



Selling your skills to employers

What are employability Skills?

Employability skills are strengths and attributes which employers look for to assess your suitability for a particular job role.

Identifying these skills requires you to consider both the experience you have gained within your studies, as well as experience gained outside of your degree.

Once you have identified your main strengths, you will need to consider how to articulate these skills to tailor your CV when selling your experience to an employer. The types of skills that an employer looks for will vary dependent on the sector that you wish to work in.

How can I develop employability skills?



Your Course – Your degree offers the opportunity for you to gain both practical skills in relation to your chosen subject, as well as transferable skills such as teamwork, leadership and communication skills. It might help you to think of particular modules or projects that you have taken part in and create a list of the types of skills you developed through this.



Work Experience – This includes part-time jobs, summer placements, work shadowing and internships. All of these offer an opportunity for you to gain experience in the workplace, even if the role that you complete is not directly related to your chosen career you will gain skills which will be very attractive to employers. Keeping a log of your achievements and skills you develop can help you when writing job applications in the future.



Extra-Curricular Activities – Getting involved in societies, sports and volunteering can offer a great way to build up your experience. You can gain recognition for completing extra-curricular activities by completing the **Futures Skills Award**, this includes any activities you are already involved in, or something new, and is a great addition to your CV. For further information on how to complete the award visit www.mmu.ac.uk/futures

For more information on how to get involved in extra-curricular activities, read our 'Make the most of your time at University' guide : www.mmu.ac.uk/careers/guides

Identifying your Skills

Creating a list of the skills that you have gained from your degree, work experience and any additional positions of responsibility is a worthwhile task when it comes to evidencing your abilities in a job application.

Following these three steps can help you with this:

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Step 1: Write a list of your past experience, including work experience, any voluntary work, societies and hobbies, include in this list your degree and key projects or modules you have studied.

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Step 2: Create a list of the tasks associated with each role or project on your list.

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Step 3: Tasks lead to skills. Look over the list you have created. What were your achievements? What skills did you learn from completing these tasks? Write examples using the STAR format:

Situation— Set the scene

Task— Briefly explain what it is that you had to do

Action— What action did you specifically take i.e. what you did; why you did it; how you did it; what skills you used.

Result— What was the outcome?

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During my summer internship in 2015, I was responsible for managing the company's customer relations, which included handling customer queries and complaints.

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On one occasion, a customer contacted our service centre as an email they had sent had not yet been responded to by the company. As I was dealing with this customer by phone, quick thinking and a personable telephone manner were essential.

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I discussed the situation with the customer and explained that we had a company policy of answering all email communications within a 48 hour period. I was able to resolve her initial query, so that at the end of the call she felt satisfied that all of her concerns had been answered.

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As a result, the client not only continued to order from us, but also added positive customer service feedback to our website.

Tailoring your skills to meet the job specification

Tailoring your application to each job that you apply for, will show the employer that you have taken the time to research the company and the role, and also gives you the best opportunity to demonstrate that you have the skills which the company are looking for.

The job description will give you a good indication of what the employer is looking for, and the criteria in the person specification will set out their ideal candidate. Comparing your own list of skills to the person specification, will help you to match up which of your examples and skills you should place most emphasis on in your application.

If you are applying for a role which is directly related to your degree, you may want to focus on 3 or 4 modules which most relate to the role you are applying for, or a particular project that you worked on which offers you the opportunity to expand on the specialist knowledge and skills you have gained.

If you are applying for part-time work, or a role that is not directly linked to the subject you have studied you may want to focus more on the transferable skills you gained, such as team work, communication and leadership skills.

You may wish to showcase yourself in a more innovative and visual way by creating an online or e-portfolio. There are lots of options available, however we recommend you have a look at the following:

Myshowcase

Wakelet

Careers & Employability Support

The Careers & Employability Service offers a range of support to Manchester Met students and graduates:

- **Find Opportunities:** We advertise hundreds of part time, graduate and internship roles through My Career Hub.
- **JobsHub drop in:** Every afternoon from 1pm-4pm. Get any CV/cover letters or application forms checked by a Careers and Employment Assistant before you submit this.
- **Ask a Careers Question Online:** Get online advice through My Career Hub. This service allows you to ask your question at any time and receive support via email.
- **Careers Consultant Appointments:** Book a 30 minute appointment to discuss any career query you may have.

For more information visit www.mmu.ac.uk/careers