Biochemical Society
Advancing Molecular Bioscience

Skills that employers want and how they can be developed – at school

During your time at school it's a good idea to try and acquire as many transferable skills as possible and improve upon existing ones. They will help you when trying to secure a work experience placement and when applying to higher education. Below is a list of some of these skills and some examples on how to acquire or improve them.

Type of skill	Employers' requirements – 'Buzz' words	Some examples of how the skills can be developed through interests, work experience and education.
Self- reliance skills	• Self awareness – purposeful, focused, self-belief, realistic • Proactivity - resourceful, drive, self-reliant • Willingness to learn - inquisitive, motivated, enthusiastic • Self-promotion - positive, persistent, ambitious • Networking - initiator, relationship-builder, resourceful • Planning action - decision-maker, planner, able to prioritise	• Duke of Edinburgh Award • Young Enterprise Award • Music band (play regularly at local venues) • Participate in competitive sport • Public speaking/debating society • Amateur dramatics
People skills	• Team working - supportive, organised, co-coordinator, deliverer • Interpersonal skills - listener, adviser, co-operative, assertive • Oral communication - communicator, presenter, influencer • Leadership - motivator, energetic, visionary • Customer orientation - friendly, caring, diplomatic	• Working in a shop/supermarket/restaurant • Fundraising for charity • Voluntary work • Member of orchestra • Play sport for team • Guide/scout leader • Air training corps
General	• Problem-solving - practical, logical, results orientated • Flexibility - versatile, willing, multi-skilled • Business acumen - entrepreneurial, competitive, risk taker • IT/computer literacy - office skills, keyboard skills, software packages • Numeracy - accurate, quick-thinker, methodical • Commitment - dedicated, trustworthy, conscientious	• Young Enterprise Award • Project work through studies • Mensa membership • Book club • Member of local club/society • Music grades
Specialist skills	• Specific occupational skills - specialist relevant knowledge, e.g. languages, IT • Technical skills – e.g. journalism, engineering, accounting, sales	• European Computer Driving License (ECDL) • Language skills • Web design skills • Writing for school/college newspaper • First aid at work qualification • NVQ qualification.

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Skills that employers want and how they can be developed – at university

University is also a great place to build up an impressive skill set which can be used to help you improve your CV and make you more employable for graduate roles. Here are some ways in which you can improve upon the skills which you may already have from school in addition to gaining new ones.

Type of skill	Employers' requirements – 'Buzz' words	Some examples of how the skills can be developed through interests, student societies and study.
Self- reliance skills	• Self awareness – purposeful, focused, self-belief, realistic • Proactivity - resourceful, drive, self-reliant • Willingness to learn - inquisitive, motivated, enthusiastic • Self-promotion - positive, persistent, ambitious • Networking - initiator, relationship-builder, resourceful • Planning action - decision-maker, planner, able to prioritise	• Attend networking events • Apply for summer internships • Apply for a summer studentship to carry out a lab-based placement • Participation in a student society • Roles of responsibility within a society (social sec/captain/representative) • Join and engage with your relevant learned society
People skills	• Team working - supportive, organised, co-coordinator, deliverer • Interpersonal skills - listener, adviser, co-operative, assertive • Oral communication - communicator, presenter, influencer • Leadership - motivator, energetic, visionary • Customer orientation - friendly, caring, diplomatic	• Poster presentations and opportunities to explain the science involved • Participation in a student society • Roles of responsibility within a society (social sec/captain/representative) • Team leader roles • Freshers representative • Peer mentoring
General	• Problem-solving - practical, logical, results orientated • Flexibility - versatile, willing, multi-skilled • Business acumen - entrepreneurial, competitive, risk taker • IT/computer literacy - office skills, keyboard skills, software packages • Numeracy - accurate, quick-thinker, methodical • Commitment - dedicated, trustworthy, conscientious	• Project write ups • Literature review • Analysis of results collected • Producing graphs • Meeting deadlines independently • Managing multiple tasks • Organisation of university/society events
Specialist skills	• Specific occupational skills - specialist relevant knowledge, e.g. languages, IT • Technical skills – e.g. journalism, engineering, accounting, sales	• SPSS – statistical analysis software • Microsoft Word/Excel • Laboratory skills and practical techniques – e.g. developed through a final year project • Writing for the student newspaper