



Placing Student Off The Grid  
*Working Project*

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# Defining The Problem

Method

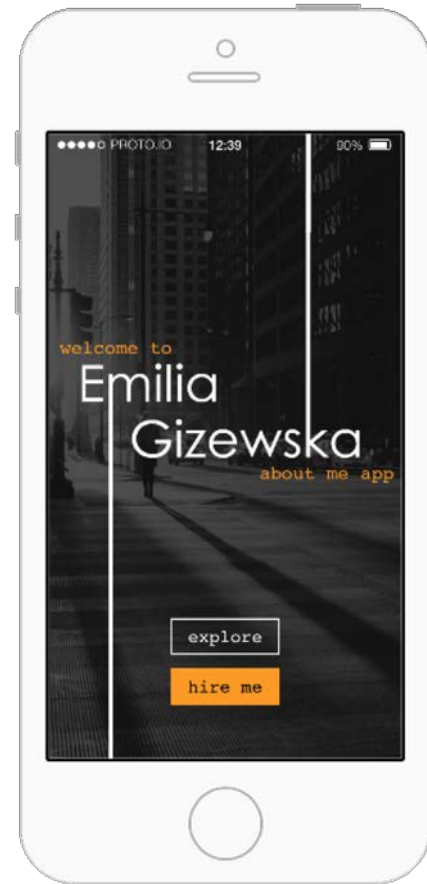
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# Impetus

**Employer requirements are becoming more sophisticated** as the demands on what they offer broaden too. Employers will not usually be looking for just CVs or conventional portfolios from potential creative staff. **They will be looking for approaches and work that demonstrate, above all, awareness of the employers' creative and commercial aims.**

Summary Report on 'Your Futures in Digital Media' – An Employability Event held between 14th and 17th January 2014. Digital Union and Northumbria University.



First student approaches relied on gimmicks rather than truly demonstrating what they could offer.

# Tensions...

- **For the students**, the sense of competition for places at a formative stage in their personal development can feel overwhelming and potentially negative.
- **For employers** finding the right student to join an established team and the time to mentor them are two key challenges in order to create a successful placement.
- **For tutors** or dedicated placement staff, the pressure to prepare and place everyone in a restricted timeframe is intense.

# Work Requirements

1. **A CV and covering letter** written to your preferred design or digital agency for work experience.
2. **An online portfolio** and use of related social media channels that demonstrates your design knowledge, craft skills and interests.
3. **Undertake a small 'live' practical assignment** that includes a written element e.g. a presentation or a reflective commentary on the project approximately 500 words.
4. Participate in a **mock interview**.





Talks from recent graduates who they could identify with

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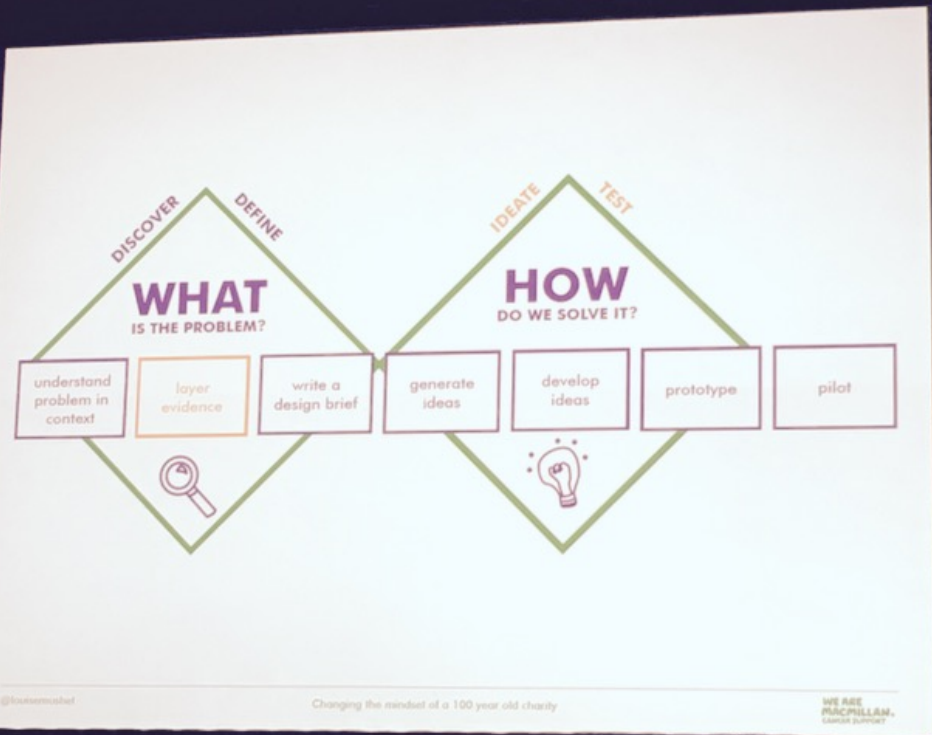
## Knowledge & skills sharing workshops from local agencies

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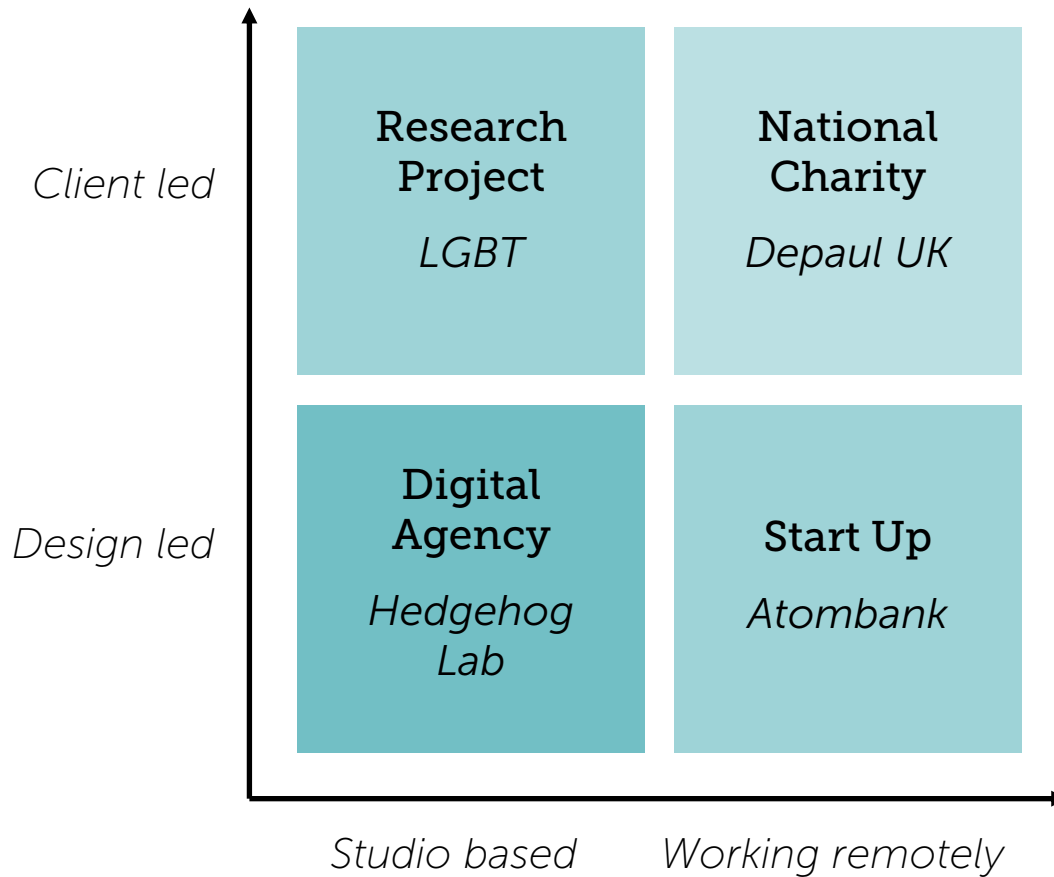


Students mixed with professionals at an industry conference

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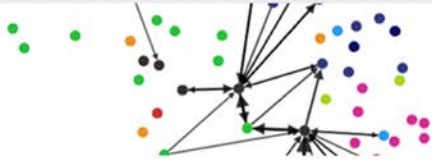
Work Experience opportunities selected to reflect student interests and assess different modes of working.

# Poll & Match

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My Polls

Logout



## Poll Results

Responses to your poll are displayed in a "heat map" to the right. Darker colors represent more replies.

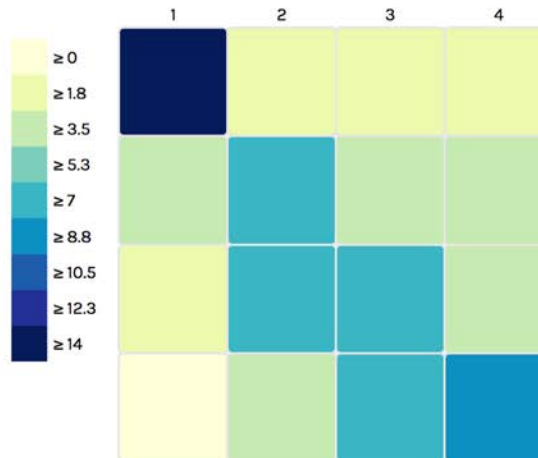
Choices are ordered by popularity, with the most popular at the top.

Responses are listed in a sortable table. You can delete duplicate or unwanted responses.

To assign choices to your poll participants, click below.

Match Poll

## Poll Results



## Work Experience

Youseum with Hedgehog Lab.

LGBT Hate Crime paper prototypes with N

What if... with Atombank

Interactive Resource with Depaul Charity

## Responses ( 21 )

Time (GMT)	Name	Email	1	2
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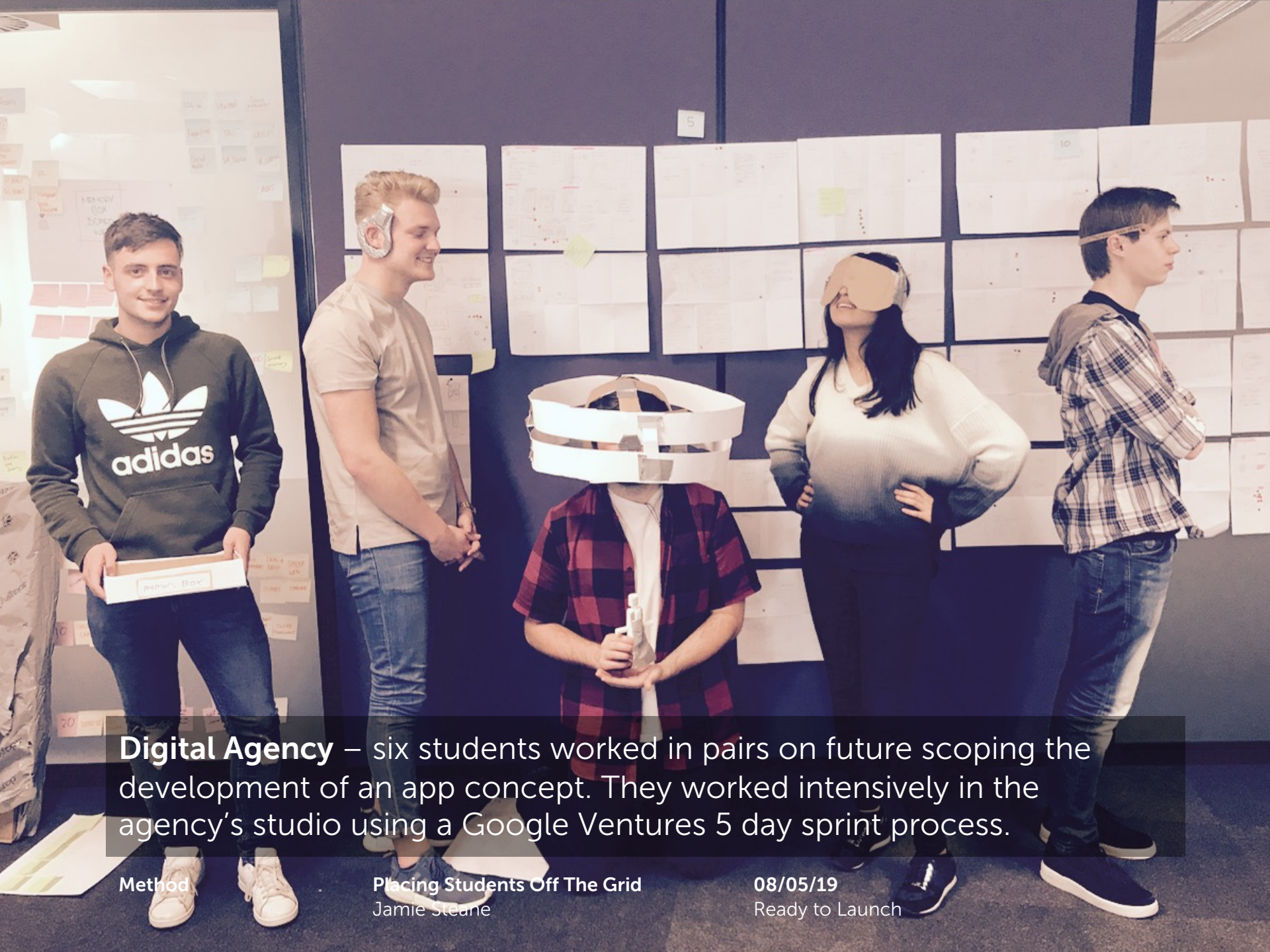
Students made choices online using Poll & Match to using <http://www.pollandmatch.com/>

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**Digital Agency** – six students worked in pairs on future scoping the development of an app concept. They worked intensively in the agency's studio using a Google Ventures 5 day sprint process.

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**Research Project** – six students worked in two groups designing workshop tools to gather qualitative data from victims of LGBT related hate crimes. This was achieved through design workshop with researchers over a 4 week period.




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A group of five students are gathered around a long white table in a meeting room. They are engaged in a discussion, with some looking at laptops and others at each other. The room is brightly lit by a large window on the right. The wall behind them is covered with various design posters and prototypes. One poster features a circular diagram with the text 'Social Design'. Another poster has the text 'Market & Application Design'. The students are dressed in casual attire, including a patterned shirt, a dark polo shirt, and a dark long-sleeved shirt. The overall atmosphere is collaborative and focused.

**Start Up** – five students worked in two groups working on ‘blue sky’ development ideas for an app only bank (Atombank). They worked with the in-house design team most remotely with a couple of face-to-face presentation meetings over six weeks.

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**National Charity** – four students worked in a digital presentation of a video scenario based workshop about teenage homelessness for the Depaul Charity. They worked remotely a regional branch over six weeks.

Endeavour







**Mock Interviews** – creative directors and designers were invited into the University to give mock interviews. Students were paired together taking it in turns to valuably observe each other being interviewed.



## Before work experience

The following questions will explore your feelings prior to undertaking work experience.

Before undertaking this work experience, what did you perceive its purpose and value to be? \*

Long-answer text

Did you set yourself any personal goals or objectives? If so what were they? \*

Long-answer text

On completion of their work experience and mock interviews students were asked to complete a survey using Google Forms. This fulfilled the their requirement for a 500 word 'written reflection'.

← Professional Practice

QUESTIONS RESPONSES 8

What were your organisation's motivations for offering one of the project briefs?

Long-answer text

⋮

Did it require more work on your part than anticipated?

If so, why was this?

Long-answer text

How satisfied were you with the students' level of commitment?

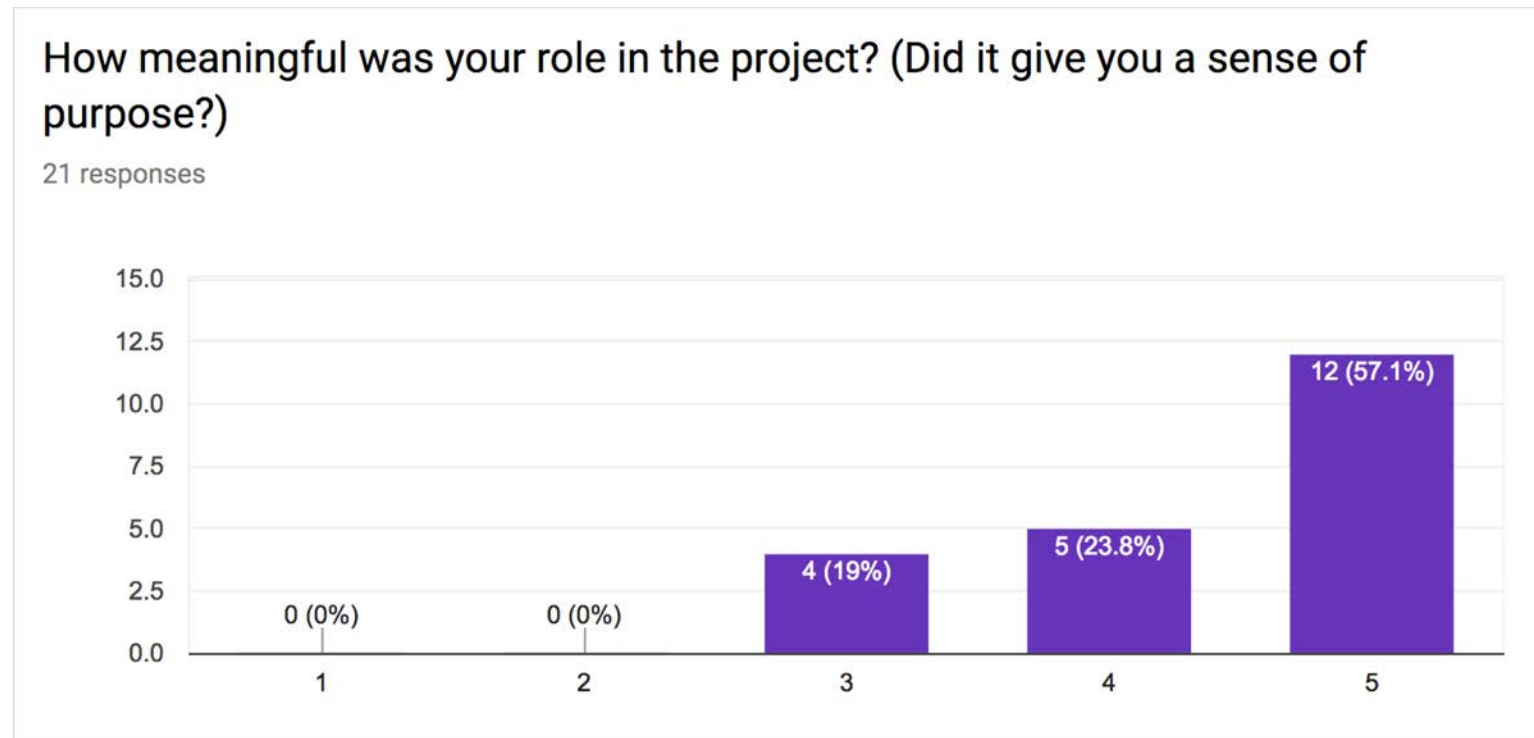
1 2 3 4 5

Not at all satisfied      Very satisfied

How satisfied were you with the students' level of professionalism?

Similarly, professional collaborators were asked their view on both the work experience and/or the mock interviews.

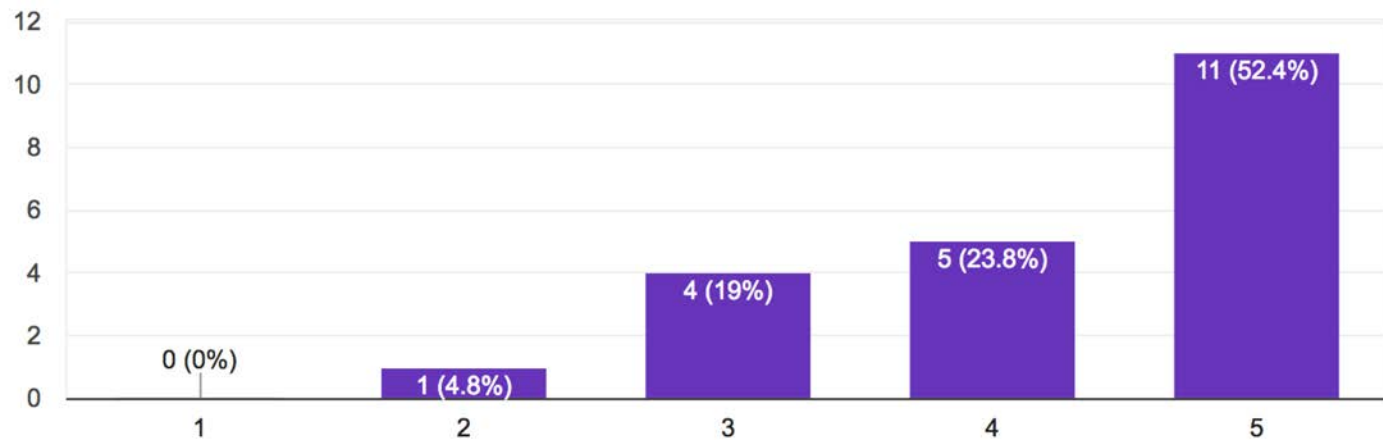
# Student feedback



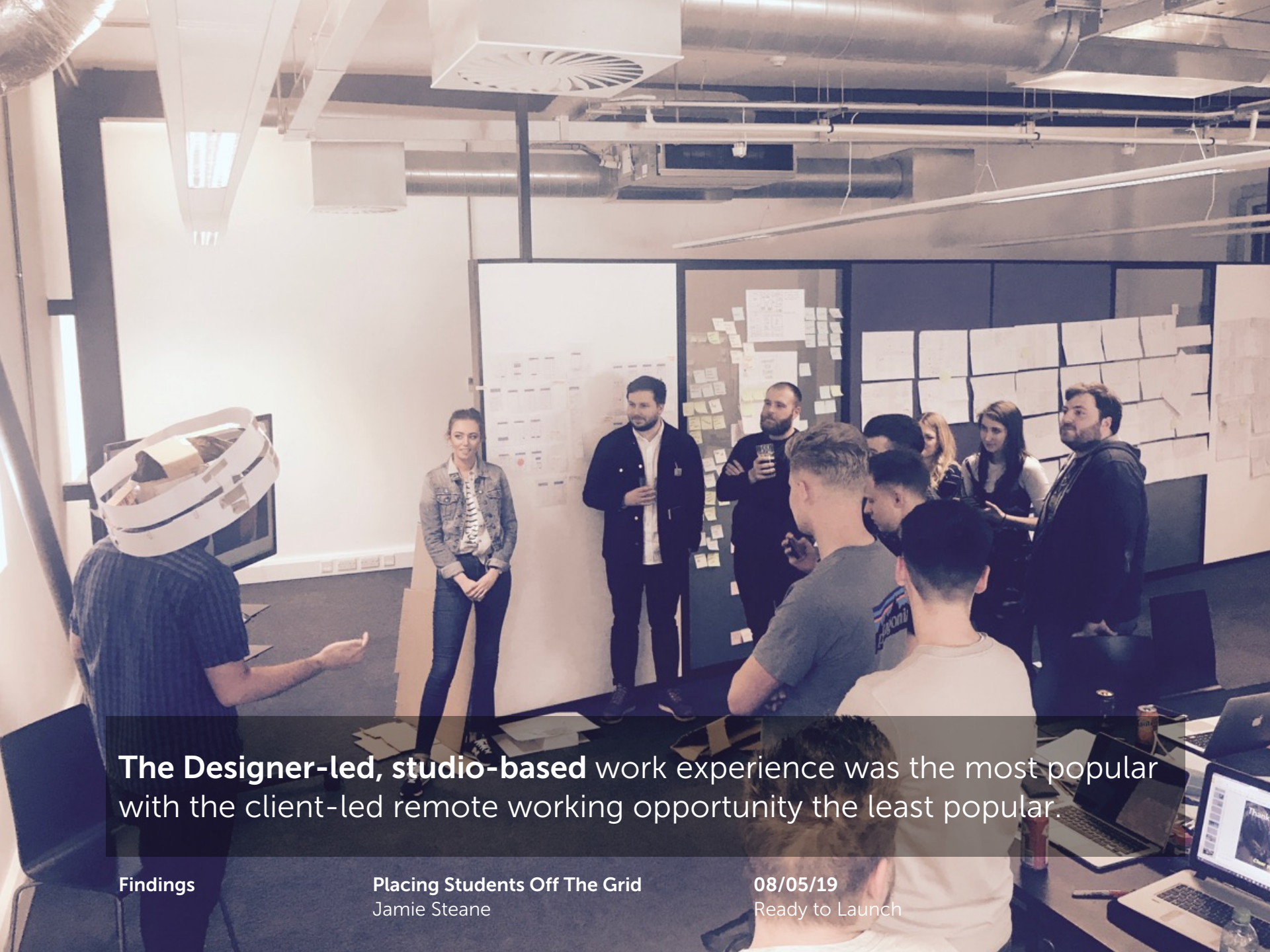
# Student feedback

How valued did you feel as being part of this project? (Was your contribution been positively acknowledged?)

21 responses







**The Designer-led, studio-based** work experience was the most popular with the client-led remote working opportunity the least popular.

Findings

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**The variety of experiences had a shared benefit.** Learning new tools, perspectives and uses for design.

**Findings**

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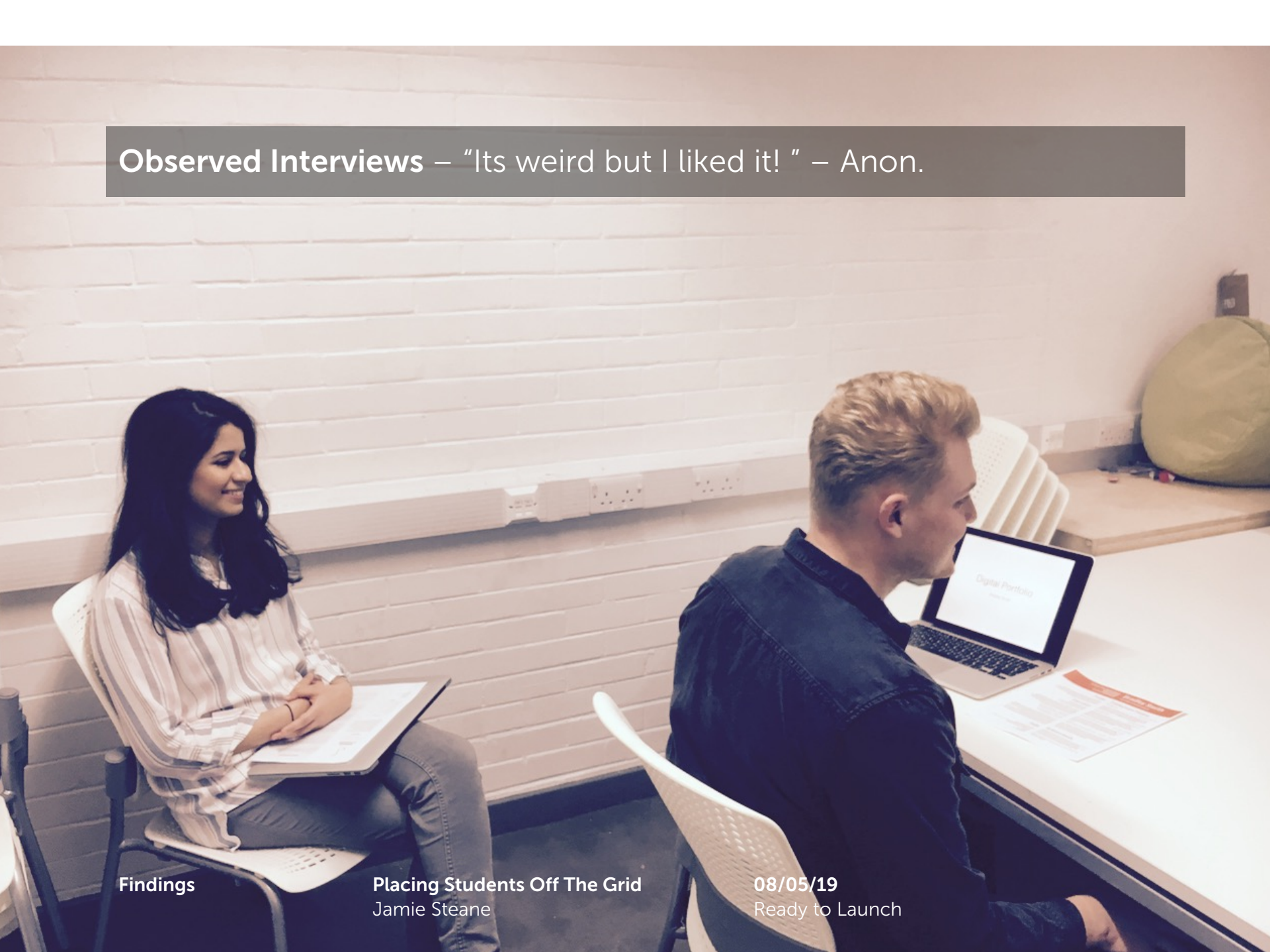
**Collaborators observed students working in established team and identified different people that we would have expected to continue working with on future placements.**

Findings

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**Observed Interviews** – “Its weird but I liked it!” – Anon.



**Findings**

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## Since then...

Changed schedule – capstone module for the year.

Refined the reflection process

Increase the number of project partners from 4 to 8.

Has lead to an increased interest in placement years and opportunities provided by partners.

# Thank you!

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