

Unit 3: Employability and Professional Development

Unit code: **M/601/1251**

QCF Level 4: **BTEC Higher National**

Credit value: **15**

● **Aim**

To provide learners with the opportunity to acquire employability skills required for effective employment and to manage their own personal and professional development.

● **Unit abstract**

All learners at all levels of education and experience require employability skills as a prerequisite to entering the job market. This unit gives learners an opportunity to assess and develop an understanding of their own responsibilities and performance in or when entering the workplace.

The unit considers the skills required for general employment such as interpersonal and transferable skills, and the dynamics of working with others in teams or groups including leadership and communication skills.

It also deals with the everyday working requirement of problem solving which includes the identification or specification of the 'problem', strategies for its solution and then evaluation of the results of the solution through reflective practices.

● **Learning outcomes**

On successful completion of this unit a learner will:

- 1 Be able to take responsibility for own personal and professional development
- 2 Be able to demonstrate acquired interpersonal and transferable skills
- 3 Understand the dynamics of working with others
- 4 Be able to develop strategies for problem solving.

Unit content

1 Be able to take responsibility for own personal and professional development

Responsibilities: own responsibilities eg personal responsibility, direct and indirect relationships and adaptability, decision-making processes and skills, ability to learn and develop within the work role; other eg employment legislation, ethics, employment rights and responsibilities

Performance objectives: setting and monitoring performance objectives

Individual appraisal systems: uses of performance appraisals eg salary levels and bonus payments, promotion, strengths and weaknesses, training needs; communication; appraisal criteria eg production data, personnel data, judgemental data; rating methods eg ranking, paired comparison, checklist, management by objectives; skills audit (personal profile using appropriate self-assessment tools); evaluating self-management; personal and interpersonal skills; leadership skills

Motivation and performance: application and appraisal of motivational theories and techniques, rewards and incentives; manager's role; self-motivational factors.

Development plan: current performance; future needs; opportunities and threats to career progression; aims and objectives; achievement dates; review dates; learning programme/activities; action plans; personal development plan

Portfolio building: developing and maintaining a personal portfolio

Transcripts: maintaining and presenting transcripts including curriculum vitae

2 Be able to demonstrate acquired interpersonal and transferable skills

Effective communication: verbal and non-verbal eg awareness and use of body language, openness and responsiveness, formal and informal feedback to and from colleagues; IT as an effective communication medium; team meetings

Interpersonal skills: soft skills eg personal effectiveness, working with others, use of initiative, negotiating skills, assertiveness skills, social skills

Time management: prioritising workloads; setting work objectives; using time effectively; making and keeping appointments; reliable estimates of task time

3 Understand the dynamics of working with others

Working with others: nature and dynamics of team and group work; informal and formal settings; purpose of teams and groups eg long-term corporate objectives/strategy; problem solving and short-term development projects; flexibility/adaptability; team player

Teams and team building: selecting team members eg specialist roles, skill and style/approach mixes; identification of team/work group roles; stages in team development eg team building, identity, loyalty, commitment to shared beliefs, team health evaluation; action planning; monitoring and feedback; coaching skills; ethics; effective leadership skills, eg, setting direction, setting standards, motivating, innovative, responsive, effective communicator, reliability, consistency

4 Be able to develop strategies for problem solving

Specification of the problem: definition of the problem; analysis and clarification

Identification of possible outcomes: identification and assessment of various alternative outcomes

Tools and methods: problem-solving methods and tools

Plan and implement: sources of information; solution methodologies; selection and implementation of the best corrective action eg timescale, stages, resources, critical path analysis

Evaluation: evaluation of whether the problem was solved or not; measurement of solution against specification and desired outcomes; sustainability

Learning outcomes and assessment criteria

Learning outcomes	Assessment criteria for pass
On successful completion of this unit a learner will:	The learner can:
LO1 Be able to take responsibility for own personal and professional development	1.1 reflect on own current skills and competencies against professional standards and organisational objectives 1.2 evaluate own development needs and the activities required to meet them 1.3 devise a personal and professional development plan based on identified needs 1.4 reflect on own development against original aims and objectives set in the personal and professional development plan
LO2 Be able to demonstrate acquired interpersonal and transferable skills	2.1 communicate in a variety of styles and appropriate manner at various levels 2.2 demonstrate effective time management strategies
LO3 Understand the dynamics of working with others	3.1 analyse team dynamics, discussing the roles people play in a team and how they can work together to achieve shared goals 3.2 discuss alternative ways to complete tasks and achieve team goals
LO4 Be able to develop strategies for problem solving	4.1 review tools and methods for developing solutions to problems 4.2 develop an appropriate strategy for resolving a particular problem 4.3 evaluate the potential impact on the business of implementing the strategy.

Guidance

Links to National Occupational Standards, other BTEC units, other BTEC qualifications and other relevant units and qualifications

The learning outcomes associated with this unit are closely linked with:

Level 3	Level 4	Level 5
Unit 1: Communication and Employability Skills for IT	Unit 3: Employability and Professional Development	Unit 4: Project Design, Implementation and Evaluation
		Unit 50: Work-based Experience

It also links with the following Asset Skills cross-sectoral Employability Matrix:

- Plan and manage time, money and other resources to achieve goals
- Find and suggest new ways to achieve goals and get the job done and achieve goals
- Plan for and achieve your learning goals
- Understand the roles people play in a group and how you can best work with them
- Lead or support and motivate a team to achieve high standards
- Find new and creative ways to solve a problem.

Essential requirements

Access to a range of work-related exemplars (for example appraisal and development systems, team health checks, job descriptions, action plans, communication strategies, etc) would be of assistance in delivering this unit. Case studies based on relevant sectors, workshops, career talks and work-based mentors would also be useful in the teaching and learning aspect of the unit.

Learners can generate assessment evidence through a range of possible activities including individual work placements, project management, research reports, development of case studies, the process of working with others (eg employee – supervisor roles, teamwork, group work) and everyday communication within the workplace.

Resources

Books

NCCER – *Basic Employability Skills: Trainee Guide 00108-09* (Prentice Hall, 2009) ISBN 013609919X

Thompson Leigh, L – *Making the Team: A Guide for Managers* (Pearson Education, 2008)

ISBN 9780136037767

Websites

www.prospects.ac.uk

www.stemnet.org.uk/resources/employability_skills_guide.cfm