



College of Economic and Management Sciences



2020 Employer Survey Report
CEMS Graduate Employability

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Executive Summary

CEMS GRADUATE EMPLOYMENT STATUS	
CEMS POST-GRADUATE STUDENTS (2018 & 2019) 2018: N = 150; 2019: N = 204	EMPLOYER RECRUITMENT & EMPLOYMENT OF CEMS GRADUATE (2020) (N = 310)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mostly full time employed (average: 70%) • In some form of employment (average: 10%) • Qualification content mostly in line with current job • Employment found while studying undergraduate (ODEL nature of Unisa is an enabling factor) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited active recruitment of Unisa CEMS graduates • Unisa CEMS graduates employed by survey employer respondents (84%)
MEANING OF EMPLOYABILITY	
CEMS POST-GRADUATE STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS (2018 & 2019)	EMPLOYER PERCEPTIONS (2020)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students' regard the credibility of the Unisa CEMS qualification as being important for their employability • Students' professional qualities and work experience • Being able to confidently show case job-related aptitudes, generic transferable attitudes, qualities and behaviour required by employers (Graduateness) <p>Note:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Predominant reason for studying at Unisa: flexibility offered by the Unisa ODeL nature enabling them to gain employment and work experience while studying. • The quality and credibility of the Unisa CEMS qualification was of little importance as reason for studying at Unisa. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employers regarded the quality, credibility and reputation of a qualification as important <u>but</u> as less important than the work readiness (graduateness & employability), professionalism and work experience of graduates • Graduates should be sufficiently equipped for workplace (application of skills and qualities to business context) • Qualification content should be relevant to contemporary job sector (keeping track with changes in job sector) • Graduate should demonstrate work readiness
KEY ELEMENTS OF CEMS GRADUATE EMPLOYABILITY	
STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Predominant positive perceptions of the CEMS graduate's employability/work readiness attributed to the type of student that pursue ODeL studies (certain DIFFERENTIATING QUALITIES) (see Section II of the report) • Perception that, generally, the Unisa CEMS graduate can hit the ground running within 6 months of employment • Generally, students felt positive about their studies at Unisa CEMS (on average: 70%) • Employers generally assumed that Unisa CEMS qualifications are of quality and credible (however, not a differentiating factor for employing graduates) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employers raised some concerns about administrative issues and strikes, exam papers, and student support matters that negatively impact reputation of Unisa qualification (see Section II) • Students felt that more could be done in enabling them to confidently show case their capability to apply discipline theory/knowledge to practice/real business world context (e.g. request for portfolio – project and competence- based assessments). The teaching and learning emphasis seems to be still too much on theory/knowledge assessment instead of practical application of theory/knowledge to solve complex business

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Generally, employers felt positive about Unisa CEMS programmes and the qualities of graduates • ODeL nature of programmes • Content of CEMS ODeL modules • Specific qualities and skills cultivated through the ODeL nature of graduates’ studies • Competence and work-ability of the Unisa CEMS graduate 	<p>problems in innovative ways on post-graduate level</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of work experience of the undergraduate
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OPPORTUNITIES	CHALLENGES
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement CEMS Graduate Employability Strategy to in-curriculate employability and graduateness • PQM renewal and transformation for enhanced Graduate employability • Adopt PQM occupation mapping and competency-based curriculating to enhance teaching, learning and assessment for Graduate employability • Enhance student living and learning experience of ODeL (transformation) through student induction/socialisation programmes that market CEMS PQM relevance to world of work/employer requirements • Capitalise on recommendations made by students and employers for enhancing Graduate employability (See Section III of the report) by operationalising key priorities in the CEMS Graduate Employability Operational Plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students reported mixed perceptions about their employability: on average, 55% felt confident about their employability and on average, 45% felt less confident about their employability/work readiness • Students had mixed feelings about the study programmes preparing them for the world of work and employer expectations/requirements: on average 54% felt positive; 46% felt more could be done • The general work readiness/work preparedness of the graduate • Programme teaching and learning approach still too much on knowledge assessment- need more appropriate balance between knowledge assessment vs applied competency assessment at different NQF levels of study • Graduate capability to apply theory/knowledge to practice/business context remains high priority for employers • Relevance of PQM curriculum and module content in Industry 4.0/beyond world of work • Lecturer updated competence in ensuring PQM and curriculum content relevance; and teaching/assessing applied competencies of employability/work readiness
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KEY SKILLS INFLUENCING CEMS GRADUATES’ EMPLOYABILITY	
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CEMS POST-GRADUATE STUDENTS’ PERCEPTIONS (2018 & 2019)	EMPLOYER REQUIREMENTS (2020)
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Entrepreneurial business-oriented attributes	<p>SEE SECTION II of this report for detail description.</p> <p>Employers highlighted key skills such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workplace skills: Effective communication skills/Numeracy skills/Business acumen in problem solving • Entrepreneurial capability: Information discovery, synthesis, retrieval and evaluation skills/Adaptability/flexibility/Ability to market self and unique skills and talents/Experience and industry knowledge/Innovative thinking and creativity in problem solving for business
Applied strategic business management and project management skills	
Graduateness/employability attributes and skills	
Work experience and work readiness skills (hit the ground running and contribute to innovative business problem solving)	
Qualities of professionalism and life-long learning	
<p>Self-perceived Graduateness Scores:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scholarship (problem solving/decision making skills; enterprising/business skills; 	

<p>analytical/critical thinking skills): Average mean scores</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Global/moral citizenship (interactive skills; self-presentation/presenting and applying information skills; ethical/responsible behaviour): High mean scores • Life-long learning (professionalism; goal-directed behaviour; continuous learning): Average mean scores 	<p>solutions/Application of interdisciplinary knowledge in business problem solving</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Other: Personal qualities/strategic business and project management skills/and digital/Industry 4.0 skills
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Section I

Background to and Rationale for Survey

Research Project Team

- Prof Truida Oosthuizen: Head Tuition and Student Support (CEMS Commissioned Project Coordinator/Manager)

- Prof Melinde Coetzee (Department of Industrial and Organisational Psychology): Lead researcher

Project members (co-researchers):

- Ms Cebile Tebele (Department of Industrial and Organisational Psychology)
- Prof Ingrid Potgieter (Department of Human Resource Management)
- Prof Nadia Ferreira (Department of Human Resource Management)

BMR team members (data collection)

- Prof Deon Tustin
- Prof Pierre Joubert
- Dr Abigail Mosheau

Background to the Report

The **2020 CEMS Employer Survey** is the third survey that forms part of a **CEMS Commissioned Research Project** on CEMS Graduate Employability. A pilot survey was conducted in 2018 and a follow-up survey was conducted in 2019. The two 2018/2019 CEMS Graduate Employability Surveys involved post-graduate students. The third survey (2020 CEMS Employer Survey) involved employers as important stakeholders in employing the CEMS Graduate.

- **Pilot Survey 2018:** The pilot research project involved post-graduate (Hons, PGDip, M&D) students from the Department of Industrial and Organisational Psychology (IOP) and Human Resource Management (HRM), enrolled for 2018. The pilot survey formed the basis for the survey instrument development.
- **Follow-up Survey 2019:** The follow-up survey involved post-graduate students from the full range of post-graduate qualifications offered by CEMS. Rationale for focusing on postgraduate students: These students are generally employed at professional or managerial levels, and have experience of employer expectations, including knowledge of strategies they utilised to obtain/create employment.

The 2019 follow-up research project served the following purpose:

- Further refinement of the survey instrument based on pilot study data in order to utilise the refined version of the instrument in the 2019 follow-up study.
- Identifying core patterns of themes and trends that could be useful in informing module teaching and learning design practices in order to enhance the graduateness/employability of CEMS Unisa students.

- **Employer Survey 2020:** The survey was conducted with the assistance of BMR. The BMR has the expertise and resources to conduct surveys (i.e. data collection) amongst employers in various industries. The survey was launched on 13 February 2020 and data collection was completed on 30 March 2020.

Step	Date	Status
1. Planning of 2020 Employer Survey	November 2019/January 2020	Completed
2. Conducting 2020 Employer Survey. BMR data collection <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Survey (electronic research questionnaire) o Computer-assisted telephone interviewing (CAT) 	February to March 2020	Completed
3. Data analysis and reporting	May 2020	Completed
4. Writing management report	June 2020	Completed
5. Feedback to CEMS management	June 2020	In process

Note: Ethics clearance was done in accordance with BMR Research Ethics Policy.

Aim of the 2020 CEMS Employer Survey Report

The aim of the **2020 CEMS Employer Survey Report** is threefold:

1. To report the empirical findings of the employer survey conducted in **2020 (Section II of the Report)**
2. To integrate the employer survey findings with core findings that emerged from the **2018 CEMS Student Graduateness/Employability Pilot Survey** and the **2019 CEMS Student Graduateness/Employability Follow-Up Survey (Section III of the Report)**; and
3. Based on the three surveys' findings, to propose a **CEMS Graduate Employability Strategy (Section IV of the Report)**.

Purpose of the 2020 CEMS Employer Survey

The three CEMS surveys were commissioned by the Deanery in order to address aspects of the Unisa **Strategic Focus Area** and **Target 1** outlined in the **CEMS Operational Plan for 2020**. The Operational Plan states that the mission of the College is to endorse Unisa's 2030 Strategic Plan and to align College activities with the strategic direction of the university. As the largest College in the field of Economic and Management Sciences in South Africa, the College aims to be a strategic centre for effective learning and research that ultimately contribute to the work readiness, graduateness and employability of its graduates.

UNISA STRATEGIC FOCUS AREA 1: Towards becoming a leading comprehensive ODeL university in teaching and learning, research, innovation and community engagement based on scholarship				
UNISA STRATEGIC TARGET 1: Quality educational offerings serving current and future generations through a streamlined and relevant PQM appropriate to a comprehensive university, responsive to current and future societal and stakeholder needs and the unique student profile				
College Objective	College Actions	Risk	Mitigation Action	2020 Target/Milestone
Conduct graduateness/employability survey to ensure contextually relevant and appropriate PQM	Implement recommendations of 2019 survey Complete graduateness/employability survey with employers	Recommendations will compete with other curriculum transformation priorities	College implementation strategy for implementation	Do curriculum consultations and amendments based on College 2018 & 2019 graduateness/employability surveys. Complete employer survey by July 2020

Section II Empirical Results

Sampling and Data Collection

Data were collected by means of a cross-sectional quantitative survey and computer-assisted telephone interviews (CATI).

ACTIVITY	OUTCOME
BMR sampling frame <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Sampling plan considered the various CEMS study fields and programmes (10 academic departments) ○ Sampling Plan considered entities that already employed CEMS graduates as well as entities that could be potential employers of CEMS graduates ○ CEMS graduates: Approval granted by Prof Goolam to use Unisa Honours, Masters and Doctoral students (emails) as reference point ○ CEMS departments contacted to provide additional information of employers to contact 	<p>Students contacted to obtain access to relevant line managers</p> <p>Additional information assisted in constructing employer data base</p>
BMR employer recruitment questionnaire	<p>N = 1803 positive responses (consent to participate in employer recruitment process)</p> <p>N = 660 reflected full records of employer's name, surname, position, email address and telephone number</p> <p>N = 700 reflected only telephone numbers of employers</p>
Survey questionnaire <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Developed by CEMS Research Project Team ○ Refinement of survey instrument in collaboration with BMR research team ○ Piloting of survey instrument by BMR and CEMS research team 	<p>Finalisation of survey instrument and sign off (Jan 2020) by CEMS team</p> <p>Survey questionnaire anonymous – cannot be traced to individual graduates employed by the participating entity.</p>
BMR Electronic link to survey questionnaire to employers	<p>Online survey launch terminated by March 2020</p> <p>N = 203 responded</p>
BMR CATI interviews	<p>Conducted March 2020</p> <p>N = 480 approached</p>
BMR data capturing and data cleaning	<p>March 2020 completed</p>
BMR handing over data set to CEMS project team	<p>N = 349 captured responses (March 2020)</p>
Statistical analysis: CEMS research project team	<p>N = 310 useable responses (March – April 2020)</p>
CEMS: Data interpretation and reporting	<p>May/June 2020</p>
CEMS 2020 Employer Survey Report finalisation	<p>June 2020</p>
Communication/Submission of Report to CEMS Management	<p>July 2020</p>

Employer Research Questionnaire

The following aspects were measured by the **Employer Research Questionnaire**:

RESEARCH QUESTIONNAIRE ELEMENTS	
Q3.1	Job role/position in the business
Q3.2	Economic sector
Q3.3	Legal status of business/company (e.g. closed corporation)
Q3.4	Employment categories (e.g. small, medium)
Q3.5	Country in which company is registered
Q3.6	Does the company actively recruit graduates from the Unisa College of Economic and Management Sciences (CEMS)?
Q3.7	Academic disciplines of Unisa CEMS graduates recruited
Q3.8	Does the company employ Unisa CEMS graduates?
Q4.1	Reasons for employing a graduate from Unisa CEMS (rated not important to important) See categories of reasons: Q4.2 to Q4.11 below
Q4.2	<i>If not important</i> : Reasons why employer feel the Quality of the Unisa CEMS qualification is not important
Q4.3	<i>If not important</i> : Reasons why employer feel the Credibility of the Unisa CEMS qualification is not important
Q4.4	<i>If not important</i> : Reasons why employer feel the Reputation of the Unisa CEMS qualification is not important
Q4.5	<i>If not important</i> : Reasons why employer feel the Academic Record of the Unisa CEMS graduate is not important
Q4.6	<i>If not important</i> : Reasons why employer feel the Professionalism of the Unisa CEMS graduate is not important
Q4.7	<i>If not important</i> : Reasons why employer feel the Work experience of the Unisa CEMS graduate is not important
Q4.8	<i>If not important</i> : Reasons why employer feel the Work readiness of the Unisa CEMS graduate is not important
Q4.9	<i>If not important</i> : Reasons why employer feel the Job-related aptitudes, skills, knowledge and attitude of the Unisa CEMS graduate is not important
Q4.10	<i>If not important</i> : Reasons why employer feel the Graduateness (i.e. personal/intellectual growth in field of study) of the Unisa CEMS graduate is not important
Q4.11	<i>If not important</i> : Reasons why employer feel the Employability (generic transferable skills and attributes required by the job and workplace) of the Unisa CEMS graduate is not important
Q4.12	Other reasons employer consider to be important when employing a graduate from Unisa CEMS
Q4.13	In employer's experience: Are Unisa CEMS graduates sufficiently equipped for the workplace?
Q4.14	Provide reasons for Q4.13 (if yes)
Q4.15	Provide reasons for Q4.13 (if no)
Q4.16	Employer suggestions for CEMS to better equip graduates for the workplace
Q4.17	Does company offer education, training and development opportunities to enhance workers' employability?
Q4.18	Type of education, training and development opportunities offered by company
Q4.19	Importance employer attach to specific skills in business and economics or commerce related areas of specialisation
Q4.20	Employer requirements of graduates: Other skills that should be considered in business and economics or commerce related areas of specialisation
Q4.21	Employer requirements of graduates: Specific knowledge areas used business and economics or commerce related areas of specialization

Q4.22	Employer requirements of graduates: Specific personal qualities used business and economics or commerce related areas of specialization
Q4.23	Would employer like to receive a brief report on survey outcome?
Q424	Email address for report to be sent to

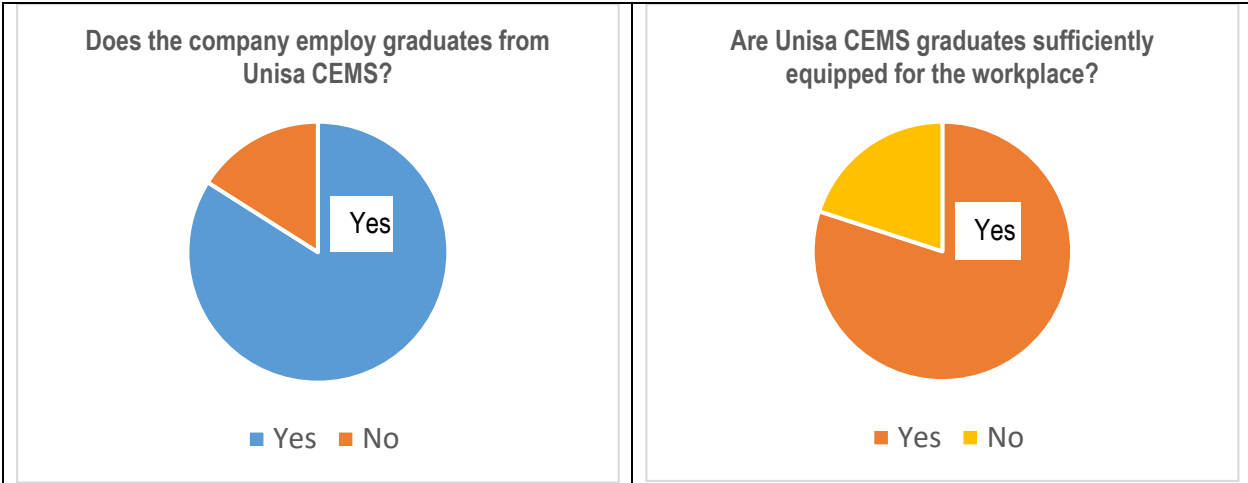
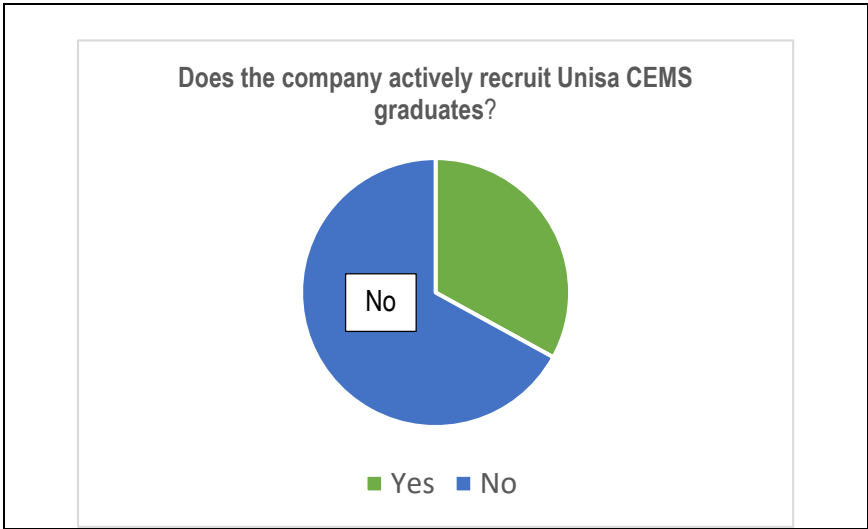
Characteristics of the 2020 Employer Sample

EMPLOYER FINAL SAMPLE CHARACTERISTICS (N = 310)	% (2020)
JOB ROLE	
CEO	3%
Director/Assistant Director	5%
Manager/Head of Department	23%
Business partner/consultant/practitioner (human capital/talent/skills development/recruitment)	55%
Administrative/HR officer/accountant/clerk	14%
ECONOMIC SECTOR	
Agriculture, forestry & fishing	2.1%
Banking, Finance, Real Estate & Business Services	8.9%
Culture, Arts, Tourism, Hospitality, Accommodation & Sports	3.1%
Construction	2.4%
Chemical	1.2%
Education, Training & Development Sector	11.9%
Energy & Water	2.1%
Fibre Processing & Manufacturing	0.6%
Food & Beverages	1.5%
Financial & Accounting	5.8%
Health & Welfare	4.6%
Insurance	2.4%
Manufacturing, Engineering & Related Services	3.7%
Media, Advertising, Information & Communication Technologies	4.6%
Mining & Quarrying	1.8%
Public Services	14.7%
Safety & Security	1.8%
Transport, Storage & Communication	5.2%
Financial & Accounting	2.8%
Wholesale & Retail	2.4%
Other	16.2%
LEGAL STATUS OF COMPANY/BUSINESS	
Privately held, limited company (Pty) Ltd	32.9%
Publicly listed company (Ltd)	9.4%
Close Corporation (CC)	1.3%
Sole proprietorship	1.0%
Parastatal	7.7%
Government entities	32.3%
Other	8.7%
EMPLOYMENT CATEGORIES	
Micro (less than 50 employees)	13.9%
Small (51 to 150 employees)	5.5%
Medium (151 to 500 employees)	13.2%
Large (more than 500 employees)	60.3%

COUNTRY IN WHICH COMPANY REGISTERED	
South Africa	94.9%
Other (MultiAfrica, UK, USA, Canada, Moscow)	5.1%
ACADEMIC DISCIPLINES FROM WHICH CEMS GRADUATES ARE RECRUITED	
Accounting Sciences	7.7%
Business Administration	5.2%
Business Informatics	2.0%
Business Leadership	2.7%
Business Management	5.3%
Economics	5.3%
Financial Management	8.2%
Financial Modelling	3.0%
Human Resource Development	4.1%
Human Resource Management	7.3%
Industrial and Organisational Psychology	2.7%
Information Science	3.3%
Information Systems	4.2%
Labour Relations Management	3.3%
Logistics	3.2%
Management Accounting	5.6%
Management Studies	3.0%
Marketing Management	2.9%
Operations Management	1.5%
Organisational Development	2.6%
Risk Management	4.7%
Public Administration	3.6%
Quantitative Management	1.4%
Tourism Management	1.0%
Transport and Logistics	3.2%
Transport Economics	1.7%
Other	1.7%

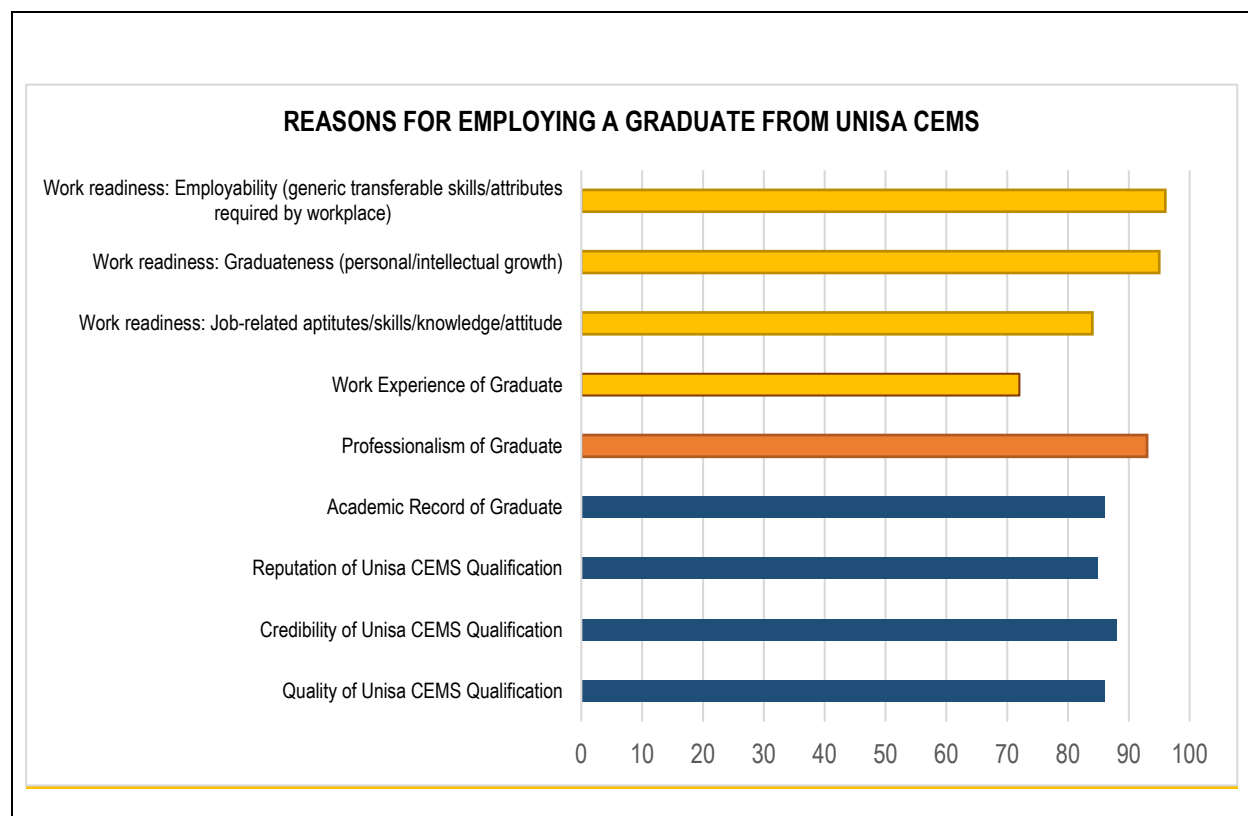
Employment of Unisa CEMS Graduates

DOES COMPANY ACTIVELY RECRUIT GRADUATES FROM UNISA CEMS?	
Yes	33%
No	67%
DOES COMPANY EMPLOY GRADUATES FROM UNISA CEMS?	
Yes	84%
No	16%
ARE UNISA CEMS GRADUATES SUFFICIENTLY EQUIPPED FOR THE WORKPLACE?	
Yes	80%
No	20%



Reasons for Employing Unisa CEMS Graduates

REASONS FOR EMPLOYING A GRADUATE FROM UNISA CEMS	NOT AT ALL IMPORTANT %	SLIGHTLY-MODERATE IMPORTANT %	VERY TO EXTREMELY IMPORTANT %	INTEGRATED VIEW HIGHEST AVG %
QUALITY of the Unisa CEMS qualification	2%	12%	86%	Institutional aspects: 86%
CREDIBILITY of the Unisa CEMS qualification	2%	10%	88%	
REPUTATION of the Unisa CEMS qualification	3%	12%	85%	
ACADEMIC RECORD of the graduate	2%	12%	86%	
PROFESSIONALISM of the graduate	1%	6%	93%	Individual qualities: 93%
WORK EXPERIENCE of the Unisa CEMS graduate	2%	26%	72%	Work experience and readiness: 87%
WORK READINESS of the Unisa CEMS graduate: Job-related aptitudes, skills, knowledge and attitude	1%	15%	84%	
WORK READINESS of the Unisa CEMS graduate: Graduateness (i.e. personal/intellectual growth in field of study)	1%	4%	95%	
WORK READINESS of the Unisa CEMS graduate: Employability (generic transferable skills and attributes required by the job and workplace)	2%	2%	96%	Graduateness/Employability: 96%



Employer Explanation of Graduate Employment Criteria

INSTITUTIONAL ASPECTS: CEMS QUALIFICATION (QUALITY, CREDIBILITY AND REPUTATION) AND GRADUATE ACADEMIC RECORD

GENERAL

- Qualification should be accredited and registered with SAQA, and be internationally recognised
- Employers assume that every higher education institution is established to offer quality education and learning; all universities are seen to have similar credibility
- Employers assume that Unisa CEMS qualification is of good quality because Unisa is seen as a reputable institution
- Reputation of Unisa and international ratings more important than qualification itself
- Reputation of Unisa compromised by issues on exam scandals – negatively influence credibility of Unisa CEMS qualifications
- Word-of mouth complaints about lack of efficiency pertaining to Unisa administration systems (e.g. study materials late; issues of strikes affecting student registrations, exams and administration matters; inefficiency in handling registration-related financial queries; lack of lecturers' care and support of students) negatively influence credibility and reputation of Unisa CEMS qualifications
- Posting previous examination papers on myUnisa during exams for students makes the credibility of qualification questionable. Focus should be on guiding students to better prepare for an examination in an independent manner.
- Qualifications are less important because CEMS qualifications' content does not differ much from those of other universities.
- Graduate academic record only important in terms of providing evidence of qualification content
- Academic records only help to ascertain authenticity of the qualification
- **EMPLOYER REQUIREMENTS:** Qualification less important than other employer requirements such as the following:
 - **RELEVANCE OF QUALIFICATION TO CONTEMPORARY AND INDUSTRY 4.0 RELEVANT CONTINUOUSLY CHANGING JOB SECTOR**
 - Evidence that the qualification content can compete nationwide and internationally in terms of real-time job sector rapid evolving/changing requirements
 - **GRADUATE CULTURE FIT**
 - Graduate fit with ethos & vision of company
 - **PERSONAL QUALITIES OF GRADUATE**
 - Passion for subject field and ability to do job
 - Date qualification obtained versus what graduate learned since obtaining the qualification
 - Fast on-the-job learning
 - Ability and willingness to perform the job to one's best
 - Willingness and aptitude to learn on-the-job
 - Work ethic and ethical behaviour
 - Willingness and ability to adapt to, and perform in any environment; adaptability and flexibility
 - Self-discipline
 - Demonstrating self-confidence in one's ability to do the job
 - Demonstrating a required level of knowledge about the field of work
 - Positive mindset and attitude
 - Ability to manage personal and business finance
 - Professionalism and work readiness/preparedness
 - Presentability/marketability at the interview
 - **GRADUATE CAPABILITY TO APPLY DISCIPLINE KNOWLEDGE AND THEORY IN BUSINESS CONTEXT**
 - Understanding practical side of the business (applied economics and management science)

- Applied skills to perform job duties
- Theory should match practical experience or ability to apply discipline knowledge/theory in business context/job practice
- Practical orientation of programmes/modules important
- Applying study knowledge to the practical work/job important
- **GRADUATE BUSINESS ORIENTATION**
 - Capability and orientation to run own business
 - Entrepreneurial thought and mindset
- **ODEL NATURE OF UNISA AND GRADUATE WORK EXPERIENCE AND WORK READINESS**
 - Lack of practical exposure in programmes because of distance learning may create perception that graduates not able to gain work experience during the course of their studies. Graduates should be able to showcase their ability to apply knowledge/theory in practice to job and business context (i.e. applied work readiness)
 - Work experience and work readiness more important than the graduate's qualification and academic record
 - Unisa graduates seem to have strong sense of commitment and perseverance most probably because of their willingness to pursue further higher education while working through ODeL
 - Unisa is seen as a leading institution of higher learning offering graduates a high sense of self-leadership and self-excellence due to the ODeL nature of studies
 - Unisa's reputation as an ODeL institution is one of the best
 - Graduates seem to know how to study and utilise time management because of part-time and ODeL approach to studies

GRADUATE PROFESSIONALISM

GENERAL

- Employers view graduate as still learning about the world of work; companies see their role to groom the graduate toward professionalism
- Professionalism is seen to be learnt through work experience, mentoring and on-the-job coaching that train graduates' toward exhibiting acceptable work behaviour and conduct

GRADUATE WORK EXPERIENCE AND WORK READINESS (GRADUATENESS AND EMPLOYABILITY)

• GENERAL

- Graduates' employability is enhanced by their exposure to workplaces and opportunities to apply their discipline knowledge/theory to real-life work and job contexts
- Work experience is a bonus but not a pre-requisite for many companies because of graduate and in-service training programmes

• GRADUATE WORK EXPERIENCE

- Graduates gain work experience and develop job-relevant skills once they actually start working
- Graduates with lack of /limited work experience are employed because company in-house training, mentoring, on-the-job coaching help to enhance graduates' work experience and work readiness; the employer assumes that a graduate may not have had any prior experience
- CEMS programmes should expose students to various work and business contexts; they should feel comfortable to apply the discipline knowledge/theory outside of a specific job field
- Experiential learning/work-integrated learning important

• GRADUATE QUALITIES OF WORK READINESS

- Work readiness more important than work experience: Graduates need certain mindsets and personal qualities that inform their work readiness (i.e. know-how and capability to apply their discipline theory/knowledge in specific job contexts)
- Work readiness is demonstrated by graduates' ability to apply transferable, generic skills/attributes of Graduateness as well as transdisciplinary knowledge to solving business and job-related problems
- Graduates' work readiness is displayed in their business orientation and entrepreneurial mindset about creating employment for self and/or others rather than searching for employment

- Work preparedness is key to work readiness: personal qualities of drive, ambition, right work attitude, and willingness to learn are seen as qualities of work preparedness
- **GRADUATE JOB-RELATED APTITUDES, SKILLS, KNOWLEDGE AND ATTITUDE**
 - Job-related aptitudes, skills, knowledge and attitude are gained through company in-house training, mentoring, on-the-job coaching
 - Work attitude and personal qualities more important than job-related aptitudes, skills, knowledge at time of employment
- **GRADUATE PERSONAL/INTELLECTUAL GROWTH IN FIELD OF STUDY (GRADUATENESS)**
 - Unisa graduates' personal/intellectual development seems often different than graduates from other universities because they lack real-life exposure to the business/work context
 - Continuous personal/intellectual growth and development is important
 - The personal/intellectual capabilities should match the level of the job
- **GRADUATE GENERIC TRANSFERABLE SKILLS AND ATTRIBUTES (EMPLOYABILITY)**
 - Graduates find it often difficult to apply their discipline knowledge to industry work/business context
 - Internships are important for helping students learn how to apply their discipline knowledge to industry work/business context
 - Being able to or learning how to transfer one's discipline knowledge to industry work/business context help to increase the student's/graduate's confidence

EDUCATION, TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED BY COMPANY TO ENHANCE GRADUATES' EMPLOYABILITY	%
Yes	95%
No	5%
TYPE OF EDUCATION, TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED BY COMPANY	%
Bursaries	23%
Internships	25%
Leadership development	18%
In-house training	26%
Other	7%

Specific Experiences of Unisa CEMS Graduate – Differentiating Qualities (Reasons for Employing CEMS Graduates)

ODEL NATURE OF CEMS, UNISA AND GRADUATE WORK EXPERIENCE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● ODeL nature of Unisa allows candidates to also obtain some work experience whilst studying ● ODeL gives them exposure to work online
CONTENT OF ODEL MODULES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Course content appears to be practical ● Course content appears to be practical and in line with what is happening in the real work environment ● Structure and content of modules are good
SPECIFIC QUALITIES AND SKILLS CULTIVATED THROUGH THE ODEL NATURE OF GRADUATES' STUDIES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● COMPETENCE AND WORK-ABILITY OF THE UNISA CEMS GRADUATE <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ They are equally competent when compared with graduates from other universities ○ Graduates are capable of performing their job tasks ○ They appear to be equipped for the workplace ○ They have mastered discipline theory and are able to apply the knowledge in practice to the job

- They are skilled in both theory and practical application of knowledge to the work/job; the modules are tailored to meet the practical situation of the work environment
- They are able to clearly demonstrate what they have learnt
- The curriculum and case studies seem to be in line with the real job environment; graduates seem to be in touch with the work environment
- The ODeL nature of studies enhances work readiness/preparedness of graduates: The ODeL studies prepare graduates for all forms of job challenges, e.g. leadership skills, self-sufficient, initiative; searching for information on their own, resilience, flexibility, hard work, commitment, dedication, planning and organisation, self-management; results-driven; accountability; balancing work-home-study interface; independent critical thinkers
- They have in-depth knowledge of outstanding nature and are able to transfer the knowledge to the work context
- **WORK EXPERIENCE OF THE UNISA CEMS GRADUATE**
 - Some have previous work experience because of ODeL nature of studies
 - They are already working; are independent and life-long learners due to ODeL studies
 - Most graduates seem to be able to hit ground running once employed
- **LECTURER COMPETENCE**
 - Professors are professional and competent –they seem to have both academic knowledge and job industry experience.
 - They seem to help Unisa and graduates keep abreast with changing contexts and advances in knowledge in the field
- **QUALITIES OF THE UNISA CEMS GRADUATE**
 - Graduates are good in articulating and apply their subject/discipline knowledge to the job
 - They can work autonomous, independently without supervision
 - They bring new ideas in the company
 - They demonstrate high quality of self-leadership and leadership of others
 - They have proven self-discipline because of ODeL studies
 - They demonstrate commitment and perseverance
 - They are computer literate because of online ODeL nature of studies
 - They have administration skills
 - They are critical thinkers
 - They are more self-reliant than in comparison with graduates from other universities
 - They take responsibility for their own learning (they do not need to be spoon-fed like graduates from residential universities)
 - They are flexible and adaptable to the work environment
 - ODeL nature of studies seem to cultivate self-discipline, time management skills and ability to work under pressure, determination.
 - They demonstrate professionalism and work ethic
 - They study online and add value in real time to business
 - They have sound business management knowledge and skills required to manage complex issues; they can think innovative and outside of the box; they are able to apply their minds and skills independently and collaboratively in teams

Specific Experiences of Unisa CEMS Graduate – Differentiating Qualities (Reasons for **NOT** Employing CEMS Graduates)

GRADUATE GENERAL WORK READINESS/PREPAREDNESS

- Graduates are not work ready (prepared) and seem to lack the confidence (self-efficacy) to apply their theoretical knowledge in their work environment
- Graduates need more exposure to the workplace and knowledge regarding what makes them employable (i.e. employer and workplace requirements)
- Graduates' academic knowledge seems often too far removed from practical skills to apply the knowledge/theory in work place/on the job
- Graduates often do not seem familiar with the work environment (lack of exposure; lack of practical work-integrated learning)

GRADUATE GENERAL WORK READINESS/PREPAREDNESS/TEACHING AND LEARNING APPROACH: APPLICATION OF KNOWLEDGE

- CEMS to incorporate more practical skills required at workplace in module teaching, learning and assessment. This can be in form of real-life case studies that resemble contemporary workplace
- ODeL approach should simulate more real-life experience- current approach seems too theoretical; a work-integrated learning approach is recommended

GRADUATE GENERAL WORK READINESS/PREPAREDNESS/TEACHING AND LEARNING APPROACH: APPLICATION OF KNOWLEDGE/RELEVANCE OF CURRICULUM AND MODULE CONTENT

- Lack of work experience, experiential learning in ODeL exacerbated by module content not being in touch with changes in job industry and workplaces; graduates cannot not easily and confidently apply what they have learnt in the workplace
- Some modules use old examples not relevant to changing job industry
- Curriculum seem every broad; graduates lack specialised knowledge relevant to changing job industry needs

Employer Recommendations for Better Equipping the Unisa CEMS Graduate for the Workplace

ROLE OF ODeL INSTITUTION IN ENHANCING GRADUATE WORK READINESS

- Introduce as part of theoretical studies some work experience/exposure time before graduation
- Incorporate practicals (work-integrated learning) to prepare graduates for the workplace by helping them to acquire work-related practical skills
- Consider assistance with pre-employment placement assistance
- Educate and train students on their marketability (employee value proposition), career self-management, and self-presentation skills in employer interviews
- Establish, market and monitor student/graduate career services to inform, advise and support students on aspects of work readiness and employability
- Increase use of experts from industry as opposed to academics with little or no practical experience of industry
- College should establish strategies to showcase the differentiating qualities of their students/graduates to potential employers
- Encourage corporate companies to have graduate/career fairs at the University

CURRICULUM CONTENT AND ASSESSMENT FOR WORK READINESS

- Design a module or programme on work preparedness/readiness that help prepare students/graduates for the workplace and world of work; assess students on their work readiness before they graduate
- Consider online resources and classes on work readiness qualities and skills; e.g. live case studies on organisations as part of assessment to prepare soon-to-graduate students for world of work; chat boxes, webinars or online discussions with employers on the qualities and skills they require from graduates
- Design modules that introduce students to, and assess them on life skills and workplace skills they need
- Assess students on their work readiness as part of the curriculum
- Adopt a competency-based assessment approach: students need to know how a module help develop the generic transferable skills and attributes they need for the workplace and how to apply discipline knowledge to the job and workplace
- Add an introductory module on self-employment, establishing and managing one's own business; shift students' mindsets from notion of finding employment to becoming entrepreneurial in creating employment and running a successful business
- Integrate work-integrated learning such as internships or practicums, for example
- Reinforce life-long learning, work ethics, professionalism in the module syllabus and content
- Ensure assignments focus on industry solutions for complex business problems using academic/discipline theory as foundation

- Make assignments more practical and do not merely test knowledge. Students need to develop the self-efficacy and confidence in applying theory and knowledge to solving real-life business problems. Their ability to apply knowledge in real-life contexts should be a key focus of assignments
- Utilise real-life case studies to help students develop self-efficacy and skills in applying knowledge/theory to solve issues that affect the performance of business and people in a business
- Assess students'/graduates ability to apply their discipline knowledge to real workplace environment; help them develop portfolios of evidence that show case these capabilities to prospective employers.

RELEVANCE OF MODULE CONTENT

- Continuously review and realign module content with changing national and international (global) trends regarding industry and job requirements to ensure graduates' chances of employment in Industry 4.0, and capability to contribute to business and economy

UPSKILLING OF LECTURERS

- Ensure measures in place that help lecturers stay upskilled. Not all lecturers seem to have adequate knowledge and experience of industry, and not all are in touch with the changing needs of jobs and industry. They generally have mostly academic knowledge and do not always have a working knowledge of the real needs of industry.
- M&D supervisors should also be aware that their post-graduate students have practical knowledge of workplaces and industry and get frustrated when supervisors are not able to relate their academic knowledge to what is actually happening in industry, or if they are not in touch with shifting trends and concepts in industry.
- Academic departments to team up with experts from industry and companies to stay in touch with shifting trends and requirements

Key Skills Required in Business and Economics, or Any Other Commerce Related Area of Specialisation

EMPLOYABILITY CAPITAL	NOT AT ALL IMPORTANT %	SLIGHTLY TO MODERATE IMPORTANT %	VERY TO EXTREMELY IMPORTANT %	HIGHEST % KEY SKILLS
WORKPLACE SKILLS				
Effective communication skills	1%	4%	95%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effective communication skills • Numeracy skills • Business acumen in problem solving
Appropriate use of computer systems and software skills	2%	48%	50%	
Critical and analytic thinking	1%	46%	53%	
Numeracy skills	1%	13%	86%	
Business acumen in problem solving	1%	6%	93%	
Leadership ability	2%	53%	45%	
Attention to detail in solving business problems	1%	42%	57%	
Team work and collaboration skills	1%	50%	49%	
ENTREPRENEURIAL CAPABILITY				
Information discovery, synthesis, retrieval and evaluation skills	1%	11%	88%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information discovery, synthesis, retrieval and evaluation skills • Adaptability/flexibility • Ability to market self and unique skills and talents
Adaptability/flexibility	1%	10%	89%	
Ability to market self and unique skills and talents	1%	19%	80%	
Experience and industry knowledge	1%	19%	80%	
Complex business problem solving	2%	56%	42%	

Innovative thinking and creativity in problem solving for business solutions	1%	15%	84%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experience and industry knowledge • Innovative thinking and creativity in problem solving for business solutions • Application of interdisciplinary knowledge in business problem solving
People skills	1%	46%	53%	
Leadership skills	2%	53%	45%	
Application of interdisciplinary knowledge in business problem solving	1%	11%	88%	

EMPLOYABILITY CAPITAL	Cronbach alpha coefficient (reliability)	Composite reliability	Mean	SD
Workplace skills	.88	.80	4.42 (High)	.49
Entrepreneurial capability	.89	.79	4.26 (High)	.57

WORKPLACE SKILLS	SIGNIFICANTLY AND POSITIVELY PREDICT GRADUATE EMPLOYABILITY QUALITIES GAINED THROUGH CEMS STUDY PROGRAMMES (MODERATE PRACTICAL EFFECT)
Effective communication skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Professionalism • Work experience • Work readiness qualities in terms of <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ personal/intellectual growth in field ○ job-related aptitudes, skills, knowledge and attitude ○ generic transferable skills and attributes required by the job and workplace
Appropriate use of computer systems and software skills	
Critical thinking and analysis skills	
Numeracy skills	
Business acumen in problem solving	
Leadership ability	
Attention to detail in solving business problems	
Team work and collaboration skills	

Other Skills Required in Business and Economics, or Any Other Commerce Related Area of Specialisation

PERSONAL QUALITIES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to speak, write and understand English as a business language • Ability to work independently from supervision/ Autonomy (working independently) • Ability to work cooperatively in teams • Commitment and perseverance • Cognitive ability • Ethical and moral behaviour • Integrity in economics • Life skills: diversity management, emotional intelligence and conflict resolution, negotiation and time management skills • Ability to deal effectively with clients • Ability and mindset toward personal and professional growth and development (life-long learning capability) • Confidence in presentation skills • Customer service/ interpersonal skills and customer interface skills • Social skills and general knowledge awareness - be aware of the social aspect of our country in terms of economic activities and general staff affecting the country in order to make better decisions

STRATEGIC BUSINESS AND PROJECT MANAGEMENT SKILLS

- Generic and strategic business management skills crucial in all jobs in 2020s
- Basic financial knowledge and skills/ Ability to explain financial concepts to non-financial people
- Ability to write and conduct business research
- Project management skills
- Entrepreneurial thought, innovative thinking and creativity in business problem solving
- Policy and strategic plan implementation, evaluation and impact measurement skills
- Knowledge of the economy and the sector
- Administration skills
- Risk Management
- Strategic management
- African economics
- Human resource management and people behaviour
- Ability to interpret legislation

DIGITAL SKILLS/INDUSTRY 4.0

- Critical thinking, digital and financial data analysis, and business problem-solving ability
- Digital literacy
- Computer clouding and SMART office management practices
- Computer systems operations
- Digitization as a skill especially for millennials.
- Fourth Industrial Skills , Digital and Artificial Intelligence skills/Digital business skills
- Government's computers systems (BAS, SAP, Finest, logis & etc
- Business Intelligence System

Section III

Integration of Key Findings – CEMS Student Employability Surveys 2018 & 2019 & CEMS 2020 Employer Survey

Employment Status of CEMS Graduates

CEMS POST-GRADUATE STUDENTS (2018 & 2019) 2018: N = 150; 2019: N = 204	EMPLOYER RECRUITMENT & EMPLOYMENT OF CEMS GRADUATE (2020) (N = 310)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mostly full time employed (average: 70%) • In some form of employment (average: 10%) • Qualification content mostly in line with current job • Employment found while studying (ODEL nature of Unisa is an enabling factor) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited active recruitment of Unisa CEMS graduates • Unisa CEMS graduates employed by survey employer respondents (84%)

Meaning of Graduate Employability

CEMS POST-GRADUATE STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS (2018 & 2019)	EMPLOYER PERCEPTIONS (2020)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students' regard the credibility of the Unisa CEMS qualification as being important for their employability • Students' professional qualities and work experience • Being able to confidently show case job-related aptitudes, generic transferable attitudes, qualities and behaviour required by employers (Graduateness) <p>Note:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Predominant reason for studying at Unisa: flexibility offered by the Unisa ODeL nature enabling them to gain employment and work experience while studying. • The quality and credibility of the Unisa CEMS qualification was of little importance as reason for studying at Unisa. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employers regarded the quality, credibility and reputation of a qualification as important <u>but</u> as less important than the work readiness (graduateness & employability), professionalism and work experience of graduates • Graduates should be sufficiently equipped for workplace (application of skills and qualities to business context) • Qualification content should be relevant to contemporary job sector (keeping track with changes in job sector) • Graduate should demonstrate work readiness • Study programmes should have <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ prepared them for the world of work ○ developed and enabled them to show case their capability to practically and confidently apply discipline knowledge and theory in the business context ○ developed a business orientation, entrepreneurial mindset and skills ○ developed a range of generic, transferable personal and professional skills and qualities required by the workplace (see Section II of the report)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Employers felt strongly that graduates should have developed an entrepreneurial business-oriented mindset and skills in establishing a business to create/craft employment instead of merely focusing on finding a job. This will be the form of employability in Industry 4.0.
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CEMS Graduates' Employability

CEMS POST-GRADUATE STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS (2018 & 2019)	EMPLOYER PERCEPTIONS (2020)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students reported mixed perceptions about their employability: on average, 55% felt confident about their employability and on average, 45% felt less confident about their employability/work readiness 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Predominant positive perceptions of the CEMS graduate's employability/work readiness attributed to the type of student that pursue ODeL studies (certain DIFFERENTIATING QUALITIES) (see Section II of the report) Perception that, generally, the Unisa CEMS graduate can hit the ground running within 6 months of employment

Key Perceptions of Unisa CEMS Programmes

CEMS POST-GRADUATE STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS (2018 & 2019)	EMPLOYER PERCEPTIONS (2020)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Generally, students felt positive about their studies at Unisa CEMS (on average: 70%) Students had mixed feelings about the study programmes preparing them for the world of work and employer expectations/requirements: on average 54% felt positive; 46% felt more could be done Students felt moderately positive that their study programmes enable the development of their employability Students felt moderately positive that their study programmes enable the development of professional qualities and experience, and equipping them with generic, transferable work-ready/employability qualities and skills Students felt that more could be done in enabling them to confidently show case their capability to apply discipline theory/knowledge to practice/real business world context (e.g. request for portfolio – project and competence- based assessments). The teaching and learning emphasis seems to be still too much on theory/knowledge assessment instead of practical application of theory/knowledge to solve complex business problems in innovative ways 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Employers generally assumed that Unisa CEMS qualifications are of quality and credible (however, not a differentiating factor for employing graduates) Employers raised some concerns about administrative issues and strikes, exam papers, and student support matters that negatively impact reputation of Unisa qualification (see Section II) Generally, employers felt positive about Unisa CEMS programmes and the qualities of graduates. <p>(See Section II of this report on the specific experiences of Unisa CEMS graduate- differentiating qualities ascribed to the ODeL nature of programmes and balance between knowledge/theory and application of theory in business context). However, some concerns should be noted (e.g. lack of work exposure)</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regression analysis of the 2019 survey showed that the type of learning (i.e. emphasis on knowledge assessment versus application of knowledge/theory in practice) and learner development (i.e. emphasis on reflexive learning, competency development, and life-long learning) predict (large practical effect) students' perceptions of developing and sustaining their employability. 	
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Key Factors Impacting CEMS Graduates' Employability

CEMS POST-GRADUATE STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS (2018 & 2019)	EMPLOYER PERCEPTIONS (2020)
<p>MARKETABILITY (ENABLING FACTOR) The labour market views qualification as credible/of acceptable quality; acceptable working experience; right competencies, knowledge and skills; employer preferred personal qualities; knowledge, skills and personal qualities gained from study programme are transferable to job and other occupations (graduateness)</p>	<p>SEE SECTION II of this report for detail description. Employers highlighted factors such as</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ODeL nature of programmes • Content of ODeL modules • Specific qualities and skills cultivated through the ODeL nature of graduates' studies • Competence and work-ability of the Unisa CEMS graduate • Work experience of the graduate • Lecturer competence in ensuring PQM and curriculum content relevance; and teaching/assessing applied competencies of employability/work readiness • The general work readiness/work preparedness of the graduate • Programme teaching and learning approach • Graduate capability to apply theory/knowledge to practice/business context • Relevance of curriculum and module content
<p>ENTREPRENEURIAL ORIENTATION (ENABLING FACTOR) Entrepreneurial competencies assisted in finding/creating employment; personal network of contacts; confidence in ability to present and "sell" self to employer; ODeL of Unisa provides flexibility in being entrepreneurial in searching/finding/creating a job and sustaining employability</p>	
<p>GEOGRAPHY/EXPERIENCE/SUPPORT (IMPEDING FACTOR) Lack in working experience; lack career guidance and support in finding employment; limited geographical mobility</p>	
<p>MARKET/SOCIOCULTURAL CONDITIONS (IMPEDING FACTOR) The labour market is saturated and does not require the qualification; labour market does not view the qualification as credible/of acceptable quality; employment conditions are uncertain; parental, social and cultural influences impede options; module content not industry relevant</p>	
<p>LACK OF PERSONAL EMPLOYABILITY CAPABILITIES (IMPEDING FACTOR) Lack right qualifications, competencies, knowledge and skills for available job; lack the right personal qualities that employers are looking for; lack entrepreneurial competencies</p>	

Key Skills Influencing CEMS Graduates' Employability

CEMS POST-GRADUATE STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS (2018 & 2019)	EMPLOYER REQUIREMENTS (2020)
Entrepreneurial business-oriented attributes	<p>SEE SECTION II of this report for detail description. Employers highlighted key skills such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workplace skills: Effective communication skills/Numeracy skills/Business acumen in problem solving • Entrepreneurial capability: Information discovery, synthesis, retrieval and evaluation skills/Adaptability/flexibility/Ability to market self and unique skills and talents/Experience and industry knowledge/Innovative thinking and creativity in problem solving for business solutions/Application of interdisciplinary knowledge in business problem solving • Other: Personal qualities/strategic business and project management skills/and digital/Industry 4.0 skills
Applied strategic business management and project management skills	
Graduateness/employability attributes and skills	
Work experience and work readiness skills (hit the ground running and contribute to innovative business problem solving)	
Qualities of professionalism and life-long learning	
<p>Self-perceived Graduateness Scores:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scholarship (problem solving/decision making skills; enterprising/business skills; analytical/critical thinking skills): Average mean scores • Global/moral citizenship (interactive skills; self-presentation/presenting and applying information skills; ethical/responsible behaviour): High mean scores • Life-long learning (professionalism; goal-directed behaviour; continuous learning): Average mean scores 	

Key Recommendations for Enhancing CEMS Graduates' Employability

CEMS POST-GRADUATE STUDENTS' RECOMMENDATIONS (2018 & 2019)	EMPLOYER RECOMMENDATIONS (2020)
TEACHING AND LEARNING	TEACHING AND LEARNING
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • curriculum content should prepare students for the changing world of work, be industry relevant and enhance students' insight into real-life business needs, challenges and practices in South African and global contexts • emphasise the development of competencies and qualities that enhance students' professionalism, Graduateness, employability and work readiness with due consideration of the changing needs of industry/employers • create learning opportunities that help students develop the capability to apply critical and analytical thinking, research skills, and discipline specific/interdisciplinary knowledge/theory in solving real-life challenging business and job related problems in innovative ways that contribute to business performance • craft applied project and work-based, and real-life case study-based assignments that enable students to apply theory/knowledge and critical, creative thinking to find solutions for real-life business/industry problems 	<p>SEE SECTION II of this report for detail description. Employers highlighted the following key aspects:</p> <p>Relevance of module content: Continuously review and realign module content with changing national and international (global) trends regarding industry and job requirements to ensure graduates' chances of employment in Industry 4.0, and capability to contribute to business and economy</p> <p>Curriculum content: SEE SECTION II of this report for detail description. Recommendations of students are corroborated by employers.</p> <p>Aspects highlighted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adopt a competency-based assessment approach: students need to know how a module helps develop the generic transferable skills and attributes they need for the workplace and how to apply discipline knowledge to the job and workplace • Integrate work-integrated learning such as internships or practicums, for example • Reinforce life-long learning, work ethics, professionalism in the module syllabus and content

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • develop entrepreneurial thought/mindset, knowledge, and skills in setting up own business or practice in area of specialisation • create opportunities for continuous self-reflexive learning on the development of professional work readiness qualities, and Graduateness/employability competencies and qualities • develop capability for self-directed career management and continuous/life-long learning and professional development in the changing world of work context • teach students how to showcase their professionalism, work readiness, and graduateness/employability to prospective employers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure assignments focus on industry solutions for complex business problems using academic/discipline theory as foundation • Utilise real-life case studies to help students develop self-efficacy and skills in applying knowledge/theory to solve issues that affect the performance of business and people in a business • Consider the manner in which is modules are developed. Modules to be developed in such a manner that graduates will be able to develop and showcase their capability to practically and confidently apply discipline knowledge and theory in the business context • Educate and train students on their marketability (employee value proposition), career self-management, and self-presentation skills in employer interviews
<p>ASSESSMENT</p>	<p>ASSESSMENT</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Change current emphasis on knowledge assessment to more applied competency-based assessment in the form of portfolio of evidence that can showcase competencies to employers • Expose students to practice-based assignments and assessment that help them develop the capability and confidence to transfer theory/knowledge to the solving of real-life business and job problems 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assess students on their work readiness as part of the curriculum • Assess students'/graduates' ability to apply their discipline knowledge to real workplace environment; help them develop portfolios of evidence that show case these capabilities to prospective employers • Make assignments and assessment more practical and do not merely test knowledge. Students need to develop the self-efficacy and confidence in applying theory and knowledge to solving real-life business problems. Their ability to apply knowledge in real-life contexts should be a key focus of assignments • Guide students to prepare for examinations in the correct manner rather than to provide them with the previous exam papers. This will allow students to critically think and apply the knowledge they have learnt
<p>INSTITUTIONAL (CEMS): PQM</p>	<p>INSTITUTIONAL (CEMS): PQM & STAFF UPSKILLING</p>
<p>Students expressed satisfaction with current PQM and study programmes. No specific recommendations</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design a module or programme on work preparedness/readiness to help prepare students for world of work, especially that of Industry 4.0 and beyond • Consider including competencies that will allow graduates to demonstrate their learnt entrepreneurial business-oriented mindset and skills in establishing a business to create employment instead of merely finding a job. (Employability and digital skills set in Industry 4.0 and beyond) • Add an introductory module on self-employment, establishing and managing one's own business; shift students' mindsets from notion of finding employment to becoming entrepreneurial in creating employment and running a successful business • Consider online resources and classes on work readiness qualities and skills; e.g. live case studies on

	<p>organisations as part of assessment to prepare soon-to-graduate students for world of work; chat boxes, webinars or online discussions with employers on the qualities and skills they require from graduates</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design modules that introduce students to, and assess them on life skills and workplace skills they need • Revise current PQM to include skills to ensure graduates develop the necessary work readiness skills (such as graduateness and employability) • Ensure measures in place that help lecturers stay upskilled in teaching PQM. Not all lecturers seem to have adequate knowledge and experience of industry, and not all are in touch with the changing needs of jobs and industry. They generally have mostly academic knowledge and do not always have a working knowledge of the real needs of industry. • M&D supervisors should also be aware that their post-graduate students have practical knowledge of workplaces and industry and get frustrated when supervisors are not able to relate their academic knowledge to what is actually happening in industry, or if they are not in touch with shifting trends and concepts in industry. • Academic departments to team up with experts from industry and companies to stay in touch with shifting trends and requirements and adjust/innovate/renew PQM
<p>INSTITUTIONAL (CEMS): SUPPORT</p>	<p>INSTITUTIONAL (CEMS): SUPPORT</p>
<p>Students requested support in career management, job searching, career pathing in changing industry context, and CV and self-presentation to employers in job search process</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduce as part of theoretical studies some work experience/exposure time before graduation • Incorporate practicals (work-integrated learning) to prepare graduates for the workplace by helping them to acquire work-related practical skills • Consider assistance with pre-employment placement assistance • Educate and train students on their marketability (employee value proposition), career self-management, and self-presentation skills in employer interviews • Establish, market and monitor student/graduate career services to inform, advise and support students on aspects of work readiness and employability • Increase use of experts from industry as opposed to academics with little or no practical experience of industry • College should establish strategies to showcase the differentiating qualities of their students/graduates to potential employers • Encourage corporate companies to have graduate/career fairs at the University

Section IV

Proposed CEMS Graduate Employability Strategy

Preamble: Principles of In-Curriculating Graduate Employability

- Improving job prospects and enhancing employability and occupational career development is a key focus and rationale for students entering Higher Education.
- A student-centered focus on occupational careers and employability in the PQM is associated with lower student (especially undergraduate) stress and anxiety about employment and careers, and contributes to student retention and throughput.
- In-curriculum teaching and assessment of student (especially undergraduate) employability and career development have been associated with reduced unemployment, job search times and skills to manage employability and careers on postgraduate level.
- The future of all types of work and employment is uncertain. In Industry 4.0/beyond (including post-COVID19 pandemic) students will increasingly witness major changes in employment; jobs, occupations, and career pathways. Higher Education (and CEMS) need to prepare students for the contemporary and future workforce and nature of employment.
- The CEMS Employer Survey 2020 showed that employers felt strongly that graduates should have developed an entrepreneurial business-oriented mindset and skills in establishing a business to create/craft employment instead of merely focusing on finding a job. This will be the form of employability in post COVID-19 pandemic and Industry 4.0/beyond.
- In-curriculating for Graduate employability requires an appropriate balance between the teaching and assessment of discipline knowledge and addressing the broader transferable Graduateness and work readiness skills and qualities that students will need for their future work and occupational career development.
 - The CEMS postgraduate student surveys (2018 & 2019) highlighted that students felt satisfied with their study programmes and that their employability benefited from especially teaching and assessment that utilise challenging real-life business case-study approaches that demanded critical and creative thinking and problem solving, and the application of discipline knowledge in finding innovative solutions that contribute to business performance. However, the students felt that more could be done to develop their applied competencies (i.e. skills in applying discipline knowledge in real-life work and business context). The emphasis of teaching and assessment seems to still emphasise knowledge assessment on post-graduate level.
 - The CEMS postgraduate student surveys (2018 & 2019) highlighted that students on postgraduate level prefer project-based learning and assessment. Project-based learning is known to facilitate knowledge acquisition and retention, support the development of important work readiness and real-world skills such as solving complex problems, thinking critically, analysing and evaluating information, working cooperatively, and communicating effectively, and for developing flexible knowledge. Project-based learning and portfolio of evidence assessment enable the post-graduate student to showcase their Graduateness and employability capabilities to prospective employers.
- The CEMS postgraduate student surveys (2018 & 2019) and employer survey (2020) highlighted that both students and employers:
 - regarded the quality, credibility and reputation of a qualification as important but as less important than the work readiness (Graduateness & employability), professionalism and work experience of graduates
 - felt strongly that Graduates should be sufficiently equipped for the contemporary and future workplace (application of skills and qualities to business context) and demonstrate work readiness
 - PQM and qualification/module content should be relevant to the contemporary job sector (keeping track with changes in job sector and occupations)
 - Study programmes should have
 - prepared students/graduates for the world of work

- developed and enabled them to showcase their capability to practically and confidently apply discipline knowledge and theory in the business context
 - developed a business orientation, entrepreneurial mindset and skills in contributing to the workplace or even creating new forms of jobs and occupations (employment)
 - developed a range of generic, transferable personal and professional skills and qualities required by the workplace (see Section II of the report)
- Transferable skills learning is not sufficient for raising and future-proofing CEMS graduates' employability in the post COVID-19 pandemic and Industry 4.0/beyond employment market. Curriculating, teaching, learning and assessment should also cultivate a flexible professional purpose mindset that assists students to take responsibility for their employability and occupational career development. Nurturing a professional purpose mindset involves capturing the influence of students' personal values, beliefs and worldviews in giving direction to their life and motivating them to pursue meaningful employment and career goals. A professional purpose mindset commits students to developing a professional future aligned to their own values and future life aspirations. Such a mindset generally provides an internalised rationale for their higher education studies to be drawn upon to provide motivation and perseverance and active engagement in their studies and life-long learning goals.
- For CEMS, in-curriculating, teaching and assessing CEMS students' Graduateness and employability should support the following principles of transformation outlined in **the Unisa Integrated Transformation Strategy (2019)**:
 - "...transformation should mean UNISA will teach its students the best that humanity has produced across disciplines, and from all continents, while anchoring all that in an African context. UNISA should therefore produce a cosmopolitan graduate and boast cosmopolitan African scholars, who are knowledgeable in the world's knowledge systems".
 - **Workstream 2: Student equity, development and achievements**
 - "There should also be increased efforts to provide support for students, so that they may develop into dynamic citizens and eventually exit the university as highly skilled graduates who will contribute to the development of the country"
 - **Workstream 3: Students' living and learning experiences, including their socialisation in a ODeL environment**
 - "Pursuant to achievement of equity, development and increased throughput for students should be efforts to improve the experiences of students at UNISA. This is borne out of the fact that more young students are choosing UNISA as their university of choice. These are young people who live in a technologically advanced world and expect the same from the institution that it should be able to respond to their educational need and deliver such on platforms that they are familiar with"
 - "Reviewing of Teaching and Learning systems, placing an emphasis on enhancing the support provided to students, and to improve the learning experience"
 - "Reviewing Assessment Systems, to improve quality output and therefore contribute to the graduate (skills) pool for the country"

CEMS Graduate Employability Strategy

- The proposed CEMS Graduate Employability Strategy supports the *Unisa Strategic Target 1: Quality educational offerings serving current and future generations through a streamlined and relevant PQM appropriate to a comprehensive university, responsive to current and future societal and stakeholder needs and the unique student profile.*
- The proposed CEMS Graduate Employability Strategy is operationalised in the CEMS/Departmental Operational Plan to ensure active implementation and monitoring of the achievement of the strategy's priority objectives.
- The proposed CEMS Graduate Employability Strategy highlights four key priorities for the medium term (2021 - 2023):

PRIORITY 1: PQM RENEWAL AND TRANSFORMATION

- **ANNUAL PQM REVIEW:** The CEMS PQM and module content should be annually reviewed in consultation with stakeholders such as students, alumni, members from industry and professional bodies for future-proofing its relevance in a rapidly changing world of work
- **OCCUPATION/PROFESSION MAPPING:** The CEMS PQM and modules should be mapped to align with occupations listed on the latest annual version of the national Organising Framework for Occupations (OFO).
 - The OFO is tool used by employers to map jobs and occupational titles, and to inform SETAs about changes in jobs and occupations, and jobs and occupations in high demand in a specific sector. PQM and module mapping with occupations on the OFO will help academics and students better understand the alignment between the CEMS PQM and modules and occupations high in demand, which may help inform students' occupational career development planning.
 - The current Unisa Module Form forms the blueprint for module development and renewal. OFO mapping of the module (i.e. OFO codes and occupations relevant to the module) should be attached as an Appendix to the Module Form. This approach will ensure academics relate the module purpose, outcomes and syllabus to actual occupations in demand in the South African context. OFO occupation mapping is a first step for in-curriculating graduate employability. The OFO mapping process may generate ideas for typical case studies and OER's to be developed.
- **COMPETENCY-BASED CURRICULATING:** A competency-based approach should be followed in the PQM design and module development. Each qualification should have a competency matrix linked to occupations and where applicable, profession which is attached to the module forms of the qualification. In-curriculating graduate employability requires a competency-based approach toward teaching, learning and assessment. Each PQM (qualifications and their module mix offered in a Department) should be reviewed in terms of the
 - OFO listed occupations (and where applicable profession),
 - typical competencies required by the identified occupations with due consideration of the digital era and technological developments influencing job and occupational tasks, the profession-specific competency framework (often as directed by a professional body) that the qualification is teaching and assessing toward student progression and, if applicable, professional registration routes.
 - The qualification module mix should be analysed in terms of which of the modules at which NQF levels of study contribute to the development of specific competencies outlined in the qualification competency matrix. Discipline-occupation/profession specific competencies are developed in a staggered approach across and at different NQF levels of study.
 - Competencies refer to:
 - **Discipline knowledge** which is scaffolded in terms of the various module subject components of the relevant qualification. This exercise will help ensure that the current module subject mix remains relevant to real-world industry needs and may potentially result in further streamlining of the PQM.
 - **Discipline specific skills** relating to the identified occupations and where applicable, profession.
 - **Key generic Graduateness attributes** (see CEMS Graduateness framework) required for all graduates
 - **Key generic professional qualities, mindsets and skills of employability/work readiness** required by employers (see Section II of this report)
 - The module form outcomes and assessment criteria should clearly reflect the competencies relevant to a module
- **ACADEMIC KNOWLEDGE/SKILLS:** Academics should have a working knowledge of the overall purpose of the qualification and how the module mix contributes to specific current and future occupational and job demands and the competencies that need to be developed by a subject. Academics should have a publication record or work experience in the field or module they are involved in to ensure that students are exposed to the most recent literature and current developments in the field.
- **TRANSFORMATION - NEW EMPLOYABILITY MODULES IN CEMS UNDERGRADUATE PQM:** Review CEMS undergraduate PQM to include the following two modules (Note: the occupational mapping and competency-based curriculating process may enable streamlining of the PQM to allow the development/adding of the following two essential employability modules):
 - **First year level:** Develop a new compulsory module across all CEMS undergraduate qualifications. The module should form a prototype of the Africanised approach to and perspective on the world of work (e.g.

African economic and management world of work view). The module’s purpose is to sensitise the undergraduate student to the world of work, and toward the Graduateness, and professional purpose mindsets, values, beliefs, skills and attributes required to showcase work readiness for employability. The module content could include the importance of an entrepreneurial mindset and developing entrepreneurial and business knowledge and skills in Industry 4.0/beyond. The module should be developed by a CEMS interdisciplinary African team of subject experts on the African approach/perspective on the world of work with due consideration of employer requirements of graduates. The Africanised prototype module may help generate innovative development of OER’s and study materials that serve as an example for other CEMS modules. **NOTE: Suggestion - a current CEMS signature module could be adapted/replaced to accommodate the need for this new module.**

- **Third year level:** Develop a new prototype Africanised compulsory module across all CEMS undergraduate qualifications. The module should form a prototype of the Africanised approach to and perspective on human capacity development. The purpose of the module is to guide the third year student on developing a life-long learning mindset and the capabilities to manage their employability and occupational career development. The module should educate and train students on their marketability (employee value proposition), career self-management, and self-presentation skills in employer interviews. The module could serve as the formal assessment of student Graduateness and work readiness in the CEMS undergraduate PQM. The module should be developed by a CEMS interdisciplinary African team of subject experts on the African approach/philosophy on human capacity development with due consideration of employer requirements of graduates. The Africanised prototype module may help generate innovative development of OER’s and study materials that serve as an example for other CEMS modules. Note: Currently the IOP undergraduate PQM has a second year module (IOP2605: Human Capacity Development) that could be considered for renewal into a full prototype Africanised module to be presented at third year level.

PRIORITY 2: ENHANCED TEACHING, LEARNING & ASSESSMENT

- The teaching, learning and assessment approach of each module should refocus on developing the discipline subject-specific knowledge and competencies through learning and assessment opportunities that enable the application of transferable graduateness and employability skills and mindsets to solving real-life work and business problems typically relevant to identified occupations. The NQF level descriptors should be used as tool to scaffold the teaching and assessment at the appropriate level of study.
 - Expose students to practice-based assignments and assessment that help them develop the capability and confidence to transfer theory/knowledge to the solving of real-life business and job problems. Ensure assignments focus on industry solutions for complex business problems using academic/discipline theory as foundation
 - Utilise real-life case studies to help students develop self-efficacy and skills in applying knowledge/theory to solve issues that affect the performance of business and people in a business
 - Consider the manner in which is modules are developed. Modules to be developed in such a manner that graduates will be able to develop and showcase their capability to practically and confidently apply discipline knowledge and theory in the business context.
 - Consider using various technological platforms in teaching and assessment. This will ensure students become comfortable with technology, which is an essential employability skill.
- A balanced approach should be followed at the various NQF levels of study in terms of knowledge assessment and applied competency assessment:

Study Level	% Discipline knowledge	% Applied competency development (transferable skills in applying discipline knowledge in real-life work and business context)
Undergraduate: Year 1	80%	20%
Undergraduate: Year 2	60%	40%
Undergraduate: Year 3	40%	60%
Postgraduate	20%	80%

- Moderation of exam papers should include as additional criterion the evaluation of the balance between knowledge versus applied competency assessment.
- Alternative forms of assessment such as project-based learning in the form of portfolios of evidence should be considered at **third year exit level and postgraduate level**. Project-based learning and portfolio of evidence assessment enable the post-graduate student to showcase their Graduateness and employability capabilities to prospective employers.

**PRIORITY 3: TRANSFORMATION - STUDENT LIVING AND LEARNING EXPERIENCES, INCLUDING THEIR SOCIALISATION
IN AN ODEL CONTEXT**

- Analyse CEMS PQM in terms of industry-relevant career and employability prospects across the CEMS disciplines
- Establish a CEMS student induction programme which enhances student awareness of career prospects offered by CEMS programmes (e.g. induction programme, web and formal brochure communication; website blogs/discussion forums/workshops on career and work readiness/employability awareness)
- Establish, market and monitor student/graduate career services to inform, advise and support students on aspects of work readiness and employability
- Introduce students to career and employability counseling services offered by Unisa Directorate: Counselling and Career Development
- Arrange career fairs involving alumni and employers
- Arrange seminars and conferences with industry experts as speakers
- Encourage corporate companies to have graduate/career fairs at the University.

PRIORITY 4: UNDERGRADUATE EMPLOYABILITY RESEARCH

- Conduct a CEMS undergraduate survey to assess (Note: the survey may inform the development of the new Africanised world of work module)
 - Industry 4.0/beyond world of work knowledge and work readiness of the undergraduate
 - Employment and career development mindsets and worldviews
 - Digital and entrepreneurial/business efficacy

CEMS Graduate Employability Strategy: Operational Plan

Objectives	College/Department Objective	College/Department Actions	Risk	Mitigation Action	2021 – 2023 Target/Milestones
Streamlined programme offerings and PQM	Offer and develop approved College PQM and phase-out specified programmes and modules	Annually review PQM and module content for industry 4.0/beyond relevance in collaboration with stakeholders from industry, professional bodies and students (ensure future-proofing relevance of PQM for graduate employability)	Workload and stakeholder availability may impede annual reviews	Continuous formal communication with stakeholders on changing graduate employability needs (e.g. Advisory Boards)	First Departmental PQM review reports due in 2022
		Conduct PQM occupation/profession mapping for graduate employability	Recommendation may compete with other PQM activities	Consultation with PQM owners to ensure cooperation/ buy-in Engage DCDT to assist with training of academics	Develop examples (IOP and HRM): due 2021/2022 All departments: PQM occupation mapping reports due in 2023
		Conduct competency-based curricula for Graduate employability	Recommendation may compete with other PQM activities	Consultation with PQM owners to ensure cooperation/ buy-in Integrate PQM occupation mapping and competency-based curricula for graduate employability in module development schedules Engage DCDT to assist with training of academics	Develop examples (IOP and HRM): due 2021/2022 All departments: PQM occupation mapping reports due in 2023
		Enhance academic knowledge/skills in PQM occupation/profession mapping and competency-based curricula for graduate employability	Recommendation may compete with other PQM activities	Communication and guidelines on PQM occupation/ profession mapping and competency-based curricula for graduate employability Engage DCDT to assist with training of academics	Communication and guidelines Communication and guidelines 2021/2022
		Develop two new undergraduate CEMS interdisciplinary prototype Africanised Graduate employability modules to (1) sensitise students to world of work (Year 1) and (2) assess their human capacity development, work readiness, employability and Graduateness (Year 3) (CEMS interdisciplinary team of African subject experts)	Recommendation may compete with other PQM activities (module development and PQM streamlining)	Consultation with PQM owners to ensure cooperation/ buy-in Integrate module development in CEMS module development schedule Allocate resources for module development Engage DCDT to assist with training of academics	2021: Identify modules to be adapted (e.g. current CEMS signature module and IOP Human Capacity Development module) 2021: Identify team of subject experts and briefing Start module development 2022 2023: Modules developed for implementation 2024
	Conduct graduateness/employability survey to ensure contextually relevant and appropriate PQM	Conduct an undergraduate Employability survey	Recommendation may compete with other curriculum transformation priorities	College implementation strategy for implementation	2021 as per research schedule

1.3 Enhanced teaching processes	Implement the ODeL business model and ensure curriculum transformation for teaching and learning into undergraduate modules	Apply in-curriculating competency-based approach for Graduate employability and Graduateness in teaching, learning and assessment	Academics may need training	Allocate resources for training Engage DCDT to assist with training of academics	2021 - 2023 Attachments to Module Forms PQM occupation map and competency matrix
		Moderate % knowledge versus applied competency formative and summative assessment at year 1, year 2, year 3 and post-graduate level	Academics may need training	Allocate resources for training Engage DCDT to assist with training of academics	2021 - 2023 Exam Moderation reports
		Integrate Graduate employability development in all QA and evaluation processes	Recommendation may compete with other QA activities	Consultation with QA owners to ensure cooperation/ buy-in	2021 - 2023 Exam reports QA evaluation reports
Transformation dimension: Student living and learning experiences, including their socialisation in an ODeL context	Student living and learning experience	Arrange and market Graduate employability awareness Services: Student induction programme alumni, and employer career fairs, seminars Online brochures, webinars, video clips	Lack of capacity in College	College strategy to distribute resources	2021 - 2023 Student feedback Marketing plan

