

AEME Presentation

Do graduating Events Management students perceive transformative benefits from experiential learning opportunities on a university's public events programme?

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Overview:

- August 2010: The Academy of Music & Theatre Arts at Falmouth University launched public programme
- Executive Producer 2011 - 2017
- Case study of 50 graduating 2018 students across two courses
- Considers student perceptions on the transformative value and impact of experiential, or “hands on”, learning.



Research Methodology

- Primary research in the form of online questionnaires was carried out with a sample group of fifty students
- BA(Hons) Creative Events Management & BA(Hons) Music, Theatre & Entertainment Management
- Eleven questions prompted a response using the Likert Scale
- One open question was posed to elucidate qualitative information
- A range of ethical principles were considered and limitations of this case study identified including the sample size

Experiential Learning

- ***‘An increasingly valued form of pedagogy in higher education’***; Qualters (2010 and Kolb & Kolb 2005) which demonstrates ***‘stronger student learning outcomes’***; potentially enhancing value for money
- ***‘The importance of ‘real-world’ authentic learning experiences is highlighted within and across disciplines and warrant further attention.’*** Evans, Muijas & Tomlinson 2015. 34)
- Falmouth students benefitted from opportunities to gain direct experiences, the results of which are ***‘often concrete, easily identifiable and applicable’*** (Perrin J, 2014. 1)

Approaches to Experiential Learning & Assessment

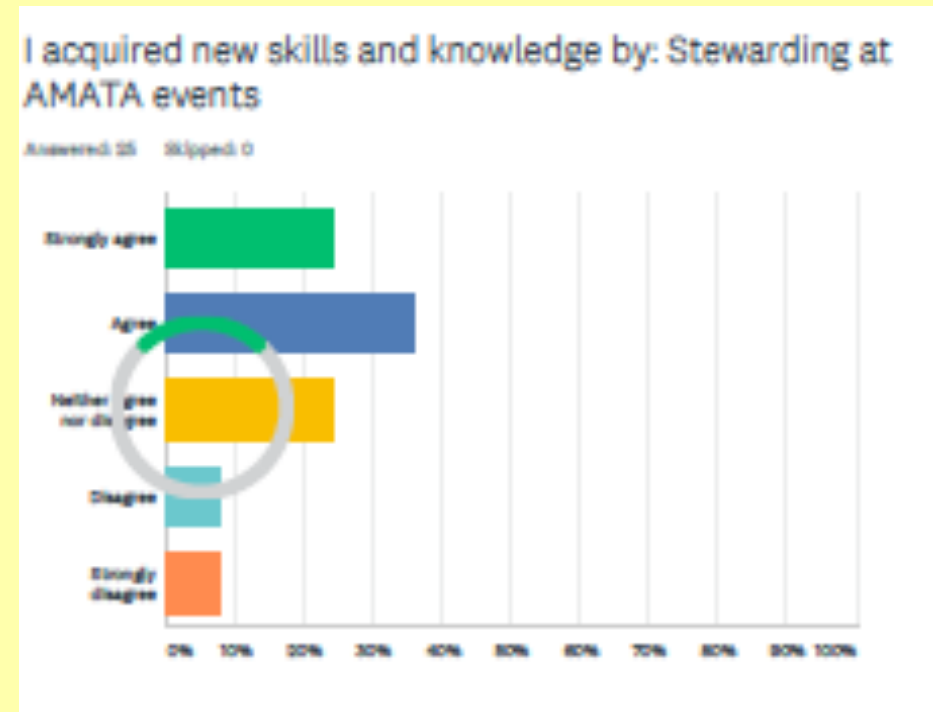
- The developmental approach used by universities may be; ***‘the difference between experiential education programs that enhance student learning and those that do not.’*** Austin & Rust (2015. 145)
- ***‘Literature relating to experiential learning demonstrated the importance of a concrete experience as a crucial component of experiential learning’*** Clark, Threeton & Ewing. J (2010)
- Yates, Wilson & Kendra (2015. 18) identify; ***‘the need to study the connection of teaching methods with compatible assessment methods’***

General discussion on our institutional approach to the Public Programme:

- Hosts student & public events over 8 years as a learning vehicle for students. Opportunities included:
- Stewarding at events
- 1st year tech inductions
- Shadowing the AMATA Producer
- Taking in-house placements
- Programming extra-curricular events into AMATA
- Running assessed events in AMATA
- Using Ticketsolve box office system
- Working with AMATA technicians AND production staff on live events

Q1. Stewarding at AMATA Events

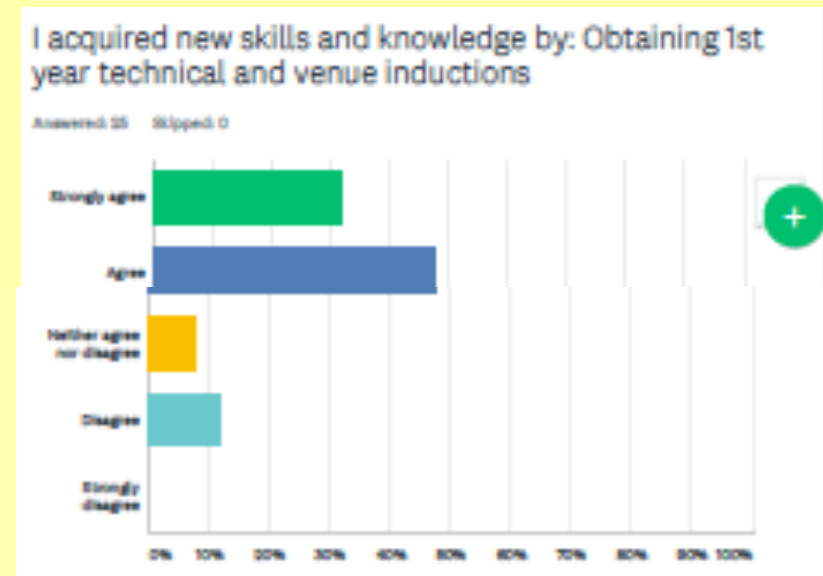
- **6 (24.00%) Strongly Agree**
- **9 (36.00%) Agree**
- **6 (24.00%) Neither Agree nor Disagree**
- **2 (8%) Disagree**
- **2 (8%) Strongly Disagree**
- 25 Total Respondents



- *‘Stewarding several events in my first year really turned me off wanting to volunteer again (I spent the whole of one event just opening and closing doors for people...!) I would have loved my first sessions to be more varied e.g. box office, technical set-up, artist liaison.’ Respondent 14*

Q2. 1st Year tech and venue inductions

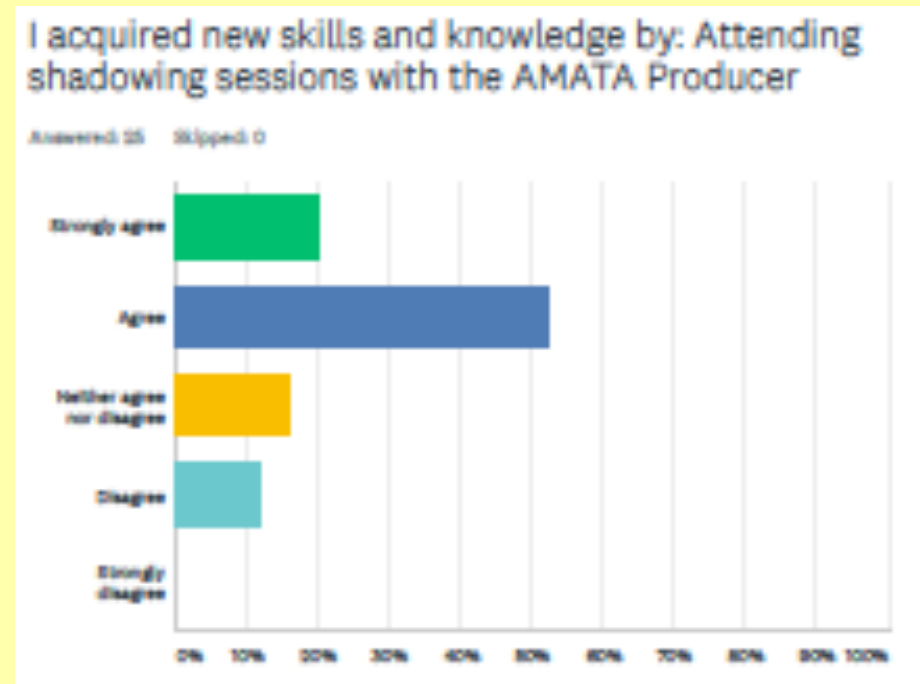
- **8 (32.00%) Strongly Agree**
- **12 (48.00%) Agree**
- 2 (8.00%) Neither Agree nor Disagree
- 3 (12%) Disagree
- 0 (0%) Strongly Disagree
- 25 Total Respondents



- *“Coming to Falmouth with no experience in management, the opportunities created by AMATA helped me to gain basic knowledge of the industry.” Respondent 15*

Q3. Shadowing the AMATA Producer

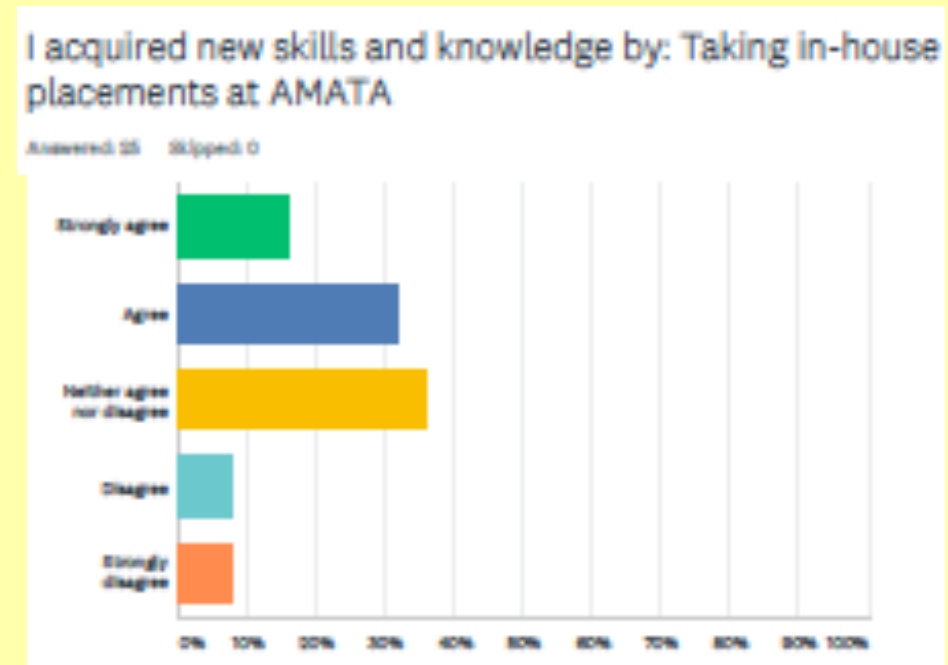
- **5 (20.00%) Strongly Agree**
- **13 (52.00%) Agree**
- **4 (16.00%) Neither Agree nor Disagree**
- **3 (12%) Disagree**
- **0 (0%) Strongly Disagree**
- **25 Total Respondents**



- *'I think being able to work with the team in AMATA was so important as it gave us a lot of practical knowledge as well as contacts that we could call on when we needed help.'* Respondent 1

Q4. In-house Placements

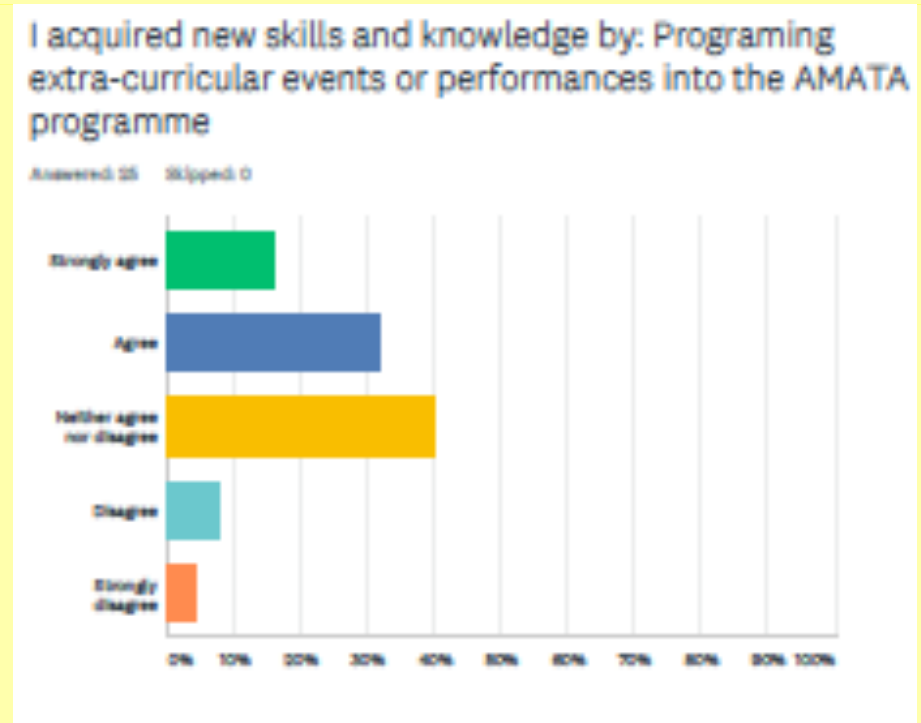
- **4 (16.00%) Strongly Agree**
- **8 (32.00%) Agree**
- **9 (36.00%) Neither Agree nor Disagree**
- **2 (8%) Disagree**
- **2 (8%) Strongly Disagree**
- 25 Total Respondents



- *‘Personally I lacked engagement however I put that to not fault of the AMATA however even without engaging I still got a good impression of professional practice within a venue setting’ Respondent 3*

Q5. Programming extra-curricular events

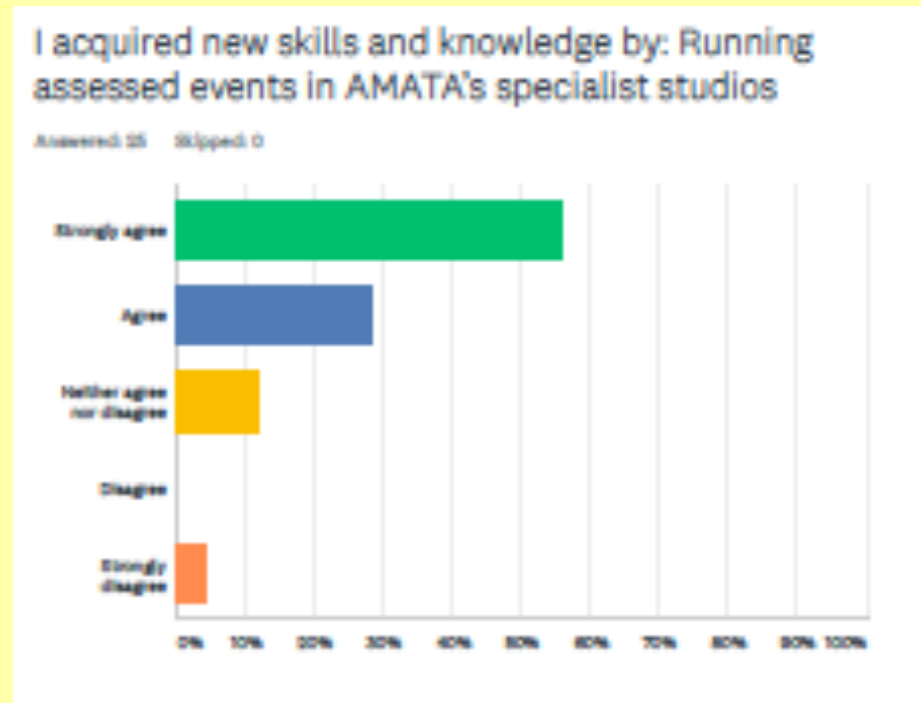
- **4 (16.00%) Strongly Agree**
- **8 (32.00%) Agree**
- **10 (40.00%) Neither Agree nor Disagree**
- **2 (8%) Disagree**
- **1 (4%) Strongly Disagree**
- 25 Total Respondents



- *Through the support of AMATA, I have been able to subsequently support the student bar. My team have engaged with many of the staff in AMATA to help advise technical teams and offer equipment for rental on these events. The business, supported through AMATA had led me on to academic success. Respondent 4*

Q6. Assessed events in specialist studios

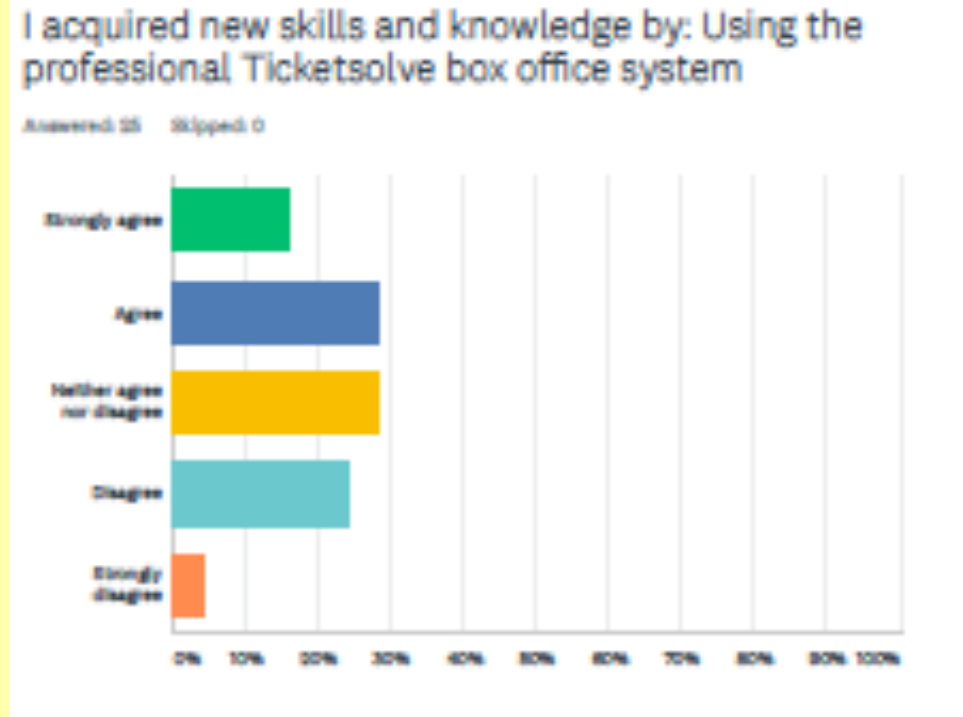
- **14 (56.00%) Strongly Agree**
- **7 (28.00%) Agree**
- **3 (12.00%) Neither Agree nor Disagree**
- **0 (0%) Disagree**
- **1 (4%) Strongly Disagree**
- **25 Total Respondents**



- (Appreciated being) – *‘able to work with other students of different disciplines meaning opportunities for collaboration - use of flexible spaces with on-hand tech team was valuable.’* Respondent 6

Q7. Using Ticketsolve box office system

- **4 (16.00%) Strongly Agree**
- **7 (28.00%) Agree**
- **7 (28.00%) Neither Agree nor Disagree**
- **6 (24%) Disagree**
- **1 (4%) Strongly Disagree**
- 25 Total Respondents



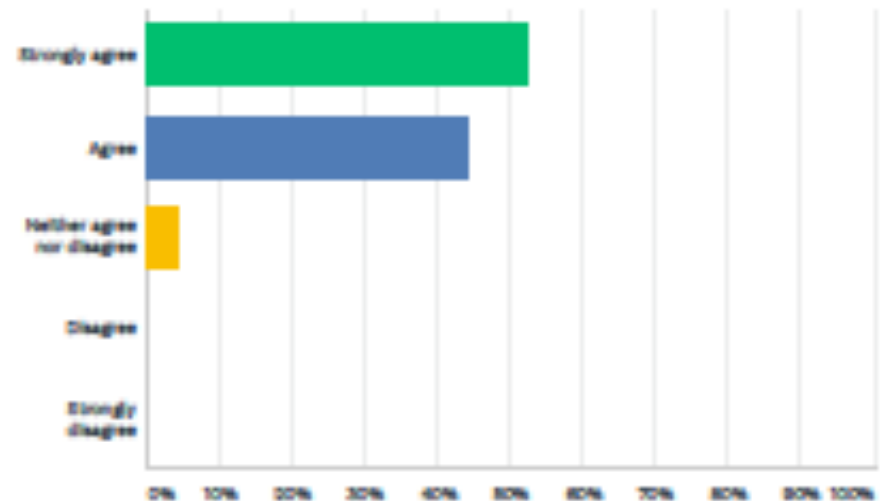
- (Gaining) *'skills in: venue management, health and safety, audience control, marketing, box office management and tech equipment.'*
Respondent 2

Q8. Working with AMATA technicians

- **13 (52.00%) Strongly Agree**
- **11 (44.00%) Agree**
- 1 (4.00%) Neither Agree nor Disagree
- 0 (0%) Disagree
- 0 (0%) Strongly Disagree
- 25 Total Respondents

I acquired new skills and knowledge by: Working with AMATA technicians on live events

Answered: 25 Skipped: 0



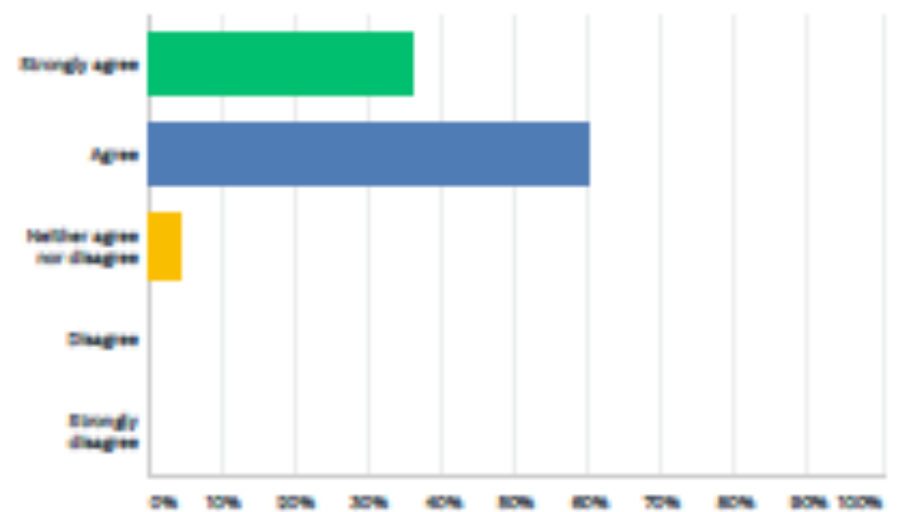
- *‘Overall, I have learnt lots from the tech team at AMATA since 1st year inductions all the way to my third year event. I have gained the basic tech knowledge what has come in very useful within the work world however I do wish sessions with tech and AMATA were more compulsory, thorough...’* Respondent 11

Q9. Working with AMATA Production Staff

- **9 (36.00%) Strongly Agree**
- **15 (60.00%) Agree**
- **1 (4.00%) Neither Agree nor Disagree**
- **0 (0%) Disagree**
- **0 (0%) Strongly Disagree**
- **25 Total Respondents**

I acquired new skills and knowledge by: Working with AMATA production staff on live events

Answered: 25 Skipped: 0



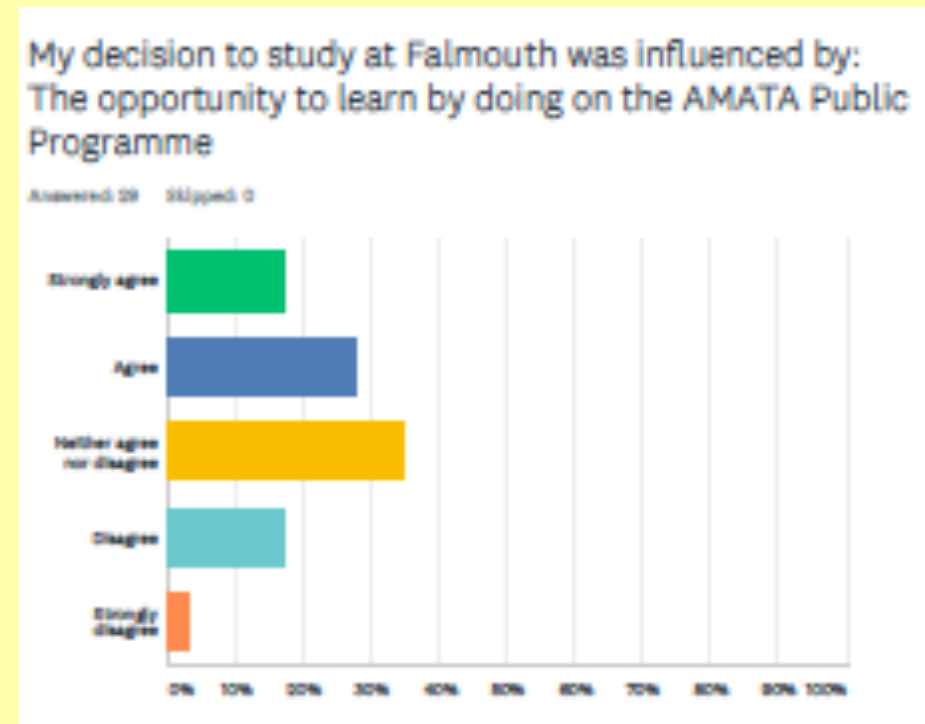
- *'My engagement with the professional staff and volunteering for the public programme has allowed me to be put in real life scenarios and learn how to tackle potential challenges on the spot, all while learning new things from the staff, whether it be technical training or shadowing the production team.'* Respondent 8

Discussion of emerging themes

- **Respondents valued ‘concrete’ and applicable experiential learning** *‘Great to work with different staff and AMATA teams with events, experiencing ‘real world opportunities’* Respondent 12
- **Within the programme, different approaches were perceived as having variable transformative value** *‘I was involved with the AMATA public programme very little... however, now I feel it would have been a valuable long term placement ... The AMATA building has been great ... I especially like how we have access to all the tech throughout our three years.* Respondent 17
- **The importance of a customer facing attitude** *‘Helpful and nice’* Respondent 9 **VS** *‘sometimes with the technicians I do feel like we’re treated lower than them’* Respondent 10

But ... did any of this influence applicants acceptance on the course?

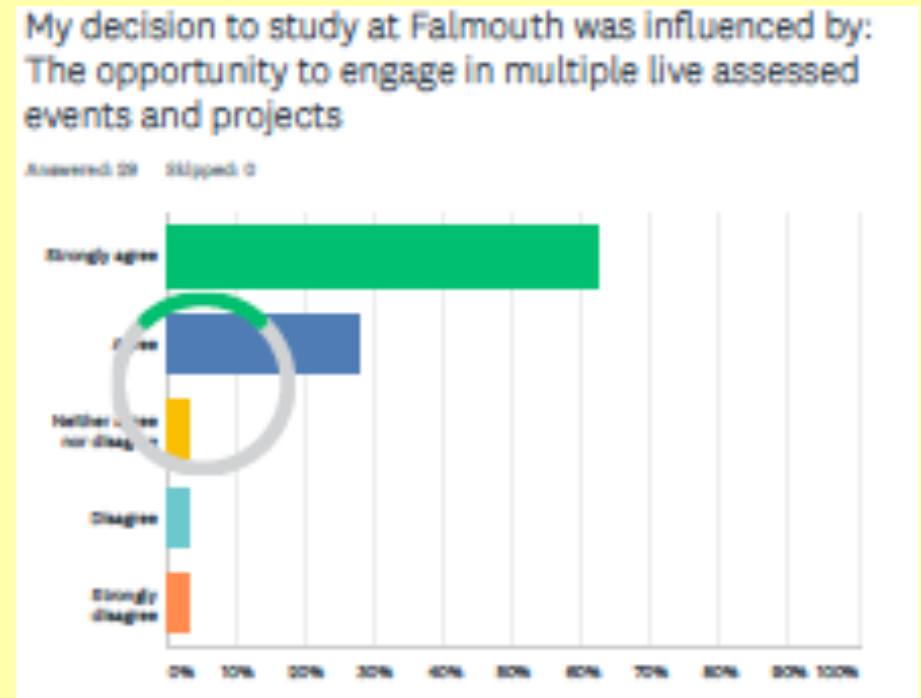
- 5 (17.24%) Strongly Agree
 - 8 (27.59%) Agree
 - 10 (17.24%) Neither Agree nor Disagree
 - 5 (17.24%) Disagree
 - 1 (3.45%) Strongly Disagree
- 29 Total Respondents



Only inconclusively!?

So ... what significantly influenced acceptances on the course?

- **18 (62.07%) Strongly Agree**
 - **8 (27.59%) Agree**
 - 1 (3.45%) Neither Agree nor Disagree
 - 1 (3.45%) Disagree
 - 1 (3.45%) Strongly Disagree
- 29 Total Respondents



Live events/projects!

Identification of potential for good practice

- 1st Year tech and venue inductions
- Linkage of experiential learning to assessment (EG for tech inductions) to drive engagement/perceived value for students
- Assessed events in specialist studios
- Working with AMATA technicians
- Working with AMATA production staff
- Furthermore; multiple assessed live events & projects appear attractive to applicants

Conclusion

- Respondents were very positive about live assessed events and working with professional teams in specialist facilities with clear linkage to assessments
- Much less positive about stewarding, in house placements and utilising the box office system
- Developmental approach does appear impactful
- Further research opportunities arise around live assessed events?
- *'It gave me a chance to gain hands on experience and to learn outside of the classroom. Preparing me for real world experiences.'* Respondent 18

Thank you

- **Do you have any questions?**
- **Follow me at:**
<https://www.tumblr.com/blog/futurefestivals>

List of References

- Austin, J.A. & Rust D.Z. (2015) *Developing an Experiential Learning Program: Milestones and Challenges*. International Journal of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education. International Society for Exploring Teaching & Learning
- Clark, R, Threeton, W & Ewing. J (2010) *The Potential of Experiential Learning Models in Career & Technical Education and Career and Technical Teacher Training* Journal of Career and Technical Education
- Evans, Muijas & Tomlinson (2015) *Transforming Teaching, Inspiring Learning*. Higher Education Academy. York
- Perrin, J (2014) *Features of Engaging and Empowering Experiential Learning Programs for College Students* Journal of University Teaching and Learning Practice University of Wollongong
- Yates T, Wilson, J & Purton, K (2015) *Surveying Assessment in Experiential Learning: A Single Campus Study*. The Canadian Journal for the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning