

# EMPLOYABILITY AND EMPLOYER ENGAGEMENT: GUIDE TO LEARNING DESIGN

## THIS LEAFLET HAS BEEN DESIGNED TO HELP YOU CONSIDER

- How to support students in developing explicit employability skills and attributes to enable them to achieve their academic, personal and career goals throughout their qualification
- The importance of engaging employers in design of curriculum content, teaching and learning and also how to engage employers. This will enhance student learning and add credibility to support students' demonstration and application of this knowledge in real world contexts during and on completion of their qualification.

## WHAT IS EMPLOYABILITY?

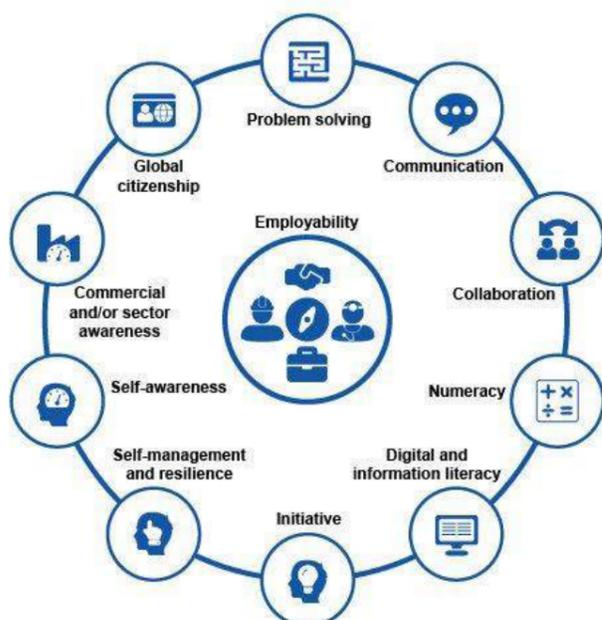
The Open University (2019) understands employability as 'A set of capabilities and achievements that support students in developing their careers, raising their aspirations and enhancing their contribution to society'.

## WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

- For students – to achieve their academic, personal and professional goals, to get into their chosen field of work and progress, to develop as an individual and recognise their personal contributions to society
- For employers – to ensure OU students and alumni meet employer needs in respect of skills and attributes
- For the OU – as part of our mission to empower students to achieve their potential, to enable our civic mission in respect of supporting the economy/labour market requirements and skills gaps and for official metric reporting.

## WHAT IS THE EMPLOYABILITY FRAMEWORK?

The Employability Framework encapsulates ten core skills and attributes that OU students need to support them in their personal, study and career development.





## HOW DO I APPLY THE FRAMEWORK IN LEARNING DESIGN?

The Employability Framework is designed as a tool for embedding and making explicit employability within the curriculum. It fits with the OU's student-centred approach to Learning Design, which focuses on the student learning journey, what students will do to learn and what skills and attributes they will develop.

The Employability Framework is used by curriculum teams to:

- Embed and make explicit employability within curriculum by mapping how material develops and enhances the skills and attributes identified in the Employability Framework.
- Ensure curriculum development supports our students in better understanding and navigating the transforming employment landscape by providing clear linkages between their learning and its applicability in different real-world contexts, where appropriate.
- Support OU academics and professional staff to engage in cutting edge employability research and scholarship

Full details of how the framework should be used in design of new curriculum and incorporated into the Learning Design process can be found in the [Employability Framework Repository](#).

## WHY IS IT IMPORTANT TO ENGAGE EMPLOYERS?

Collaboration and engagement with employers in the development of curriculum will ensure that the relevance of content meets the needs of one of the key consumers of higher education across society. The inclusion of practical examples of the application of knowledge can help to enhance learning for students and provide scaffolding for their own contexts. For those students studying for career-related reasons, the integration of the employer voice will add credibility and inspiration. It also provides indications of occupational areas where skills from their qualification are in demand. There are many great examples of how the OU works with employers which can be found on the [Employability Hub](#) and in the [Employer Engagement CPD module](#) module hosted in My Learning Centre.

## ONLINE SOURCES OF SUPPORT

- [The Employability Hub](#)
  - [The Employability Framework](#)
  - [The Employability Framework and Curriculum Design](#)
  - [Best Practice Guide for Employer Engagement](#)
- [Guidance for curriculum teams on the Employability Framework and FutureYou](#)
- [Repository of Best Practice for Embedding Employability](#)
- [Curriculum Management Guide](#)

## WHAT DO I NEED TO THINK ABOUT IN RELATION TO LEARNING DESIGN?

- What the employability development journey will be for students throughout their module and qualification and how this will be staged
- How employability skills and attributes are supported by academic and digital skills as well as subject knowledge
- What activities you will build into your curriculum to enable students to develop and articulate their skills and attributes
- How employers will be engaged in developing the module/qualification and how they will be contributing to its ongoing development
- How the qualification will be attractive to employers and meet employer needs
- How changing environments will be reflected in the module and qualification content to ensure its currency.

## CONTACTS

- Faculty/School Employability Lead
- [Learning Design Team](#)
- [Learning and Teaching Librarian](#)
- [CES Learning and Teaching Consultant](#)
- CES Employer Engagement team – to source/contact employers - [careers-service-employers@open.ac.uk](mailto:careers-service-employers@open.ac.uk)