



Workbook

Preparing to Progress



Contents

Instructions	3
Key	3
1. Planning	4
Assessment Criteria	4
a) Assessing experience and skills	4
b) Identifying areas for development	14
c) Action planning	15
Summary	21
2. Application materials	22
Assessment Criteria	22
a) Drafting a UCAS application	22
b) Writing a personal statement	24
c) Writing a CV	28
Summary	32
3. Interview preparation	33
Assessment Criteria	33
a) Practising interview performance	33
b) Using feedback to progress	37
Summary	38
Key terms	39
Instruction	39
Useful references	42
Websites	42



Instructions

1. This workbook provides you with lots of knowledge covering the unit you are studying. To help you to understand this knowledge, be active in your learning. You can do this in many ways:
 - Read the information, then re-read and use a highlighter to pick out key points
 - Complete all the highly recommended activities; these will help you to develop your understanding as well as summarise information
 - Complete the glossary of key terms at the back of the workbook either as you go along or at the end as a revision task
 - If possible, supplement your knowledge by using a textbook or some of the Useful References at the end of the workbook
 - Try to complete all or some of the think deeper activities. These are extra activities to expand your knowledge and develop your interests. You will need to have a separate notebook or use an electronic file to record your notes and thoughts
2. Some areas of knowledge are difficult to grasp; you might get disheartened, but don't! Just ask for help. Talk to other students or your assessor/tutor; they are there to help you.
3. Web links and other resources featured in this workbook are suggestions only to support the delivery of this qualification and should be implemented at the centre's discretion. The hyperlinks provided were live at the time this workbook was last reviewed. Please kindly notify Ascentis if you find a link that is no longer active.
Please note: Ascentis is not responsible for the content of third-party websites and, whilst we check external links regularly, the owners of these sites may remove or amend these documents or web pages at any time.

Key



Activity

These activities are highly recommended. There is space in the workbook for you to record your answers.



Think deeper

These activities will expand your learning. They are optional, and it is suggested that you record your answers in a separate notebook or electronic file.



1. Planning

Assessment Criteria

- 1.1** Identify personal experiences, qualifications and transferable skills.
- 1.2** Evaluate personal qualities, skills, qualifications and experiences whilst summarising and mapping to a chosen career path/HE course.
- 1.3** Review and summarise potential areas for development.
- 1.4** Produce an action plan showing which new essential skills, qualifications or experiences are needed, how they can be acquired and time scales.

In this section you will be able to better understand your strengths and weaknesses and use that knowledge to help your progression into Higher Education and future employment. To make the most out of your strengths, you need to identify and understand exactly what those strengths are. This is not as easy as it sounds and requires a degree of thought and reflection. The reflective process will allow you to take a critical look at yourself and arrive at a positive outcome. There are many skills that can be learned to help with progression into Higher Education, such as CV writing, interview techniques and UCAS application writing, which we will practise later in this workbook, and the mastery of which can set you apart from other candidates.

a) Assessing experience and skills

When preparing for the transition into Higher Education or the workplace, the ability to look critically at your experiences and skills is essential. There are many attributes that a candidate has that are not as easy to define as an exam result or a qualification. Being able to look at yourself, define those qualities and relate them to the position you are applying for will separate you from other candidates.

Reflective skills

Reflection is a skill, and one that will help you to develop unique, clear applications for Higher Education and employment. The skill of reflection is required in many professional occupations at all levels, e.g. nursing, teaching and social work, as well as in the legal profession, the sports industry and many commercial settings.

If you learn and practise reflection you will develop your skills and improve their effectiveness.

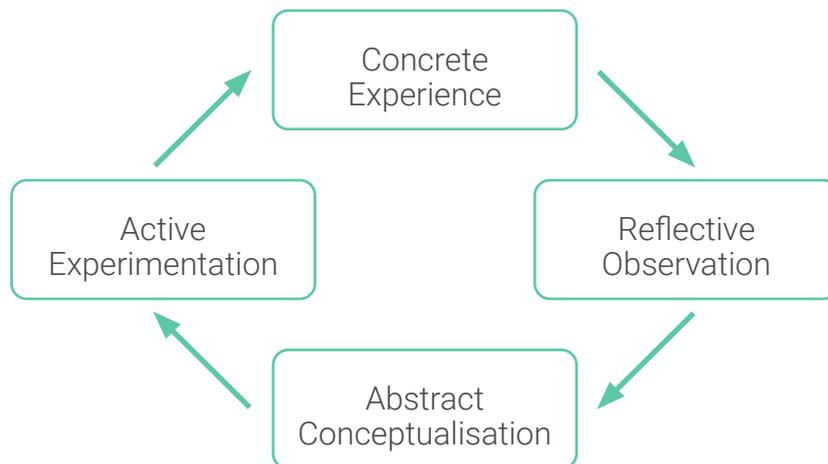
In this section we will consider two models of reflection that can be used to help you develop self-reflection in your thinking.



1. Kolb's (1984) reflective cycle

Kolb's reflective cycle is based on four stages:

1. **Concrete experience** – doing something (an action, an experience).
2. **Reflective observation** – asking questions about the concrete experience, e.g. why did x occur? How did y happen? It is a stage of reviewing the experience or action.
3. **Abstract conceptualisation** – a stage of trying to make judgements about the action or experience, and being able to understand one's own thoughts and feelings, to clarify what can be learnt from the situation and what changes could be made next time.
4. **Active experimentation** – putting into practice new ideas, actions and learning from the experience and applying new ways of dealing with future situations or refining and fine-tuning actions.

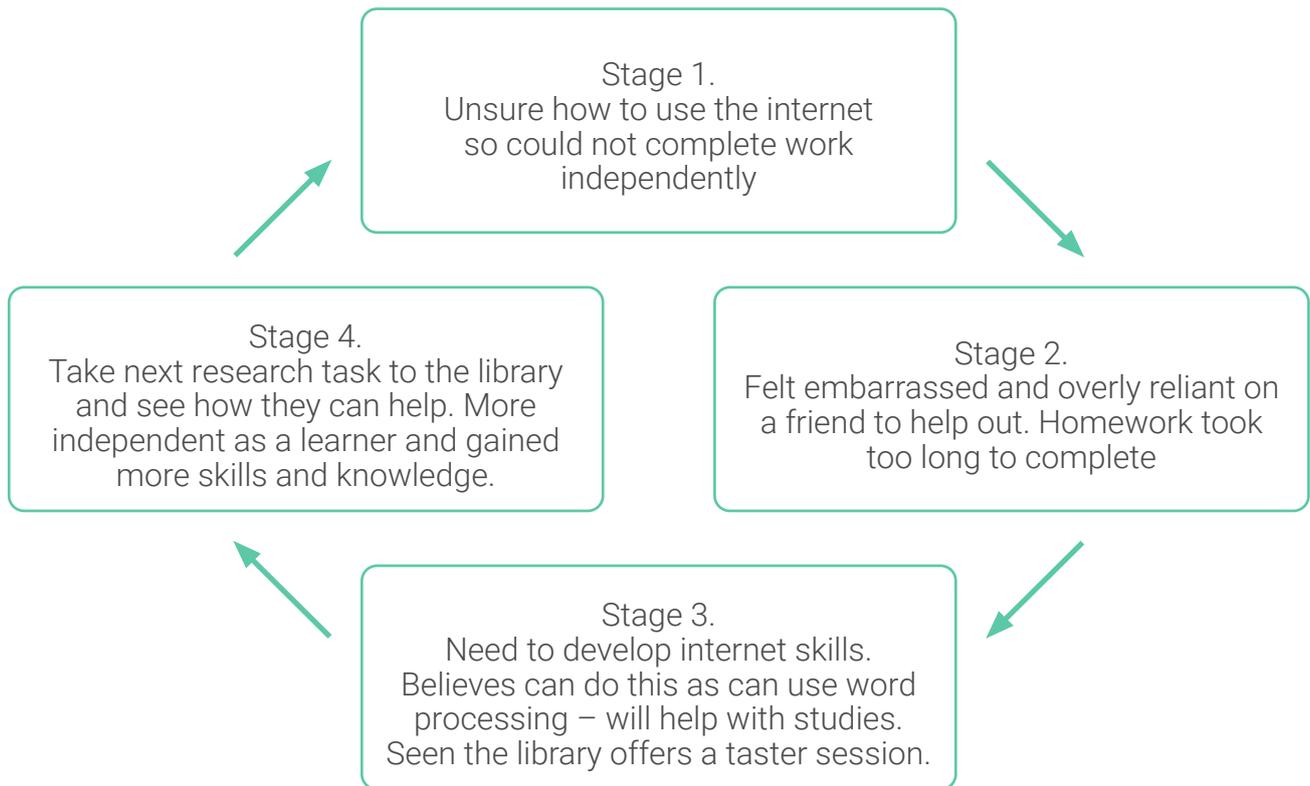


Source: Kolb, D.A. (1984) *Experiential learning: experience as the source of learning and development*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.

Kolb's cycle is based on learning by doing and thinking; for this reason it is known as an **experiential learning process**.

Case study: Tim

Tim has joined an Access to HE course. He has not studied in education for 15 years and has limited IT skills. Tim manages to complete most work using some books he has been given, but increasingly his teachers ask for more up-to-date information. He was asked to complete a two-minute presentation on a news story from within the last 24 hours, using the internet as a source of information on the newsworthy item. Tim asked a friend for help to find something. Tim uses Kolb's reflection cycle to help him decide what to do next time.



In Tim's case study we can see in his reflection that he realised he did have some IT skills, i.e. word processing; he also had the goal of becoming a more independent learner. He acted on this by setting a target of going to the library for support and further development.

2. Gibbs' (1988) Model of Reflection

The second model to consider is Graham Gibbs' model of reflection. This model can be used in many situations and is a popular model to apply to professional practice in the workplace.



Activity

Use the two weblinks in the Materials to Download section of the Useful References at the end of this workbook to find out what Gibbs' six stages of reflection are, and list the main points in the space below.

Explain using your own example why Gibbs' model of reflection is useful.



These two models of reflection are very helpful when you are trying to reflect on personal experience, strengths and weaknesses. The models will bring out strengths as well as areas for development.

If, for example, in the reflective process you identified that your communication skills are not as good as you would like, you can build into an action plan a communications skills workshop, or more simply, you could just ask your friends and family how they think you could improve your communication skills. There is always a simple answer to a problem if you take time to think about it. By using these skills regularly, they become second nature, and you will begin to apply the skills to other aspects of your life.

Definable and transferable skills

In addition to personal qualities, you will need to consider definable and transferable skills.

There are a number of areas that are easily definable skills, such as:

- Exam results
- Subject areas with recognised qualifications
- Education to date
- Work experience placements
- Previous employment in another field
- Hobbies and interests

Transferable skills: these are skills that are useful and relevant in many different areas, e.g. in employment, in education and in social settings. You may have a positive outlook most of the time, which means you are motivated, with a 'can do' attitude; this is useful in many different contexts.

It is important to know what transferable skills you possess so that you can 'sell' your application to universities and employers. We will examine how you can make the skills you have 'transferable', or relevant to the position you are applying for and between different situations. The best way to illustrate this is with a case study.

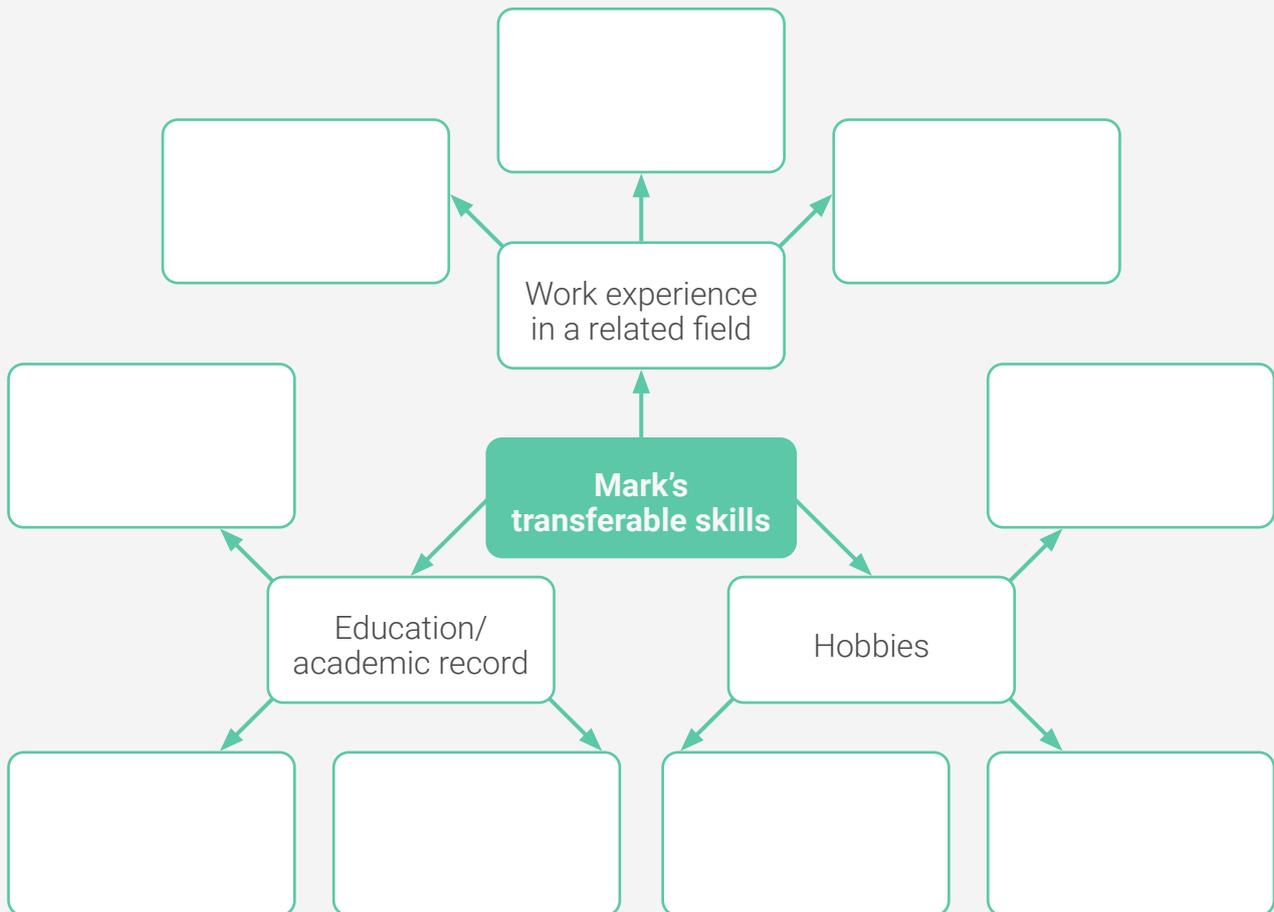
Case study: Mark

Mark is just coming to the point where he wants to apply for a university degree course. He is hoping to study nursing. He has five GCSE passes at or above grade C. He has worked in his local nursing home at weekends for the last two years and he enjoys looking after his horse and competing at local horse shows. He is studying Biology, Psychology and Art at his local college to an A-level standard. Mark has transferable skills that will be relevant to his application for a nursing degree.



Activity

Using information about Mark, complete the diagram below to highlight the transferable skills Mark can state in his application for Nursing, e.g. Communication Skills.



As can be seen from the information about Mark, a long list of transferrable skills can be deduced, e.g. reliability, communication skills, creativity. Not all of these skills are about the exams he has taken. No one has all possible transferable skills, but everyone can identify a number from their own life experiences. You will have the opportunity to create your own list of transferable skills later on in this workbook.

Time management and organisational skills

Time management and organisational skills are crucial to being a learner and in employment. These are two good examples of transferable skills.

As you progress into Higher Education or the workplace you will find that there is often too much to do in too little time. A vital skill you can develop is learning how to manage your time effectively and being well organised.



Activity

There are some useful **time-management** quizzes and assessments available online. Complete both time-management quizzes listed in the Useful References section at the end of this workbook. Reflect on your time-management skills by summarising your results in the space below.



Activity

We all have some weaknesses when it comes to time management, e.g. being easily distracted, procrastinating and taking on too much. Use the internet or books to research some useful ways to improve your time-management skills. Create a list of at least three top tips for time management that are meaningful to you.

Top Tips for Time Management

1.

2.

...continued



....continued

3.

Why is the skill of time management important to you?



Activity

There are some useful **organisational skills** quizzes and assessments available online. Complete organisational skills quizzes in the Useful References section at the end of this workbook. Reflect on your organisational skills by summarising your results in the space below.



Activity

It can be difficult to recognise the skills that you have built up. There are some useful online quizzes and assessments available to help you.

Follow links to the career quizzes by the National Careers Service and UCAS in the Useful references section. Then:

1. Write your results in the space below.
2. Describe the skills and qualities you knew you possessed and the ones that the quizzes pointed out to you.
3. Assess whether you think the results you received were useful or whether you need to do more exploring.
4. Note down the career goals you got from the process (even if the quizzes only reinforced ideas you already had) and the skills and qualities you need to develop further to attain those goals.

Record your answers in the spaces below.



Skills developed as a learner

By studying for the Access to HE Diploma, you will be able to improve a number of skills essential to progressing into Higher Education or the workplace, such as:

- A better understanding of academic writing
- Enhanced academic writing skills
- An understanding of the importance of transferable skills
- An ability to reflect on yourself
- An ability to create a number of documents essential to higher learning or employment such as: essays, presentations, applications for UCAS or jobs, CVs, action plans



Activity

Reflect on your studies so far and write in the space below the skills you are developing, improving on and gaining more confidence in doing during your Access to HE studies. Note down goals you have set for yourself during your studies and how you plan to attain them.



Think deeper

Use the Useful References section to read about the career paths and successes of many Access to HE students. You may get ideas that apply to you, and you will certainly be inspired and motivated to continue with your studies, which is also a skill – one of perseverance!



b) Identifying areas for development

Another important aspect of taking a critical look at yourself is identifying areas where you can improve. This is a process that allows you to examine areas in which you do not feel as confident and make a plan to develop them.

All people, even the most successful, continue to develop themselves throughout their careers, and the first step in that development is deciding what needs to be improved.



Activity

Using your reflection tools, personal qualities, definable and transferable skills and your careers quiz results, complete the following:

- a) Fill in the table below to create a list of your transferable skills, including those from your work experience, hobbies and academic experience.
- b) Review the table and, at the bottom of each column, identify a target for further improvement.

Academic qualifications	Work experience	Hobbies	Interests	Personal qualities
Targets for further improvement				



c) Action planning

Writing an action plan is the next step in progressing from reflection on personal experience and goals to applying for a position in HE or the workplace. The skills of reflection, organisation and time management are essential in action planning. We will consider the process of writing effective action plans.

i) SMART targets



Activity

A SMART approach helps you to set goals and targets. Read the information below and answer the questions that follow. SMART is a well-known acronym used to describe an effective target-setting approach. This is known as developing SMART targets.

Use the internet and any other resources to discover what is meant by the term SMART.

S

M

A

R

T

Why do you think using SMART targets is an effective way to set goals?



Activity

Read the examples of targets personal tutors and learners have written in their individual learning plans. Re-write each target to make it SMART.

1. I will improve my punctuation.
2. I will hand in my English assignment on time this term.
3. I will do some volunteer work at the local primary school because I would like to be employed as a teacher.
4. I will try to sort out my access to the library.



Activity

Read the case study below and answer the questions that follow.

Case study: Georgia

Georgia has been absent from her lessons for three weeks due to a car accident and her child's illness. She has collaborated with her personal tutor to write three SMART targets:

1. I will read two chapters a week of my English literature book for the next three weeks. When I attend my tutorial on 12th February, I will have completed the book.
2. I will offer to write up the group work notes for the marketing assignment in information technology and share these with everyone in the group before the presentation on 5th February.
3. I will make arrangements with family so that I can attend the local university open day on 4th March. I will attend from 10am to hear the subject talks I am interested in.

Questions

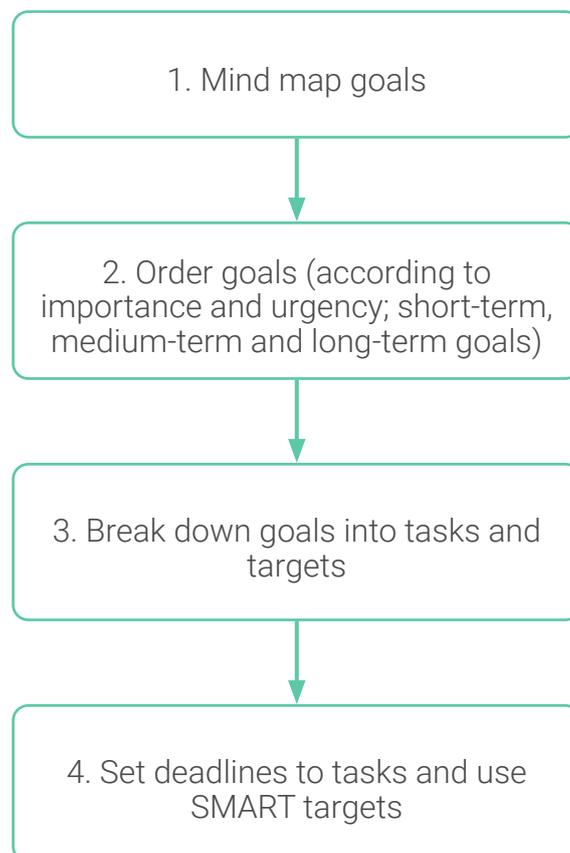
Why do you think SMART targets are helpful for Georgia?

Why might Georgia fail to achieve a target and what advice would you give her?



Once you know how to set clear targets, e.g. using the SMART approach, you can begin to write an action plan. An **action plan** is a useful tool to convert your ideas and goals into actions and can result in self-improvement. It is a way of breaking down a problem into smaller, achievable goals performed in stages that allow a bigger task to be undertaken easily. We have gone through the process of self-reflection when it comes to the skills that you already have, and also those that you need to work on to improve. Now we have to decide how to go about achieving your goals.

ii) Action planning steps





Example: Action plan template

Overall aim – In this section, complete an overall aim, e.g. Start degree course		
Goals and targets	Actions	Date
Short term: You decide on the timescale; it may be 1–2 weeks. Describe your goal or target, e.g. Complete application for university	Clearly identify actions, e.g. Attend college presentation on applying to university	Include clear dates, e.g. 21st October
Medium term: You decide on the timescale; it may be 1–2 months. Describe your goal or target, e.g. Successfully meet entry requirements for university		
Long term: You decide on the timescale; it may be 8–10 months. Describe your goal or target, e.g. Finances and childcare arranged prior to starting degree		



Think deeper

Use the internet or books to review examples of action plan templates. Find a style that you like or create one of your own from the ideas that you have seen.

Check that it meets the SMART criteria. It could be as simple as:

Goal / Actions(s) / By when



Activity

Practise using an action plan. Set a career-related goal, e.g. applying to university, gaining work experience or researching a particular career idea. Now create your own action plan using the action plan template above or one that you have created or found online.

After completing your action plan, answer the question below.

Action Plan

Goals and targets	Actions	Date

Ask a friend or family member to review your action plan and comment on how effective they think it is and whether they have any further suggestions

Feedback on Action Plan



Summary

In this section we have considered a range of techniques and tools to help you assess your qualities, skills and experience, for example: reflective thinking; definable and transferable skills, including time management and organisational skills, career goals and skills developed as a learner. You have started to identify and evaluate your qualities and skills, review areas for further development and demonstrate the skill of action planning.



2. Application materials

Assessment Criteria

- 2.1** Produce notes covering topics to be included in a UCAS application or a CV.
- 2.2** Produce a suitable personal statement for HE or a CV for an employer in an appropriate format with relevant personal and academic information.

In this section you will develop further ideas for your Higher Education application and/or future employment. You will learn about some of the ways you can develop your action planning skills and the ability to reflect on yourself and your development.

a) Drafting a UCAS application

You have been considering the personal qualities and skills that you already have. It is vital that you can translate those skills and make them relevant to the position you are applying for, be it a new job or a university application. It is important to understand what is required of you and what attributes your chosen path requires. These can often be found on the applications page of your chosen course or job, and it is vital that you read these before writing your application.

Read the following case study to see how an applicant relates her qualities and skills to her choice of career in the Royal Navy as an engineer.

Case study: Jo

Jo has worked hard to gain eight GCSEs at or above grade C. She is now studying a vocational qualification in Engineering as she did not want to go on to study A-levels. She plays rugby and hockey at county level. She has always been interested in how things work and spends a lot of her free time building kit cars with her father and brother.



In the left-hand column are Jo's attributes, i.e. her definable and transferable qualities and skills, and in the right-hand column are the skills as they relate directly to her choice of career.

Attributes	Related to Royal Navy Engineer
Eight GCSEs	Strong academic aptitude
	Ability to learn
Vocational qualification in Engineering	Understanding of field
	Prior knowledge of field
	Dedication to field
Team sports to a high level	Team working
	Communication skills
	Loyalty
	Commitment
Hobby of car mechanics	Aptitude for Engineering
	Genuine interest in chosen field
	Good hand-eye coordination
	Problem-solving skills



Think deeper

It is useful to research the types of skills, qualities and qualifications that are being looked for in your chosen career. Conduct some research using university websites and job descriptions from potential employers' websites. Identify the skills, qualities and qualifications required for your chosen career path.



Activity

Using your notes on your definable and transferable skills from Section 1, complete the table below, with your attributes in one column and how they relate to your degree/job choice in the other.

Attributes	Related to Chosen Career Path

b) Writing a personal statement

We will find out how to write a personal statement for a university application. Initially, you need to be aware of the organisation that deals with university admissions, which is known as UCAS. There is a wealth of information and support on their website.



i) UCAS



Activity

UCAS is the organisation that deals with university admissions via its administration system. Answer the questions below to find out what is available on the UCAS website (www.ucas.com).

Questions:

1. Find the *Undergraduate* section on the UCAS website and go to one of the *subject guides*. Select something you are interested in. Write down three facts from your chosen subject guide that you find interesting.

1.

2.

3.

2. Find the *Undergraduate* section on the UCAS website and go to the *Student life* pages. Research one of the key headings that interests you, e.g. Managing money, Study skills guides or Getting student support. Write down three useful facts about student life.

1.

...continued



....continued

2.

3.

ii) UCAS personal statement

The UCAS personal statement is one of the most important pieces of writing you will have had to create up to this point. This is your opportunity to promote yourself to your potential university.

There are a number of factors that should be taken into account before you start writing, such as:

- **Content** – this is your opportunity to expand on the information about you already available on the application and relate that content to your chosen subject.
- **Conciseness** – there is a strict word limit, and as much positive information should be included as possible, without using any unnecessary words.
- **Personal attributes** – include the qualities that make you a great candidate for the university and the subject area.
- **Originality** – you are unique and therefore do not need to use the words of others to express who you are and what you can add to your chosen university – don't plagiarise!
- **Relevance** – tailor your statement to your chosen subject and make sure that you have read the course requirements for your chosen university.
- **Accuracy** – ensure your statement is grammatically correct and has no spelling mistakes.
- **Honesty** – be prepared to be asked about anything you write in your personal statement and be able to talk enthusiastically about it.



Activity

You may receive specific advice and information from your tutors about how to apply to university through UCAS. But if not, or if you want additional support and help, use the Useful references at the end of this workbook to research links to support you in applying to Higher Education.

Using the internet, research 'writing a UCAS personal statement'. Write down some useful notes for yourself in the space below.

Things to remember when writing a personal statement:

Answers:

a) Why I have chosen this subject:

b) Personal qualities/experiences I have that demonstrate my interest in/aptitude for this subject:



c) Writing a CV

The ability to write a CV (short for 'curriculum vitae') is an essential skill that allows you to fully demonstrate your achievements in order to impress potential employers. There is a lot of advice available on how to write CVs. In this section, we will consider some of the most common CV writing tips and conventions. There are some standard features that employers will want to see on a CV, but one of the most important things to remember is that your CV must be tailored to the industry and employer that you are applying to. For example, a CV for a career in the media or sales will be presented differently to one that is being sent to a long-established law firm.

i) CV layout and content

To maximise the impact of your CV, it needs to be clearly laid out and follow a logical order. Headings will need to be clear so that they stand out, e.g. Qualifications and Employment. Your CV presentation says something about you, so make sure it is professional. Use a word processing package with a professional font such as Arial. Think about font size; you do not want the CV to look crammed with information that is time-consuming to read, but you do not want it to be too sparse either. Avoid borders around CVs. Some CVs include photographs and others do not. This is a controversial area, and in general in the UK a photograph is not expected, but in other parts of the world it is usual to include a photograph. Therefore, always research your industry and employer as much as possible before finalising a CV.

Top Tip

Font size: Use appropriate font size 10-12 (but not smaller than 10; your name at the top of the CV can be font 14-16)

The list below highlights the content that most CVs will include.

Personal Information:

- Name
- Address
- Contact number and email



Personal Profile:

- Explain why you are applying for the job, reference the job description and show background research on the company. This section often spells out some of the transferable skills that are not otherwise noticeable from the education and employment histories.

Experience and Employment History:

- Employment location with dates
- Short paragraph outlining duties and responsibilities

Qualifications and Education:

- Qualifications include dates and, if necessary, the awarding organisation, e.g. C.I.H. (Chartered Institute of Housing)
- Education, e.g. Higher Education and dates

Remember

Use reverse chronological order so that most recent qualifications or experiences are at the top of each section and order skills from most advanced or most relevant to least. List relevant information e.g. don't list your swimming badges from 10 years ago if not relevant!

Interests and Hobbies:

This is a useful section if you have some stand-out qualities and activities that are applicable to the job role or being a team member, e.g. volunteer work, weekly first aider at football matches, committee member at the local photography group. Avoid listing ordinary things such as reading, travelling and socialising, but you could say that you are a book-club organiser at the local library or an online blogger for luxury hotels – only if the information is true, of course!

References:

You may include the names and contact details of referees or say that these are available on request. Only add names and contact details of persons who have agreed to be your referees in advance. Look closely at what you are required to do in making your application.

Here is a basic example of a CV for Jo. The example illustrates the required content and logical layout. It can contain more detail, however, and a great deal of thought should be put into writing the supporting information on your own CV. Each element should add information about your personal qualities as well as your achievements.



Jo Bloggs

Address: 1 Albany Crescent, Chickering, Essex

Telephone: 077638899220

Email: j.bloggs@email.co.uk

Personal Profile

I am currently studying for my Diploma in Mechanical Engineering with a view to becoming a Royal Navy Engineer. I have tailored my education to becoming an engineer from an early age. I enjoy figuring out how engines work and I am currently building a kit car from scratch with my family. I am an enthusiastic team player and have been a member of our regional county hockey and rugby teams for the last three years.

Experience and Employment History

2013–2014 Carworks Garage, 11 Garage Road

Apprenticeship working with registered mechanics on a variety of jobs. Key responsibilities: communicating with customers, responsible for safe tool storage, health and safety in workshop, testing tyre tread, booking servicing and MOTs, money handling, updating car sales website.

Qualifications

Level 2 IMI Certificate in Light Vehicle Maintenance – Pass

GCSEs: Biology A, Maths B, Art B, Chemistry B, English B, English Literature B, French B, Geography C

Education

2014–2016 Higher Education College

2010–2014 Reed Comprehensive School

Hobbies and Interests

Rugby

Hockey

Building kit cars

References

Available on request



Activity

Look at the case study information for Jo and her CV and review what Jo has written in the section entitled 'Personal Profile'. Jo has more transferable skills and qualities that she could include. In the space below, write three sentences that Jo could include that would sell her skill set better.

Jo's Personal Profile:



Think deeper

You may already have a CV but it might need refreshing and updating, e.g. with your college course and skills gained. If you have not got an up-to-date CV, it is useful to create one. There is an example to follow above and many more ideas and templates available on the internet. Look at the Useful References section at the end of this workbook to help you find helpful guides to writing CVs.



Activity

Use the information on writing CVs and the sample CV to create your own for a job in the industry you would like to work in. Find a job vacancy on a job search website, such as www.reed.co.uk or www.indeed.co.uk, and explain three key skills required for the role. Write the job title of the vacancy you found in the space below and follow with the CV you would tailor to applying for this role.

Summary

In this section, we have examined a range of practical tasks that need to be completed to apply for a Higher Education place and/or employment.



3. Interview preparation

Assessment Criteria

- 3.1** Prepare for an interview.
- 3.2** Perform in a mock interview situation applying appropriate skills.
- 3.3** Reflect upon strengths and areas to develop or improve drawing on the mock interview experience and tutor feedback.

In this section, you will learn more about the skills you need for interviews in a range of situations. You will gain knowledge to be better prepared for the interview stage of an application process.

a) Practising interview performance

The interview process can be a stressful experience. This stress can never be totally eradicated, but there are ways you can prepare for an interview that take some of the anxiety out of the process.

As with CV writing, time management and the reflective process, some of the skills required for an interview can be learned and practised.

Top Tip

- Research where and when the interview will take place and arrive in plenty of time.
- Dress appropriately – arrive looking as if you have made an effort to look professional, regardless of the position you are interviewing for.
- Use positive non-verbal communication – smile and introduce yourself, thank them for inviting you to interview, maintain eye contact with your interviewers, sit forward in your seat to demonstrate active listening – and don't fidget!



These may seem like common-sense suggestions, but when you are placed in a stressful situation you can do things you would never dream of doing normally. When it comes to the interview itself, there are some helpful guidelines that, if followed, can help you to prepare:

- Research the institution you are going to interview with.
- Read through your application form and CV to ensure you are happy to talk about any of the information you have included.
- General questions – write a list of questions you will likely be asked, such as:
 - Why do you want to do x?
 - What is your best quality?
 - What is your worst quality?
 - Why do you want to study here?
 - What do you bring to the university/job that is unique?
- Specific questions – write a list of questions related to your chosen field that interviewers would use to gauge your interest in the subject, such as:
 - What qualities are important in mechanical engineering and do you have any of those qualities?
 - Have you read anything in the news about mechanical engineering that interested you?
- Have a question prepared for the end of the interview, when you may be asked if you have any questions for the interviewers.

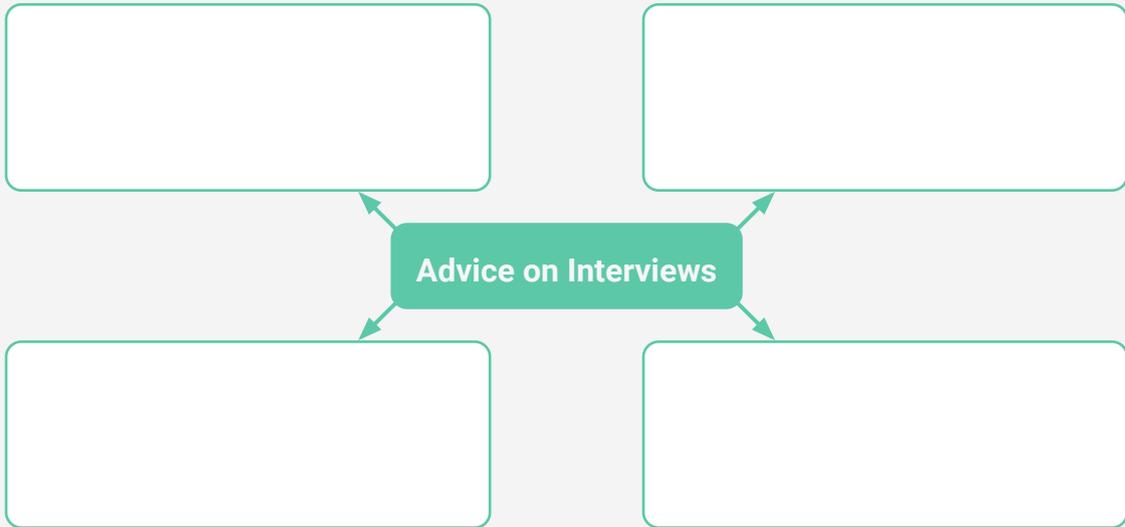
The most important take-home message from the interview process is: prepare. Performing a mock interview is vital as this will allow you to see how you perform under pressure and will allow you to practise putting into words some of the areas you have thought about. It is a good idea to practise responses to questions in front of a mirror or by recording a video of yourself.



Activity

Before answering the questions below, research tips on interview skills. Select the advice and guidance that is useful to you and make a few notes in the space below. Plan answers to the practice questions listed earlier.

Advice on Interviews



Practice Questions for Interviews

General questions:

1. Why do you want to do x?

2. What is your best quality?

...continued



....continued

3. What is your worst quality?

4. Why do you want to study here?

5. What do you bring to the university/job that is unique?

Specific questions:

6. What qualities are important in [your subject choice, e.g. social work] and do you have any of those qualities?

...continued



....continued

7. Have you read anything in the news about [your subject choice, e.g. teaching] that interested you?

8. Have a question prepared for the end of the interview, when you may be asked if you have any questions for the interviewers.

b) Using feedback to progress

As with any reflective process, it is important that you focus as much on the positives in your interview as the negatives. The easiest way to do this is to jot down positives and negatives. You may also want to get feedback from others such as peers or family members.

Being in an interview situation in front of your peers or videoing your practice performance will demonstrate things that you would not have been able to predict, such as:

Positives:

- You maintain good eye contact
- You appear friendly and enthusiastic
- You have good knowledge of your chosen subject



Negatives:

- You repeat yourself
- You say 'errr' a lot
- You don't always answer the question adequately

The positives and negatives you come up with can then be added into the action plan you created earlier in this workbook, which can guide your learning and improve your technique. The most important things to remember are preparation and practice, both of which will help you to promote yourself and succeed in interviews.

Summary

In this section, we have considered the interview stage in the process of preparing to progress. We have examined a set of useful interview questions and covered the importance of reflecting on interview skills by gaining feedback from others.



Key terms

Instruction

This is a list of useful terms for the unit Academic Writing Skills. Use this workbook, books or the internet to find helpful definitions. Write out the definitions as you go through the workbook or at the end as a useful summary and check on your knowledge and understanding.

Academic record

Action plan

Aptitude

Curriculum Vitae (CV)

Defined skills



Model of reflection

Organisational skills

Personal qualities

Procrastination

Reflective thinking

Qualities



Self-knowledge

SMART target

Time management

Transferable skills

UCAS

Undergraduate



Useful references

Websites

Quizzes and skills assessments

nationalcareers.service.gov.uk – Online assessments re skills and careers

www.ucas.com/careers/buzz-quiz – Careers quiz

www.psychologytoday.com/gb/tests/career/time-management-skills-test – Free time management quiz

www.surveymonkey.com/r/assess_timemgmt – Free time management quiz

www.psychologytoday.com/gb/tests/career/organization-skills-test-version-workers-students

– Organisational skills quiz

Success stories

www.qaa.ac.uk/news-events/blog/nadia-whittome's-journey-from-access-to-he-to-becoming-the-uk's-youngest-mp# – Read about an Access student's journey into politics

www.accesstohe.ac.uk/real-stories – Motivating student success stories, including video interviews

How to write CVs

www.prospects.ac.uk/careers-advice/cvs-and-cover-letters/how-to-write-a-cv – Writing a CV and cover letters

jobs.theguardian.com/article/how-to-write-a-cv-video-/ – How to write a CV

nationalcareers.service.gov.uk/careers-advice/cv-sections – CV Writing

<https://www.cv-library.co.uk/career-advice/> – CV writing and many associated top tips

How to write application materials for university

www.ucas.com/ – UCAS home page

www.ucas.com/advisers/guides-resources-and-training/guides-and-resources

– An example application form



www.ucas.com/undergraduate/applying-university/how-write-ucas-undergraduate-personal-statement - Writing a UCAS personal statement

www.ucas.com/advisers/guides-resources-and-training/guides-and-resources – Tools and resources for applying to university

www.ucas.com/sites/default/files/ucas-personal-statement-worksheet.pdf – Useful worksheet for preparing to apply to university

Information for mature students

www.ucas.com/undergraduate/student-life/mature-undergraduate-students – Applying to university as a mature student

www.gov.uk/mature-student-university-funding – Mature students and Higher Education funding

www.thecompleteuniversityguide.co.uk/student-advice/applying-to-uni/mature-students-university-guide – Guide to applying to university, including funding for mature students

Interview preparation

jobs.theguardian.com/careers/interview-advice/ – Interview advice

Material for download

www.mmu.ac.uk/media/mmuacuk/content/documents/careers/Applying-the-Gibbs-Model-2018.pdf – Gibbs' model of reflection

shop.brookes.ac.uk/product-catalogue/oxford-centre-for-staff-learning-development/books-publications/ebooks/learning-by-doing-a-guide-to-teaching-and-learning-methods-by-graham-gibbs-ebook – Gibbs (1988) Learning by Doing, A Guide to Teaching and Learning Methods by Graham Gibbs; a free, digital copy of Gibbs' book

Disclaimer

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