a contact/relationship with, or involve non-linear employers (who recruit graduates from all disciplines), the central careers and employability team may also be able to suggest some potential nominees.

**3. Membership mix/representation**

In terms of the mix of organisations on your board, you might like to consider representation from:

* Local, regional and national (plus global if possible) employers
* Representation from freelancers/self-employed sector, SMEs, larger employers and corporate employers
* Representation from key professional bodies, associations and sector recruitment specialists

You should also aim to have a diverse range of roles, examples could include:

* Graduate Recruitment Manager or HR Manager
* Line Manager of graduates
* Director/Founder of an SME
* Alumni from your faculty now working within key employers
* Self-employed/freelance professional
* Business Development Manager of professional association

**4. Other questions to ask yourself as you shortlist your nominees**

Other questions to consider:

* Are we asking the same people that we always ask and, if so, will we learn anything new?
* Will these members act as the critical friends and tell us where we need to improve?
* Is this the group representative of where our graduates actually secure work?
* Should we invite at least one employer that recruits from all disciplines – so is not specific to our particular discipline or area of expertise but does hire our graduates?
* Could we invite an employer that has no existing relationship with (or does not currently target) Sheffield Hallam University, but that we are keen to work with?
* Is there suitable diversity within the group?\*

\* Graduate Recruitment and HR are predominantly female professions. **If you have or end up with an exclusively male board, you should seek to rectify this immediately** regardless of the discipline. Equally, if you have or end up with an entirely white board, we would strongly encourage you to seek out and invite new BAME members.