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Onwards & Upwards



A Toolkit for Careers Advisors Working with
Mature Students in Higher Education

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A Toolkit for Careers Advisors Working with Mature Students in Higher Education

Careers Service

Cooperative Education & Careers Division

University of Limerick

www.ul.ie/careers

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Summary

This toolkit serves as a framework for those working with adult learners who are planning to study at third level. It comprises two modules, Educational Guidance and Career Development, which highlight and examine the core aspects of educational and career preparation through a number of tutorials which include course and career investigation, grant applications, skills identification, CV and application form preparation, interview advice and overall self-awareness. Each tutorial comprises an introductory text and presentation slides, while others have assignments and additional materials to support tutorial activities. Both modules offer practical exercises, which enable students to relate to and customise the learning to meet their own needs.

Students also gain the opportunity to give oral presentations and submit assignments and reports, activities that are typical of most educational and career paths today. The toolkit guides and advises tutors throughout all aspects of the modules, while allowing for flexibility in each tutorial given the diverse needs of all groups. Through regular feedback and updating, the toolkit continues as an invaluable aid in supporting adult learning.

This report can be downloaded at: <http://www.ul.ie/careers/careers/mature/toolkit.shtml>.

Acknowledgements

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Welcome

Welcome to the toolkit for careers-advisors working with mature students. This guide was developed by the Careers Service at the University of Limerick, and has been instrumental in preparing mature students for undertaking their degrees and future careers. We hope you enjoy and benefit from the toolkit and look forward to your feedback on completion of the modules with your students.

Background Information on the Educational Guidance and Career Development Modules

The Educational Guidance and Career Development modules were developed specifically for adults on the University of Limerick's (UL) Mature Student Access Certificate Course; a one-year pre-degree course for adults over the age of 22. The Course is designed for those who want to develop the necessary skills to begin a full-time degree course. It offers the opportunity to learn or refresh key learning skills (study skills, maths, computing etc), to explore further study and career options, and to study foundation-level subjects in one of the following areas: Humanities, Science, Electronic & Computer Technology, Business, and Engineering.

The UL Careers Service introduced career-development tutorials for mature students in 2003. This programme consisted of ten tutorials, and used the online Career Development Module from Reading University as a guide. The sessions were quite similar to the standard career tutorials used with typical undergraduates. Topics included creating a career profile, researching courses and careers, creating CVs and applications, and preparing for interviews.

Over the last three years, however, based on feedback from each group and from the tutor's regular evaluation, the material has evolved into two modules – the Educational Guidance Module and the Career Development Module. Much of the material can be applied to learners of any age group, but some tutorials are tailored for the needs of adult learners.

Using the Toolkit

This toolkit is designed for those working with adults in educational and career guidance settings. It guides tutors through the modules by providing background information to each tutorial, relevant materials for research and assignments, and tips and advice for the tutor where necessary. The presentation slides that accompany each tutorial are the main teaching aid for tutors, and should be downloaded and edited for each group before delivering the modules. The slides are available at <http://www.ul.ie/careers/careers/mature/toolkit.shtml>. Tutors may copy the slides as tutorial handouts if they so wish.

Programme Outline

The Educational Guidance, and Career Development, Modules are now core elements of the Mature Student Access Certificate Course in UL. Students must complete assignments and achieve a pass grade in both modules. When working with adults, it is important to acknowledge that each group will differ in many regards, and the tutor may need to adapt resources and style of presentation to suit the needs of the group.

Educational Guidance Module

The Educational Guidance Module is designed to help students investigate and become familiar with courses that best suit their interests and needs. It contains nine weekly tutorials, each of two hours duration. Tutorials cover the career/life planning process, career and life review, course investigation, presentation skills, and higher education grants.

Career Development Module

The Career Development Module is designed to help students investigate and become familiar with careers that best suit their interests and needs. It comprises nine weekly tutorials, each of two hours duration. Tutorials cover mature graduates and the workplace, skills review and personality questionnaires, researching careers, CVs and covering letters, application forms, and interviews.

Although the modules and accompanying tutorials represent a sequential pattern, most can be used randomly also. A number of areas, e.g. Giving Presentations (Educational Guidance Module) and Skills and Interests (Career Development Module), may require more than one tutorial depending on the size of the group. The modules have been developed specifically for the Mature Student Access Certificate Course in the University of Limerick, so each tutor should adapt the tutorials to suit their particular groups.

Tutorial Duration

All tutorials in this toolkit require approximately two hours; a coffee break is recommended after 45 minutes. The tutor should decide on the duration of each tutorial part.

Delivering the Modules

Two-way open communication is essential. The tutor should be prepared to share their life and career experiences with the group; an active approach such as this will encourage the group to reflect upon and share their own experiences in tutorials.

Feedback and Evaluation

Feedback is vital for refining and developing the modules. The tutor should check regularly with the group to ensure that the tutorials are beneficial. In addition to completing evaluation forms (which can be done anonymously), the tutor should ask the group for oral feedback, and be prepared to adapt the modules if necessary. Be prepared for negative feedback, and use suggestions to improve the modules.

Keeping in Touch

At the beginning of the first tutorial, each student completes the Registration Form. The tutor can use these details to contact the group throughout the modules and as they progress through college. Former group members can be an invaluable source of support for new course participants.

Educational Guidance Module

Tutorial 1:	Career and Life Review
Tutorial 2:	The Career-Planning Process
Tutorial 3:	Life as a Mature Student
Tutorial 4:	Investigating Courses
Tutorial 5:	Giving Presentations
Tutorials 6 & 7:	Individual Presentations
Tutorial 8:	Higher Education Grants
Tutorial 9:	Feedback and Evaluation

Educational Guidance Module

Tutorial 1: Career and Life Review

Learning Outcomes	<p>At the end of this tutorial, group members will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Have an overview of the Educational Guidance and Career Development Modules</i> • <i>Be aware of course assignments</i> • <i>Have introduced themselves to each other and the group</i>
Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Registration forms</i> • <i>Outline of Educational Guidance and Career Development modules</i> • <i>Presentation: “Career and Life Review”</i> (Downloadable at: http://www.ul.ie/careers/careers/mature/toolkit.shtml)
Assignment	<p><i>None</i></p>
Introduction	<p>The objective of this tutorial is to give students an overview of the Educational Guidance Module and any relevant assignments. It also enables the group to become acquainted with each other and to reflect on their lives to date.</p>
Part 1	<p>Overview of Module and Registration</p> <p>The tutor introduces themselves to the group and gives an overview of the Educational Guidance Module. Students register for the Module and give their contact details to the tutor.</p>

Part 2 Introductions

The group divides into pairs, and each student interviews a partner for 5 minutes. Partners discuss their lives, and career and study interests.

Discussing their favourite film, book, song etc is a good ice-breaker.

Partners then switch roles and repeat the process. Each student is then tells the group about the person they have just interviewed. This usually works well, as those who dislike discussing themselves in public often find it easier to introduce somebody else.

Some group members may not be comfortable speaking in public, even in front of a small group, and should not be pressurised.



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Part 3 Overview of Next Week's Tutorial

Tips and
Advice

Group Size

- It is difficult to predict or control group sizes, but between 10 and 14 group members is ideal, as working with larger groups can be difficult. If it is a large group, it might be better to divide the group into two and run the same session twice.


Venue

- A comfortable room with moveable seating works well, e.g. classroom. Lecture theatres may inhibit animated discussions so avoid them if possible.

Encouragement

- Many people maintain that they have little to say on their lives to date. As time goes on and confidence grows, group members generally find that their life experiences are far more interesting than they initially thought!


Slideshow: Introduction to Module


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Educational Guidance Module

Career and Life Review


1


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Overview of Today's Tutorial

- o Registration
- o Educational Guidance & Career Development Modules – an overview
- o Introductions
- o My life as it is now

2



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Educational Guidance Module

- o Career and Life Review
- o The Career Planning Process
- o Life as a Mature student
- o Investigating courses
- o Giving presentations

- o Two assignments:
 - Your life to date, or Your ideal life Due.....
 - Course study, Due.....
 - 5-10 minute presentation on course of choice or your own career/life to date

3



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Career Development Module

- o Mature Graduates and the Workplace
- o Skills and Interests
- o A Career Investigation
- o CVs and Covering Letters
- o Application Forms
- o Interviews

- o Two assignments:
 - A Career Investigation
 - CV & Cover letter


4


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My life as it is now

- o With partner: Interview each other (five minutes each)
- o Story of your life
 - You, family, jobs you've had (loved, hated!)
 - Why you applied for this course
 - Favourite song, film, book?
 - Each person to introduce other to group

5


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Next Week

- o The Career Planning Process
 - Think about a holiday you've planned or would like to plan
- o Assignment 1- Personal Career/Life Profile
- o Presentations
 - Look out for examples of good and not so good public speakers (television characters, politicians, former teachers etc)

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Registration Form

Educational Guidance and Career Development Modules

These Modules will help you to:

- Understand the career planning process and how to plan your career more effectively.
- Investigate 3rd level courses that best suit your interests and needs.
- Recognise and develop the key employability skills important for career success e.g. communication skills, research skills, team working.
- Enhance your CV.
- Learn how to perform effectively at interviews.

Module Structure

Weekly 2-hour tutorials

Four short career-related assignments (no final examination):

1. Personal Career/Life Profile
2. Course Investigation
3. Career Investigation
4. CV and Cover Letter

Further Information

Contact _____ (Phone) _____
(Email) _____

Name: _____

Home Address: _____

Email Address: _____

Telephone No : _____

Signed: _____

Educational Guidance Module

Tutorial 2: The Career-Planning Process

Learning Outcomes	At the end of this tutorial, group members will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Understand the career-planning process, and how it relates to their own lives</i>
Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Career-Planning Skills Questionnaire</i> • <i>Presentation: “The Career-Planning Process”</i> (Downloadable at: http://www.ul.ie/careers/careers/mature/toolkit.shtml)
Assignment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Assignment 1 – Personal Career / Life Profile</i>
Introduction	<p>This tutorial introduces students to the career-planning process, and helps them to identify how it relates to their own lives. Career planning is a continual process, and this tutorial allows the group to identify where they are in that process. Many people regularly change their jobs, relationships, courses etc. and are often unaware of the control they could have over such changes. By familiarising group members with the career-planning process, the tutor can highlight steps to increase control over life, and career decisions.</p>
Part 1	<p>Planning – Thought Processes</p> <p>This part of the tutorial shows how planning a holiday and a career use the same thought processes. Few people plan holidays flippantly; yet, many of us adopt a nonchalant approach when planning and managing our careers.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Each student is asked to plan their ideal holiday, using the steps outlined in Slide 4 of the presentation, and discuss this with a partner. The holiday can be extravagant – anything goes, within the given budget! • The tutor asks various group members to describe their ideal holiday in detail. They should consider what their ideal holiday would be, the factors that would influence their choice of holiday (cost, time of year, location, travel distance, budget, school holidays, fear of flying etc), and the final preparations (ticket collection, insurance, pet minders

etc). A group discussion follows.

- The tutor then outlines how planning a career uses the same steps as planning a holiday (see Slide 5).

Part 2 Career-Planning Skills Questionnaire

- Each student fills out the Career-Planning Skills Questionnaire to gauge where they currently fit into the career-planning process. The tutor should reassure the group that many students score poorly on initial completion.
- Group members are encouraged to examine areas with low scores, and identify how they could take more control over their lives.



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Part 3 Discussion: Career-Planning Skills Questionnaire

In pairs, group members should discuss where each person fits into the career-planning process, and what they could do to manage their careers more effectively.

Part 4 Assignment Distribution

Group members receive Assignment 1 - Personal Career / Life Profile, and have a choice of two titles:

- My life/career to date
- My ideal life/career, and how I could achieve it

The assignment should be:

- About themselves
- Approximately 500-700 words
- Word-processed if possible







Tips & Advice

Introducing Assignment 1 - Personal Career / Life Profile

- At this stage, group members may have limited computer skills, so handwritten assignments are acceptable.

- Assignment 1 is a useful exercise to reflect on past decisions, present situations, and future options. It also helps to ease people into the essay-writing process. Group members may not have written an essay for some time, if ever, and it can be a daunting process. Group members should reveal only what they feel comfortable with.
- This assignment will not appeal to everyone; the tutor should acknowledge that not everybody will find it useful, but should emphasise that effective career planning will be difficult without a reflection such as this assignment.
- The tutor should also consider that group members may not previously have had a 'career' or been in paid employment. Therefore, it should be highlighted that the group must reflect on their lives as a whole, not just in the context of careers or employment.
- The tutor should emphasise that the assignments are confidential.

Slideshow: The Career-Planning Process

 <p style="text-align: center;">Educational Guidance Module</p> <p style="text-align: center;">The Career Planning Process</p>	 <p style="text-align: center;">Overview of Today's Tutorial</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Planning your ideal holiday o The career planning process o You and your life o Assignment 1
1	2
 <p style="text-align: center;">The Career / Life Planning Process</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Most people spend more time planning their holidays than they do planning their careers. o The clearer you can make your picture of where you'd like to be in your life or career, the quicker you'll get there 	 <p style="text-align: center;">Plan Your Ideal Holiday</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o You've got a budget of €3000 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What kind of holiday do you want? • Where will you find the info you need? • Influencing factors? • Final Preparations? • Would you go back? Recommend it to others? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 5 minutes to write down thoughts, 2 minutes to tell each other
3	4
 <p style="text-align: center;">Career Planning Process</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Same steps as planning a holiday <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Starts with yourself <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Look at your interests, skills, values, motivations? • Looking at your options <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Where can you find the info you need? Anyone who can help you? • Making decisions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Influencing factors: family, geographical location etc. • Getting there <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Job search, networking, CVs, interviews • Taking stock <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Happy with the way things are? Need to change? 	 <p style="text-align: center;">Career Planning Skills Questionnaire</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Will give you an idea of what areas you need to work on to manage your career more effectively. o Don't worry if you get a low score! Most people do the first time.
5	6

Where are You in the Career Planning Process?



- o Need to start with yourself?
 - Look at your interests, skills, values, motivations?
- o Need to look at options?
 - Where can you find the info you need? Anyone who can help you?
- o Need to set some goals?
 - Make decisions, make a plan, get work experience etc
- o Getting there
 - Job search, networking, CVs, interviews
- o Need to reflect on my life to date?
 - Taking stock, happy with the way things are?
 - Need to change?

7

Your Life



- o Think about the following questions:
- o Where are you in the career planning process?
- o What could you do in the future to manage your career more effectively?
 - 5 minutes alone & 5 minutes to your partner

8

Assignment 1- Personal Career/Life Profile



- o Choice of two
- o 500-700 words
- 1 My life to date, and what I've learned
- OR...
- 2 My ideal career or life; What could I do to achieve this?

9

Next Week



- o Assignment 1 due
- o Overview of Cooperative Education Programme in UL
- o Life as a mature student; students from last year's course
- o Any questions?

10

Career-Planning Skills Questionnaire

Where Am I Now?

Planning and managing your career is an ongoing process. You will need to be self-reliant and motivated.

This means taking responsibility for your career and personal development, and managing the relationship between work and learning throughout all stages of your life. It is a continuous, life-long process, and should not be confined to your college years.

Examine the statements on the next page; they will help you to assess how well you plan and manage your career. They will also provide you with a means of measuring your strengths, and identifying areas you may need to develop to improve your career-management skills.

Before you do this exercise, please take note of the following: do not worry if your score is low! Most people score at the lower end of the scale when they first complete this questionnaire. This exercise simply aims to review your current approach to career planning, and the focus should be on how you can benefit from the findings.

Career-Planning Skills Questionnaire

Where Am I Now?

Read carefully through each statement and rate yourself as follows:

- 0 I feel that I am weak in this area, and it still needs a lot of work
- 1 I am comfortable in this area, but I still need to work on it
- 2 I am good, or above average, in this area
- 3 I feel very confident in this area - I can support my confidence with clear and current evidence of my achievements

- I am aware of my strengths, values, motivations and skills that will make me stand out in the jobs market
- I have examined how my current skills and experiences could be applied to different careers
- I can provide evidence of the key skills required in the workplace
- I have a clear idea of the career(s) I am interested in, and entry requirements
- I understand the realities of the job market, and the benefits and limitations of pursuing particular career paths (e.g. limited jobs in sectors that are in economic decline)
- I know how and where to find the information I need to research careers of interest
- I make the most of my network of contacts (family, friends, classmates, workmates, lecturers, careers advisors, others) for advice and guidance on future career plans
- I give myself time to plan my future, and have set short term and long term career goals
- I have an up-to-date, well-organised and concise CV
- I have good interview skills

Total Score:

How did you do?

- If your score is towards the lower end of the scale, that is not a cause for concern at this stage. Most people do not score very highly the first time they complete the questionnaire.
- Examine the areas of low score and consider what you can do to address them.
- Make an appointment to see a Careers Advisor; they can help you to investigate self-assessment, develop a career plan, produce a CV, prepare for interviews etc.

Scores

A: 25 –30 You are very focused, and aware of your strengths and opportunities. Ensure that you can support your ratings with evidence, and that you have shown a true reflection of your current career-planning stage.

B: 20 – 25 You can effectively manage your career and lifelong learning. Take another look at your low scores. Make sure you understand where the gaps are and create an action plan to address areas for development.

C: 14 –20 You are doing well, but you may not be making the most of the opportunities to manage your learning and career. You may also want to consider the following – How can I be more proactive? What are my obstacles? Are they related to time, ability, resources or motivation? Can someone help me to develop an action plan?

D: Below 14 Remember, if you are at the beginning of the career-planning stage, this score is acceptable. But if you really want to find the right career for you, you must be more proactive. Positive steps include: taking time out for reflection, speaking to a careers advisor, building your network of contacts, and researching future opportunities

The UL Careers Service wishes to thank Peter Hawkins and the Windmills Programme, Me plc exercise, on which this is based.

Educational Guidance: Assignment 1

A Personal Career / Life Profile

Please choose one of the following titles and write a 500-700-word essay on this topic.



- My life/career to date
- My ideal career/life; what could I do to achieve this?

Submission date: _____

Need help? Contact: _____

Educational Guidance Module

Tutorial 3: Life as a Mature Student

Learning Outcomes	<p>At the end of this tutorial, group members will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Be familiar with the Cooperative Education (CoOp) programme in UL (or similar)</i> • <i>Have spoken to students from last years Mature Student Access Certificate Course (or similar)</i>
Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Guest speakers – Former Mature Student Access Certificate Course students (or similar), and Cooperative Education Managers (or similar - optional)</i> • <i>Presentation: “Life as a Mature Student” (Downloadable at: http://www.ul.ie/careers/careers/mature/toolkit.shtml)</i>
Assignment	<p><i>None</i></p>
Introduction	<p>Week 3 is usually a good stage to introduce this session, but the tutor can decide on the most appropriate time for each group. Guest speakers play an important part in this module. They add variety to the tutorials, and present real experiences of mature student life to the group.</p> <p>Former group members are invited to talk about their experience as a mature student and expand on issues faced by many throughout this stage of life e.g. managing family and college responsibilities, and other issues that the group may find useful.</p> <p>Cooperative Education (CoOp) Managers are also invited to speak to the group about work placements. CoOp is a formal work-placement programme in all degree programmes in the University of Limerick. This is an optional part of the tutorial as work-placement is not obligatory in all colleges.</p>
Part 1	<p>Informal Presentation by Former Students</p> <p>Former students to speak to the group.</p>
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Part 2	<p>Presentation by Cooperative Education Managers</p> <p>Cooperative Education Managers present on the work-placement programme in UL. They also discuss exemptions for mature students in certain programmes. Question and answer session to follow.</p>
Part 3	<p>Assignment 1 Deadline and Overview of Next Week's Activities</p>
Tips and Advice	<p>Selecting Speakers</p> <p>By Week 3, the tutor should have a good idea of the general backgrounds and personalities of group members. It is important to pick the speakers carefully so the group can relate to them.</p>

Slideshow: Life as a Mature Student

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Educational Guidance Module

Life as a Mature Student

1

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Overview of Today's Tutorial

- o Overview of Cooperative Education Programme in UL
 - Coop Manager, Humanities
 - Coop Manager, Sciences, and Engineering
- o Life as a mature student
 - Students from last year's Access course

2

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Assignment 1 – Due Today

- o 500-700 words

- 1 My life to date, and what I've learned
- 2 My ideal career or life; what could I do to achieve this?

3

Educational Guidance Module

Tutorial 4: Investigating Courses

Learning Outcomes	<p>At the end of this tutorial, students will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Know the specific degree programmes offered automatically on successful completion of the Mature Student Access Certificate Course.</i> • <i>Be familiar with the requirements for Assignment 2 – A Course Investigation</i> • <i>Have visited the institution’s careers service and be familiar with its resources, particularly the ‘Using your UL Degree’ sheets and the UL Careers website</i>
Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Guest speakers – Mature Student Officer, Course Directors, and former Mature Student Access Certificate Course students (or similar) currently studying for degrees</i> • <i>Presentation: “Investigating Courses”</i> (Downloadable at: http://www.ul.ie/careers/careers/mature/toolkit.shtml) • <i>Prospectuses</i> • <i>Any other relevant material e.g. career information</i> • <i>Assignment 2 – A Course Investigation</i>
Assignment	<p><i>Assignment 2 – A Course Investigation</i></p> <p><i>Submission day for Assignment 1 - Personal Career / Life Profile</i></p>
Introduction	<p>This tutorial examines the degree options available in UL. Not everybody will find a suitable course in UL, so students can investigate external courses for their assignment. Guests are invited to speak about different courses and answer student questions.</p>
Part 1	<p>Mature Student Officer</p> <p>The Mature Student Officer speaks to the group about degree programmes in UL, which are directly available on successful completion of the Mature Student Access Certificate Course. This tutorial outlines these programmes, as well as those requiring conventional applications from potential mature students. College prospectuses are distributed.</p>
Part 2	<p>Other Guest Speakers</p>

A number of course directors/ lecturers or tutors should attend to give a more detailed overview of the degree programmes in their department. Students are encouraged to contact course directors for further information.



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Part 3 Overview of Assignment 2

Students are given 2 weeks to complete Assignment 2. Students must write a report (500- 700 words) on a course of interest covering the following areas: entry requirements, subjects, work-placement, and possible career opportunities. They should also reference their information sources. The discussion should include the various sources of information on courses. If the tutor is in contact with students on relevant courses, they should have arranged for a number of degree students to speak to the current group about their degree programme.

The aim of this exercise is to develop research skills and information-seeking skills. If students can research one course, then they can apply the same research skills to other courses. Therefore, the choice of course they investigate is immaterial, provided their approach is thorough. Merely copying course details from a website or a prospectus is not acceptable.

At this stage, group members are informed that they will present their researched information to the group in 2 weeks time, and that next week's tutorial will prepare them for presentations.

Part 4 Visit to the Careers Service


The tutor should visit the Careers Service with the group, outline the resources available, and introduce them to the Careers website.

Tips and
Advice

Preparing for Presentations

- Group members may not yet have a particular course in mind, and may feel that this assignment is too difficult or too early in the programme. Students can choose to prepare a short presentation on a subject of their choice, if they feel they do not have enough relevant course information at this stage.
- For many people, presenting their information to the group causes anxiety. To reassure, the tutor should explain that it will be an informal way of gathering information about different courses from each other. However, some people may have severe anxiety, and should not feel compelled to present.


Slideshow: Investigating Courses


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Educational Guidance Module

Investigating Courses


1


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Overview of Today's Tutorial

- o Return assignments
- o Guest speakers to talk about a number of courses
- o Coffee
- o Overview of assignment 2- A Course Investigation
- o Visit to Careers Service


2


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Overview of Assignment 2
A Course Investigation

- o Due...
- o 500-700 word report
 - What you should cover:
 - Why you're interested, subjects, entry requirements, career opportunities
- o You'll also be presenting this information to the group in two weeks


3


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Next Week

- o Presentation Skills
- o Remember, this week- look out for examples of good and not so good public speakers

4


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Now

- o Visit to the Careers Service
- o Lots of free career materials to take away

5

Educational Guidance: Assignment 2

A Course Investigation

Please choose a course of interest to you and write a 500-700 word essay on this topic.

You should cover the following areas in your report:

- Entry requirements
- Subjects
- Work-placement
- Possible career opportunities



Your report should be supported by referencing the sources of information used in the research e.g. websites, careers publications etc.

Submission date: _____

Need help? Contact: _____

Educational Guidance Module

Tutorial 5: Giving Presentations

Learning Outcomes	At the end of this tutorial, students will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Understand the characteristics of an effective speaker</i> • <i>Know how to prepare a presentation</i>
Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Presentation: “Giving Presentations”</i> (Downloadable at: http://www.ul.ie/careers/careers/mature/toolkit.shtml) • <i>Overhead projector</i>
Assignments	<i>Preparation of a 5-minute presentation as part of Assignment 2.</i>
Part 1	<p>Introduction</p> <p>Discussion on Speaking in Public</p> <p>The two quotes (see Slide 3) are used to initiate a group discussion on speaking in public. Each person is then asked for examples of ‘good’ and ‘not so good’ speakers from any background e.g. previous teachers, politicians, television or cartoon characters, and others. Group members should identify three characteristics of effective and ineffective speakers. This should initiate further group discussion.</p>
 COFFEE – COFFEE – COFFEE – COFFEE – COFFEE – COFFEE 	
Part 2	<p>Effective Presentations</p> <p>This part of the tutorial focuses on effective presentations. This should include the structure and layout of the presentation. It should also highlight various aids such as index cards. The tutor may comment on their own presentation style, and perhaps give examples from their own experience.</p>
Part 3	<p>Preparing a Presentation</p> <p>Each person is asked to prepare a 5-minute presentation on a course they are investigating for the following week. Some people may not have sufficient information at this stage to present, so they may present another topic of interest to them. However, the course research must be submitted for the assignment irrespective of the student’s presentation topic.</p> <p>The tutor should reassure the group that no one is expected to present formally; they may deliver in their own style (within reason!). A number of</p>


methods should be outlined, e.g. presenting from the top of the room, or from their seat, availing of presentation equipment – blackboards, posters, slides etc. Although notes are acceptable, students should not be encouraged to read from a prepared script.

Tips and
Advice

Reassuring Students for Presentations


- Many people are unnerved by public speaking. The tutor may want to substitute the word ‘Presentation’ with ‘Talking to a group’ or a less formal term. Presentations play a large role in third-level education, so this is an ideal introduction to this area. Tutors should emphasise that this is an opportunity to practice in a safe, supportive environment. Everyone should be encouraged to participate. Most students do, and view it as a huge achievement and a significant confidence booster. Bear in mind that there will be exceptions, and some students will simply refuse.
- Two tutorials may be allocated to this section of the module to depending on group-size.

Slideshow: Giving Presentations


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**Educational Guidance
Module**
Giving Presentations


1


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Overview of Today's Tutorial

- o Giving presentations
- o The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly
- o What not to do
- o How to become a better speaker


2


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**When Asked to Speak,
Don't Freak!**

- o *All the great speakers were bad speakers at first*
(Ralph Waldo Emerson)
- o 99% of people would rather die than stand up and speak in front of a group
(Survey from Book of Lists)


3


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**The Good, The Bad &
The Ugly**

- o Think about previous presentations/speeches/talks/lectures you've attended
- o Select...
 - 3 criteria from the best of these
 - 3 criteria from the worst of these
- (3 min each list)
- You can use examples from your school days, television characters etc


4


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**Don't Read From a Prepared
Speech – Boring!**

- I frequently write articles about, and sell photographs of herps, herpetoculture, and traveling to see, photograph, and collect herps in and out of the United States. Many appear in popular books and magazines. I've authored the monthly herp question and answer column "*Herpetological Queries*" in *REPTILES* magazine since its inception in 1993, and also provide the "*Bits & Pieces*" herp quiz in each issue too. I have also co-authored and photographed *The Corn Snake Manual* (published in 2000) with my wife, Kathy.
- I've been active in herpetoculture and the pet business for a long time, watching it blossom and grow since the early 1970s. I was co-owner of Glades Herp, Inc. in Ft. Myers, Florida from its creation in 1989 until March of 1996. That experience gave me keen familiarity with import / export laws and how the pet industry works; I've sure seen it change and evolve immensely! All the time, I've followed the history while taking numerous slides to document progress along the way. Due to my innate history-gathering tendency, I was invited to specifically speak on that very subject at the Second World Congress of Herpetology in Adelaide, Australia in 1994.
- Please feel free to contact me to discuss details and fees if your group is interested in having me talk to them. I can probably tailor a slide show to meet your exacting situation or needs.

5


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Improve Your Presentation Skills

- o People remember the first and last things they hear
- o 3 steps
 - Tell them what you're going to tell them
 - Tell them
 - Tell them what you told them
- o Practice, practice, practice!

6

Improve Your Presentation Skills



- o Use personal examples
- o Keep it simple
- o Be sincere
- o Less is more
- o Involve the audience
- o Be prepared for questions
- o Make eye contact

7

Improve Your Presentation Skills



- o Drink lots of water
- o Move around
- o Don't use bad language or tasteless jokes
- o Practice in front of a live audience beforehand
- o Know your audience

8

Improve Your Presentation Skills



- o Be enthusiastic
- o Be aware of your vocal projection & work on it
- o Slow down
- o Eliminate distractions- mobiles off
- o Use stories, graphics, pictures

9

Improve Your Presentation Skills



- Use key words
- Bullet points
- Visual aids
- Index cards for notes
- Different coloured cards (green-intro, yellow-main points, red-close)
- Make sure notes are big enough

10

Improve Your Presentation Skills



- o Check out the room beforehand
- o Nervousness & Fear- perfectly natural
 - Go first
 - Use notes
 - Breathe deeply
- **REMEMBER:** The audience wants you to succeed

11

Finally





- o Next week and the week after
- o Over to you – Each person to report to group what they've found out about various courses
- o 5- 10 minutes each

12



Educational Guidance Module

Tutorials 6 & 7: Individual Presentations

Learning Outcomes	<p>At the end of this tutorial, students will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Have given a 5 minute presentation on a course they have researched or on a subject of their own choice</i> • <i>Have submitted Assignment 2 – A Course Investigation</i>
Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Presentation equipment</i>
Assignment	<p><i>Submission day for Assignment 2 – A Course Investigation</i></p>
Introduction	<p>Depending on the size of the group, and how many people attend on the day, this tutorial may need to extend over two sessions.</p>
Part 1	<p>Individual Presentations</p> <p>The purpose of this tutorial is to practice effective presentation skills. The tutor should remind students that it can be easier to be the first to present their information, and should encourage volunteers. Students should feel free to ask questions on the presentations.</p>
 COFFEE – COFFEE – COFFEE – COFFEE – COFFEE – COFFEE 	
Part 2	<p>Group Discussion</p> <p>At the end of the tutorial, tutor should acknowledge how difficult it is to speak in public. The first presentation can be the most difficult, but with practice, it should get easier.</p>
Tips and Advice	<p>During Presentations</p> <p>The level of formality is irrelevant for this presentations; the objective is to introduce the group to presentation techniques.</p> <p>The tutor should not choose a prominent seating position; it can distract and unnerve presenters.</p>

Educational Guidance Module

Tutorial 8: Higher Education Grants

Learning Outcomes	At the end of this tutorial, students will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Understand application procedures for higher education grants in Ireland</i>
Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Copies of previous application forms for higher education grant (available from local authority websites)</i> • <i>Relevant contact details for local Citizen Information Centres, local authorities, Department of Social Welfare offices, Student Welfare officers, and any other relevant contacts</i> • <i>Presentation: “Higher Education Grants” (Downloadable at: http://www.ul.ie/careers/careers/mature/toolkit.shtml)</i>
Assignment	None
Introduction	<p>Many mature students will apply for higher education grants and other funding to help them through college. The Mature Students Access Certificate Course in UL does not currently qualify for such funding, but it is a process that students will need to consider for future courses. This tutorial will familiarise students with the grant application process.</p>
Part 1	<p>Applying for a Grant</p> <p>This part of the tutorial examines eligibility requirements, documentation, closing dates, application methods, and useful contact details for grant applications. Each student should have a copy of a grant application form and instructions; these are available on local authority websites.</p>
 COFFEE - COFFEE – COFFEE – COFFEE – COFFEE – COFFEE 	
Tips and Advice	<p>Answering Queries on Grant-Eligibility</p> <p>Grants are means-tested, and therefore, are not available to all students. Some students will qualify for the full grant; partial funding is also offered to some students. The group are likely to ask the tutor some questions on their eligibility for grants, and the Back to Education Allowance. The tutor</p>

should refer them to their local authority and the Department of Social and Family Affairs. The local Citizens Information Centre is also a good information source in this regard.

Also, if the college has a student-welfare officer who can give them information on other financial assistance, students should be made aware of this service.

Slideshow: Higher Education Grants

Educational Guidance Module

Higher Education Grants

1

Higher Education Grants

You're eligible if you are:

- o A student undertaking a full time undergrad course of at least 2 yrs duration **or** a full time postgrad course

Independent mature candidates are candidates over 23 who live separately from their parents from October 1 of the year preceding the year of application. They are assessed on their own income.

2

Higher Education Grants

o Documents you'll need:

- Original birth cert
- Proof of permanent/ordinary address (telephone/ gas bill etc)
- Proof of income: P60, P21, P45
- Social Welfare- letter from them, and if applicable, Health Board

3

Where To Apply

o **Apply to:**

- Your local authority

4

How do you apply?

Application forms can be obtained in the following ways:

- By calling in person to the office
- By sending in a stamped self-addressed A4 envelope

Completed application forms, together with all necessary documents, are returned to County Council. All Candidates are then notified in due course.

5

When do you apply?

Forms usually become available mid to late July with closing date normally around the end of August each year – this may change from year to year, but County Councils usually advertise in local press when the application forms become available.

6

Who do you apply to?



Do I apply to County Council or VEC?

County Councils process applications for students pursuing Degree and Post-Graduate courses. VECs process applications for students pursuing TLT, PLC, Cert and Diploma courses.

7

Other Information





- o Citizens Information Centres
 - o www.citizensinformation.ie

- o Other relevant grant authorities







8

Educational Guidance Module

Tutorial 9: Feedback and Evaluation

Learning Outcomes	At the end of this tutorial, students will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Have received feedback on their assignments</i> • <i>Have reviewed and evaluated the Educational Guidance Module</i> • <i>Be familiar with the Career Development Module</i>
Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Evaluation Form</i> • <i>Presentation: “Feedback and Evaluation”</i> (Downloadable at: http://www.ul.ie/careers/careers/mature/toolkit.shtml)
Assignment	<i>None</i>
Introduction	The main objective of this tutorial is to obtain oral and written feedback on the Module from the group. This module continues to evolve based on feedback given by each group. The group also receives feedback on their assignments, and an overview of the Career Development Module.
Part 1	Group Receives Feedback on Their Assignments The group receives general feedback on their assignments (see Slide 3). The tutor should correct any errors and clarify any false information submitted in assignments to prevent confusion regarding courses of interest.
Part 2	Group Gives Feedback on the Module The group reviews the module by informal discussion with the tutor. They also complete the evaluation form (supplied at the end of this tutorial).
 COFFEE - COFFEE – COFFEE – COFFEE – COFFEE – COFFEE 	
Part 3	Overview of the Career Development Module The tutor presents an overview of the Career Development Module and explains how it follows on from this module.
Tips and Advice	Obtaining Feedback It is important that the students evaluate each module. However, the tutor must be prepared for negative feedback also. Ideally, the tutor should seek regular feedback throughout the tutorials, and be prepared to adapt to the group’s needs if necessary.

Slideshow: Feedback and Evaluation

<p style="text-align: right;"> UNIVERSITY of LIMERICK OILEACOL LUIMNIGH</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Educational Guidance Module</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Feedback and Evaluation</p> <p style="text-align: center; font-size: 2em; border: 2px solid orange; border-radius: 50%; width: 40px; margin: 0 auto;">1</p>	<p style="text-align: right;"> UNIVERSITY of LIMERICK OILEACOL LUIMNIGH</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Overview of Today's Tutorial</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Feedback on assignments o Review of Module o Overview of Career Development Module o Evaluation of Module <p style="text-align: center; font-size: 2em; border: 2px solid orange; border-radius: 50%; width: 40px; margin: 0 auto;">2</p>
<p style="text-align: right;"> UNIVERSITY of LIMERICK OILEACOL LUIMNIGH</p> <p>Feedback on Assignments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o No formal teaching placement in Humanities degrees o For teaching need further training o Possible to get teaching English placement abroad (S.America, Africa etc) o Law & Euro Studies –Spanish at beginners level, German needs hons leaving cert. Check with course director <p style="text-align: center; font-size: 2em; border: 2px solid orange; border-radius: 50%; width: 40px; margin: 0 auto;">3</p>	<p style="text-align: right;"> UNIVERSITY of LIMERICK OILEACOL LUIMNIGH</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Review of Module</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Career History/Life Review o The Career Planning Process o Cooperative Education & Careers Service o Met with students from last year's course o Investigating courses o Giving presentations <p style="text-align: center; font-size: 2em; border: 2px solid orange; border-radius: 50%; width: 40px; margin: 0 auto;">4</p>
<p style="text-align: right;"> UNIVERSITY of LIMERICK OILEACOL LUIMNIGH</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Your Evaluation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expectations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Did it meet your expectations? • Do you have a better idea of your course options? • Has it helped you to decide what to do next? • Assignments <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Were they useful? • Were they difficult? • How could they be improved/made more relevant? <p style="text-align: center; font-size: 2em; border: 2px solid orange; border-radius: 50%; width: 40px; margin: 0 auto;">5</p>	<p style="text-align: right;"> UNIVERSITY of LIMERICK OILEACOL LUIMNIGH</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Overview of Career Development Module</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mature Graduates and the Workplace • Skills and Interests • A Career Investigation • CVs and Covering Letters • Application Forms • Interviews • Two Assignments <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A Career Investigation • A CV and Covering Letter <p style="text-align: center; font-size: 2em; border: 2px solid orange; border-radius: 50%; width: 40px; margin: 0 auto;">6</p>

Educational Guidance Module

EVALUATION FORM:

1. Were the tutorials useful for learning about various courses?

2. What aspect of the Educational Guidance Module was most useful?

3. What aspect of the Educational Guidance Module was least useful?

4. Can you recommend further relevant topics for this module? If so, please give details?

5. Any other comments?

Optional

Name: _____

Contact telephone number/email: _____

Thank you for your feedback.

Career Development Module

Tutorial 1: Mature Graduates and the Workplace

Tutorial 2: Skills and Interests

Tutorial 3: Career Investigation

Tutorials 4 & 5: Individual Presentations

Tutorial 6: CVs and Covering Letters



Tutorial 7: Application Forms

Tutorial 8: Interviews

Tutorial 9: Feedback and Evaluation

Career Development Module

Tutorial 1: Mature Graduates and the Workplace

Learning Outcomes	<p>At the end of this tutorial, group members will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Have an overview of the Career Development Module</i> • <i>Understand the requirements of Module assignments</i> • <i>Have discussed mature graduates in the workplace</i> • <i>Have analysed the findings of the UL Mature Graduate Survey</i>
Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Presentation: “Mature Graduates and the Workplace”</i> (Downloadable at: http://www.ul.ie/careers/careers/mature/toolkit.shtml)
Assignment	<p><i>None</i></p>
Introduction	<p>This tutorial provides students with an overview of the Career Development Module and its relevant assignments. It is also an opportunity for the group to discuss their concerns on entering the jobs market as a mature graduate.</p>
Part 1	<p>Overview of Module and Assignments</p> <p>The tutor gives a brief overview of the module, and the assignments – A Career Investigation, and CV and Covering Letter.</p>
Part 2	<p>Mature Graduates and the Workplace</p> <p>In groups of four, students discuss matters relevant to mature graduates and the jobs market. Examples are provided on Slide 4 (see presentation; these refer to employer attitudes to mature graduates, and characteristics unique to mature graduates), but other areas can also be discussed. Each group presents their findings; this is followed by a group discussion.</p> <p>The table on Slide 5 (see presentation; table outlining a number of competencies often held by mature students) is a useful tool for highlighting the skills and qualities of mature students, and should help instil confidence in the group at this point.</p>
 COFFEE – COFFEE – COFFEE – COFFEE – COFFEE – COFFEE 	
Part 3	<p>Mature Graduate Survey</p> <p>Discussion of Mature Graduate Survey – a survey of the career experiences of mature graduates from UL from 1998-2002. This survey was conducted</p>

by the UL Careers Service in 2004. The objective was to investigate the career experiences of UL mature graduates and to make their career advice available to prospective students and graduates.


The study discusses occupations, postgraduate study, and salary levels, and presents a number of case studies on life as a mature student. It also provides tips on job searching as a mature graduate. The survey report is available at: www.ul.ie/careers/careers/mature.

Tips and
Advice

Promoting Mature Student Qualities

Many students feel that their age may be an issue when job seeking. Some have concerns on discrimination; this tutorial allows them to voice those concerns. It is also an opportunity to look at the qualities, skills and life experiences that older adults can bring to a job. It is important to focus on the positive aspects of mature graduates.


Slideshow: Mature Graduates and the Workplace



Career Development Module

Mature Graduates and the Workplace


1



Overview of Today's Module

- Mature graduates and the workplace
- Skills and Interests
- A Career Investigation
- CVs and Covering Letters
- Application forms
- Interviews

2




Two Assignments

- **A Career Investigation** (600-700 words)
Due.....
- **CV & Cover Letter**
Due:

Graded on a pass/fail basis

3




Mature Graduates And The Workplace

4 groups (10 min discussion)

- A & B
Why are some employers reluctant to employ older graduates?
- C & D
What are the advantages/positive qualities of being an older student and future employee?


4



What Do Mature Students Have To Offer?

•Communication skills	•Time management	•Determination	•Adaptability
•Common Sense	•Worldly wisdom	•Stamina	•Ambition
•Life experience	•Goal setting	•Ability to work unsupervised	•Self motivation
•Self discipline	•Persistence	•Flexibility	•People skills

5



Mature Reflections - A survey of the career experiences of mature graduates, UL, 1998 - 2002

- Summary
- 60 mature graduates surveyed in 2003
- Employment details of mature graduates compare very favourably with those of younger graduates.
- 85% employed
- 73% full time
- 12% part time
- Salary levels decent: more than a third earning in excess of €33,000 in June 2003
- 89% thought their degree was relevant to their job
- Almost half had gone on to further study after their degree

6

Mature Reflections - cont



- **Experience of the job search process**
- Two thirds thought that maturity was an advantage when entering the jobs market
- Only 3% said they experienced discrimination based on their age
- 83% considered their degree made them more employable
- Personal contacts proved to be the most important source of job vacancies

7

Next Week



- **How Employable are you?**
 - What skills do you need to be employable?
- **What careers would suit you?**
 - Career Pathfinder- looks at your interests and suggests careers to match them
- **In the meantime, check out the following:**
- Personality websites
- www.careerdirections.ie (Irish website)
- www.careersworld.com (Irish website)
- www.personalitytype.com/quiz.asp (American website)
- Temperament Sorter (70 questions, 10 min)
- www.advisorsteam.com (American website)

8

Career Development Module

Tutorial 2: Skills and Interests

Learning Outcomes	At the end of this tutorial, group members will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Be familiar with the skills required by employers</i> • <i>Have assessed their employability skills</i> • <i>Have completed an occupational-interest questionnaire</i>
Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Employability Skills Worksheets (2)</i> • <i>Occupational-interest Questionnaire</i> • <i>Internet access if using online questionnaires</i> • <i>Presentation ‘Skills and Interests’</i> (Downloadable at: http://www.ul.ie/careers/careers/mature/toolkit.shtml)
Assignment	<i>None</i>
Introduction	<p>The objective of this tutorial is to familiarise students with the skills needed in today’s workplace. The importance of transferable skills is stressed, and the group are asked to identify their own skills and support this with evidence.</p> <p>The group also completes an occupational-interest questionnaire. There are a variety of online and paper-based questionnaires. The tutor can decide which is most suitable.</p>
Part 1	<p>Essential Employment Skills</p> <p>The tutor asks the group to list the skills they think are important to employers when recruiting graduates. The results of a transferable-skills survey conducted in July 2003 are then discussed; this survey is available at: http://www.skillsproject.ie</p> <p>(This project was a joint initiative between Dublin City University, Trinity College Dublin and Waterford Institute of Technology)</p> <p>The tutor should emphasise that although qualifications and academic results are important, transferable skills are equally important. For many mature students, these skills can strengthen their profile when applying for jobs.</p>

Part 2 Skills Assessment

Using Employability Skills Worksheet 1, each group member is asked to examine a number of transferable skills, identify those they possess, and give an example of where they have used these skills.

It is also important for them to identify gaps in their skillset, and to identify means of acquiring further skills to enhance employability. Students should discuss their findings with a partner.



COFFEE – COFFEE – COFFEE – COFFEE – COFFEE – COFFEE

**Part 3 Occupational-Interest Questionnaire**

The paper-based questionnaire used on the Mature Student Access Certificate Course is the Career Pathfinder – Quicksan, a short paper-based questionnaire designed to help individuals assess their interests. It also provides information on activities, competencies and work-types associated with those preferences.

If the group has Internet access, there are free online questionnaires also. It is important to emphasise that the questionnaires aim to stimulate ideas on career areas, and answers are not examined in a ‘right or wrong’ basis.

Online questionnaires include: www.careersworld.com,
www.careerdirections.ie, www.prospects.ac.uk.

Tips and Advice Encouraging Skills Reflection


For many students, this may be their first examination of their skills and occupational interests. The tutor should emphasise that these skills can be developed in a number of areas and can usually be transferred to other environments.

Slideshow: Skills and Interests


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Career Development Module
Skills and Interests

1


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Overview of Today's Tutorial

- o Skills Review
 - What skills do employers look for?
 - What skills do you have? Employability skills sheet
- o Occupational Interest Questionnaires
 - Career Pathfinder - Quickscan


2


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What Do Employers Look For?

- o Irish Employer survey July 2003
84 Companies, all sectors –business, finance, education, the arts, retail, tourism
- o Most Important Factors in Recruitment:
 - Enthusiasm for position
 - Personality
 - Transferable skills
 - Potential for advancement
 - Good Academic record
 - Relevant Work Experience
 - Specialist Subject Knowledge
 - Personal Interests
 - Any other work experience


3


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Employability Skills or Transferable Skills

<p>People Skills</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Team work Interpersonal skills Communication skills 	<p>Self Reliance Skills</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Self awareness Self presentation Networking Action planning
<p>Generalist Skills</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Problem solving IT/computer literacy Flexibility 	<p>Specialist Skills</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Company specific skills Technical skills


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How Employable Are You?

- o Employability Skills Sheets: 1 and 2
- o Each person to complete worksheets and then interview a partner, asking the following questions:
 - What skills do you have? Do you have evidence? (Worksheet 1)
 - What skills do you need to develop? (Worksheet 2)
 - How and where might you develop them? (Worksheet 2)

5


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Career Pathfinder – Quickscan

- o A self-assessment questionnaire to help you assess your interests. Provides info on careers associated with those interests
- o A number of things will influence your career or job choice- your educational qualifications, interests, opportunities available, family commitments etc
- o This questionnaire is about what you **enjoy** doing- this is important when choosing a job or career
- o It will give you a broad overview of the areas in which you are most interested.

6

Career Pathfinder- Quicksan



- o Not a test- no right or wrong answers
- o Based on various job activities
- o 60 statements about various jobs
- o Assume you can do all the activities
- o Indicate your preference for undertaking each activity using the 1-5 rating scale given.
- o Try to avoid using the middle option (unsure) as much as possible.

7

Employability Skills Worksheet 1

From the list of skills below, highlight those you feel you have, and give an example of where you have demonstrated this skill. What skills on the list would you like to develop? Could they increase your employability potential?

People Skills	Your evidence of using this skill
Team work	_____
Interpersonal Skills	_____
Leadership	_____
Cultural Awareness	_____
Customer Service	_____
Oral and Written Communication	_____

Self Reliance Skills	
Willing to Learn	_____
Self Confidence	_____
Self-promotion Skills	_____
Self-Motivation, being proactive	_____
Networking Skills	_____
Action Planning	_____

General Skills	
Commitment	_____
Flexibility	_____
Business awareness	_____
IT Skills	_____
Problem Solving Skills	_____
Numeracy Skills	_____

Specialist Skills	
Technical Skills	_____
Specialist Skills	_____
Company Specific Skills	_____

Employability Skills Worksheet 2

What are your three strongest skills? What evidence do you have? (Be specific!)

1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____

Your Action Plan:

Choose three skills you would like to develop that will increase your employability.

Skill 1: A skill I need to develop is: _____

Examples of how I might do this:

Skill 2: A skill I need to develop is: _____

Examples of how I might do this:

Skill 3: A skill I need to develop is: _____

Examples of how I might do this:

Example 1: You feel that you need to improve your verbal communication skills. You could improve your skills in this area by:



- *Volunteering to do a presentation*
- *Attending relevant workshops*
- *Observing an effective communicator and discussing their presentation approach*

Example 2: You feel that you would like to work more effectively with others. You could improve your skills in this area by:

- *Contributing more in meetings and groups*
- *Getting involved in project groups and other joint activities*

Career Development Module

Tutorial 3: Career Investigation


Learning Outcomes	At the end of this tutorial, group members will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Have discussed potential careers</i> • <i>Know where to find information on careers</i>
Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Career booklets, brochures, web links</i> • <i>Presentation: “Career Investigation”</i> (Downloadable at: http://www.ul.ie/careers/careers/mature/toolkit.shtml)
Assignment	<i>Assignment 1 – A Career Investigation</i>
Introduction	The purpose of this tutorial is to encourage the group to start thinking about jobs or careers of interest to them, and to identify information sources for further investigation in the area. The tutor should encourage the group be creative - any career area, as long as it is of interest to them, is worth investigating. The group also receives details of Assignment 1 – an assignment of 600-700 words on a career area of interest to them.
Part 1	Group Discussion on Careers The group are asked to identify a job or career area that they are interested in exploring, then to discuss it with a partner, and with the group if they so wish.
Part 2	Finding Careers Information The tutor asks the group to identify sources of information for an in-depth investigation of careers areas.
 COFFEE – COFFEE – COFFEE – COFFEE – COFFEE – COFFEE 	
Part 3	Assignment 1 - A Career Investigation The group receives details of the assignment for this tutorial. They can investigate any career area, provided they have evidence of thorough investigation and can show their information sources. The group is also asked to prepare a five-minute presentation for the following week on the career they have investigated.

Tips and
Advice

Meeting the Tutorial Objective – Outlining Research Skills

- The purpose of the assignment is to develop some useful research skills, so the focus of this assignment is on the research approach and information gathered, not the specific career. Some group members may not fully understand their career options, and may change their choice several times; however, the underlying objective in this exercise is to highlight appropriate research methods.
- Preparing for presentation is a useful exercise as it reinforces the presentation skills acquired in the Educational Guidance Module. It is also an effective way of sharing careers information with other group members.


Slideshow: Career Investigation



Career Development Module

A Career Investigation


1



Overview of Today's Tutorial

- o Researching Careers
- o Assignment 1- A Career Investigation


2



Researching Careers

- o Brainstorm- What careers are of interest to you?
- o Where might you find information on these careers?
- o (Individually 5 min, group discussion 10-15 min)


3



Finding Careers Information

- o Careers Service Resource Area:
 - Access to computers, brochures, career booklets, employer info, postgrad study
- o Irish Career Websites
 - www.ul.ie/careers www.gradireland.com
 - www.careerdirections.ie
 - www.careersworld.com
 - www.publicjobs.ie
- o Maynooth Virtual Careers Library
 - <http://careers.nuim.ie/students/careers/virtuallibrary.shtml>
- o www.prospects.ac.uk (leading UK graduate careers website)
- o Talk to people working in different areas
- o Careers Advisors can help

4




Assignment Details

Assignment 1: A Career Investigation
600-700 words: Due.....

- o Choose a career you're interested in
- o Find out as much as you can about it
 - Entry requirements
 - Will you need to do further training?
 - Location? Money?
 - What will you need to succeed in this area? (develop new skills, get relevant experience)
 - Any restrictions? (Can't leave local area, can only work part time, don't want to do further study etc)

5



Next Two Weeks

- o 5 minute presentation to group on career of your choice.

6

Career Development Module: Assignment 1

A Career Investigation

Choose a career of interest to you and investigate your chosen area. The assignment should be word-processed, and approximately 600-700 words.

Assignment Structure

Introduction

Name and describe the career you have chosen to investigate.

Main body

This should analyse all of the main areas below:

- The career or occupation - its tasks and responsibilities
- Qualifications required for employment in the area
- Environment and lifestyle
- Labour market, and employment opportunities

Yourself in relation to the job:

What qualifications, skills and qualities will you need to enter and survive in this job? You might identify strengths in relation to the job, and/or limitations/reservations such as geographical limitations, family commitments, the need to pursue postgraduate study etc.

Indicate how you plan to deal with any such limitations: for example, will you need to pursue a specific postgraduate course as a stepping-stone towards the job? Or will you explore other careers to find a more suitable fit?

Concluding Paragraph

This should draw together and summarise key observations, and indicate what you might do or develop in relation to what you have learned from your investigation.

Sources of information

You will be expected to use:

- Online resources outlined in class (see Useful Links and Websites, page 54)
- Careers resources available in your Careers Service or the college library
- Your own knowledge of the areas you are interested in

Submission Deadline

The submission deadline for this assignment is: _____

Don't forget to include your name and ID number on the assignment.

Online Information Resources

Please note that the following websites are mere examples of those suitable for distribution in tutorials. The tutor should research and include websites that will suit the needs of their particular group.

Irish Career websites

- www.careersworld.com
- www.careerdirections.ie
- www.gradireland.com
- www.ul.ie/careers - Using Your UL Degree: examines every degree in UL
- www.activelink.ie - The Online Network for Irish Non-profit Organisations
- <http://careers.nuim.ie/students/careers/virtuallibrary.shtml> - Virtual Careers

Psychology/Counselling and Social Work

- www.psihq.ie - The Psychological Society of Ireland
- www.nswqb.ie - National Social Work Qualifications Board
- www.irish-counselling.ie - Irish Association for Counselling and Therapy

Teacher Training in Ireland

www.education.ie - Visit Students and Trainees > Teacher Training

Construction links



www.constructionjobs.ie

UK Graduate Career Websites

www.prospects.ac.uk - One of the best UK jobs websites for graduates: visit 'Investigate Jobs'



Career Development Module

Tutorials 4 & 5: Individual Presentations

Learning Outcomes	At the end of this tutorial, group members will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Have given a 5-10 minute presentation on a career area</i> • <i>Submit Assignment 1 - A Career Investigation</i>
Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Overhead projectors/blackboards (if available)</i>
Assignment	<i>None (Submission of Assignment 1)</i>
Introduction	Depending on the size of the group, this tutorial may need two sessions.
Part 1	<p>Individual Presentations</p> <p>Each group member presents their research findings to the group. At this stage, group members may be more comfortable about giving a short presentation. Despite the experience gained in the Educational Guidance Module, the tutor must not pressurise any member to present. Members should be encouraged, but always given the option of declining.</p>
 COFFEE – COFFEE – COFFEE – COFFEE – COFFEE – COFFEE 	
Part 2	Continuation of Individual Presentations
Tips and Advice	<p>Reassuring Students Before Presentations</p> <p>As with the presentations in the Educational Guidance Module, the level of formality is irrelevant for these presentations; the objective is to introduce the group to presentation techniques.</p> <p>The tutor should not choose a prominent seating position; it can distract and unnerve presenters.</p>

Career Development Module

Tutorial 6: CVs and Covering Letters

Learning Outcomes	<p>At the end of this tutorial, group members will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Understand the importance of customising their CV for each job</i> • <i>Be clear about the correct content and layout of CVs</i> • <i>Understand why CVs are rejected</i> • <i>Recognise the importance of including a covering letter with every CV</i> • <i>Have analysed five CVs with regard to layout, spelling etc.</i>
Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Sample CVs</i> • <i>Selection of action-words for effective applications</i> • <i>Presentation: “CVs and Covering Letters”</i> (Downloadable at: http://www.ul.ie/careers/careers/mature/toolkit.shtml)
Assignment	<p><i>Assignment 2 - CV and Covering Letter</i></p> <p><i>Submission day for Assignment 1 – A Career Investigation</i></p>
Introduction	<p>The objective of this tutorial is to help the group to understand the importance of preparing a concise and targeted CV. Many CVs are compiled without any particular job in mind and are used to apply for a number of vacancies irrespective of the job descriptions, a particularly ineffective way of applying for jobs! This tutorial emphasises how every job application requires a customised CV. Assignment 2, “A CV and Covering Letter”, is also discussed.</p>
Part 1	<p>Experience of Creating CVs</p> <p>Students are asked about their experience of compiling CVs. Some of the group may never have had a CV; more will not have updated theirs in some time.</p>
Part 2	<p>Effective CVs and Covering Letters</p> <p>To familiarise students with the techniques of CV creation, the tutor outlines features of an effective CV: content, layout etc. The importance of the covering letter and online CVs are also discussed here.</p>
 COFFEE – COFFEE – COFFEE – COFFEE – COFFEE – COFFEE 	
Part 3	CV Exercise

The objective of this exercise is to encourage critical evaluation of CVs. In groups of three, students must analyse five CVs (samples of poor CVs are included with this tutorial; tutors can add to this selection or use other CVs if they so wish), and decide if the candidate should be invited for interview based on their CV. They must give reasons for invitation or rejection of each candidate's CV.


Tips and
Advice

Critically Evaluating CVs

None of the CVs included are ideal; some are particularly bad, but all need editing in some regard e.g. irrelevant and inappropriate content, spelling mistakes, and other common errors. The tutor asks the group to be critical in their appraisal of each CV and to be ruthless in their selection.

Students are asked to create a CV and Covering letter for their assignment. They are also asked to include a job description with their assignment. This can be real or imagined, but the CV must be written with a particular job in mind. Students can write an imaginary CV for a graduate job if they like.


Slideshow: CVs and Covering Letters



Career Development Module

CVs and Covering Letters

1




Overview of Today's Tutorial

- o CVs
- o Covering Letters
- o Assignment 2 –A CV and Covering Letter

Your Experience

- o Your experience to date of compiling a CV
 - Do you have a CV?
 - Is it up to date?
 - Would you send it away right now?
 - What changes would you make?


2



Starting Points

- o Purpose of CV- to get you an interview
- o No such thing as the perfect CV
- o Adapt your CV to every job for which you are applying
- o **Most people don't!**

3




Creating CVs

A CV should contain:

- o Personal Details
 - Name, Address, Tel no, email
- o Education, Qualifications (most recent or relevant first)
 - Dates, places, title of course, core subjects, relevant projects, lab techniques, results(if good)
- o No need for primary school info, inter cert, junior cert, lists of leaving cert subjects etc
- o A number of layouts are acceptable


4



Creating CVs

- o Work Experience, (Career History, Professional Experience, Relevant Experience)
- o Separate Relevant Experience from Other Experience, if necessary,
 - or into Skill Groupings (eg Management, Planning, Communication), or into Career Areas (Administration, Sales)
- o Don't underestimate your achievements and skills acquired in unpaid or voluntary work
- o Raising a family, managing on a tight budget- these involve a variety of skills e.g. planning, juggling responsibilities, time management, mediation, organisation etc

5



Creating CVs

- o Skills
 - Computing Skills – e.g. Proficiency in Microsoft Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Internet, Email
- o Languages
 - Level of fluency
- o Driving Licence
- o Interests
 - Be brief but try and get your personality across. (No political or religious beliefs, unless relevant to the job)

6

Creating CVs



- o 2 Referees
- o One academic – if possible. (Someone from UL?)
- o One work or personal (not family)
- o Ask permission first
- o Keep them informed about jobs you're applying for
- o Give them a copy of your CV

7

Why CVs are Rejected



- o First Impressions –you've got 20/30 seconds
- o Poor visual layout-too much text crammed in, not enough white space, overwritten, long paragraphs and sentences
- o Length of CV –should be 2 pages, no longer. Not an autobiography, relevant info only
- o Poor spelling, bad grammar

8

What You Should Leave Out



- o Photos
- o Any sort of failure (exams, business, marriage)
- o Age, weight, health, religion, marital status
- o Title pages, binders and folders
- o Salary information (unless asked for)

9

What You Should Put In



- o Make it look good – plenty of white space
- o Make it easy to read
- o Allocate space in accordance to importance of information
- o Use short sentences- action verbs (developed, managed, trained)
- o Use bullet points

10

Covering Letters



- o **Very Important**
- o Should always accompany a CV
- o 1st paragraph- who you are, what you are applying for, and where you saw the advert.
- o 2nd paragraph- why you are applying to this particular company.
- o 3rd paragraph-Draw attention to the key skills & relevant info from your CV, and what you can offer an employer
- o 4th paragraph-Availability for interview & looking forward to their reply

11

Online CVs



- o CVs- Check if CV should be sent as part of text of email or as an attachment
- o Check visual impact –send CV to yourself

12

CV Watchdog Exercise



- o Recruitment campaign
- o Groups of 3 to look at 5 CVs
- o What do you think?
- o Come to a group decision- would you invite this person for an interview? Why? Why not?
- o Give reasons for invitation or rejection

13

Assignment Two



- o 2 page CV and 1 page Covering Letter
- o Include a job description, or make one up!
- o Your CV and letter can be based upon your own experience, or you can create an imaginary 'future CV' for a graduate job.
- o Submission date.....
- o Next week: Application Forms

14

Sample CV 1

CURRICULUM VITAE

Name: Sally Webster

Maiden Name: Smith

Date of Birth: 15th February 1957

Address: 24 Charlton Place
Limerick City

Phone: (061) 11111

Marital status: Separated

Dependants: Two daughters – Rosie aged eighteen and Sophie aged
seventeen

Education: Intermediate Cert: 1973 Leaving Cert: 1975
Red Wreck Hill Convent
South Circular Rd., Limerick

Computer Skills: Access to, and good knowledge of Microsoft Word, e-mail and
Internet.

Additional Resources: Car owner
Full driving licence
French speaker (not fluent but adequate)

Hobbies & Interests: Reading, listening to music, yoga, watercolour & oil painting,
tennis, and walking the dog.

On completing Secretarial College in 1976 and having armoured myself with the skills of typing and taking shorthand, I was ready to enter the workplace. Fortunately, work for secretaries was in abundance at this time resulting in the fact that over a number of years I gained a great deal of experience from working in various types of employment. I commenced in Manchester and joined an agency where a range of secretarial skills was acquired. From there I was offered a job with the Bank of Ireland, Seven Sisters Road in London. Having consolidated my secretarial skills I decided to take time out and travel to some parts of Europe, working in restaurants, hotels etc.

Upon returning to Limerick I found employment with Rovers Return Accountants but the monotony of typing sets of accounts overcame me. In order to improve my prospects I took a year out and went to France working as an au pair in order to learn the language and experience the French culture. While attending university on a part-time basis my knowledge of the French language and civilisation grew. Both these courses enhanced job prospects but also, on a long-term basis, skills such as the ability to organise have stood to me throughout my married and working life. The French course enabled me to gain employment with Shannonside Tourist Office in Limerick which offered me many opportunities, one in particular was my secondment to work with Bord Failte where I was employed to work in France for three months promoting Irish holidays to travel agencies throughout France. Now many years later this course has taken on a different significance, it enhances our family holidays in France and also allows me the opportunity to help my two daughters who are studying French.

Employed by Irish Site Management, during the construction of Alcan in the early 1980's, my role was secretary to the Irish Congress of Trade Unions. I eventually commenced working with my husband in 1982 under a licence agreement with Limerick service station. Over the years I have had ongoing training, staff management, marketing, hygiene courses etc. This worked very well for me as it gave me the opportunity to work from home when my daughters were small and also to choose my hours to coincide with their school hours.

One course which my husband and I took was a parenting course and we both agreed it opened our minds and changed our attitudes to what parenting is all about. Other courses I undertook were Focusing with Sr. Bet Lynch, Listening Skills and a Personal Effectiveness Course with Fr. Les Battersby. Having completed one year with Oscail and taking Literature, Sociology and Psychology and passing my first year exams, I decided to apply to study full-time a Limerick college. I commenced this degree course in September 1999 and entering my third year I took Theology to degree level and in my fourth and final year will take Philosophy to degree level. Over the years I have carried out voluntary work with local charities where extra training was given.

REFERENCES

Mr. Mike Baldwin
Manager,
Bank of Limerick,
Seven Sisters Road, London.

Mr. Fred Elliot,
Rovers Return Accountants,
O'Connell Street, Limerick. (January 1977 to August 1977).

Ms Deirdre Rashid, Regional Manager,
Weatherfield Tourism,
O'Connell St. Limerick. (May 1978 to March 1980)

Mr. Jack Duckworth,
Irish Management,
Aluminium Factory,
Co. Limerick. (March 1980 to December 1981).

Peacock Services Raheen Ltd.,
Cork Road, Limerick (January 1982 to 1999.)

Ms. Emily Bishop (Personnel)
Bank of Limerick
63'O'Connell Street, Limerick.
(November '97 to Sept. '97). – Relief Work

Sample CV 2

Roy Cropper

22 Strand Road

Monaleen

Limerick

Tel: 061 454545

Mobile: 087 363645

Email: royboy@eircom.net

Profile

- Excellent communication skills gained through my Administration Officer post, where I advised on information needs and answered client enquiries.
- Managing a Medical Library Information desk has given me experience of problem solving on behalf of clients, in a calm and efficient manner
- Experience of working in various teams, in the workplace and in college, undertaking planning, organising, and leading with a range of projects.
- Thorough working knowledge and experience of word-processing, email and internet for use in researching information for college projects

Career to date

Administration Officer 1995-2002

Mid Western Health Board, Limerick City

- Responsible for maintenance and daily running of medical library records
- Answered client queries and advised on relevant library information sources
- Liaised with internal and external personnel regarding medical publications
- Supervised information assistants, co-ordinated Enquiry desk cover and library duties
- Devised and conducted Medical library tours and delivered presentations to students

Previous Employment

Clerical Officer 1990 – 1995

Homeware Supplies, Cork

Admin Support

Staff Specialists, Cork 1987 –1990

Other employment (paid and unpaid) includes Board Member of Parents Committee, Limerick National School, temping work

Education and Training

University of Limerick 2002 –present

Access Course for Higher Education

St Josephs Secondary School 1982 – 1987

Leaving Certificate

Additional Information

- Major interests include reading (which I find an excellent way of relaxing), particularly history and classical fiction.
- Family activities
- Have a clean driving licence, and have been a car owner for over twelve years

Referees

Mr Norris Cole

Lecturer

Dept of Public Administration

University of Limerick

Tel 061 55555

Email felliott@ul.ie

Ms Rita Fairclough

Dept Manager

Medical Library

Health Board

Limerick

061 77777

Sample CV 3

Audrey Roberts

Address	22 Mayfield Drive Tipperary	Email	sn@home.ie
Tel	062 8888	Nationality:	Irish
Mobile	088 0022279	Date of Birth:	23/07/71

PROFILE

I am a highly motivated and ambitious mature undergraduate environmental chemistry student with a background in retail management and office administration. I am extremely keen to enter a career in Human Resources where I can utilise my experience of staff development along with my personal strengths in interpersonal & communication skills, team working & leadership, planning and organisation. I derive much satisfaction from new challenges and have a strong self-development focus.

HIGHER EDUCATION

University of Limerick **1999 – 2003** **BSc Hons in Environmental Chemistry (2.1 expected)**

Honours Subjects: Environmental Geochemistry, Environmental Analytical Chemistry, Atmospheric & Hydrospheric Chemistry, Environmental Toxicology, Management and Modelling, Industrial Chemistry

Honours Project: “Factors Affecting the Retention and Release of Chromium (V1) in COPR”.
Research for this 10,000 word report involved preparing soil samples for analysis, learning new analytical techniques and use of spectrometers, collating and interpreting data, and presentation of results.

Subjects Yrs 1- 3: Chemistry, Chemical Pharamcology, Maths (calculus and algebra), Oceanology, Geology

WORK EXPERIENCE

Big Smoke Power station, Co Limerick Laboratory Assistant **Summer 2001**

During a 3 month summer placement my role was to analyse coal samples, collate data and produce reports. This involved weighing samples using furnaces and analytical machines (sulphur analysers and bomb calorimeters), calculating the ash and moisture content of coal and carrying out titrations.

ABC Foodstores, Tipperary Town **Fresh Foods Manager** **1988 - 1997**

Promoted to Fresh Foods Manager in 1992, following two years experience as Assistant Manager, after completing a retail training programme on leaving school. Fresh Foods, with a weekly turnover of £20K, encompassed the delicatessen, fish and meat aisle, chilled convenience foods, dairy produce and cooked meats. My role included responsibility for merchandising, food safety, health and safety issues and staff training and development. I was responsible for setting and meeting sales targets, controlling stock loss, managing staffing budgets, supervising staff on a day to day basis, placing orders, controlling deliveries, planning promotions and anticipating changes in customer demand.

This role provided valuable business and staff management experience but I opted for a career change and a return to education when the store closed following a company merger.

SKILLS

Communication/ Interpersonal Skills

- Interpersonal skills developed to high level while dealing with staff, colleagues & customers in retail management.
- Able to build effective working relationships with colleagues of all levels and of all ages.
- Report writing experience gained in business and academic environments.
- Presentations made throughout degree course and to industrialists following submission of final year project.
- Delivered regular team training on customer care, product ranges, and health & safety issues etc while in retail.

Team Working/ Leadership

- Gained much experience both as a team member and team leader and enjoy both roles.
- Group work has been a regular feature at university, through project and lab work, and is central both to my administrative job and additional committee work.
- Team building and development was an essential aspect of my role with ABC Foodstores, and one that I greatly enjoyed.

Planning & Organising

- Effective time management, self discipline, and the ability to work under pressure has enabled good academic achievements while juggling part-time work with study.
- Thorough forward planning during my honours project has been critical to its success along with the organisation of samples, experiments, data management and the necessary access to labs and equipment,
- Checking and tracking data in my part-time administrative role requires accuracy and close attention to detail.
- Managing a busy Fresh Foods Department with ongoing stock control requirements and a staff of 30 (many part-time) required a high level of organisation and planning, to ensure maximum efficiency and excellent customer satisfaction.

Analytical & Research

- Laboratory skills including use of highly complex analytical machines and apparatus developed through degree especially during honours project.
- Independent research for my honours project provided a new opportunity for in-depth study.
- Analysis of data has been central to my current and previous jobs.

IT

- Experienced using Microsoft Word, Excel, PowerPoint and the Internet.

INTERESTS AND ACTIVITIES

Drama: Active member of the South Tipperary Drama Society since 1993. I am involved in planning productions with responsibility for finance, organising venues, sound systems, lighting and publicity.

PREVIOUS EDUCATION

Currie High School, Tipperary Town 1983 – 1988
Leaving Cert 2 honours, English C, Chemistry C

REFEREES

Will be pleased to supply on request

Sample CV 4

Tracey Barlow
97 Long Road
Limerick City

Tel 061 789152
e-mail jquirke22a@hotmail.com

Date of birth 20/07/81
Driving licence Full, clean

Education:

- 1999 - 2002 BA HPSS, University of Limerick
QCA average 2.7
Subjects studied: Russia in revolution, 1905 to 1917; the treatment of the Jews in the Second World War; the Vietnam War; black rights in America in the twentieth century.
Skills developed: excellent written and oral communication; research, interpretation and presentation.

Worked well on my own and as part of a team for tutorial work; set my own deadlines and managed my time effectively under pressure.

School of History's 'History Prize' for outstanding work (1999).
- 1992 - 1999 Leaving Certificate: History (A), English (A), German (B), St Deirdre's High School, Limerick

Employment History:

- Summer 2001 Retail assistant, Bookshop, Cork
- Worked in travel section, responsible for training new members of staff.
 - Developed relevant subject knowledge in order to deal with customer enquiries in person and by telephone.
 - Deputised for supervisor, including managing staff and cashing up.
- 2000 to 2001 Waitress, Best Pint Bar, Limerick City
- Worked under pressure in a fast moving and often stressful environment.
 - Developed excellent interpersonal skills dealing with customers and other members of staff.
- Summer 2000 Retail assistant, Books For All, Covent Garden, London, UK
- Had to be flexible, worked shifts at short notice.
 - Dealt with customer complaints and enquiries.
- Summer 1999 Telesales, Eastern Electricity, Limerick
- Developed excellent telephone and communication skills in a pressurised business environment.
 - Worked as part of a team to achieve set business and sales targets.

Positions of responsibility:

- School prefect and form captain, 1997 to 1999.
- Captain of school hockey team in 1996.
- Elected treasurer of the University History Society in 2000, which involved maintaining the society's accounts and collecting subscriptions from members

Interests:

- Active member of the University Snowboarding Society. Have helped to plan several excursions to dry slopes and two trips abroad, one to Canada and one to Austria.
- Travelled extensively throughout Europe and beyond. Planned and financed a summer trip to South America in 2000 and Thailand in 1999.
- Written music reviews for the student paper, An Focal and have also had short stories published in independent publications in Munster.

Other skills:

- Proficient in Microsoft Office, including Word, Excel and Access.
- Familiar with the basics of HTML, in the process of creating my own website.
- Good standard of written and spoken German and French.

References:

Academic

Dr David Platt
Department of History
University of Limerick

Telephone 061 2754632
e-mail d.platt@history.ul.ie

Employer

Ms Cilla Brown
Books For All
Patrick Street
Cork
Telephone 021 882883
cbrown@booksforall.ie

Sample CV 5

Ciricilim Vita

Mision: An Inspiring Individual with overwhelming ambition and drive. Will one day rise to the top of the corporate ladder

Full Name Steven McDonald Esquire

Home Address The Mills, Dunmanway, Co Cork

Telephone Number 24242

Email hotlips11@yahoo.ie

Date of Birth 07 November 2002

Education

Dunmanway Nursery School 1977-1978

Dunmanway Primary School 1978-1985

Dunmanway Secondary School 1985-1992

Junior Certificate

Maths B

English D

Science C

Art D

French D

Music F

History B

Irish A

Leaving Certificate

Art D

Science C

English C

Irish B

Maths C

French D

History B

Work Experience

1984-1985 Paper round for Mr Martin Ryan, The Stores, Dunmanway

1986- 1988 Weekend milkround for O'Driscolls Creamery, Dunmanway

1998 1999 Fuel Injection Engineer at McCarthys Petrol Station, Dunmanway

Summer 2001 Construction worker. Kellys Pharmaceutical Co. London. Was drafted in to do the work that union members refused to do.

Summer 2002 Hygiene and Sanitation Executive, Main Hospital, Cork

Intrests and Activities

- politics- chairman of the Tipperary Anarchists Society,
- religion- active member of The Latter Day Nightists
- walking
- reading

Refrees

Rev Charlie Stubbs

Church of Latter Day Nightists

Dunmanway

Co Cork

Jim McDonald

Mountjoy Prison

Dublin

Action Words for CVs and Application Forms

The following list of words may be useful when compiling CVs or covering letters. Effective use of these words will increase the professionalism and impact of an application, as these words deliver the intended meaning in a powerful and concise manner. Remember, that you must be able to support your experience with evidence.

Words you may find useful:

A Administered	D Delivered	Interpreted	R Recorded
Advised	Designed	Interviewed	Reduced
Analysed	Detected	Invented	Referred
Arbitrated	Determined	L Lectured	Rendered
Arranged	Developed	Logged	Represented
Assembled	Devised	M Maintained	Researched
Assisted	Diagnosed	Managed	Restored
Audited	Directed	N Navigated	Reviewed
B Built	Discovered	Negotiated	Realised
C Calculated	Dispensed	O Obtained	Received
Charted	Disproved	Operated	Recommended
Collected	Distributed	Ordered	Routed
Completed	Drew up	Organised	S Selected
Compounded	E Edited	Oversaw	Served
Conducted	Eliminated	P Performed	Sold
Conserved	Evaluated	Planned	Solved
Consolidated	Examined	Prepared	Studied
Constructed	Expanded	Prescribed	Supervised
Consulted	F Founded	Presented	Supplied
Controlled	I Identified	Processed	T Tested
Co-ordinated	Implemented	Produced	Trained
Corresponded	Improved	Promoted	Translated
Counselled	Increased	Protected	W Wrote
Created	Installed	Provided	
Criticised	Instituted	Purchased	
	Instructed		

Career Development Module: Assignment 2

CV and Covering Letter

Prepare a 2-page CV and 1-page covering letter using the information gained in this tutorial.

Include a job description, or create one!



You can base your CV and covering letter on your own experience, or you can create an imaginary 'future CV' for a graduate job.

Submission date: _____

Need help? Contact: _____

Career Development Module

Tutorial 7: Application Forms

Learning Outcomes	At the end of this tutorial, group members will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Have reviewed several application forms</i> • <i>Have analysed typical employer questions and developed a structured approach to answering such questions</i> • <i>Understand how to complete an application form correctly</i>
Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Sample application forms (graduate and non-graduate)</i> • <i>Presentation: “Application Forms”</i> (Downloadable at: http://www.ul.ie/careers/careers/mature/toolkit.shtml)
Assignment	<i>None</i>
Introduction	The objective of this tutorial is to familiarise students with job application forms.
Part 1	Completing Application Forms The tutor asks the group about their experiences of completing job application forms. Afterwards, they receive a selection of graduate and non-graduate application forms to examine and comment on.
Part 2	Skills Review and Tips on Completing Forms The tutor should emphasise the importance of reviewing individual skills, and the job/company requirements, <i>before</i> completing the form. The group then learn of a number of tips to successfully complete forms.
 COFFEE – COFFEE – COFFEE – COFFEE – COFFEE – COFFEE 	
Part 3	Answering Difficult Questions This part of the tutorial explores ways of dealing with difficult application form questions. The tutor outlines the STAR response (see Slide 8: explanation of STAR response) as a structured guide to answering questions. In pairs, each member uses the STAR response to answer a typical application question and discusses their response with their partner.
Part 4	Discussion The tutor gives a summary on completing forms and ends with a couple of extracts from poor applications.

Tips and
Advice

Sourcing and completing application forms

- Tutors should include application forms from various careers areas e.g. local supermarkets, graduate programmes etc. to highlight that non-graduate forms can present difficult and time-consuming questions, and that these forms demand thorough preparation also.
- Some group members may find the application exercise difficult, and may need encouragement from the tutor on identifying examples of the skills required (problem solving, communication etc). Encourage the group to question each other about their experiences.


Slideshow: Application Forms


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Career Development Module

Application Forms


1


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Overview of Today's Tutorial

- oYour Experience and Review of Sample Forms
- oThe Application Form
- oThe Ten Commandments
- oExercise
- oWhat Not to Do

2


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Application Forms

- o Your experience of filling out application forms to date
- o Graduate Application Forms
 - What do you think?
 - Easy?
 - Difficult?


3


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Before Applying

- oResearch yourself
 - Review experience and career interests
 - Identify your skills
- oResearch careers/courses
 - Analyse job descriptions or course outline
- oResearch company
 - Company literature, website
 - Employer directories
 - Own contacts


4


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Ten Top Tips

- 1.**Make a copy of your blank application form**
- 2.**Read it through thoroughly before you start to fill it in**
- 3.**Follow the instructions carefully**
Use block capitals, black ink, write legibly, type or word process - whatever they want.
- 4.**Answer all questions** If a question genuinely does not apply to you, clarify that it is not applicable

5



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Ten Top Tips

5. **Consider why the question is being asked**
if you relate the question to the job tasks and level, and what you know the company requires, you are more likely to be convincing
6. **Draft answers first: make sure they fit the space available**
You may need 2 or 3 drafts before you are satisfied - but the more applications you make the easier it gets!
7. **Check your grammar, spelling, punctuation....**
A spell check on your computer will not pick up all errors. Have someone else proof-read your document if possible, or use a dictionary.

6


Ten Top Tips


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8. **Copy your draft onto the application form**
Normally you should complete application forms in black ink, as they are often photocopied by the employer. Untidy handwriting can spoil the appearance, so take every care.
9. **Keep a copy of the completed application form for future reference**
When you are invited to an interview you will need to remember what you wrote. Also, your responses can be used again or adjusted in filling out other similar applications
10. **Bring draft answers to the Careers Service for help to improve them**

7


How to Answer Difficult Questions


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- o What has been your experience in giving explanations or instructions to others?
- o STAR response
 - S: Describe the situation
 - T: Explain the task/problem that arose
 - A: What action did you take?
 - R: What was the result or outcome?

8


Exercise- Typical Questions


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- o In pairs: Each of you will be given a question, 5 minutes to answer individually
- o Then share your answer with your colleague who will give you feedback (5 minutes) on the following:
 - Have you answered the question?
 - Have you given enough evidence?
 - Have you used action phrases?
 - Are there any spelling, grammar issues?
- o Change over roles and repeat (5 minutes)
 - Questions taken from Prospects SAF (Standard Application Form)

9

Typical Questions


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Analysis, problem solving and creative thinking:
Describe a difficult problem that you have solved. State how you decided which were the critical issues, say what you did and what your solution was.
What other approaches could you have taken?

Planning, implementation and achieving results:
Describe a challenging project, activity or event which you have planned and taken through to a conclusion. Include your objective, what you did, any changes you made to your plan and state how you measured your success.

Influencing, communication and teamwork:
Describe how you achieved a goal through influencing the actions or opinions of others (perhaps in a team context). What were the circumstances? What did you do to make a difference?

10


Before You Send Off an Application Form


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- o Has the required information been provided ?
- o Is the information clear and accurate ?
- o Has enough evidence been given ?
- o Were there any spelling errors ?
- o What was the first impression of the form ?
- o How would you improve on this form ? Leave it for a while, before re-reading it.
- o Check for spelling, gaps etc. The form should be well presented with concise full sentences.
- o Read again (out loud is best)

11

Before You Send Off an Application Form


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- o Be sure that the form carries your name, address etc correctly.
- o Staples are better than paper clips for any additional sheets of paper
- o Enclose a letter of application/covering letter if you decide it is necessary.
- o Use an appropriate size of envelope and make sure to address it correctly, using the right form for the right employer.
- o Photocopy the completed form and hold on to it with the advertisement.

12

Application Disaster Stories



- o 'I do not have any major achievements that I would consider to be of interest to this application.'
(Courtesy of a large IT company.)
- o My **experient** at the university has **enable** me to work with other people, as well as on my own. I have considered my academic **decipline** and all my experience in order to **decid** this particular career. My **experient** in the **word** of commerce has also been a factor.'
(Excerpt from unsuccessful application form, courtesy of Northern Foods.)

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Next Week





- o Assignment 2 due- CV and Covering Letter
- o Preparing for Interviews

14

Career Development Module

Session 8: Interviews


Learning Outcomes	<p>At the end of this tutorial, group members will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Have reviewed their own interview experiences</i> • <i>Understand the importance of interview preparation</i> • <i>Be familiar with different types of interviews</i> • <i>Be familiar with competency-based interviews and how to answer difficult questions</i> • <i>Comprehend psychometric tests</i>
Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>AGCAS booklet “Going for Interviews” (or similar)</i> • <i>Presentation: “Interviews”</i> (Downloadable at: http://www.ul.ie/careers/careers/mature/toolkit.shtml)
Assignment	<p><i>Submission day for Assignment 2 – CV and Covering Letter</i></p>
Introduction	<p>The objective of this tutorial is to introduce the group to interview preparation, typical interview questions, competency-based interviews, and psychometric tests.</p>
Part 1	<p>Interview Experiences</p> <p>The group is asked about their experiences of interviews – positive and negative recollections, what they learned from these, and difficult questions posed to them. Preparation before interviews is emphasised. The importance of non-verbal communication and typical questions are discussed.</p>
Part 2	<p>Competency Interviews</p> <p>The group is introduced to the concept of competency-based interviews, is advised on how to respond to questions, and is shown examples of an interview-rating scale.</p>
 COFFEE – COFFEE – COFFEE – COFFEE – COFFEE – COFFEE 	
Part 3	<p>Interview Types</p> <p>The tutor and group discuss recommended questions to ask at an interview, aspects that might create a poor impression, self-reflection after the interview, different types of interviews, and psychometric tests.</p>

Tips and
Advice

Include role-plays where appropriate and feasible

Many interview workshops include role-plays. This tutorial does not include any, as time is restricted. Tutors can include role-plays if they feel the group will benefit from them and are willing to participate.


Slideshow: Interviews



Career Development Module

Making the Most of the Interview

1



Overview of Today's Tutorial

- o Preparing for interviews
- o The interview experience
- o Questions to expect and to ask
- o Different types of interview
- o Psychometric Tests
- o Interview resources

2



Attitudes Towards Interviews

- o Why bother with interviews?
- o Your experience of interviews
- o What questions do you dread?

3




Interviews

Interview = A meeting with an objective

- o Employer's objective is to find the best person for the job
 - Employer: reviews candidate's experience and abilities
 - Can you do the job? (skills & abilities)
 - Will you do the job? (attitude & motivation)
 - How will you fit into the organisation? (personality)
- o You: impress employer and assess position on offer
 - What does this position offer me?
 - How does it fit with my career plans?
 - You have passed the first hurdle
 - You must prove that you are the most suitable candidate for this position


4



Preparation

- o Review own skills, experiences and qualities
 - Check CV
 - Review skills, experience & qualities
 - Identify relevant examples for each of above
- o Research organisation
 - Websites, reports, articles, company literature, etc
 - Contacts with knowledge of organisation or sector
 - Relevant articles in the press
 - Personal visit or telephone call
- o Research job and occupational area
 - Job description – or similar
 - Current issues
- o Prepare your questions
- o Practice

5



Non-Verbal Communication

- o First impressions very powerful
- o Allow time to relax
- o Dress appropriately
- o Entrance and introductions
- o Smile and make eye contact
- o Be aware of own movements
- o Watch body language of interviewer

6

Typical Questions



Always start from the job description.

This will help you in deciding what questions to expect.

- Tell me about yourself - Bring me up to date with your CV?
- Why did you choose to do this particular course?
- What experience have you had that is relevant to this post?
- What interests you about this job?
- What do you know about this organisation/ department?
- How do you organise and plan projects?
- Can you give me an example of a project you've been involved in?
- How have you handled differences of opinions between you and other team members?

7

Competency-Based Interviews



- o Company identifies key skills required for job
- o Designs questions to elicit evidence of skills
- o Emphasis on past behaviour as predictor of success
- o **Teamwork:** *Describe a team project you worked on. What problems arose? How did you deal with them?*
- o **Communication Skills:** *Describe situation when you had to persuade others to support your view. Give an example of any reports you've written which illustrate your writing skills*
- o **Interpersonal skills:** *What kinds of people do you find it difficult to work with? How do you handle those situations?*
- o **Organisation skills:** *Describe a situation where you generated a plan leading to a specific goal*
- o **Problem-solving:** *Tell us about an error you made and what you learned*

8

Responding to Competency Questions



Q *What has been your experiences in giving explanations or instructions to others?*

- o STAR response
 - S: Describe the situation
 - T: Explain the task/problem that arose
 - A: What action did you take?
 - R: What was the result or outcome?

9

Example of Interview Rating Scale



- o Rating: 0-5; 0=no response; 5=excellent
- o Selection Criteria
 - Intelligence – Academic performance, Questions
 - Responsibility – Work roles, external activities
 - Appearance & poise – First impressions
 - Interpersonal relations – Interests, team-roles
 - Integrity – no inconsistencies
 - Self-confidence – Relaxed manner, responsible
 - Communication skills – Articulate, coherent, grammar, responsive
 - Interests – External interests, involvement
 - Leadership potential – Elective offices, initiative
 - Interviewing skills – Logical thinking, knows priorities

10

Your Answers



- o Listen carefully, seek clarification
- o Illustrate answers with real examples and evidence
- o Be positive – constructive criticism
- o Keep answers specific and succinct
- o Take time to respond
- o Be alert to interviewer's body language
- o Speak clearly, smile and show enthusiasm
- o Know what you want to say, and find the opportunity

11

Your Questions



- o Types of projects & responsibilities
- o Training programmes
- o Career development opportunities
- o Reporting structure
- o Performance appraisal
- o Profile of staff
- o Or simply - What happens next?

12

What Creates a Bad Impression



- o Poor personal appearance
- o Negative attitude – evasive, using excuses
- o Lack of interest and enthusiasm
- o Lack of preparation
- o Poor knowledge of role
- o Failure to give concrete examples of skills
- o Over emphasis on money/rewards
- o Lack of career plan

13

After the Interview



- o Review own performance
 - What went well
 - What went badly
 - What you wished you had said
 - Prepare for next stage
- o Invitation to second / final round interviews
 - Psychometric testing
 - Panel interview
- o Rejection letter / email
 - If you can request feedback - use it

14

Other Types Of Interviews



- o Rotating
 - Like one-to-one with different interviewers
- o Group
 - 6-8 candidates
 - Group observed while discussing topic
 - Be aware of group interaction
- o Panel
 - 2-5 interviewers, or as many as 13!!
 - Try to identify different roles
 - Respond to interviewer, include others through eye contact

15

Psychometric Tests



- o Aptitude Tests - measure skills relevant to position
 - Verbal comprehension - evaluate logic of text
 - Numerical reasoning - interpret statistical data
 - Diagrammatic reasoning - recognise patterns
 - Watch timing – complete as many as possible
- o Personality Questionnaires
 - Look at personality style
 - No right or wrong answers
 - Be spontaneous, don't try to second-guess
 - Tests include built-in checks
 - Employers may be looking for different personality profiles

16

Psychometric Tests – Tips & Resources



- o Enquire about type of test and prepare, if possible
- o Listen to instructions, seek clarification if necessary
- o Pace yourself and watch your time
- o Work quickly and accurately
- o Skip questions you can't answer
- o Seek feedback
- o Practice Online Psychometric Tests on Careers website
- o Other Resources
 - www.shldirect.com
 - www.Aptitudeonline.co.uk
 - Books on Aptitude/Personality tests

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Web Resources for Interviews



- o UL Careers website: www.ul.ie/careers
- o Gradireland website: www.gradireland.com
- o Careers4graduates: www.careers4graduates.org
- o UK GradProgramme: www.grad.ac.uk
- o Doctor Job: www.doctorjob.com (Virtual Interview)
- o Prospects: www.prospects.ac.uk
- o Realworld: www.realworldmagazine.com
- o Virtual Career Coach:
- o <http://www.windmillsonline.co.uk/interactive/>

18

Last Tutorial- Next Week





- o Return Assignments
- o Feedback and Evaluation of Module

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Career Development Module

Session 9: Feedback and Evaluation

Learning Outcomes	At the end of this tutorial, group members will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Have received feedback on their assignments</i> • <i>Have reviewed and evaluated the Career Development Module</i>
Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Evaluation Forms</i> • <i>Presentation: “Feedback and Evaluation”</i> (Downloadable at: http://www.ul.ie/careers/careers/mature/toolkit.shtml)
Assignment	<i>None</i>
Introduction	The main objective of this tutorial is to obtain oral and written feedback from the group. This module, like the Educational Guidance Module, continues to evolve based on feedback given by each group. The group also receives feedback on their assignments.
Part 1	Evaluation of Module The group receives general feedback on their assignments (see Slide 3). The tutor clarifies any errors or false information submitted in assignments to prevent confusion regarding careers of interest.
 COFFEE – COFFEE – COFFEE – COFFEE – COFFEE – COFFEE 	

Slideshow: Feedback and Evaluation

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Career Development Module

Feedback and Evaluation

1

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Career Development Module

- o What we've covered
 - Mature Graduates & the workplace
 - Skills and Interests
 - A Career Investigation
 - CVs and Covering letters
 - Application Forms
 - Interviews

2

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Review & Evaluation

- o Informal & Formal
 - What did you learn?
 - Which part was most useful?
 - Which part was least useful?
 - Were there other areas that should have been covered?
- o Assignments
 - Were they useful?
 - Were they difficult?
 - How could they be improved/made more relevant?

Any other comments?

3

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Good luck!

- o If you need further information on any aspect of career planning, you can contact the Careers Service throughout the summer at:.....
- o Website:

4

Career Development Module

EVALUATION FORM:

1. Were the tutorials useful for learning about career management skills e.g. researching careers, CVs, application forms, and interviews?

2. What aspect of the Career Development Module was most useful?

3. What aspect of the Career Development Module was least useful?

4. Can you recommend further relevant topics for this module? If so, please give details?

5. Any other comments?

Optional

Name: _____

Contact telephone number/email: _____

Thank you for your feedback.



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