LinkedIn as a pedagogical tool for careers and employability learning: A scoping review of the

literature

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Abstract

Purpose: Professional networks are conduits for career insight, vehicles for career exploration, and incubators of professional identity. Accordingly, LinkedIn is a rich environment for university students' careers and employability learning. In this article we review how the pedagogical use of LinkedIn has been conceived, implemented, and evaluated in higher education research.

Design/methodology: We conducted a scoping literature review on research articles and chapters investigating the use of LinkedIn for careers and employability learning. We conducted a systematic database search and screened the results, resulting in 30 eligible studies. Each study was analysed for its research characteristics, theoretical foundations, reported affordances or outcomes, and critical concerns.

Findings: We find little evidence of cohesion or consistency in the existing research. Studies draw on different theoretical and methodological approaches and use different measures of networking behaviours and competencies. Studies tend not to consider ethical concerns about using LinkedIn as a pedagogical tool.

Practical implications: We argue this is not yet a body of research that supports the synthesis necessary for a reliable evidence base. We recommend that educators employing LinkedIn in their curriculum ground their work in more coherent, cohesive, and integrated theories of careers and employability learning.

Originality: This review summarises a body of literature on the use of LinkedIn as a pedagogical tool for careers and employability learning in higher education. It describes and critiques the

beginnings of an evidence-base from which educators can further investigate how students can be supported to develop their online professional networking skills.

Keywords: LinkedIn; graduate employability; career development; professional networking

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Introduction

Graduate employability is a core objective for many universities in the marketised economies of contemporary higher education (Bridgstock and Jackson, 2019; Cheng *et al*., 2022). Employability outcomes are a feature of universities' marketing efforts and university rankings, are reported in the media, and in some cases have been factored into university funding and oversight frameworks (Bridgstock and Jackson, 2019; Sin *et al*., 2019). Students expect

employment outcomes from their personal investment in their education, while policy makers and employers expect universities to deliver skilled graduates into the labour market (Bridgstock and Jackson, 2019; Cheng *et al.* 2022; Sin *et al.*, 2019; Tomlinson, 2017).

As a result, employability is targeted in higher education curricula, through a variety of strategies including the integration of career development learning, work-integrated learning, and graduate attributes (Bridgstock and Jackson, 2019; Cranmer, 2006; Healy *et al.*, 2022a, 2022b; Krouwel *et al.*, 2020). Accordingly, many academics have developed a scholarly interest in and practical concern for their students' career success (Cranmer, 2006; Healy *et al.*, 2022b; Krouwel *et al.*, 2020; Römgens *et al.*, 2020), although some contest employability as an expression of the value of higher education (Cranmer, 2006; Sin *et al.*, 2019).

Professional networking is a crucial career management skill that students need when engaging with industry and employers (Bridgstock, 2020; English *et al.*, 2021). Several employability-oriented pedagogical strategies address professional networking, including mentoring, career-information interviewing, work-integrated learning, e-portfolios and industry-based innovation challenges (Bridgstock and Jackson, 2019; Cranmer, 2006; Healy *et al.*, 2022b; Krouwel *et al.*, 2020).

Professional networking is now done online as much as in person, particularly in the global, technology-enabled world of work (Baumann and Utz, 2021). LinkedIn is the world's leading professional social networking website, with over 774 million individual users and 57 million company accounts across 200 countries ("LinkedIn: About Us", n.d.). It is reasonable that educators seeking to support their students' networking skills consider LinkedIn an essential platform that students should learn to use (Bridgstock, 2019; Brown *et al.*, 2019).

In this article, we investigate an emerging body of research into the use of LinkedIn as a pedagogical tool for careers and employability learning in higher education. We conducted a scoping literature review focused on scholarship investigating the use of LinkedIn in the higher education classroom. We sought to explore several research questions. First, what are the general characteristics of this body of research and to what degree it is conceptually and empirically cohesive? Secondly, what are the affordances or outcomes of the use of LinkedIn identified in this body of research? Finally, what critical concerns about the use of LinkedIn as a pedagogical tool have been raised in this research?

The purpose of this article is to map the extant literature on the pedagogical use of LinkedIn for careers and employability learning and evaluate the degree to which it can serve as a cohesive evidence-base for other scholars and educators. We also consider whether our findings reflect previously stated concerns about the lack of integrated approaches to careers and employability learning in higher education (Clarke, 2018; Healy *et al.,* 2022a, 2022b).

We begin by providing a review of the graduate employability and career development literatures, focused on professional networking. After describing our data collection and analysis methods, we describe our findings regarding study characteristics, theoretical foundations, critical or ethical concerns, and the stated affordances or outcomes of using LinkedIn for careers and employability learning. We conclude by arguing that educators using LinkedIn in their classroom can benefit from drawing on more coherent, critical, and integrated approaches to careers and employability learning.

Careers and employability learning in higher education

Two distinct fields of research have focused on the conditions, characteristics, and capabilities that support higher education students' career success: graduate employability and career development (Clarke, 2018; Cranmer, 2006; Healy *et al.*, 2022b; Römgens *et al*., 2020). Graduate employability, a sub-discipline of higher education research, considers how individual, institutional, and socio-economic factors influence university graduates' employment and career success (Clarke, 2018; Krouwel *et al.*, 2020; Römgens *et al*., 2020; Tomlinson, 2017). Contemporary graduate employability research has evolved from a narrow focus on employability *skills* to consider a broader range of employability *capitals*, including human, social, cultural, identity and psychological capitals (Benati and Fischer, 2020; Römgens *et al*., 2020; Tomlinson, 2017). Pedagogical approaches to enabling graduate employability is one theme in this research, alongside themes focused on professional identities, graduate attributes, perceived employability, and workplace learning (Healy *et al.*, 2022b).

Career development, a sub-discipline of applied psychology, has focused on how individuals approach career decision-making and career management, enact proactive and adaptive career mindsets and behaviours, and understand their career as a meaningful element of their identity (Spurk, 2021). Key themes in career development research centred on university students include: career exploration, decision-making, and career management; career decision-making difficulties; career future-orientations such as proactivity and adaptability; and barriers to career development (Healy *et al.*, 2022b).

Graduate employability and career development have for the most part been separate, parallel fields of research and professional practice, despite sharing the same fundamental concern for student career success (Clarke, 2018; Cranmer, 2006; Healy *et al.*, 2022a, 2022b).

Healy and colleagues (2022a, 2022b) have argued that the gap between career development and graduate employability scholarship and practice undermines efforts toward providing quality, evidence-based careers and employability learning for university students. They propose *careers and employability learning* as a more integrated pedagogical approach to supporting students' successful career-related transitions in, through, and out of higher education (Healy *et al.*, 2022a, 2022b). In this article, we demonstrate how this lack of integration is visible in the body of literature focused on the use of LinkedIn in higher education classrooms.

Professional networking for careers and employability learning

Professional networking is the act of strategically building and leveraging interpersonal relationships for the purpose of advancing work or career goals (Batistic and Tymon, 2017; Wolff and Spurk, 2019). Networking should not be understood only as a transactional instrument for achieving employment and advancement outcomes. Professional networks are also important resources for careers and employability learning: conduits for career information and insight, vehicles for career exploration and reflexivity, and engines of professional identity formation and expression (Batistic and Tymon, 2017; Baumann and Utz, 2021; Bridgstock and Tippett, 2019; Davis *et al.*, 2020; English *et al.*, 2021; Wolff and Spurk, 2019).

In the career development literature, networking skills and behaviours have been proven to offer a range of positive outcomes, including employment, advancement, and salary growth; improved job performance, satisfaction and fit within an organisation; and improved wellbeing and reduced work fatigue (Davis *et al.*, 2020; Wolff and Spurk, 2019). Career development scholars have subjected networking attitudes, behaviours and skills to empirical inquiry and developed several survey instruments to measure these qualities (Davis *et al.*, 2020; Wolff and Spurk, 2019).

In higher education research, social connections are frequently acknowledged as crucial factors that enable or constrain the development and expression of various forms of employability capitals (Batistic and Tymon, 2017; Benati and Fischer, 2020; English *et al.*, 2021; Holmes, 2015; Tomlinson, 2017). Professional connections enable access to opportunity and information that support the transition from university into the workplace (Batistic and Tymon, 2017; Baumann and Utz, 2021). In addition, professional networking can develop students' career management skills, increase their perceptions of their own employability, and promote the development of their professional identity (Batistic and Tymon, 2017; English *et al.*, 2021).

Ruth Bridgstock's connectedness learning model (Bridgstock and Tippett, 2019) is the most thoroughly conceptualised and studied approach to professional networking for graduate employability. The connectedness learning model highlights the role of social and relational learning for careers and employability learning, focusing on the "the central roles of partnerships, groups, communities, and networks in order to better prepare students for their future lives and work" (Bridgstock and Tippett, 2019, p. 9). The model elaborates five *connectedness capabilities* that enable students to establish themselves and thrive in their graduate careers: building a connected identity; making connections; maintaining and strengthening connections; working with connections; and social network literacy (Bridgstock and Tippett, 2019). The connectedness learning model also describes several connectedness pedagogies and enabling strategies—predicated largely on collaboration with industry and community partners—which support students to develop and apply their connectedness capabilities (Bridgstock and Tippett, 2019). However, the connectedness learning model does not reflect the degree of theoretical integration of career development and graduate employability advocated by Healy *et al.* (2022b), lacking substantive reference to career development scholarship.

LinkedIn for careers and employability learning and development

LinkedIn is a social networking website dedicated to professional, rather than personal, connections and communication (Baumann and Utz, 2021; Davis *et al.*, 2020; "LinkedIn: About Us", n.d; Pena *et al.*, 2022; Ruparel *et al.*, 2020). LinkedIn users maintain profiles which list their work experience, qualifications and skills; connect to others with shared professional backgrounds and interests; share news and information; and search for employment opportunities. Professional networking on LinkedIn affords many of the same benefits as in-person networking but may offer additional benefits for career information gathering and job seeking (Baumann and Utz, 2021; Davis *et al.*, 2020; Pena *et al.*, 2022; Ruparel *et al.*, 2020). Bridgstock (2019) noted the potential of LinkedIn as a pedagogical tool in support of connectedness learning for employability, explaining in detail certain affordances in support of each of the five connectedness capabilities.

LinkedIn, like all social media platforms, is subject to criticism focused on its business model and practices and on certain elements of its design, structure, and culture. Firstly, LinkedIn profits from users' data ("LinkedIn Business Highlights", 2022) and influences their behaviour through its design architectures and discursive culture (Staunton, 2020; van Dijck, 2013). While users do have some control over the content they write on their profile, LinkedIn exerts a normative influence which potentially makes authentic self-expression difficult or risky (van Dijck, 2013). Secondly, some studies have questioned the efficacy of LinkedIn for job seeking (Johnson and Leo, 2020) or noted how online job seeking is influenced by digital inequalities related to demographic factors and digital literacy, with LinkedIn potentially biased toward wealthier, more educated professionals (Karaoglu *et al.*, 2021). Finally, and most importantly, participation on LinkedIn may expose users to risks to their privacy and safety. LinkedIn's own

community guidelines and safety advice acknowledge a range of potential risks, including abuse and bullying, harassment and stalking, and scams and identity theft ("Professional Community Policies", 2022; "Staying Safe", 2022).

Research method

Our initial intention for this study was to conduct a systematic review of the literature (Bearman et al., 2012; Linnenluecke *et al*., 2020) to provide a synthesis of the evidence for the pedagogical use of LinkedIn in higher education. However, we soon discovered that the broad variety of approaches to research and reporting in our data set would make comparative analysis challenging and that the small number of articles in our dataset would not support bibliometric analyses such as citation network analysis or topic modeling (Linnenluecke *et al*., 2020). As a result, we have instead approached this study as a scoping literature review (Levac *et al.*, 2010; Peters *et al*., 2015).

Scoping literature reviews are useful for mapping research literature and identifying research gaps (Levac *et al.*, 2010; Peters *et al*., 2015). Scoping reviews are faster and less intensive than systematic reviews and are therefore useful for rapid reviews or 'reconnaissance' of research on a topic or as an initial stage in a broader systematic literature review, to validate or refine research questions, search protocols, or analytical strategies. Scoping reviews are particularly useful when a body of literature is not coherent enough to support a systematic literature review ((Levac *et al.*, 2010; Peters *et al*., 2015).

In this study, we followed the stages for conducting a scoping literature review recommended by Levac et al. (2010): identify research questions; identify relevant studies

iteratively, as a team; select studies for inclusion; chart the data iteratively, as a team; and collate, summarise, and report results, including descriptive summaries and thematic analysis.

Data collection

Identify relevant studies

We searched five databases: ERIC, A+ Education, Academic Search Ultimate, Scopus, and Web of Science. The search terms were developed with the assistance of a research librarian, chosen to capture a broad range of results, and adapted to suit the data fields of each database. The search terms used in Web of Science are illustrative of our approach: (pedagog* OR education OR teach* OR learn* / Topic) AND (LinkedIn / Topic) AND (networking OR employ* OR job* OR career* / Topic) AND (graduate* OR undergraduate* OR college* OR universit* OR "higher education" OR he / Topic).

Additional searches of open educational resource databases and for grey literature in Google Scholar yielded no relevant results. Our searches therefore include only journal articles or book chapters. We limited our search to English language publications. A limit for publication years was not necessary as no searches returned results prior to 2003, the year that LinkedIn was founded. The searches were initially performed in October 2019. Each search was saved in the associated database and an email alert set up for any new results. New articles or chapters found in this way were reviewed until October 2022.

Select studies for inclusion

[Figure I here]

Figure I illustrates the stages of our search, screening and selection of eligible studies. After the shortlisted studies were selected from each search, collated and de-duplicated, abstracts were reviewed for inclusion as journal articles or book chapters that promoted, described or evaluated efforts to use LinkedIn to develop university students' professional networking skills and behaviours, or investigated university students' use of or attitudes toward LinkedIn. We excluded studies that focused on social media in general, rather than LinkedIn in particular; did not have university students as their primary focus; or focused on academic performance or social engagement as outcomes of student use of LinkedIn rather than careers and employability benefits.

The reference lists of the selected publications were reviewed for articles not retrieved by the database searches. Finally, Google Scholar was employed to identify any works that cited each study in our dataset.

Data analysis

Chart the data

After establishing our final dataset and downloading the full text of each article or chapter, we charted each study's research characteristics, theoretical foundations, critical or ethical concerns, and the stated affordances or outcomes for careers and employability learning. Data extraction was shared among the authors, with all coding checked and moderated by the first author.

We categorised each publication as one of five study types. *Theoretical* studies are those which proposed the affordances of LinkedIn but did not provide an account of any actual intervention. *Descriptions* explained how an intervention was delivered but did not offer any

empirical evaluation of its impact. *Evaluations* were studies which attempted to measure the impact of an intervention. *Student-use* studies investigated how students use LinkedIn, or what their attitudes toward LinkedIn are, with no reference to any educational intervention. *Evaluation/student-use* studies where those which framed the study as an evaluation of an intervention, but whose analysis and findings reported student use of or attitudes toward LinkedIn rather than the impact of the intervention per se.

We coded the affordances or outcomes of LinkedIn to the five connectedness capabilities (Bridgstock and Tippett, 2019). We added additional codes to reflect affordances or outcomes which are not reflective of the networked, collaborative principles of the connectedness learning model, but instead reflect other career management skills or behaviours: personal branding; professional communication and etiquette; professional knowledge and skills; seeking and securing employment or work experience; career mobility; and civic engagement.

Results

Study characteristics

[Table I here]

Table I shows the study characteristics of publications in our dataset. No author contributed to more than one article in the dataset. The sources of the publications fall into two broad categories, in roughly equal numbers: higher education and educational technology journals, or discipline-specific teaching and learning journals. Sixty percent of the publications focused on business students, with the remaining publications covering a range of disciplines. Empirical studies accounted for 73% of all publications, most of which were student use or evaluation/student use studies, at 37% and 30% respectively. Of the 22 empirical studies, half

employed quantitative methods, 27% employed mixed methods, and 23% employed qualitative methods. The measures used in empirical studies were eclectic, with no common measure being used in more than one article, no articles using existing measures from prior research (Davis, *et al.,* 2020; Wolff & Spurk, 2019), and no studies attempting to develop or validate a new scale of their own.

Theoretical foundations

[Table II here]

The theoretical foundations of publications in our dataset are displayed in Table II. There is a wide variety of theoretical foundations, with no one theory favoured by more than a few publications and some publications not explicitly referring to any theoretical approach at all. Theories used by more than one publication include connectedness learning, social capital, uses and gratifications theory, professional or pre-professional identities, and experiential learning. In many cases, a publication's use of theory was little more than a minor reference, rather than an explicitly stated and developed theoretical approach.

Critical and ethical concerns

Critical and ethical concerns about LinkedIn or its application as a pedagogical tool are displayed in Table II. Only 25% of the publications made any substantive reference to any critical or ethical concerns. Critical or ethical concerns were most often reported as being expressed by students in student use or evaluation/student use studies, or as caveats or limitations in the conclusions of the articles.

No publications adopted an inherently critical approach and all studies seemed to accept LinkedIn as an important, effective, and safe platform for careers and employability learning. In

fact, some student use studies that reported critical concerns expressed by students seemed to imply that the students' concerns were unwarranted and indicative of limited awareness or confidence, rather than the recognition of legitimate risks.

Affordances and outcomes

The affordances or outcomes of LinkedIn as a pedagogical tool for careers and employability learning are displayed in Table II. Most studies identified a narrow range of affordances or outcomes, with few reflecting the breadth of connectedness capabilities and other adaptive career behaviours described in the graduate employability and career development literatures. Social network literacy is the most represented affordance or outcome, which is expected given that building student awareness, capability, and confidence was the primary motive for many of these studies. Building a connected identity and personal branding were also frequently cited affordances or outcomes, reflecting a strong focus on using LinkedIn to join a professional community and promote oneself to peers and potential employers. Other affordances and outcomes were reported much less frequently, particularly the those which reflect more developed professional relationships, such as strengthening or working with connections.

Discussion

The goal of this article is to provide a summary of scholarship that has investigated the use of LinkedIn as a pedagogical tool in the higher education curriculum. We have described the general characteristics of this research, the degree to which it is conceptually and empirically cohesive, what critical concerns about LinkedIn have been addressed, and what affordances or outcomes of the use of LinkedIn have been found.

Our findings show that research into LinkedIn as a tool for careers and employability learning in higher education has been conducted in various disciplines, has drawn on various theoretical and methodological approaches, and has found a range of affordances or outcomes. However, there is little consistency in any of these factors across our data set. Therefore, this body of scholarship offers a limited pool of either qualitative or quantitative evidence to help understand or evaluate the use of LinkedIn for careers and employability learning. These findings support our contention that, as useful as individual studies might be, this is not yet a body of research that supports the kind of synthesis necessary for an evidence base for educators to draw from.

The studies used a range of theories or measures of networking behaviours and competencies, with no common use of any particular one. Several studies seem to lack any theoretical foundation to the research. Few studies incorporate contemporary graduate employability literature, while fewer still apply relevant career development research, and only one (Brown *et al.*, 2019) integrates both fields of scholarship in the way advocated by Healy et al. (2022a, 2022b). The connectedness learning model (Bridgstock and Tippett, 2019), predated by most studies in our data set, informed three studies out of 30. Nonetheless, our findings suggest that the connectedness learning model is a much-needed innovation, as it offers the only thorough and coherent theoretical account of professional networking for careers and employability learning.

This scoping review has also demonstrated a lack of criticality in this body of research. Although some studies in this review acknowledge critical concerns, none of them apply the depth of critical analysis that other, non-pedagogical research into LinkedIn has (Karaoglu *et al.*, 2021; Staunton, 2020; van Dijck, 2013). LinkedIn is, above all else, a for-profit business which

trades in individuals' data ("LinkedIn Business Highlights", 2022), seeks to influence their behaviour to its own advantage (Staunton, 2020; van Dijck, 2013), and potentially exposes users to a range of risks ("Professional Community Policies", 2022; "Staying Safe", 2022). These concerns are valid and warrant a bias toward criticality and caution from educators, researchers, and students.

The range of affordances and outcomes described in this scoping review underlines the lack of cohesion in understanding what professional networking is and how it is done. For some, such as those studies focused primarily on instrumental personal branding or opportunity seeking, networking is primarily a matter of displaying certain kinds of capitals (Clarke, 2018), through certain kinds of expression and signaling (Tomlinson and Anderson, 2021; Goodwin *et al.*, 2019), in the hopes of realising concrete career and employment goals. In studies focused more on connected identities, networking for students is described as a process of joining a professional community: first observing that community's codes and conventions, before beginning to assume an appropriate professional identity modelled on those observations (Bridgstock, 2020; Holmes, 2015). Crucially, professional identities need to be developed accurately and borne credibly enough to be accepted by the target community, in a process described by Holmes (2015) as the warranting of an emergent graduate identity. Expressing a professional and employable identity is a complex task and is therefore a skill that should be expressly taught to students (Bridgstock and Tippet, 2019; Tomlinson and Anderson, 2021; Goodwin *et al.*, 2019), through careful and critical application of appropriate pedagogical approaches.

Limitations and implications for practice and research

There are several limitations of scoping literature reviews (Levac *et al.*, 2010; Peters *et al.*, 2015). First, scoping reviews require a balance between attempting to capture as much relevant scholarship as possible and gathering a manageable and meaningful dataset. Too-broad search terms and over-inclusive criteria increases the volume of literature and makes synthesis more challenging, while narrower searches and inclusion criteria risk reducing the salience of the review. The small number of studies in this review, along with their diversity, made meaningful synthesis challenging. The small size of our dataset also prevented us from using bibliometric methods of analysis, such as citation networks or topic modelling (Linnenluecke *et al.*, 2020). Secondly, scoping reviews do not necessarily assess the quality of research, as systematic literature reviews do (Levac *et al.*, 2010; Peters *et al.*, 2015). We have made no judgement on the empirical validity of any research in this scoping review, which would be an important step toward consolidating the research and evaluating its merit as an evidence base.

In identifying the lack of cohesion and integration of this body of literature, we are not suggesting that all research on LinkedIn should apply the same theories, follow the same methods, or approach networking in the same way. A diversity of approaches allows for the work to reflect the context of the discipline and profession under investigation. However, the current incohesive and dis-integrated nature of this body of research makes synthesis challenging and diminishes its value as an evidence base with which to design quality careers and employability learning using LinkedIn.

We can draw several recommendations from our findings to support researchers and educators to employ LinkedIn in their curriculum more critically and intentionally. Researchers should ensure that they do not overlook key theories or evidence from both graduate

employability and career development when investigating students' use of and attitudes toward LinkedIn or evaluating pedagogical interventions which use it. Researchers applying quantitative methods should not overlook existing, validated measures from the career development literature (Baumann and Utz 2021; Davis *et al.*, 2020; Spurk, 2021; Wolff and Spurk, 2019) or frameworks of learning outcomes such as the connectedness learning model (Bridgstock and Tippett, 2019). Drawing on existing theories and incorporating existing measures will enable more synthesis of research and allow for reproducibility of studies.

Educators who see value in promoting professional networking for careers and employability learning in their curriculum will benefit from reviewing the connectedness learning model, the theories and evidence that inform it, and research that has applied it (Brown *et al.,* 2019; de Villiers Scheepers *et al.* 2019). In addition to describing connectedness capabilities as learning outcomes for students, the model provides useful suggestions for connectedness pedagogies and enabling strategies for educators and institutions (Bridgstock and Tippett, 2019). This is not to say that all professional networking education scholarship should be based on this model, but the fact is that it is the most coherent and robust model currently available. The connectedness learning model will benefit from further research, particularly empirical validation of its theoretical claims and the integration of theory and evidence from career development scholarship (Baumann and Utz 2021; Davis *et al.*, 2020; Spurk, 2021; Wolff and Spurk, 2019).

Finally, educators considering using LinkedIn in their classroom have a duty of care to design evidence based, ethical and equitable educational experiences. Educators should carefully consider how LinkedIn is used in their profession—if it is used at all—and adapt their advice to students accordingly. Educators must prioritise student safety, privacy, and agency when promoting the use of LinkedIn in their classroom, recognising that ethical concerns about

LinkedIn are legitimate and that the risk to some students' personal safety and wellbeing may be significant and must be respected. Most importantly, no student should be forced to create or maintain a LinkedIn profile. Students should always be allowed the option of completing alternative tasks, especially when the task is a compulsory assessed item.

Conclusion

We share the opinion of the authors of the publications included in this scoping review, that LinkedIn is a valuable tool for careers and employability learning in higher education. addition to its instrumental uses for personal branding and opportunity seeking, LinkedIn also offers students transformational careers and employability learning experiences, such as career exploration and future-oriented thinking, engagement with and entry into professional communities, and the development and warranting of their emergent graduate identities. LinkedIn has an important place in the pedagogical repertoire of careers and employability educators in higher education.

However, we also believe that educators who employ LinkedIn as a pedagogical tool are duty-bound to use it with attention to evidence-based and ethical best practice, given the many legitimate concerns about its business model, data and privacy practices, safety, and normative effects on user behaviour. Based on the results of this scoping review, we do not believe that current research provides such a model of best practice. To provide effective, empowering, and safe learning experiences for students, educators and researchers need to ground their work in more coherent, cohesive, and integrated theories of careers and employability learning, drawing on relevant literature from the graduate employability and career development research communities.

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