

LEVEL 5 ASSESSMENT SPECIFICATION

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Programme:	BA Accounting HNC/HND/BA Business Management (HRM / Finance / Marketing / Digital Marketing)		
Module:	Changemakers: Building your Personal Brand for Sustainable Employment		
Module code:	BMBM5021	Contribution to Overall Module Assessment (%):	50%
Lecturer:	Robyn Griffiths	Internal Verifier:	Gwyneth Jones
Assignment Title:	Employability Skills and Semester Abroad Reflection	Word count (or equivalent):	2,000 words or equivalent
Submission deadline:	Friday 2nd May 2025	Return date of provisional marks & written feedback:	Friday 6th June 2025
Submission method:	All written assessments, where practical and possible, must be submitted via Turnitin unless otherwise instructed by the Lecturer. (Please DO NOT put this assessment specification into Turnitin or it will match many similarities with other students' submissions.) Alternative submission method (if applicable): Late submission of the assessment will result in a late penalty mark. Penalties for late submission: Up to one week late, maximum mark of 40%. Over one week late, 0%. Only the Extenuating Circumstances Panel may approve a change to submission dates.		
Academic honesty / referencing:	Academic honesty is required. In the main body of your submission you must give credit to authors on whose research and ideas your work is based. Append to your submission a reference list that indicates the books, articles, etc. that you have used, cited or quoted in order to complete this assessment.		

Module Learning Outcomes (from module syllabus)
• Evaluate personal employability skills and their congruence with the skills required for professional practice in a real or simulated environment. • Build a personal brand and promote a professional identity for a specific opportunity.

Part 1: Evaluation of Employability Skills

Introduction

Employability skills are the essential skills, personal qualities, and values that enable individuals to thrive in the workplace (Australian Government Department of Education, Skills and Employment, no date). They are sometimes known as enterprise or workplace skills: things like communication, teamwork, adaptability, leadership, and reliability. Employability skills are just as important as academic qualifications in a challenging job market. Employers today are looking for professionals who have more than a deep technical skill set, but a set of soft skills like being agile and collaborative and the ability to perform in a volatile, uncertain, complex, or ambiguous environment (Kiderlin, 2023).

Husain et al. (2010) further stipulate that employability skills are needed in achieving and securing gainful employment because they facilitate employees to cope with the job demands and to respond swiftly to the industry needs. So, it becomes necessary for people like me, who are about to come into industries like fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG) and fashion retail, to understand and develop these skills (Sarfraz et al., 2018).

In this report, I will be assessing my current skills compared to the expectations of employers in these sectors.

Main Body

Industry and Employers Research

The two industries I have chosen to focus on are FMCG and fashion retail, with particular attention to Unilever and Vivienne Westwood.

The leading global FMCG company, Unilever, has graduate programs and junior roles available across customer development, marketing, supply chain and finance (Plc, U., 2024).

They look for candidates with good strength in communication, analytical thinking, adaptability, and leadership potential as per their job posts and graduate schemes. For instance, Unilever's Future Leaders Programme emphasises the need for collaboration across markets, being commercially aware, and delivering actual business impact amidst its sustainability goals (Johnson, 2025). Additionally, my digital skills are also increasingly sought after as proficiency in Excel, Power BI and in analysis tools (Bessalel, 2024).

Vivienne Westwood, on the other hand, is a luxury fashion brand that highlights some elements of activism and sustainability (Careers - Vivienne Westwood, no date). Sales associates, marketing assistants, and operations and logistics roles are types of job opportunities. Vivienne Westwood requires their employees to possess excellent customer service skills, communication

skills and teamwork skills. Especially, sustainability awareness should be considered because the brand commits to ethical fashion. Their job descriptions also include creativity, attention to detail and adaptability in fast-paced retail environments.

Both industries are seeking the same type of soft skills such as communication and teamwork and are also calling for industry specific skills (CBI, 2019). Within FMCG analytical thinking and commercial awareness are important, whilst fashion retail cares about customer service excellence and creativity. Sustainability awareness is becoming a cross-industry expectation, and it is hence a crucial skill for future employability (Nisha & Rajasekaran, 2018).

Skills Evaluation

Throughout my studies in International Business and my part-time work experience, I have laid better grounds for employability, quite fitting for both FMCG sector and fashion retail. I have communication skills, teamwork skills, adaptability, customer service, and time management. As a barista, I developed excellent verbal communication skills and have dealt with a wide range of customers, as well as handled complaints professionally. These communication abilities align well with Unilever's global operations, where cross-cultural collaboration is key, and with Vivienne Westwood's emphasis on delivering excellent customer service in retail environments.

Another key strength is teamwork, demonstrated through collaborative university projects and working effectively in a busy café. Unilever and Vivienne Westwood are both companies that value collaboration. One collaborates for the sake of managing the cross-functional project, and another collaborates to ensure smoothness in store operations. Moreover, balancing high-pressure shifts with academic deadlines has strengthened my adaptability, preparing me for fast-paced environments such as Unilever's global operations and retail settings that demand flexibility with varying customer needs.

In the case of fashion retail roles, especially where client interaction is core, and FMCG roles that centre on customer development, understanding the customer service experience is personally relevant. In addition, being able to manage time well has enabled me to hold part-time work and academic commitments at once, a skill that is necessary in both parts of the world to meet goals as well as handle several priorities.

Additionally, I have a foundational awareness of ethics and sustainability from my International Business modules, which is increasingly important given Unilever's sustainability commitments and the fashion industry's move towards responsible practices. I enjoy looking back at my journey, but I know that I can develop in a few areas, including leadership and technical skills. Although I have played a supporting role in offering ideas and leading small projects to date at work, I aim to gain more available leadership experience to match the industry's expectations. In addition, while I am familiar with the capabilities of PowerPoint and basic Excel, I intend to build my capabilities in analytical tools such as Power BI or advanced Excel, which are required for the data-driven roles at Unilever and aid in fashion sales reporting (Bessalel, 2024). To further

strengthen these areas and be more employable, I plan to continue to pursue internships, online courses, and business projects.

Conclusion

After evaluating my skills against industry requirements, I feel that the FMCG sector, especially in a company like Unilever, is where my current skills and skills that I must acquire in the long term are best suited for my career. This is because my foundation in communication, teamwork, adaptability, and time management, combined with my academic background in International Business, matches Unilever's need for globally minded, adaptable graduates who can work in and lead diverse teams (Johnson, 2025). Furthermore, I have experience in problem solving and customer service, something that lays a great foundation for roles in customer development, marketing, and operations.

My personal brand centres on being approachable, reliable, and adaptable qualities that resonate with Unilever's emphasis on collaboration, teamwork, and delivering genuine business value. However, I believe that my interpersonal skills, cross-cultural communication, and time management capacities would allow me to excel in Unilever's exciting global business, and to have a career that matches my skills and my academic specialisation.

Part 2: Reflective Essay on Skill Development

Introduction

This reflective essay is intended to critically analyse and evaluate the skills and knowledge I have acquired internationally through my studies at the University of Wales Trinity Saint David and the evaluation of my employability. Adopting Gibbs' Reflective Cycle as the structure (Gibbs, 1988), I will base my reflections on such core skills as communication, leadership, adaptability, and cross-cultural competence. I will look at how relevant these are for practical academic and professional situations, especially in international business. Moreover, I will discuss the way these skills can help to increase my competitiveness in the job market, determine the existing limitations, and propose measures for continuous development and the achievement of future professional success. This reflection also addresses the issue of sustainability awareness in the business practice that was developed to become an important professional quality (Turker & Altuntas, 2014).

Description

As a result of participation in group projects, networking, assigned topics, and visits around the UK, my motivation was put to the test as I was exposed to international perspectives across the courses taught. During one of my semesters abroad at the University of Wales Trinity Saint David, this experience broadened my global outlook. The most effective experience was the collaborative work in a group with peers of various ethnicities, whereby we had to analyse real-world business cases, as it was for Piranha Pit. This event complemented my course evaluations and set out what I was strong at in terms of leadership and teamwork, and what areas I had to work on (time management under pressure, deeper critical analysis). Besides, sustainability themes were brought out in sessions, making me think of the long-term consequences of business moves, which I now realize are key in future professional practice (Turker & Altuntas, 2014).

Feelings

At the beginning, I felt both excited and anxious. Studying abroad brought anticipation of experiencing new cultures as well as concerns about potential communication barriers. Participating in group projects gradually boosted my confidence, especially when I could spearhead discussions and bargain ideas between various perspectives. Realising that my communication and adaptability were improving made me feel proud. I admit, though, that I got annoyed in moments of miscommunication or when deadlines seemed like a huge burden. Thinking about these emotions has taught me how important soft skills, like emotional intelligence and resilience, are in both the academic world and professionalism (iHasco, 2021). I also developed a better sense of responsibility, not just providing results, but keeping my work in check by sustainable and ethical business principles.

Evaluation

Overall, the experience was positive. The work of my peers and tutors on projects involving groups credited me for my collaborative and problem-solving skills, which proved to be effective. The possibility to work with cultural differences elevated my cross-cultural competence, an important skill in international business (Kitsantas, 2004). I have also become more informed about sustainable business practices that are becoming more appreciated by international companies, which want to create a better corporate responsibility (Turker & Altuntas, 2014). However, I also identified weaknesses in being able to manage competing priorities and sustain high levels of critical analysis in high-pressure environments within tight timeframes. This weakness in time management occasionally limited the depth of my academic work. Further, while I had adapted well socially, there was still a need for the development of digital collaboration skills that are becoming relevant in global business operations (Asefer & Abidin, 2021).

Analysis

Through this reflection, I realised that my study abroad journey served as practical training for essential employability skills. Interaction with peers from other countries helped me to improve my communication skills, verbal and non-verbal, to address different audiences appropriately (Nichols, 2023). Leadership appeared in guiding group projects, and there I used motivational tactics and delegated tasks, which was a trait of increasing management skills. My adaptability was strengthened by adjusting to varied academic expectations and cultural norms. These skills straightaway coordinate with the demands of employers in the 21st century who are progressively focusing more on soft skills such as communication, the ability to work in a group, and adaptability in comparison to technical knowledge (Asefer & Abidin, 2021). Enhanced cross-cultural competence is especially applicable in international business, where success depends on effective adaptation to the prices of various markets and the skills to control multicultural teams (McDonald & Hite, 2023).

Sustainability awareness emerged as a useful skill as well. According to Turker and Altuntas (2014), sustainable supply chain management is now a key aspect in many industries, including the fast fashion industry, and businesses expect this aspect in professionals in their decision making. By being involved in sustainability-themed modules, I have become sensitive to these expectations, and I will take them with me into my career. Nevertheless, my analysis also identified areas for development. Time management is still an issue, especially if there are many deadlines to honor. In addition, although my leadership worked well face-to-face, I understand the importance of hardening my skills for virtual collaboration and critical thinking. These gaps, if they are ignored, will undermine my future competitiveness in both academia and the profession.

Conclusion

Through reflection using Gibbs' Cycle, I realise that my study abroad experience and related evaluations have been transformative for my personal and professional growth. I have developed confidence in my leadership, communication, and cross-cultural skills; therefore, I feel more prepared for the integration of business in the global environment. These experiences have added value in making me an ideal candidate for global employers due to qualities they seek, such as adaptability, teamwork, and intercultural competence (Dingley, 2024, [educations.com](#), 2025). In addition, my perception of the role played by sustainability in shaping competitive businesses has also influenced my professional profile (Turker & Altuntas, 2014).

However, I need to deal with the current skill gaps such as management of time, digital collaboration and critical analysis under pressure. The reflection also stressed the continued relevance of soft skills, aside from increasing performance, and essential for addressing contemporary challenges of the workplace (iHasco, 2021).

Action Plan

As a way of further building and exploiting these skills, I have listed stepwise future actions. Academically, then, I will use structures of time management strategies like prioritisation matrices and the use of digital planners to help me handle deadlines. I also intend to get feedback from lecturers to increase my critical thinking and analysis in coursework.

Professionally, I will work online in collaborative projects and internships, as well as part-time jobs that will require digital teamwork to improve skills in virtual leadership and adaptability. Networking with professionals from multinational businesses through LinkedIn and industry events will help me maintain and promote my cross-cultural competence. I also strive to stay updated on sustainable business practices by monitoring industry reports, enabling me to integrate ethical approaches into my future roles (Turker & Altuntas, 2014).

Additionally, I will also do reflective practice frequently using models such as Gibbs' Cycle to monitor my own development and spot developing gaps (Moon, 2013). This desire to learn endlessly and conduct self-assessment will make me a better candidate on the job market and will provide support for my dream to become a professional in international business.

In the long run, I would like to find a graduate position or internship within a multinational corporation, where I can use my improved skills in the real world. This will not only build my academic learning, but it will also prepare me for leadership positions in the corporate world all over the world. Using the knowledge learned from my study abroad, increasing sustainability awareness, and practicing constant development of skills, I believe that I am well-prepared to adapt to and succeed in an international professional environment.

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