

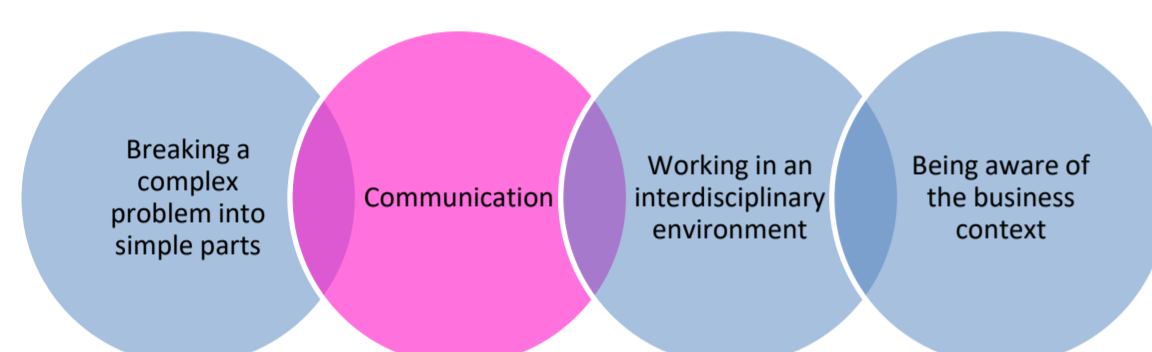
Communication Excellence Project

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Westfield Fund

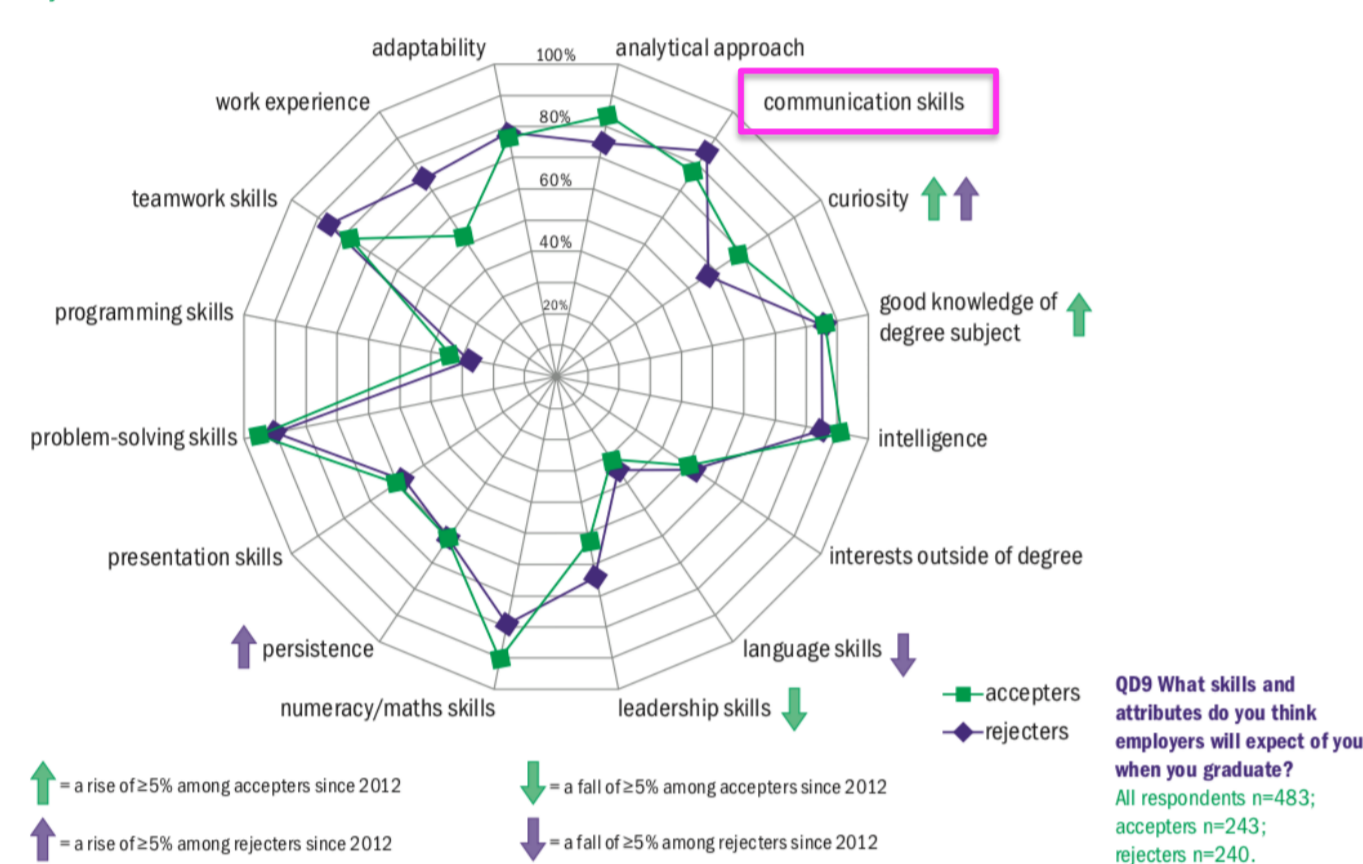
A pilot programme of **communication skills training for personal development and employability**

Motivation



Skills that employers of physicists look for

Figure 12: Perceptions of skills and attributes employers expect from graduates, accepters versus rejecters 2013



Above: Students understand the value of communication.
Institute of Physics, The Impact of tuition fees on prospective physics students, 2013

Institution	Personal Development	
	%	Rank
University of Portsmouth	96	1
The University of Hull	92	2
University of St Andrews	91	3
The University of Birmingham	89	4.5
The University of Liverpool	89	4.5

Low ranking for QMUL Physics in NSS 2016

The University of Warwick	87	8-13
The University of York	87	8-13
University of Aberdeen	87	8-13
Cardiff University	86	14-18
The University of Leeds	86	14-18
The University of Surrey	86	14-18
University of Strathclyde	86	14-18
University of Sussex	86	14-18
Aberystwyth University	85	19-20
The University of Sheffield	85	19-20
Nottingham Trent University	84	21
Queen's University Belfast	83	22-26
The University of Southampton	83	22-26
The University of Warwick	83	22-26
University of Bristol	83	22-26
University of Exeter	83	22-26
Royal Holloway, University of London	82	27-28
Swansea University	82	27-28
Sector-wide	81	-
Heriot-Watt University	79	29-33
The University of Kent	79	29-33
The University of Lancaster	79	29-33
The University of Manchester	79	29-33
University of Durham	79	29-33
Loughborough University	78	34
University of Glasgow	77	35
University of Dundee	75	36
Queen Mary University of London	74	37-39
University of Central Lancashire	74	37-39
University of Oxford	74	37-39
University of Edinburgh	73	40
King's College London	70	41-42
University College London	70	41-42
Imperial College London	61	43

Aims

Aim 1
To address a perceived deficit in personal development opportunities (as reported in NSS 2016)

Aim 2
To enhance the employability of graduates from the School of Physics and Astronomy, specifically by addressing their communication skills.

Activity



science made simple®

Commissioned Science Made Simple for communication training workshops

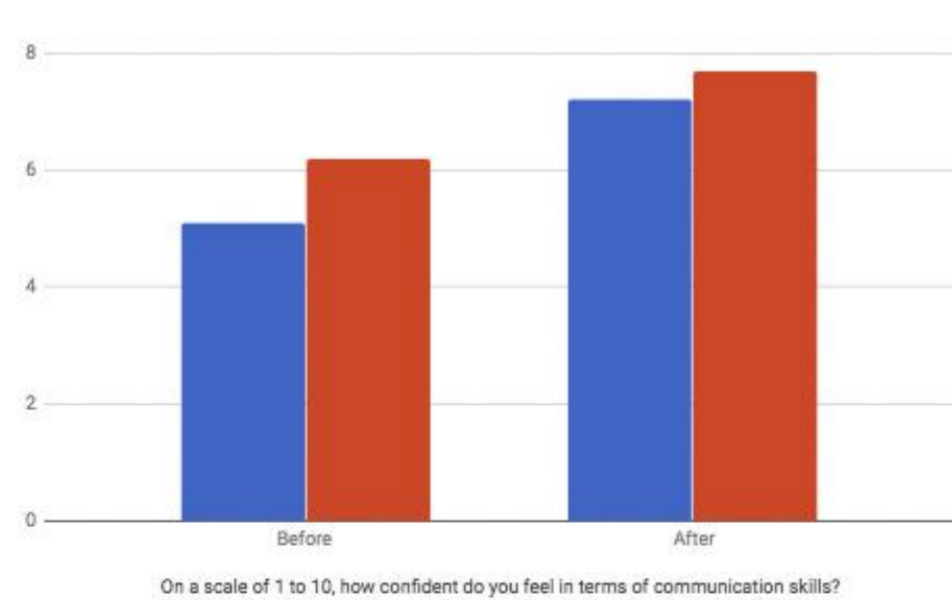


Connect Physics

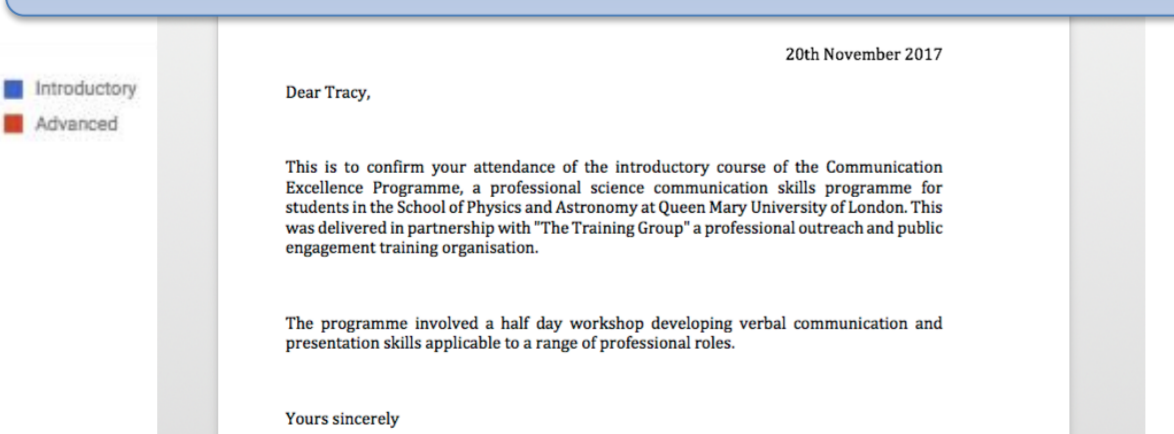
Workshops were based around existing science outreach resource "Connect Physics"

Outcomes

Reported increase in confidence, communication



Letters of participation for students records



Students trained to deliver at open days

27 undergraduate students took part in workshops

11 new outreach events in schools



Impact

Two new, high-profile opportunities for personal development

Reported increase in confidence in communication skills

Reflections

Attendance/popularity

Demand was below our expectations. 27 students took part.

Limited scope for ongoing delivery

Participants took part in ongoing outreach events. The number of these events they could get involved with was limited by the external demand for the sessions.

Difficulty integrating into the curriculum and high cost per head

The demand for this type of training was quite low; it is unlikely that similar training could be rolled out as stand-alone part of the curriculum.

Difficulty in measuring impact on bottom line

There are inherent difficulties in measuring the impact of the project on student's perception of opportunities and employability of students. Doing this would require more resource and a longer timeframe than this project allowed.