

The Dissertation and Transferable/Employability Skills

The dissertation allows undergraduates (and graduates) to acquire and develop certain skills and attributes ('transferable skills'). As well as enhancing academic performance, these skills can be used beyond students' university careers and are highly valued by employers. You are encouraged to make use of the opportunities afforded to you to develop those attributes which will stand you in good stead in later life.

The figure below demonstrates how skills might be developed by an undergraduate and the list of possible activities is not exhaustive.



Intellectual Skills	Y/ N	Communication Skills	Y/ N	Organisational Skills	Y/ N	Interpersonal Skills	Y/ N	Research Skills	Y/ N	Computer Skills	Y/ N	Numeracy Skills	Y/ N
Intellectual initiative		The ability to formulate arguments coherently, lucidly and concisely		Self-direction		Working creatively and flexibly with others		Bibliographic skills		Use of word processing		Knowledge and use of statistical techniques	
Critical reflection		The ability to present material orally in a clear and effective way, including sensitivity to listeners' perspectives		Self-discipline		Adaptability		Practical skills		Use of spreadsheets and databases		Basic financial transactions	
The ability to gather, organise and deploy evidence, data and information		The ability to present written material clearly and effectively, including sensitivity to the reader's perspective		The ability to take initiative		Formulating and meeting team objectives		Writing and presentation skills		Facility/aptitude for programming			
The ability to extract key elements from complex information, including		Attention to detail		The ability to write and think under pressure and to meet deadlines		Interacting successfully on a one-to-one basis							

[illegible]

[illegible]

Questioning Styles

Open - Asking open questions is one of the most effective ways of encouraging the person you are interacting with to talk to you. Because the question is open the respondent can answer in a number of ways, so this technique is useful for ascertaining attitudes, thoughts and feelings.

Closed - The term 'closed questions' is used to describe questions which don't offer the respondent a choice of response. These can be useful for gathering specific information, clarification and closing a discussion.

Leading - Leading questions can be used to take the respondent in the direction sought by the interviewer i.e. the questioner can guide them towards an expected response.

Recall or Probing - These encourage the respondent to expand on a previous statement. They are considered probing questions which show you have been listening and allow the discussion to go into greater detail.

Question	Definition	Rephrase of closed questions
You're not very happy are you?		
You mention you've been there before – what was it like?		
Did you have a difficult journey?		
I think they're the best ones around. What do you think?		
That's really interesting – tell me about it		
Have you made any friends?		
You don't look very pleased with the outcome		
I bet that happens regularly doesn't it		