

Reflection on Academic and Employability Skills

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Introduction

In this report I will discuss the academic and professional skills that have been discussed during the Academic and Employability module and provide evidence in the appendices for each of the sections and tasks I have completed.

Section 1 – Presentation Skills

In this section I will discuss the PowerPoint presentation task that was given to us to introduce ourselves and our skills. I will briefly discuss the presentation, the skills required to produce a successful presentation and how I could improve on what I presented.

Self-Introduction

As per my presentation I introduce myself as Kieran Perrin, 24 years old a tech enthusiast and gamer. I chose to introduce myself as these things because that is what I'm most interested in and is what defines what kind of person I am. I then discuss why I am interested in I.T. From there I move on to discuss the software I can use, the programming languages I can code in and discuss some other skills that I have. The slides from my PowerPoint presentation will be in the appendices.

Producing a Successful Presentation

When it comes to producing a successful presentation there are a few things to discuss. These include the presentation layout, font choice, media like images or video, use of colour and special effects.

Presentation Layout

Presentation layout covers a few different aspects of the slides, these are the visual theme of the presentation and the layout of the information on the slides. When it comes to the information on the slides according to Laura Spencer "each slide should be as simple as possible. Avoid putting too much material or too many images on a single slide [1]." Also, Garr Reynolds says "The best slides may have no text at all." [2] This to me suggests that a limited amount of information should be on each slide as not to overwhelm the audience with information.

Font Choice

When it comes to font choice it's best to make sure that the font is the same throughout the presentation and is easily readable for most people, this way you make sure that everyone can understand the words on the page. "be cautious about using too many different fonts in your presentation. Fonts should coordinate with each other and not clash and become distracting.[1]"

Future Enhancements

To make my PowerPoint and presentation skills better, I need to add more information in the notes area for presenting and have less information on the slides so the people being presented to are not

overwhelmed. I also need to work on my public speaking so I am more confident standing in front of people presenting and giving the best information forward I possibly can.

Section 2 – Research into Skills Evaluation

In this section I will discuss the specific skills needed to be a successful student and the skills that employers look for in their employees. I will then discuss the skills that I have and what I need to work on to be a successful student and employee.

Skills required to be a good student

To be a successful student there are a multitude of skills that can be beneficial. There are 16 fundamental skills for a student to thrive according to Brenda Wong “According to the WEF, you need a combination of traditional skills and something called ‘social and emotional learning’ (SEL). This is the ability to collaborate, communicate and solve problems. A student needs these skills to navigate the evolving digital economy with ease.

The WEF identified 16 key skills across three different areas.

Foundational literacies – how students apply core skills to everyday tasks

Competencies – how students approach complex challenges

Character qualities – how students approach their changing environment. [3]”

The 16 skills include;

“Foundational Literacies

1. Literacy
2. Numeracy
3. Scientific literacy
4. Information and communications technology literacy
5. Financial literacy
6. Cultural and civic literacy

Competencies

1. Critical-thinking/problem-solving
2. Creativity
3. Communication
4. Collaboration

Character qualities

1. Curiosity
2. Initiative
3. Persistence/grit
4. Adaptability
5. Leadership
6. Social and cultural awareness [3]”

The reason for the foundational literacies is to make sure the student has prior knowledge and understanding of the fundamentals of numeracy and literature etc, so they can jump straight into learning their relevant topics. The competencies are so the student can understand the lectures and solve the problems that are set out to them not only by themselves but in a team setting if necessary. Lastly the character qualities are so the student can stay on the right path and overcome any obstacles that is thrown at them.

Key Skills Employers look for

As part of the mock assignment I have discussed the skills that employers in the types of jobs I would be looking for wanted. For the mock assignment I investigated the job requirements of an I.T network administrator/technician. For this job there are relevant technical skills needed such as network management, active directory, my sql and many more. Generically employers will want a set of skills from their employee that will prove that they will get the job done correctly and in a timely manner. Most of the skills needed to be a good student would be transferred to be a good employee.

Self-Evaluation

To see whether I have the skills that employers would be looking for I went through the “skills framework for the information age” and filled out an excel workbook of what relevant skills and what level I had for each of the skills referenced in the framework. I found that I don’t have many of the skills that employers would be looking for, and it is something that I would need to work on to be an employable person. Not only did I go through the SFIA, but I also did an online personality test that showed I leaned toward a more leader type role. The test and the SFIA will be in the appendices.

Section 3 – Action Plans

In this section I will discuss my short- and long-term goals when it comes to my academic studies and future employment. I will discuss my plans on how to achieve my goals and the time frame in which I will be able to achieve them.

Short Term Academic Goals

When it comes to my academic goals, I want to be able to walk away from university with a 1st class honours degree in applied I.T. The time frame for this achievement would be 3 years as that is how long the course takes. To be able to achieve this goal I will have to make sure that I study hard and complete assignment and exams to the highest degree possible. Even shorter goals are to be able to pass the year without failing.

Long Term Career Goals

My long-term career goals include working in the I.T industry for multiple years in a network or technician type role before moving toward completing a teaching course and becoming a teacher or lecturer for I.T. To be able to achieve this goal I will have to pursue a job in I.T after leaving university and work hard to gather the experience needed to be a teacher. I will then have to work hard to pass the teaching course and be a good teacher for people who want to learn.

Section 4 – Application

In this section I will discuss how I apply the skills that I have learned through my time in class for this module.

Looking after Data

As a university student, the documents that I generate are of high importance and if anything were to happen, I could be in a lot of trouble. Because of this I will discuss the ways in which I have prepared for such an occasion.

Backup Plan

To make sure that if any of my data were to go missing it wouldn't be a problem, I make sure to back-up everything I do to at least three different locations. All my work will be saved in my storage on the college system, but I also keep a back-up on an external storage device, cloud storage service and on my personal computer at home. Doing this ensures that if anything were to happen to my data in any of these locations, I would be able to retrieve anything important from the back-ups.

Possible Disaster Scenarios

Some of the possible disasters that could occur in the United Kingdom include a fire or flooding. If any of the locations my data were stored were to have a fire or were to be flooded, my data would be destroyed. Because I keep multiple back-ups of the data, copying it back onto the new systems would be as easy as dragging and dropping files onto the new system and would be like nothing happened.

Time Management and Self-Organisation

To make sure that I achieve the goals I set out for myself and be the best I can be I need to make sure that I manage my time and organise myself.

Self-Improvement

E-Portfolio and Personal Development Plan

Section 5 – Conclusion and Evaluation

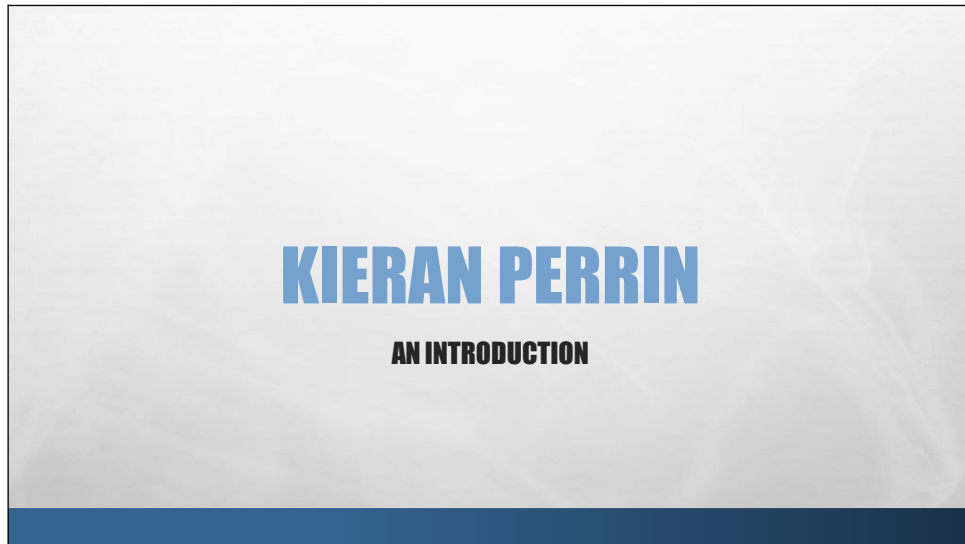
Conclusions

Considered Areas for Further Study

Section 6 – Appendices

PowerPoint Presentation

Slide 1



Slide 2

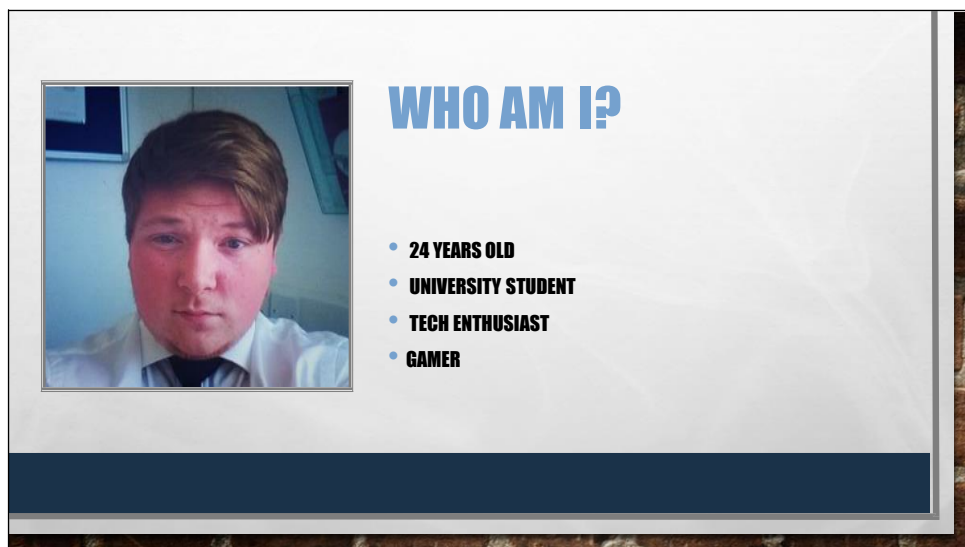


Image – a picture of myself

In the presentation I provide buzz word like descriptors of myself. I am 24 years old and a student, studying applied IT. When I call myself a tech enthusiast, I mean that in every possible way, I keep up with all the current news when it comes to technology. And I describe myself as a gamer because if I'm not doing anything else, I'm probably playing games or watching someone play games.

Slide 3

WHY AM I INTERESTED IN I.T.?

- I HAVE ALWAYS HAD AN INTEREST IN HOW THINGS WORK, TECHNOLOGY ALLOWS ME TO FIND OUT.
- I WANT TO BE AT THE FOREFRONT OF INNOVATION AND COMMUNICATION.
- ALLOWS ME TO LEARN NEW AND EXCITING THINGS.
- I CAN EXPERIENCE THINGS WITHOUT LEAVING THE HOUSE (WHICH I HAVE TROUBLE DOING).

Slide 4

SOFTWARE I CAN USE

01 I can use Microsoft office suite, I am well versed in most of its intricacies.	02 I have a basic knowledge of image editing software such as photoshop or Gimp.	03 Limited use of accounting software such as QuickBooks.	04 I have had some experience with CAD software in school.	05 Recently I have started familiarising myself with Visual studio.
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Slide 5

PROGRAMMING LANGUAGES

 I am only recently starting to learn to use programming languages, I'm not well versed in any languages, but I learn quite fast and have good problem solving skills that can be applied to programming.	 C# - I have started to learn to code using C# in university, I'm picking up the language well and I have started writing simple console programs.	 HTML - I have written multiple basic websites and have started to move toward more advance things like implementing JavaScript into a site.
 SQL - I have a small amount of experience creating a basic database with SQL.	 Visual Basic - I learnt to use visual basic while in college, although it's rather outdated.	

Slide 6



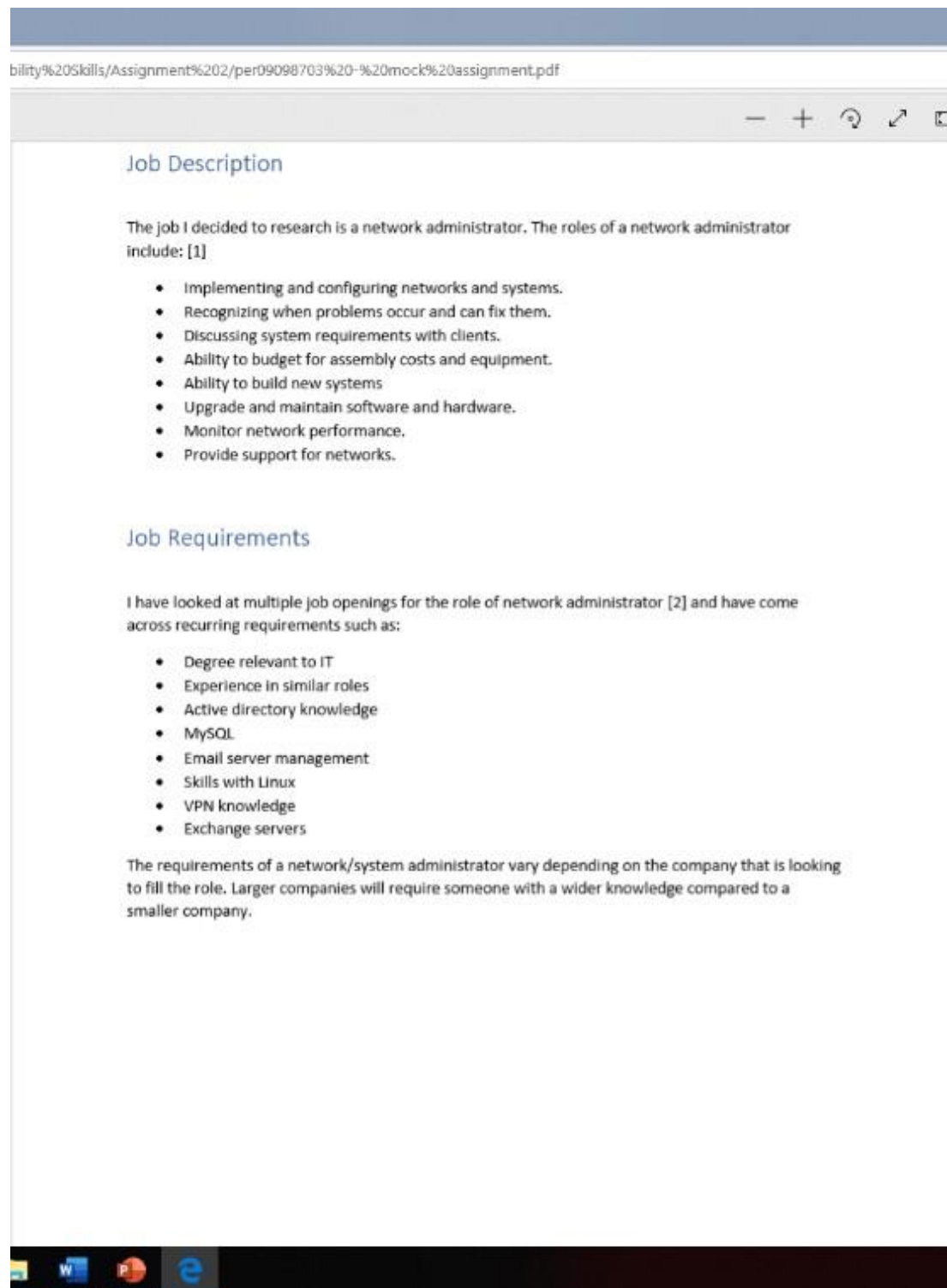
Image in the background is a switch or router.

Slide 7



Image in the background is of hardware components such as RAM sticks and CPU's.

Mock Assignment



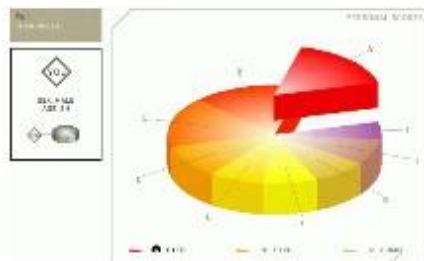
Personality Test

Your team roles

Your answers have been used to identify which team role(s) suits you best. This suitability is expressed as a percentage.

The nine team roles are the Executive, Explorer, Innovator, Analyst, Driver, Chairperson, Completer, Team player and Expert.

A total of 100 points are divided over the various roles. A group role can have up to 25 points. The graph below shows how each team role fits you. After the graph, each team role is explained in detail, in the order of its importance to you.



Executive

The executive is sometimes also referred to as the organizer. The executive is generally determined and eager to get the job done. He or she is efficient, practical, and systematic. Executives are well organized and diligent, and quickly turn the ideas of a team into concrete actions and practical plans.

Innovator

The innovator is often the creative generator of a team. He or she has a strong imagination and a desire to be original. The innovator prefers to be independent and tends to approach tasks in a scientific way. As a creative individual the innovator may play a crucial role in the way a team approaches tasks and solves problems.

Team player

The team player is caring, seeks conflicts, and seeks harmony. Being someone who likes to help other people, the team player is generally considered agreeable and friendly. He or she is diplomatic and emphasizes solidarity and team cohesion.

Explorer

The explorer is generally an extrovert by nature. He or she is cheerful, gregarious. The explorer is also inquisitive, interested and curious about things. Because explorers like to improve and communicate with others, they will have little problem presenting ideas to the team and developing new contacts.

Analyst

The analyst has a tendency to be reserved and critical. The analyst will also need to plan and ideas in a rational and sensible way. He or she will favor a prudent approach to matters and will evaluate them according to their accuracy before acting.

Driver

The driver is generally very ambitious and energetic. He or she may appear as impatient and impulsive. The driver is strong and sure and will challenge others at crucial times. Although the actions of the driver may sometimes seem somewhat emotional, they do play a crucial role in pushing the team forward to succeed.

Completer

The completer is very conscientious and feels responsible for the team's achievement. Completers are concerned when errors are made and they tend to worry because of their controlling nature. The completer is also known as the finisher because they see most objectives used at the end of a task, to polish and scrutinize the work for errors, subjecting it to the highest standards of quality control.

Expert

The expert has the skills and expertise required for the specific task at hand. He or she has a strong focus on the task and may get defensive when others interfere with his or her work. The expert prefers to work alone and team members often have a great deal of trust and confidence in him or her.

Chairperson

The chairperson has a strong coordinating role. With an emphasis on procedures, the chairperson will try to bring and keep the team together. He or she is communicative and deals with the members of the team in a respectful and open-minded way.

Bibliography

- [1 L. Spencer, The Complete Guide To Making Great Presentations.
]
- [2 G. Reynolds, "TechRpublic," 19 September 2006. [Online]. Available:
] https://moodle.gowercollegeswansea.ac.uk/pluginfile.php/198402/mod_resource/content/1/10_slide_tips.pdf. [Accessed 2019].
- [3 B. Wong, "Debut," 2017. [Online]. Available: <http://debut.careers/insight/skills-you-need-to-be-a-successful-student/>. [Accessed 2019].

MARKING CRITERIA and STUDENT FEEDBACK

This section details the assessment criteria. The *extent* to which these are demonstrated by you determines your mark. The marks available for each criterion are shown. Lecturers will use the space provided to comment on the achievement of the task(s), including those areas in which you have performed well and areas that would benefit from development/improvement.

Common Assessment Criteria Applied			Marks Available	Marks Awarded
1. Engagement with Literature Skills				
References limited, bibliography does not include sources from class and is limited, No Reading log.			20	5
2. Knowledge and Understanding Skills				
No SWOT or SMART targets, PDP/action plan vague. Data storage strategies and only one scenario discussed without detail. Only one classwork survey used, results not discussed in plans or skills self-improvement.			20	5
3. Cognitive and Intellectual Skills				
No SWOT or SMART targets, Action plan not dated and very vague, personal goals section vague. No alternatives or industry standard qualifications discussed despite being mentioned in researched job.			20	4
4. Practical Application Skills				
Identification of skills for HE detailed and well done. Work related is sketchy. Powerpoint discussed well but additional notes pages not used in presentation. No reading log, SFIA list missing, skills evaluation incomplete. Work incomplete.			20	7
5. Transferable Skills for Life and Professional Practice				
Work is incomplete. NO PDP or e-portfolio, no CV/Linkedin profile .Appendices limited.			20	3
Assignment Mark (Assessment marks are subject to ratification at the Exam Board. These comments and marks are to give feedback on module work and are for guidance only until they are confirmed.)	Late Submission Penalties (tick if appropriate)		1st	24
	Up to four weeks late			
	1st/2nd/3rd attempt?			