

Skills for Learning

Guide to Employability Skills from Exams, Reading and Note-Making

When you begin to apply for jobs and attend interviews, it is highly likely that employers will ask you to give examples of how you have gained specific skills from your time at university. This guide reviews the specific Employability skills you can gain from preparing for and taking exams, and note making. It should be a useful aid to you when drawing up your CV or applying for jobs and work placements.

Exams

Preparing for and taking exams requires good organisational and planning skills. You develop these through activities such as reading around the subject, note taking, organising your notes and planning a revision schedule. When revising for exams you will not only be consolidating your subject knowledge but also learning useful techniques for memorising information. You can apply this throughout your career as you build up your base of knowledge and expertise over the years. You may also have to take further exam based qualifications for accreditation in your profession, or choose to undertake postgraduate study for more general continued professional development.

You will develop time management skills by ensuring that you allow ample preparation time and don't leave things until the last minute. Within the exam itself, you have to work to a very tight timescale, deciding which questions to answer and giving yourself enough time to answer them in the depth required. Your ability to make decisions, plan and meet deadlines under pressure will prove very useful in many workplaces, particularly where there is a rapid pace of change or your employers are in direct competition with other businesses.

During the exam itself, you may use both problem solving and analytical skills, along with academic writing and critical skills to answer the questions. These skills are also highly valued in the workplace. The skills you acquire through taking exams include:

- Planning and organisational skills
- Memory and recall
- Working under pressure

- Problem solving and analytical skills
- Intellectual / creative thinking

Reading and Note-Making

Unlike other activities, reading and note making are not directly assessed during your study. However, they are essential skills which will aid you throughout your working life. Keeping abreast of the latest news in your profession will often require you to skim read and sift through a lot of material to establish its relevancy, and to pick out the key points that may have an impact on you or help you advance in your career. By making notes during lectures, summarising your reading for an assignment, or taking minutes of a group discussion, you will learn to critically pick out and summarize information. Over time, you may well develop your own shorthand or visual technique for making notes that is better suited to your learning style. Whether you make written notes use annotated diagrams or draw mind-maps, the activity of note making also improves your memory of the facts for recall at a later date. This will prove useful in the workplace for recording your thoughts and discussions with colleagues as well as when developing new ideas or researching information.

- Planning and organisational
- Problem solving and analytical
- Verbal and written communication
- Listening skills
- Self-reliance



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