

The Open University's Employability Skills framework

The OU considers that employability is about making connections between study, personal development and other activities in order to find, gain and be successful in your chosen career, and that developing a strong employability profile will make you much more employable and successful in your career. Apart from subject-specific knowledge, employers stress the importance of **transferable skills** (sometimes called key skills or employability skills).

The National Council for Voluntary Organisations (NCVO – of which the Students Association is a member) advocates that volunteering can be a route to employment, as well as a chance to try something new which may lead to a career change. From this perspective, volunteering can be a way of gaining new skills, knowledge and experience, developing existing skills and knowledge, enhancing a CV, and improving one's employment prospects.

The Association is keen that anyone who volunteers with us will not only meet other students, be able to give something back to the student community, and also have fun, but will develop transferable skills that they can take with them into work or any other volunteering role. With this aim, we will include the employability or transferable skills that each volunteering role supports in all of our new role descriptions.

The eleven employability or transferable skills highlighted by the OU are:

Written communication

The ability to present arguments, produce reports, summarise in writing in a clear and focused manner, related to the purpose of the text and its intended readers.

Oral communication

Being able to discuss issues, talk about specific topics, listen to viewpoints and present information.

Team working

Participating in group work activities by providing a valuable contribution and valuing inputs made by others, in order to reach a common goal.

Leadership

The capacity to motivate and encourage others, in the achievement of specific objectives, and to carry ultimate responsibility.

Interpersonal skills

Having qualities that show an ability to relate well to others, to accept and value others - particularly colleagues and customers.

Computer literacy

Being proficient in word processing and software packages.

Numeracy

Having the ability to deal with numerical data, including statistics, graphs, figures and budgets.

Planning and organising

Being able to organise work and personal events to produce a plan of action and reach a target.

Initiative

The ability to act without constant direction, to assess situations and recognise what needs to be done.

Problem solving

Being able to assess situations, recognise difficulties and determine the action that might be needed to achieve a successful outcome.

Adaptability/flexibility

Recognising that alternative action may be needed and being able to adapt to change, without detracting from the overall aims of a project or situation.

You can find out more about Employability Skills here: <https://help.open.ac.uk/employability-skills-activity>