

Bridge the University-to-Career Gap with the CONNECT Professional Identity Formation Curriculum

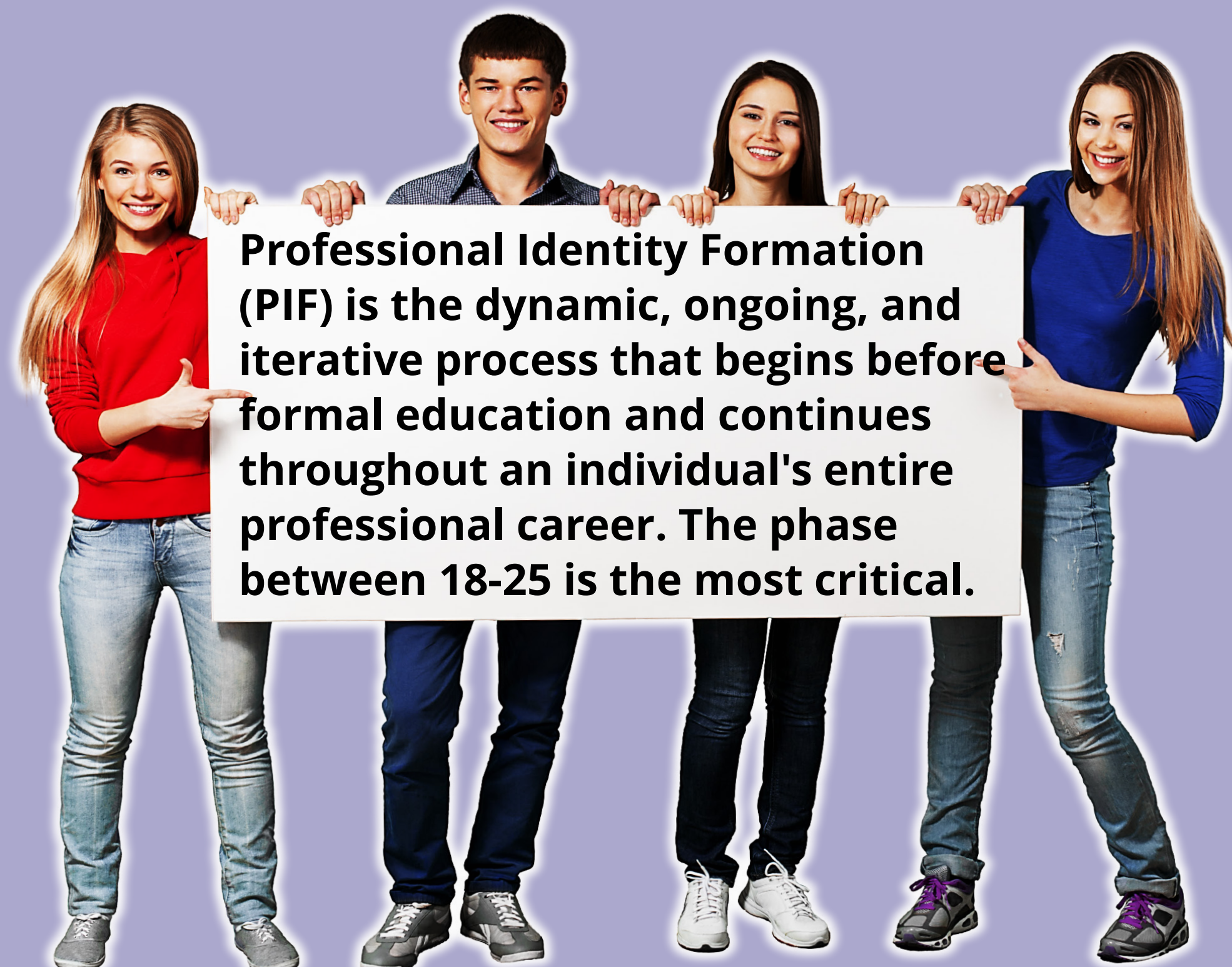
Dalene Duvenage (DSyRM)

Pracademic
Senior Honorary Research Fellow
Buckingham University Centre for
Security and Intelligence Studies
(BUCSIS)

Contact: dalene@sipsi.org

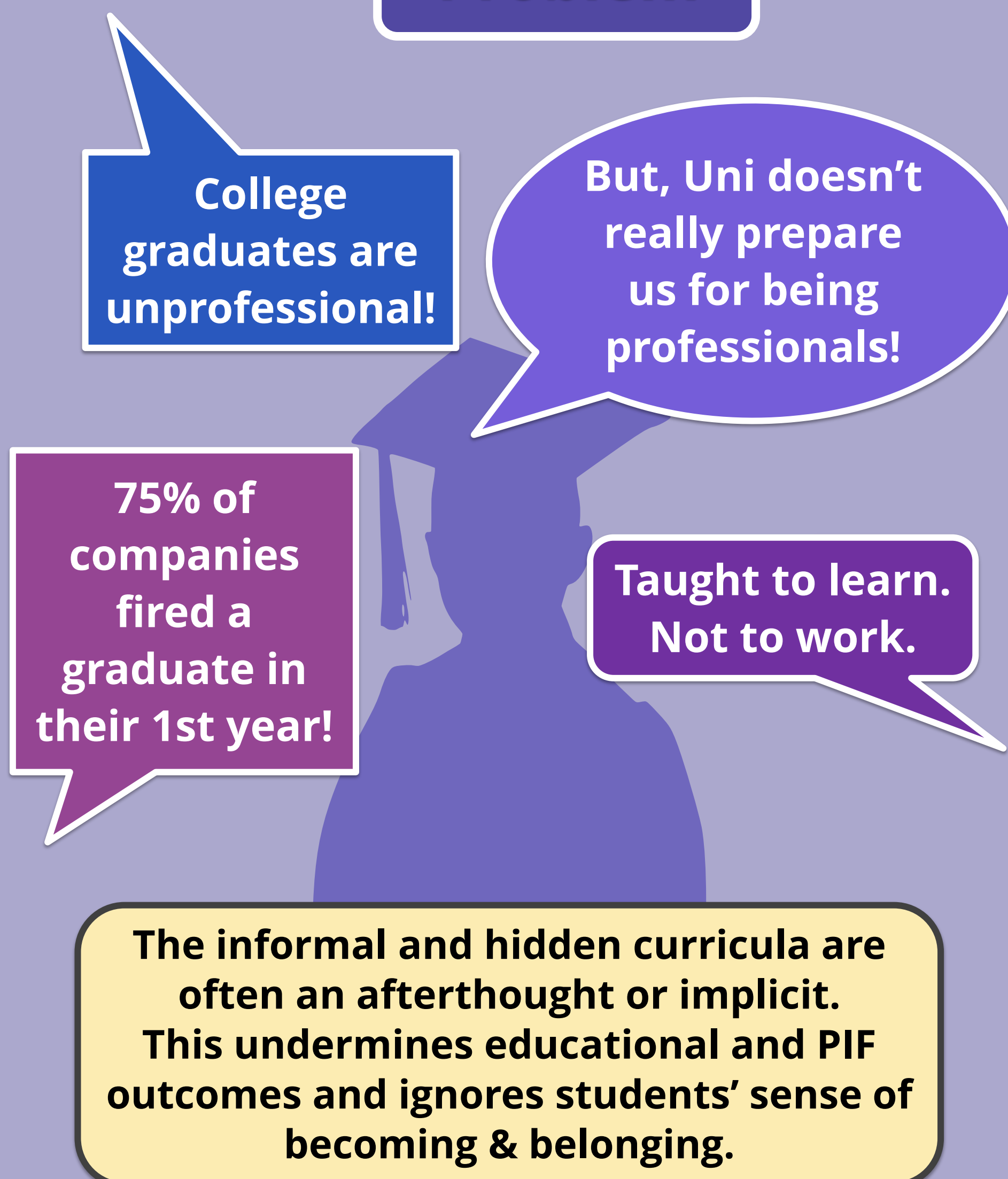
Professional Identity Formation: The Learning Stage

- Tertiary education to first formal employment, where students internalise the values, norms, and behaviours of a professional community.
- They “think, act and feel” like aspiring members of that profession.
- Skills and knowledge become a source of pride, identity and purpose.
- They consider their role within the profession and compare themselves to students of other professions, building a collective professional identity.



Professional Identity Formation (PIF) is the dynamic, ongoing, and iterative process that begins before formal education and continues throughout an individual's entire professional career. The phase between 18-25 is the most critical.

Problem



Solution

The **CONNECT Professional Identity Formation Strategy** is based on the following principles:

- **Competency-based**, applied and integrated curriculum.
- **Openness** to the evolving demands of the professional, educational, security and intelligence landscape.
- **Nurturing** a self-directed, supportive environment for students in their professional discovery journey.
- **Networking and mentoring** with peers, faculty, and professionals.
- **Experiential Learning** provides authentic workplace experiences.
- **Collaboration** with all stakeholders.
- **Transforming** students through an intentional longitudinal PIF journey.

The CONNECT PIF Curriculum

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Postgrad
	I might be a ...	Can I be a ...?	I'm becoming a ...	I am ...	I'm growing in ...
PIF Focus	Professional exposure & exploration Foster initial self-awareness & baseline knowledge of profession	Engagement & self-testing Begin to internalise professional expectations & test self-concept	Integration & commitment Deeper alignment of self with profession, values consolidation	Consolidation & transition Solidify PI and prepare for transition to real-world practice	Authoring & crafting Actively engage in identity work
PIF activities	• Required PIF course • Self-knowledge & reflection (personality and aptitude assessments) • Career exposure with guest speakers • Mentored by peers and senior students • Teamwork and communication skills • Start E-portfolio • Foundational ethics & history course	• Mentored by senior students & recent alumni • Self-assessment and reflection (Personal Development Plan, journal, etc.) • Intro to experiential learning (visits to possible employers, shadowing, etc.) • Simulations/role play with feedback • Case-based ethical dilemmas • Problem-based learning (PBL) combined with teamwork and communication skills	• Experiential learning opportunities (internships, shadowing, etc.) • Guided in-depth reflection and coaching • Mentor junior students • Mentored by professionals • Network across disciplines and universities • Applied PBL project simulations with complex problem-solving • Courses on leadership, moral courage and institutional culture	• Attend conferences and membership in professional organisations • Reach out & apply to prospective employers or graduate schools • Mentor junior students • Mentored by professionals • Portfolio defense & PDP reflection update • Group closing event with symbolic ritual • Intensive Experiential Learning with 360° evaluation • Capstone project for a real client	• Deep & continuous reflection & self-assessment • Advanced professional networking, mentoring and coaching • Mentor undergraduate students • Integrating deep disciplinary knowledge with soft skills in a collaborative environment in experiential learning • Complexity and contextual decision-making in assessments • Work-integrated learning with real-life projects & client feedback
Curriculum & pedagogy					



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