EMPLOYABILITY SKILLS & ARCHAEOLOGY AND ANCIENT HISTORY

The following is an extract from the Employability & Enterprise Policy/Strategy:

The University has accepted the following definition of employability as articulated in ‘Future Fit: preparing graduates for the World of Work’ published by UUK/CBI (2009)

“A set of attributes, skills and knowledge that all labour market participants should possess to ensure they have the capability of being effective in the workplace – to the benefit of themselves, their employer and the wider economy”

The University has agreed the following attributes as important in the development of an employable graduate: self management; teamworking; business and customer awareness; problem solving; communication and literacy; application of numeracy; application of information technology.

Self management – readiness to accept responsibility, flexibility, resilience, self-starting, appropriate assertiveness, time management, readiness to improve own performance based on feedback/reflective learning

Teamworking – respecting others, co-operating, negotiating/persuading, contributing to discussions, and awareness of interdependence with others

Business and customer awareness – basic understanding of the key drivers for business success – including the importance of innovation and taking calculated risks – and the need to provide customer satisfaction and build customer loyalty

Problem solving – analysing facts and situations and applying creative thinking to develop appropriate solutions.

Communication and literacy – application of literacy, ability to produce clear, structured written work and oral literacy – including listening and questioning

Application of numeracy – manipulation of numbers, general mathematical awareness and its application in practical contexts (e.g. measuring, weighing, estimation and applying formulae).

Application of information technology – basic IT skills, including familiarity with work processing, spreadsheets, file management and use of internet search engines

Underpinning all these attributes, the key foundation, must be a positive attitude: a ‘can-do’ approach, a readiness to take part and contribute, openness to new ideas and a drive to make these happen.

SO

HOW WILL THESE SKILLS BE DEVELOPED THROUGHOUT YOUR ARCHAEOLOGY AND ANCIENT HISTORY DEGREE?........
OVERVIEW OF ARCHAEOLOGY AND ANCIENT HISTORY COURSES

Throughout the degree schemes in Archaeology and Ancient History students progress in their acquisition of study skills and their intellectual understanding of the subject. In tandem with this, students steadily develop their employability skills.

**Information technology and application of number** are an essential component of archaeology and ancient history degrees as you will be expected to use technology in the research and production of assignments while complying with school guidelines.

Self sufficiency or **self-management** skills are vital for the successful completion of an archaeology and ancient history degree at Cardiff University. In order to encourage you to manage your own development, you are expected to maintain a PDP file in which you reflect upon your performance and put together a pro-active and ongoing programme of improvement.

The employability skills of **communication and literacy** will be developed in many ways throughout your years of study. You will be required to learn the different written communication styles of essay writing, which will take effort and practice to perfect. Studying History will teach you a questioning approach and you will learn to discuss concepts in written and oral form.

Your **problem solving skills** will be developed in several ways throughout university. Firstly, you will need to approach the daily problems of balancing life as a student with the increasing necessity amongst many for part-time work and involvement in extra-curricular activities. From an academic point of view, archaeology and ancient history involves the development of critical thinking and intellectual problem solving. You will learn to critically analyse source material (both primary and secondary) and question preconceptions while giving evidence for independent thinking and analysis. Problem solving skills are highly sought after in the recruitment of graduates.

**Teamworking** is an essential part of any degree today. You will learn to work with others to give group presentations and tutorials, whilst seminars will involve open discussion and presentation which will also enhance these skills.

**HOW WILL YOU DEVELOP THESE SKILLS THROUGH YOUR COURSE IN THE FIRST YEAR?**

**Self-management** forms a large part of your academic study. Your Personal Tutor will provide you with a PDP form in enrolment week in Year 1. PDPs are designed to help you plan for your personal, educational and career development. The progress file that you compile will be a useful resource in helping you during your degree as well as when you apply for a job afterwards. The file can, for example, assist you to develop and refine your CV by highlighting the transferable skills you have acquired and improved as a student. It will also encourage you to develop a positive attitude to learning throughout your professional life.
Teamworking is an essential part of any degree today and you will gain experience of this in seminars which will involve group work, discussion and presentation. Group visits to sites of interests as part of the Year 1 Archaeological Skills module will lay the foundation for the team interaction skills, techniques and approaches used in excavations undertaken in the second and third years.

Archaeology and Ancient History involves intellectual problem solving and your first year will prepare you to develop this skill, particularly in Core Modules such as Great Discoveries in Archaeology and Archaeological Skills.

During the first year you will also start to develop the essential employability skills of application of numeracy and information technology. You will be expected to submit assignments in accordance with school guidelines and much of this work will often be produced electronically.

Your communication and literacy skills will be developed throughout your Archaeology and Ancient History degree. In the first year you will be introduced to different styles of written communication and analysis and considerable time will be spent throughout your years of study in perfecting this skill. Written examinations and coursework will form part of your assessment throughout Level 1.

**HOW WILL YOU DEVELOP THESE SKILLS THROUGH YOUR COURSE IN THE SECOND AND THIRD YEAR?**

Your self-management skills will continue to develop at level 2 as you build upon the body of your archaeological and ancient history knowledge. At this stage, reading outside core text books will become important and continuing to prioritise your workload and manage your time will be vital. Personal Development Planning with your tutor will help you to further evaluate your self-management skills.

Communication and literacy skills will be enhanced via tutorials. In these small groups you will be encouraged to reflect upon reading and make presentations, sometimes with the use of audio-visual aids. The tutorials allow for substantial discussion and some groupwork. Essay and report writing skills will continue to be developed through your Independent Study and dissertation.

Teamworking skills will be further developed during the two excavations undertaken (normally 4 week periods over two summers) as part of the Archaeological Fieldwork core module.

Numeracy and information technology abilities are expanded at levels 2 and 3 with the continued use of technology to research and prepare assignments and ensure their submission ahead of set deadlines. In particular, there are opportunities to learn about, and use computers and quantitative techniques in the presentation, interpretation and analysis of data through modules such as Introduction to Computing for Archaeologists and Ancient Historians, GIS and Computer Projects.
At levels 2 and 3 you will be encouraged to start questioning what you are learning and critically analysing through the core modules of ‘Approaches to History’ and ‘Exploring Historical Debate’. In this way you will learn to synthesise and amalgamate information and so develop your critical thinking and problem solving skills. Practicals and tutorials will provide many opportunities for continued development of this important employability skill.

**CAREER MANAGEMENT SKILLS (CMS)**

CMS sessions delivered in years 2 and 3 will show you how to make sense of the employability skills developed throughout your degree and will help you articulate these skills effectively on paper and at interview to an employer. This link between academia and employment is essential, especially for those wanting to enter employment straight after their study. The Careers Service is available to help you further with this throughout all stages of your academic degree.

The Careers Service has a full programme of fairs, employer presentations and employer-led skills sessions that give undergraduates opportunities to meet employers and start developing their commercial awareness skills. Furthermore, this insight will allow you to better prepare for the job search and application process.