



WorkSkills from Edexcel

WorkSkills for graduates/graduate trainee schemes

The CBI's Deputy Director-General, John Cridland, described the CBI/Edexcel Education & Skills Survey 2008 as a wake up call to students and universities. The survey revealed not only that a mere 30% of graduate jobs demand a specific degree discipline, but also that it is the wider employability skills that strong candidates possess that are their most valuable asset.

Team-working and communications skills are most highly prized

Graduates with a strong academic record and an excellent degree can still experience difficulty finding (and bedding into) that all-important first job. The **WorkSkills** suite focuses on the soft skills that employers believe are lacking in many job candidates. **WorkSkills** units can be delivered as part of a university careers programme or FE college curriculum. Equally important, **WorkSkills** can be easily incorporated into an established graduate training scheme, delivering an internationally recognised BTEC qualification.

*The table below lists skills that a graduate may already have, and suggests the **WorkSkills** units that they could take to gain formal recognition for those skills. It also identifies potential skills gaps and names the **WorkSkills** units which could help them to upskill.*

Graduate/undergraduate: representative profile	WorkSkills unit suggestions	Learner benefits
Potential unrecognised existing skills	Earn recognition	Graduates and undergraduates:
Collaborative learning	Learning with Colleagues and Other Learners	- gain formal recognition for skills they acquired or currently use at university
Analytical skills	Summarising Documents	- apply their skills to a workplace task and appreciate its value to an employer
Articulating theories and solutions	Contributing to Meetings	- promote their individual views with clarity and confidence
Potential skills gaps	Upskill	
Facing workplace challenges	Solving Work-Related Problems	- produce real evidence of hands on problem-solving capability
Leadership skills	Practising Leadership Skills with Others	- learn leadership theory and practice
Entrepreneurial experience	Running an Enterprise Activity	- assimilate business principles and disciplines

*Note: There are 88 units in the highly flexible **WorkSkills** suite. The central column of this table features just 6 of the units to give you a flavour of the choice available*

WorkSkills in action

Kai, 22, Politics and French graduate

Kai graduated with a 2:1 last year, but is still looking for work.



Where I am now

"I wrongly assumed that my degree would be a passport to my dream job but I totally underestimated how competitive the job market would be. My CV's going up against thousands of other graduates with similar degrees, the problem is a lot of them have relevant work experience that I lack. **WorkSkills** will give me a way of translating some of the skills I've gained through study into a real life vocational qualification that employers can relate to."

Where I want WorkSkills to take me

"I can use material I produced while at university to show that I've achieved some of the learning outcomes in units like *Working in a Team* and *Summarising Documents*. So I'll take some units to consolidate skills I've already got.

The part I'm most looking forward to is gaining new work-specific skills. I'm going to take *Setting and Meeting Targets at Work* and *Planning an Enterprise Activity*. Since I'm not employed at the moment and the units at each level aren't very long I'm aiming for a BTEC Certificate (that's 13 units) by the end of the year. I'm sure that **WorkSkills** will kickstart my career."

This is a representative composite case study based on conversations about WorkSkills held between Edexcel researchers and recent graduates.

CBI/Edexcel Education & Skills Survey 2008

This survey revealed that employers believe a constructive attitude to work and good communication skills are more important than a graduate's degree subject or result. 86% of employers ranked positive attitude and employability skills in their top three demands. These skills include team-working, communication, business awareness, self-management and problem-solving.

For further information please visit www.edexcel.org.uk/workskills
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About Edexcel

Edexcel, a Pearson company, is the UK's largest awarding body offering academic and vocational qualifications and testing to schools, colleges, employers and other places of learning in the UK and internationally. In 2007 we delivered 9.6 million exam scripts in over 85 countries, with 4.5 million marked onscreen using the groundbreaking ePen technology.

Our general qualifications taken internationally include GCSEs, AS and A Levels, IGCSEs and O Levels. Our vocational qualifications include NVQ and BTEC from entry level to Higher National Diplomas. Our entire vocational portfolio had over one million registrations across 45 countries.