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STEPPING STONES TO EMPLOYABILITY FOR DISTANCE LEARNERS

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Employability from health professions programmes is generally considered to be high; yet, one should not forget the complex notion of employability. In general, programmes aim to make students employable with a clearer understanding of graduate skills. Yet this is not always visible to students and so their ability to tap into this when required is not maximised. This is further exaggerated with students who are undertaking courses via distance learning. Although distance learning offers a chance to work and learn at the same time that is flexible to them and suits their personal needs, there is conflict between being a student whilst also working as an employee. For these students, employability is a conundrum which needs to be understood in a far more inclusively nuanced way. The voices of part-time distance learners need to be heard by policy makers and should inform open universities' continuing efforts to enable vulnerable and marginalised learners to access Higher Education.

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