



University
of Glasgow

Graduate employability during a crisis: Evidence from Scottish graduates during the COVID-19 pandemic

Belgin Okay-Somerville (*University of Glasgow*)

Pauline Anderson (*University of Strathclyde*)

Scott Hurrell (*University of Glasgow*)

Daria Luchinskaya (*University of Strathclyde*)

Dora Scholarios (*University of Strathclyde*)

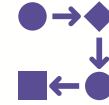


University
of Glasgow

Graduate employability



Possession



Process



Position

This Photo by Unknown Author is licensed under CC BY-SA-NC

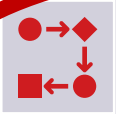
Holmes, 2013



Empirical evidence



Possession



Process



Position

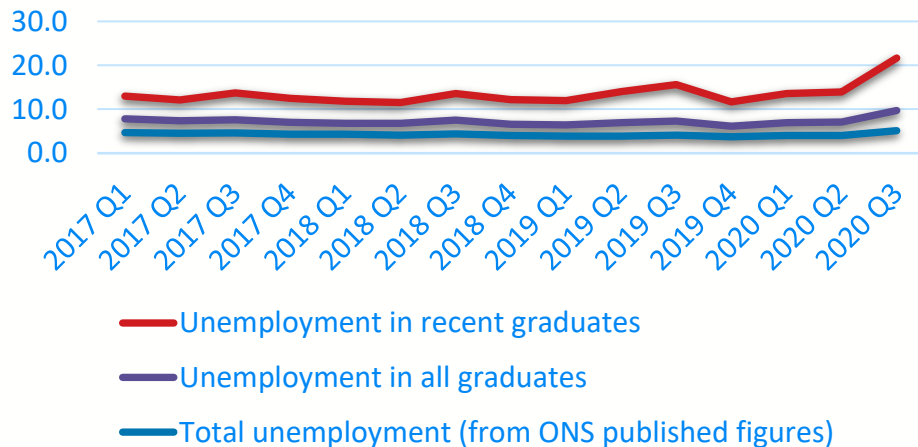


This Photo by Unknown Author is licensed under CC BY

- Okay-Somerville & Scholarios (2017)

COVID-19 & Graduate employment

Graduate unemployment



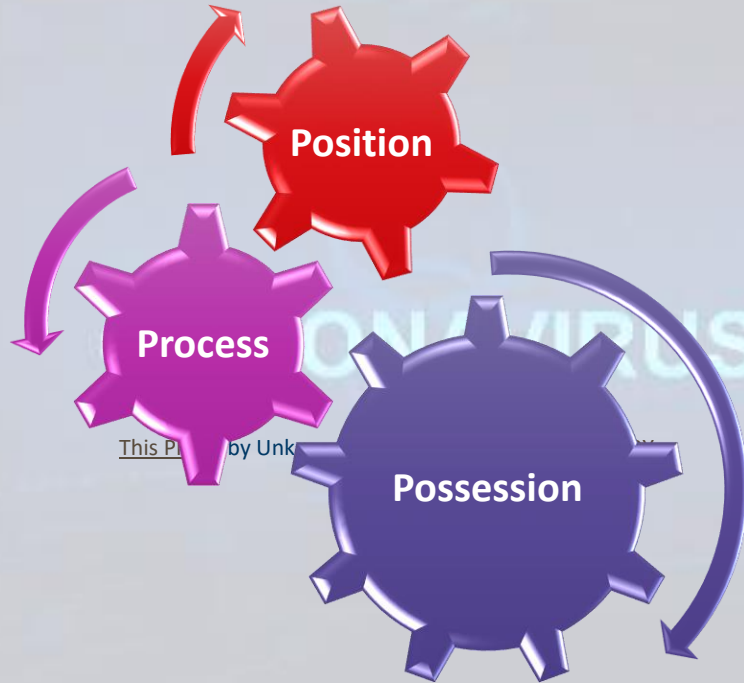
- Employers' recruitment targets, activity and budget (High Flyers Research, 2021)
 - Stable graduate salaries
 - 41% more applications
- Work experience (Mason, 2021)
- Career guidance

(adapted from ONS, 2021)

<https://luminate.prospects.ac.uk/early-careers-survey-2021-work-experience-during-a-crisis>
https://www.highfliers.co.uk/download/2021/graduate_market/GM21-Report.pdf



Research questions



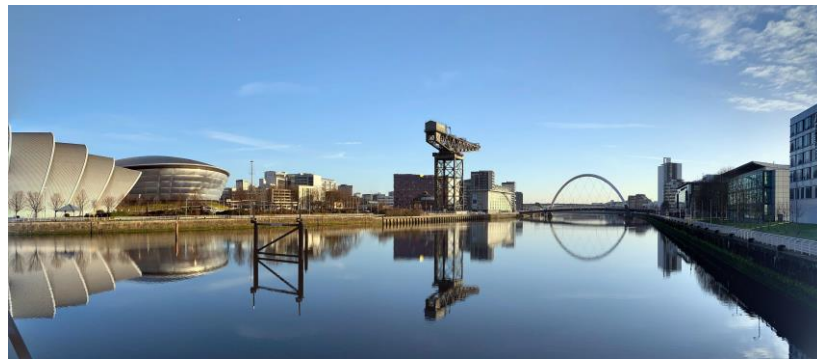
- (1) which graduates fare better or worse in terms of objective and subjective employability
- (2) how did the relative importance of position, possession and process explanations of graduate employability change during first few months the COVID-19 pandemic.



Method

- City of Glasgow 2020 Leavers
- One college and two universities(N=650)
- Sample restricted to: In work (n=312), unemployed (n=85), in training/education (n=176) (N=502)
- 67% female, 73% aged between 21-24, 45% STEM, 33 SS & 19% A&H
- 15% increased caring responsibilities
- 30% health condition lasting 12 months or more

Career advisory group & Policy advisory group





Measures

- Position – first gen
- Possession – HE type, degree subject, degree class
- Process – career competencies (Akkermans et al., 2013)
 - Reflective (on motivation & qualities)
 - Communicative (networking & self-profiling)
 - Behavioural (work exploration & career control)



This Photo by Unknown Author is licensed under CC BY-SA-NC



Measures

- Perceived employability (Rothwell et al., 2008)
- Employment status
- Salary
- Job satisfaction





Findings: Perceived employability

- Female and College vs University effects disappear when subject and career competencies taken into account
- Unemployed < in work
- Education/Training – not different from in work
- Demographics ~ ($\Delta R^2=13\%$)
- **Arts and Humanities** < ($\Delta R^2=3\%$)
- **Career competencies** ($\Delta R^2=13\%$)
 - Reflection on motivation ~ career identity
 - Networking
 - Self-profiling (-)
 - Work exploration

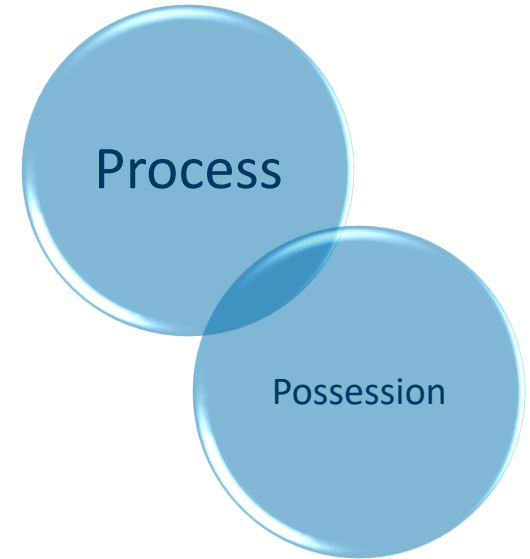


Process

Possession

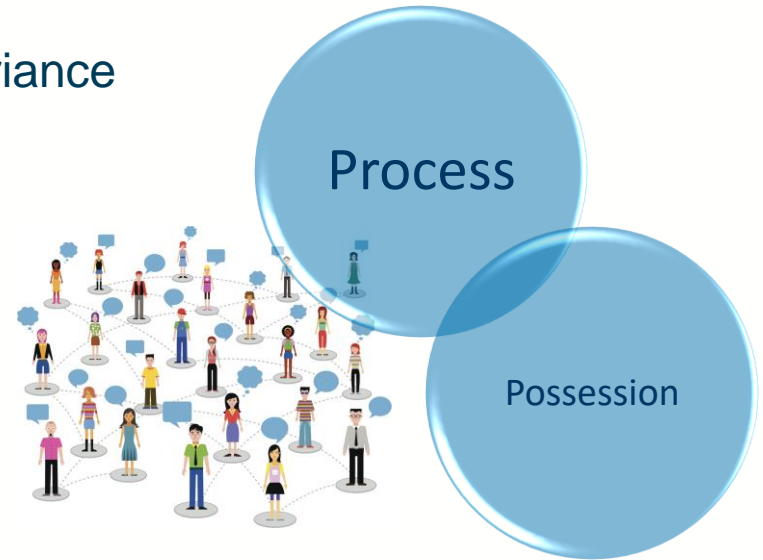
Findings: In work vs unemployed (N=395)

- Long-term health problems (-), but overall demographics model not significant
- **Arts and Humanities** < ($\Delta R^2=6\%$)
- **Career competencies** ($\Delta R^2=10\%$)
 - Work exploration



Findings: Job satisfaction (sample only 'in work, N=312)

- Time between graduation and survey (+)
- Full-time & permanent contract (+)
- Control variables (demographics) ~ **50%** variance
- College vs Uni (+) ($\Delta R^2=1\%$, n.s)
- **Arts & Humanities** < ($\Delta R^2=2\%$)
- **Career competencies** ($\Delta R^2=4\%$)
 - Networking





Salary (sample only 'in work, N=312)

- Time between graduation and survey (+)
- Private sector (-), full-time contract (+)
- Control variables (demographics) ~ **27%** variance
- **Career competencies** ($\Delta R^2=9\%$)
 - Networking





University
of Glasgow

Discussion

- Time between graduation & survey
- Contract type
- **General demographics**



This Photo by Unknown Author is licensed under CC BY-SA

This Photo by Unknown Author is licensed under CC BY-SA-NC



University
of Glasgow

THANK YOU!
ANY QUESTIONS??

Special thanks to Andrew Dorrance (University of Glasgow,
Student Intern)

belgin.okay-somerville@glasgow.ac.uk, @blgnokay