



Agriculture & Horticulture
DEVELOPMENT BOARD



New Project

CP 097

Embedding Masters-level students
within the horticultural industry

Project Number:	CP 097
Project Title:	Embedding Masters-level students within the horticultural industry
Project Leader:	Ian Dodd
Contractor:	Lancaster University
Industry Representative:	Emma Garrod, produce World Ltd
Start Date:	01 March 2012
End Date:	31 October 2013
Project Cost:	£12,000

Project Summary:

To encourage greater student engagement with the horticultural sector, this project aims to ensure students enrolled in the Masters in Sustainable Agriculture and Food Security (MSAFS) course at Lancaster University gain access to the UK horticultural industry, by the development of specific research placements (over either 5 week, or 4 month periods) at selected growers' holdings and/or horticultural research institutes. Bursary support (3 x £3000 awards) will be provided as an incentive for students to enrol in the course, to be awarded to the most academically able students, as judged by a committee comprising the Director of Study of the MSAFS course, the Director of the Centre for Sustainable Agriculture and the Director of Postgraduate Studies within the Lancaster Environment Centre. For example, bursaries are likely to be awarded high 2:1/1st class Undergraduate degree (or equivalent), merit or distinction at Masters level (or equivalent), awards for academic performance, publication of dissertation, relevant work/voluntary experience.

Additional funds (3 x £1000 awards) will be competitively awarded (based on their marks in the taught component of the course) to students as travel support to ensure their engagement with industry. Placement of students and communication of the project results (student reports) to growers and HDC will be the responsibility of the Director of Study for the

MSAFS course, who will be assisted by Lancaster Environment Centre's Enterprise and Business team.

Aims & Objectives:

(i) Project aim(s):

- To encourage academically able students to apply for the Masters in Sustainable Agriculture and Food Security (MSAFS) course administered by Lancaster University, thereby exposing them to the needs of the horticultural sector
- To ensure these students engage with the horticultural industry by conducting all or part of their (4 month) dissertation projects within growers' holdings

(ii) Project objective(s):

Details of the research aims and objectives of each dissertation project will be developed on a case-by-case basis by consultation with the nominated academic supervisor (at Lancaster University), the grower(s) concerned and where relevant, additional supervisors based at horticultural research institutes (eg. East Malling Research – *Letter of Support attached*)

Benefits to industry

Apart from the general benefits of increased exposure to horticultural issues (and potential post-graduation recruitment into the sector) that increased MSAFS enrolment would allow, **2 specific opportunities ensure that students on HDC-funded Masters bursaries engage with industry:**

- First-hand work experience via a business-based project (ENV 445 Work Placement), where the student visits the partner company 5 times over a 5 week period (in either Michaelmas Term - November-December or Lent Term – February-March) to undertake a specific project (*module outline attached*).
- A 4 month research project during April to August (LEC493 Dissertation Project – External Placement) to conduct a detailed research programme leading to the production of an industrial report tailored to industry requirements (*module outline attached*).

Existing data suggests these external placements are highly sought after by the most able students, and would rely on identification of suitable horticultural companies / growers to host students (to be undertaken by Lancaster's Enterprise and Business Partnerships team).

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