

# Professionalism in the IT industry (COMP1635)

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## Introduction to the Course

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# Introduction to Professionalism in the IT Industry



- **WHAT** this is about...
  - *It is about your entry to the IT Profession...*
    - *What it takes - How to go about it;*
    - *Developing Business Sense*
    - *Assessing your own skills and developing the ones you lack;*
  - *It is also about how to market yourself...*
    - *writing your CV towards a particular job spec*
    - *Team working*
    - *Identifying your learning style*
    - *...more...*

# Introduction to Professionalism in the IT Industry (II)



- **WHY this is essential...**
  - Technical Skills are essential...but **NOT** adequate for employment.
  - Professional skills relate to:
    - Employability development
    - Career development
    - Business communication
    - Team working
- ***The Greenwich Graduate Attributes***



# Why?

- Economy needs 300,000 digital workers by 2020 to reach full potential
  - <http://www.computerweekly.com/news/2240205466/Economy-needs-300000-digital-workers-by-2020-to-reach-full-potential>
- Skills shortages identified as key risk to government digital strategy:
  - <http://www.computerweekly.com/news/2240225289/Skills-shortages-identified-as-key-risk-to-Government-digital-strategy>
- A growing shortage of digital skills:
  - <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/education/educationnews/10985961/Britain-faces-growing-shortage-of-digital-skills.html>



# Google's Hiring Process

- <https://www.google.co.uk/about/careers/lifeatgoogle/hiringprocess/>
- Look at their webpage and do you find a particular theme?

# The Greenwich Graduate



See:

[http://www2.gre.ac.uk/\\_\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0003/832044/GraduateAttributeStatements.pdf](http://www2.gre.ac.uk/__data/assets/pdf_file/0003/832044/GraduateAttributeStatements.pdf)



# Top 10 Skills

## In 2020

- Complex problem solving
- Critical thinking
- Creativity
- People management
- Coordinating with others
- Emotional intelligence
- Judgement and decision making
- Service orientation
- Negotiation
- Cognitive Flexibility

## In 2015

- Complex problem solving
- Coordinating with others
- People management
- Critical thinking
- Negotiation
- Quality Control
- Service orientation
- Judgement and decision making
- Active listening
- Creativity

# Introduction to Professionalism in the IT Industry (II)



- **HOW we will do it...**
  - Not through the theory + practice model..
    - ...there is no one right way, only guidelines for self-improvement;
  - Not through specific textbooks
    - ...no single resource gives you the recipe to all good practice
  - ***But through:***
    - *Interaction between you,*
    - *guest lectures,*
    - *business-specific group work,*
    - *self & peer evaluation,*
    - *formative feedback...*



# Aims



- **The course aims are for you to:**
  - Consider personal employability & career issues;
  - Appreciate the context and setting of the IT Profession in the UK and globally.
  - Develop your verbal and writing skills in business communication;
  - Discover and appreciate your IT skills in the business context (including entrepreneurship & innovation)
  - Develop critical awareness and the need for critical thinking in being an IT professional...



# ...more aims!

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- Identifying the employment market that is right for you..
  - *IT sector*
  - *Non-IT sector*
- Discovering opportunities;
  - *Scanning / networking / researching*
- Understanding what employers want;
- Clarifying what it means to be a professional;
- Finding out what skills you need to start your own business...

# The course comprises 2 overlapping parts:



- **Part I – Employability issues and preparation for industry**
  - **For example:**
    - Employability skills, CVs, presentation, careers in IT, Job specs and competences, assessment centres, etc...
  - **Assessment**
    - **Formative:** [weekly tutorials](#) followed by verbal feedback for improvement.
    - **Summative:** Logbook (PDP): a final compilation of improved weekly uploads



# ...and

- **Part II – Integrated Skills for the business professional in the IT industry**
  - **For example**
    - What does it mean to be an IT professional?
    - Professional business communications
    - Entrepreneurship & Innovation – making it happen.
    - Critical thinking and evaluation
    - Researching and elicitation
  - **Assessment**
    - Your startup business plan
    - Work in groups of 4, submit **group** reports
    - More details on assessment in weeks 2-3



# Assessment

- **Coursework: 100%**
- **Assessment 1: Logbook (40%)**
  - Consists of updated versions of your **weekly tutorial exercises** – more info in tutorial sessions
    - Final logbook exercises should be refined versions of your weekly uploads.
- **Assessment 2: The Business Plan (60%)**  
**Groupwork**
  - A written proposal
    - demonstrating critical thinking;
    - professional communication skills;



# Useful materials

- Your class notes and tutorials material;
- Guest lecturers
- Your peers & group members (and other groups as well!)
- The Careers & Employability Support website (also from the portal)
  - [www.gre.ac.uk/students/get/](http://www.gre.ac.uk/students/get/)
- Palgrave study guide / careers skills website (indicative)
  - [www.skills4study.com](http://www.skills4study.com)
  - [www.palgrave.com/careerskills/](http://www.palgrave.com/careerskills/)
- Lots of suitable resources on Business Plans, for instance:
  - <https://www.gov.uk/write-business-plan>
  - <http://www.bgateway.com/starting-up/create-business-plan/prepare-a-business-plan/>
  - <http://www.greatbusiness.gov.uk/>



# ..Cont'd

- Some (maybe) helpful texts
  - **Critical Thinking Skills – Developing Effective Analysis & Argument**
    - Stella Cottrell: Palgrave Study Guides
    - ISBN: 978-1-4039-9685-5
  - **Career Skills – Opening Doors into the Job Market**
    - Littleford, Halstead, Mulraine: Palgrave Study Guides
    - ISBN: 978-1-4039-3627-1
  - **...many more resources**



# Tutorials

- You have been put into tutorial groups – **these will not change**
  - (Please consult your timetable to find out which tutorial group you are in)
- In every tutorial, please bring with you
  - Your tablet / smartphone / laptop
  - ..or simply a printout of the weekly exercises 😊
- Registers will be taken in the tutorials (as well as in the lectures)
  - Be there, your group needs you!
- Attendance is **NOT** optional
- Informal **feedback** will be given to you by your tutors in the weekly tutorials.
- Updated versions of you weekly exercises will form the Logbook





# Some ground rules....

- This is a course about *professionalism*
  - It is **not** professional to:
    - Turn up late
    - Hide behind your laptop during class
    - Talk to somebody else whilst someone is addressing you
    - Have your mobile switched on
    - Walk out in the middle of a class
    - Attendance is not optional



# Important Announcements:

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- The Industrial Placements Meeting:
  - Wednesday 12 October
- The Oracle Mentoring Scheme:
  - One-to-one mentoring by Oracle professionals
  - You need to submit an application – **it's not too late!**
  - 'Icebreaker' event this **Wed 5 October (via Moodle)**



# Resources:

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- The Industrial Placements Office
  - Pam & Hester will help you through your efforts to succeed in applying for a Placement
- The Employability & Career Services (ECS) office
  - QM Ground Floor – Elena Moreno
  - Lots of tools & resources to help!
- Your Mentor - Being part of the Oracle Mentoring Scheme
  - An excellent opportunity to be mentored by Oracle professionals
- Online Employability Support Resources
  - MyCareerBuilder
- Your Tutors

# Employability skills and Professionalism

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*You already have more skills  
than you realise.....*





# ***What is employability?***

- *“A set of achievements – skills, understandings and personal attributes – that make graduates more likely to gain employment and be successful in their chosen occupations, which benefits themselves, the workforce, the community and the economy”*

*Knight & Yorke (2003), Employability in HE, ESECT:LTSN Generic Centre*



# Employability continued....

- It is important to realise that:
  - ***Employability*** is different from the basic concept of ***employment***
  - Being employed means having a job
  - Being employable means having the qualities to:
    - maintain employment
    - Plan for progression
    - Manage the next career step



# Key employability skills

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- There are numerous surveys available which list general employability skills.
  - Most of these lists are very similar
  - The skills most commonly requested by graduate employers are discussed here

# Employability skill – Communication/literacy



- Include such attributes as:
  - the ability to write clearly and concisely
  - the ability to communicate effectively as part of a group or with individuals
  - the ability to listen, take notes and abstract relevant information from any given communication.



# Employability skill - Numeracy



- Employers obviously expect a graduate to possess good numeracy skills
- It also involves:
  - Being able to collect, record and analyse data
  - Being able to present the results of such data collection and analysis.

# Employability skill - Interpersonal



- A graduate needs to:
  - Be able work as part of a team, or independently as the situation dictates.
  - Possess Leadership skills and the ability to motivate others
  - Be able to deal effectively with customers
  - Be able to resolve areas of conflict successfully
  - Possess good presentation skills



# Employability skill - IT

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- Today's employer expects all graduates to be proficient in the use of
  - Word processing packages,
  - Spreadsheet packages
  - Database packages
  - Email and the Internet.
- These are considered basic requirements.



# Employability skill - Learning

- These are skills that demonstrate the ability to organise yourself and your work environment.
- They include such attributes as:
  - time management
  - working to deadline
  - working independently
  - problem solving.

# How do you develop employability skills?



- From life
- From your degree programme
- From work experience
- You will continue to develop them throughout your career (hopefully!)

# You probably already have more skills than you think .....



- Read the employability brochure  
<http://read.pwc.com/i/567548-employability-brochure-2016>
- And you may like to see these short video clips from PCW – giving examples of how everyday activities etc. can be used to demonstrate employability skills.
  - (Look at a few of them in your **own time!**)
  - <http://www.pwc.com/uk/en/careers/student/employability.jhtml>



# Skills for the IT industry

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- Obviously, technical skills are important
- A wide range of skills (including those we have just reviewed) are considered equally important within the IT industry.
- The SFIA framework has been developed by the BCS and others of 20 years to map IT skills to job specifications

# SFIA – *Skills Framework of the Information Age*



- A common reference model identifying skills needed to develop effective information systems. Look at:
  - <https://www.sfia-online.org/en/how-sfia-works/skills>
  - <https://www.sfia-online.org/en/how-sfia-works/responsibilities-and-skills>
- Video on BCS SFIA+ information at:
  - <http://www.bcs.org/server.php?show=nav.9025>
  - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vv4Tzwt0Kzs>





# Professionalism

Professionalism is a trait that's highly valued in the workforce. It has many attributes, including:

- Specialized knowledge.
- Competency.
- Honesty and integrity.
- Respect.
- Accountability.
- Self-regulation.
- Image.

To improve your own professionalism, focus on improving in each of these areas.



# In conclusion

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- You must be employable to embark upon a graduate career.
- Employability skills are key to a successful graduate career.
- You are already developing these skills – you need to recognise them



# Some relevant video material

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- The Irish Computing Society
  - <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QOMhRSY74v4>
- The changing 21<sup>st</sup> Century workforce
  - <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cV2SkaaaJK4>
  - <https://www.google.co.uk/about/careers/lifeatgoogle/hangout-on-air-tech-interviewing.html>