**TASK 1**

**Group Task:** For each stage of the Award design it so that the value of the Award process is being conveyed

**How to convey the value through…advertising the Award**

* Social media
  + Create a Facebook page for leaders to share ideas.
  + Social media e.g. Facebook and Twitter. Set up a # for the Edinburgh Award on Twitter – this could be used throughout the Award scheme.
* Collaborate with other staff members
  + Create slides for lecturers to use to highlight the Award to students.
  + Create informative training sessions for staff.
  + Email or create a letter to send to key contacts (lead academics/personal tutors).
* Language
  + Be careful of the choice of language used to promote the Award.
* Use employers
  + Ask employers to create videos to show why they value the Award.
* Create a hook
  + Recognise the benefits the Award offers and promote these (CV boost, HEAR transcript, building a community).
* Use the right channels
  + Use University newsletters to advertise.
  + Use the right channels to communicate the Award and research what the most appropriate channels are.
  + Use word of mouth.
* Use success stories to promote
  + Over 90% of students completing the Award would recommend it to a friend – which shows students are getting value from taking part. More statistics would help to promote the Award.
  + Use former completing student voices.
  + Use videos and quotes.
  + Have testimonials from students captured once they have completed the Award.

**How to convey the value at…Input 1**

* Compiling and understanding skills…
  + Ask students to draw characteristics required to execute particular roles e.g. a good rep would be drawn with big ears for good listening.
  + Focus on promoting skills used outside of the students’ academic careers. Encourage the point that a degree is not everything and wider skills help with future employment.
  + Break down student activities to understand the skills which are required (this could be done through interactive games or discussions).
  + Focus on mind-set – emotional intelligence and rethinking how to do things/how to think about what you’re doing.
* Selling activity
  + Have students participate in a 1 minute elevator pitch task and have peer groups offer feedback.
* Choosing skills
  + Encourage students to pick skills they need to improve for their role and not skills they already excel in – they are more likely to benefit from the Award this way.
* Use Award alumni
  + Have a completing student attend the input session and speak about their development. It may be worth inviting a student who completed a different version so that the value of the Award is understood in a wider context.
* Introduction to reflection
  + Have students complete an introductory module on reflection before attending the session so they already have general awareness of what is required of them.
* Use employers
  + Have employers attend sessions to promote the value of the Award.
* Set expectations
  + Ask students what their hopes and fears are for the Award.

**How to convey the value at…Input 2**

* Guest speakers
  + Use engaging guest speakers.
* Peer learning
  + Have students share reflections – learning from peers about their development.
* Focus on value for future employment
  + Promote CV boosting skills – not just academic skills.
  + Emphasise the importance of reflection for future career development.
* Supplement with reminder of value via email
  + As this session tends to be held online it is difficult to keep students momentum going through reinforcing the value of the Award. Sending an email to students reiterating the value may be useful here.
* Collaborate between versions
  + Useful if a range of Input 2 online resources could be shared between versions – may help the students realise the value of the Award in a wider context.
* Encourage students to commit to their development
  + Remind students in this session that they have to stick with the skills they picked at the beginning of the process and that there is value in challenging themselves to work on tricky skills.
  + Reiterate that the Award is for reflection of skill development and not for the activity the student is completing. An example of a good reflection could be reviewed in this session - this would help to demonstrate what is expected of the students.
    - Resources to help with this are available under ‘How to structure reflection’ on this webpage - <https://www.ed.ac.uk/edinburgh-award/information-for-staff/resources-for-staff>

**How to convey the value at…Input 3**

* Focus on the value of the Award experience
  + Emphasising how to use reflection to talk about skills on CVs and in interviews.
  + Having a recording by the Careers Service available to all versions which discusses interviews and CV development in relation to the Award.
  + Practice interview sessions. Work in groups of 3 and switch between roles (interviewer, interviewee, and observer). Gives students the chance to discuss the value of the Award in an interview setting.
  + Reiterating the association between the students experience and the skills which they have developed through reflection.
* Collaborate across versions
  + Getting participants from different Award schemes to come together to witness the wider impact of the Award.
* Move away from just written reflection
  + Videos and photos could be shared between students regarding their experiences here. This will encourage students to speak about what they did and how they developed throughout their experience.
* Compare reality to expectations
  + Reflecting on hopes and fears which were experienced at the start of the Award programme by students.
* Peer learning
  + Having students who have completed the leadership version of the Award (if there is one available) come to the session and provide advice to students regarding their final reflective report.
  + Students create notes on final reflection and swap with a peer to discuss their journey.

**How to convey the value at the…close of the Award/after input 3**

* Congratulations email
  + Detailing what was hoped students would get out of the process.
* The Award reception
  + It would be nice to see cohorts together during the reception or meeting as a group after or before to reinforce the feeling of community.
* Peer feedback
  + It may be possible to have returning students to the Award give this feedback (students on leadership programmes where they exist).
* Point towards other resources
  + Make students aware of the other programmes around the university which encourage skill development and will provide future support if required.

**How to convey the value through…communications between inputs**

* Support in between inputs
  + coaching between sessions
  + Introduce a buddy system to match up students from different programmes. Students could share their experience and reflect throughout the course together.
* Send additional communications
  + Analyse when the biggest drop outs happen and send extra communication during this time.
  + Produce statistics about the Award to demonstrate its success. For example, students who complete the Edinburgh Award do X, Y and Z and remind students of this.
* Plan deadlines in advance
  + Plan deadlines taking into account key university deadlines so there is no clash (this applies primarily to school based Award versions).

**TASK 2**

**First Group Task:** Produce recommendations for staff running one or more Edinburgh Award Inputs online.

**Platforms currently used to deliver Inputs**

* Collaborate
  + Input sessions can be held online. Students are given multiple times when these sessions will be run and it is their responsibility to sign up and take part in the session. Students attendance is automatically recorded when they enter the Collaborate session.
    - <https://www.ed.ac.uk/information-services/learning-technology/communication/collaborate>
* MyCareerHub
  + Students’ progress through the Award can be tracked online.
* Learn

**What works well?**

* Flexibility to suit student
  + Online is flexible as students can use the online resources when they are ready and do not have a specific date to attend a session which might conflict with other commitments.
* Resource repository
  + Online sessions make it easier to link students to certain resources.
  + Using a single online platform means that all student information and submissions can be held in one place.
* Scale
  + Online sessions make it easier to cope with the expansion of an Award.
* Develops community
  + Online sessions can help to build a student community by enabling students to interact through webinars and skype. This is particularly helpful for students who are carrying out their activity off campus.
  + Students can use online platforms to help with their reflection throughout the Award. By creating an online blog students can track their progress through the Award and view other student blogs to share ideas and comments about their different experiences. This creates a sense of community and enables students to create a bank of reflections which will help with their final reflective submission.
* Skills for staff are transferable
  + Discovering new platforms and learning how to navigate them may be helpful for future projects.
* Independent learning
  + Holding input sessions online makes student learning self-directed and allows students to be greater independent learners.
* Gives initial introduction
  + Directing students to the website gives students a first insight into the Award and helps them prepare for input 1.

**Areas for improvement…**

* Could confuse students
  + There may be a risk that using multiple online platforms will cause complications and confuse students and tutors, if they have never engaged with these platforms before.
* Training for staff
  + Tutors could be provided with additional training on online systems so they are aware of the options which are available to them and what would be best suited to their practice.
* Lack of student engagement and community
  + Online sessions reduce contact between tutors and students. There is a risk that students will lose engagement and forget the value of the Award.
  + When students are regularly meeting face to face for input sessions and workshops they will become more familiar with each other. This may be lost if input sessions are primarily run online.

**Second Group Task:** Piece together the best practice from across the group to design a really strong face to face Input 1 session

**What works well?**

* Style of session
  + Interactive activities
* Face to face
  + Having a face to face input 1 session is the first step for building a community between these students.
* Pitching
  + Some versions include a development pitch within input 1. Here there is a focus on skills which students are planning to develop, why these skills have been picked and how they will develop these skills (1 minute pitch).
* Providing introduction ahead of the session
  + By indicating to students to view the Edinburgh Award website before the input 1 session can cause greater understanding and conversations within this session.
* Venue
  + Booking a venue which suits the amount of students who are attending the session. This is important as tutors may want to deliver the session formally in a lecture theatre or in a teaching room with space for students to complete group work and interact.
* Timing
  + Evening sessions tend to be more popular with students along with food

**What could be improved?**

* Providing introduction ahead of the session
  + The input 1 session can be ‘dry’ and ‘bossy’ as there are a certain amount of steps which need to be covered. It would be better if there was introductory information online, which students could review before the session to allow more time for interaction and activities.
* Students encouraged to treat the Award like an academic course
  + There is an issue that students are not treating the Award like a module, as many students have a relaxed approach to this course causing late emails and submissions. This needs to be taken seriously at the outset to ensure students take ownership of their journey throughout the Award.
* Need to convey requirements and value
  + Balancing not wanting to overwhelm students with requirements of the Award with downplaying the Award and devaluing it in order to reassure students.
* Conveying the value
  + Conveying the value of the Award more clearly in input 1 so that students know what they are working towards which may lead to fewer drop outs throughout the process.
* Use Award alumni
  + Bring alumni to sessions to provide an insight into life after graduation and how they have used reflection in the past and currently to better their career.
  + Have students read or watch testimonials from completing students.
* Use interactive activities
  + More interactive activities. For example Lego cards task. The Lego cards contain characters which are dressed for a specific occupation/activity. Students decide on the skills which are required for each particular Lego character.
  + More creative activities. For example creating collages and role plays.
  + Create an interesting icebreaker. For example, myth-busting – what do you know and what do you want to know?
  + End the session with a kahoot quiz to reinforce specific learning goals and values.
    - <https://kahoot.com/>
* Use employers
  + Have employers attend the session to speak about the value of the Award.
* Encourage resilience
  + Introduce the concept of ‘pivoting’ (being flexible and resilient). It is important for students to realise that things do not always go as planned and it is the ability to learn from these situations and bounce back which enable us to progress.