



CONTEMPORARY TRANSITIONS

COURSE FRAMEWORK

INTRODUCTION

All programs of study for the ACT Year 12 Certificate should enable students to become:

- creative and critical thinkers
- enterprising problem-solvers
- skilled and empathetic communicators
- informed and ethical decision-makers
- environmentally and culturally aware citizens
- confident and capable users of technologies
- independent and self-managing learners
- collaborative team members

and provide students with:

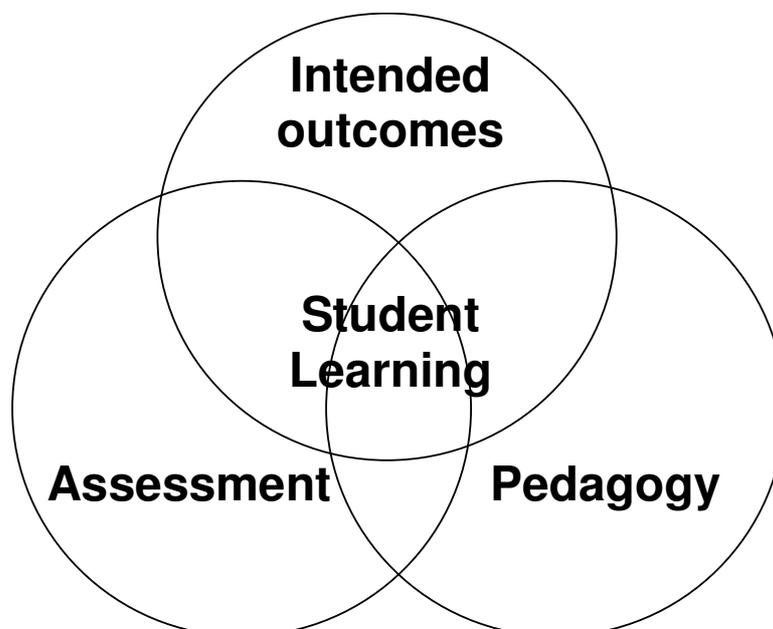
- a comprehensive body of specific knowledge, principles and concepts
- a basis for self-directed and lifelong learning
- personal attributes enabling effective participation in society

*Examples of these student capabilities are provided at **Appendix A**.*

COURSE FRAMEWORKS

Course Frameworks provide the basis for the development and accreditation of any course within a broad subject area and provide a common basis for the assessment, moderation and reporting of student outcomes in courses based on the Framework.

Course Frameworks support a model of learning that integrates intended student outcomes, pedagogy and assessment. This model is underpinned by a set of beliefs and a set of learning principles.



Underpinning beliefs

- All students are able to learn.
- Learning is a partnership between students and teachers.
- Teachers are responsible for advancing student learning.

Learning principles

1. Learning builds on existing knowledge, understandings and skills.
(Prior knowledge)
2. When learning is organised around major concepts, principles and significant real world issues, within and across disciplines, it helps students make connections and build knowledge structures.
(Deep knowledge and connectedness)
3. Learning is facilitated when students actively monitor their own learning and consciously develop ways of organising and applying knowledge within and across contexts.
(Metacognition)
4. Learners' sense of self and motivation to learn affects learning.
(Self-concept)
5. Learning needs to take place in a context of high expectations.
(High expectations)
6. Learners learn in different ways and at different rates.
(Individual differences)
7. Different cultural environments, including the use of language, shape learners' understandings and the way they learn.
(Socio-cultural effects)
8. Learning is a social and collaborative function as well as an individual one.
(Collaborative learning)
9. Learning is strengthened when learning outcomes and criteria for judging learning are made explicit and when students receive frequent feedback on their progress.
(Explicit expectations and feedback)

RATIONALE

Courses written under the Contemporary Transitions Course Framework provide opportunities for students to gain the skills necessary to make a smooth transition to post school options and to participate in society in a meaningful and effective manner.

The challenges facing young people in their transition from school to post-school training, further education and employment have increased. As tertiary institutions and employers refine their recruiting procedures in response to the changing labour market, they are seeking a range of skills, competencies, and attributes, developed through community and work-related experiences.¹

There is a broad agreement that all young people need a set of skills and attributes that will prepare them for both employment and further learning. See Appendix B for the Employability Skills Framework² The key skills identified by this framework include communication, team work, problem-solving, initiative and enterprise, planning and organising, self-management, learning and technology skills. Courses under this Framework will promote the development of these skills for all students, through active engagement in the learning environment, community or workplace experiences.

The vocational education and training (VET) sector also recommends that wherever possible students should gain Training Package competencies that are accepted nationally. In addition to the development of generic workplace skills some courses under this framework may specifically deliver nationally recognised competencies that support students' transition to employment.

Learning experiences offered within courses under the Contemporary Transitions Framework encourage personal growth and involvement and provide opportunities for students to develop personal attributes, see Appendix B, and achieve success through positive planning and action. Opportunities for students to gain and practise their skills in the learning environment, community or workplace are important elements of such courses.

Contemporary Transition courses include provision for students who require specific guidance and extended learning experiences to develop living skills and competence in problem solving. They build on students' past experiences, present skills, knowledge and understanding and emphasise inclusivity, student negotiated curriculum and assessment, individualised learning agreements, strategies and flexible delivery.

These strategies encourage student engagement and provide relevant and significant educational experiences for students with a range of learning styles and life circumstances. These experiences support students' achievement in other school subjects and prepare students for their future lives as individuals, workers and community members. Students progress towards independence and self-reliance and understand that learning is a lifelong experience.

¹ Community Studies Curriculum Statement 2003 SSABSA, Wayville SA

² <http://www.dest.gov.au/Employability/final> report Skills for the Future, Employability Skills Framework March 2002

GOALS

Course Framework Goals focus on the essential things that students should know and be able to do as a result of studying any course in this subject area. They are **intended student outcomes**.

All courses based on this Course Framework should enable students to:

- set personal goals and provide evidence of their progress towards achieving these goals
- make informed decisions and act on issues related to their lifestyle and post-school options
- understand their complex interrelationships with other people, their community, and the world in which they live
- be involved in, and apply their knowledge and skills to actively engage in their learning environment, community or workplace in some way
- use their literacy and numeracy skills effectively in everyday contexts
- communicate appropriately in a range of situations
- use technology effectively in a range of situations.

GUIDE TO THE SELECTION OF CONTENT

Courses developed under this Framework will provide details of course content through the component units of the course. While this content will differ according to the particular course classification (A, T or M, including vocational programs), all content will be chosen to enable students to work towards the achievement of the common and agreed goals of the Framework.

If a T course is to be written under this framework then a review of the assessment task type table needs to occur along with the inclusion of separate grade descriptors for T courses.

Essential Concepts and Skills

All courses developed under this Framework will be based on the essential concepts and skills of the subject area, as outlined below.

Concepts

- individual development
- the understanding of self
- individual in the community and in society
- individual in the work environment

Skills

- information gathering and appraisal
- decision making
- taking action and applying learning
- literacy and numeracy
- communication
- use of technology.

Employability skills should be applied in contexts that are related to both employment and the students' lives and community. *See Appendix B*

Vocational Courses

Colleges with Registered Training Organisation status (RTO) are eligible to deliver units of competence from Training Packages, or alternatively, they may develop vocational courses, classified as A or T based on the Training Packages, under the relevant Course Framework.

PEDAGOGY

Teaching Strategies

Teaching strategies that are particularly relevant and effective include, but are not limited to:

- negotiation of elements of content and assessment within the parameters of the course document
- individualised learning agreements
- community and workplace resources
- planning activities – process of planning, implementing and evaluating negotiated activities
- breaking down learning into manageable steps
- explicit (clear and concise) instructions and examples
- questioning and reinforcement of skills and knowledge
- collaborative learning (e.g, group work, role play)
- regular reviews to consolidate learning
- formative assessment and frequent feedback
- reflection on effectiveness of activities
- use of technology and their applications
- scaffolding new learning
- enquiry based learning
- activities that cater for individual differences and learning styles
- teacher demonstration and modelling
- practical skills.

ASSESSMENT

The purpose of including assessment task types (with examples of tasks) and assessment criteria in Course Frameworks is to provide a common and agreed basis for the collection of evidence of student achievement. This collection of evidence enables a comparison of achievement within and across colleges, through moderation processes. This enables valid, fair and equitable reporting of student achievement on the Year 12 Certificate.

Assessment Tasks elicit responses that demonstrate the degree to which students have achieved the goals of a unit (and the course as a whole).

Assessment Task Types (with **weightings**) group assessment tasks in ways that reflect agreed shared practice in the subject area and facilitate the comparison of student work across different assessment tasks.

Assessment Criteria (the dimensions of quality that teachers look for in evaluating student work) provide a common and agreed basis for judgement of performance against unit and course goals, within and across colleges. Over a course, teachers use all of these criteria to assess students' performance, but do not necessarily use all criteria on each task. Assessment criteria are to be used holistically on a given task and in determining the unit grade.

Assessment Rubrics draw on the general course framework criteria to develop assessment criteria for a task type and a continuum that indicates levels of student performance against each criterion.

Assessment Task Types

Task type	Learning Record	Assignments/ Projects	Fieldwork/Work Experience	Interactive tasks
Suggested tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • diary (journal) • evidence portfolio • tests • learning/contract agreement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • leaflets • models • posters • videos • tapes • reports • creative writing • oral presentation • panel presentation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • research • data collection • work experience • observations • community visits, consultations • community involvement • community learning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • discussions • recording feedback • presentations • role play • group work • structured interview • panel presentation
1.0 unit	10 – 40 % per assessment task			
0.5 unit	10 – 60 % per assessment task			

A variety of task types is recommended.

It is not mandatory to select an assessment item from each task type.

Which task types are used are to be determined by the course writers for their course or a particular unit within the course as appropriate to the learner group.

The Board recommends 3 - 5 assessment tasks across a standard unit (1.0) and 2 - 3 assessment tasks for a half standard unit (0.5).

Assessment Criteria

Students will be assessed on the degree to which they demonstrate:

- Knowledge, understanding and application
- Goal-setting and decision-making
- Task completion
- Literacy and/or Numeracy
- Effective communication

Relating Assessment Task Types and Assessment Criteria to the Course Framework Goals

The congruence between goals, assessment task types (the evidence) and the assessment criteria (the basis for judging the evidence) is vital in teaching and learning.

The following table show these relationships.

GOALS	ASSESSMENT TASK TYPES	ASSESSMENT CRITERIA
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • set personal goals and provide evidence of their progress towards achieving these goals • make informed decisions and act on issues related to their lifestyle and post-school options • understand their complex interrelationships with other people, their community, and the world in which they live • be involved in, and apply their knowledge and skills to actively engage in their learning environment, community or workplace in some way • use their literacy and numeracy skills effectively in everyday contexts • communicate appropriately in a range of situations • use technology effectively in a range of situations. 	<p>Learning Record</p> <p>Assignments/ Projects</p> <p>Fieldwork/Work Experience</p> <p>Interactive tasks</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge, understanding and application • Goal-setting and decision-making • Task completion • Literacy and/or numeracy • Effective communication

All goals are embedded in all of the assessment task types and generally all the criteria used to assess each of these.

ACHIEVEMENT STANDARDS

Grade descriptors provide a guide for teacher judgement of students' achievement, based on the assessment criteria, over a unit of work in this subject. Grades are organized on an A - E basis and represent standards of achievement.

Grades are awarded on the proviso that the assessment requirements have been met. Teachers will consider, when allocating grades, the degree to which students demonstrate their ability to complete and submit tasks within a specified time frame.

The following descriptors are consistent with the **system grade descriptors** that describe generic standards of student achievement across all courses.

Grade Descriptors for A courses

	Knowledge, understanding and application	Goal-setting and decision-making	Task completion	Literacy and/or numeracy	Effective communication
A student who achieves an A grade typically	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> demonstrates comprehensive knowledge, understanding and application 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> demonstrates independence in goal setting, initiative and decision making 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> always identifies, clarifies and solves problems, making innovative use of information and resources to complete tasks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> demonstrates highly competent literacy and/or numeracy skills 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> communicates effectively in all contexts
A student who achieves a B grade typically	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> demonstrates sound knowledge, understanding and application 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> demonstrates some independence in goal setting, initiative and decision making 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> generally identifies, clarifies and solves problems, making use of information and resources to complete tasks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> demonstrates competent literacy and/or numeracy skills 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> communicates effectively in most contexts
A student who achieves a C grade typically	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> demonstrates adequate knowledge, understanding and application 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> demonstrates goal setting and decision making with guidance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> generally identifies, clarifies and solves basic problems, making use of information and resources to complete most tasks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> demonstrates adequate literacy and/or numeracy skills 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> communicates in most contexts
A student who achieves a D grade typically	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> demonstrates limited knowledge, understanding and application 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> demonstrates limited goal setting and decision making with guidance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> solves basic problems, making limited use of information and resources to complete some tasks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> demonstrates basic literacy and/or numeracy skills 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> communicates in familiar situations
A student who achieves an E grade typically	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> demonstrates minimal knowledge, understanding and application 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> demonstrates limited understanding of goal setting and struggles with decision making 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> solves basic problems with assistance, making little use of information and resources to attempt tasks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> demonstrates minimal literacy and/or numeracy skills 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> communicates in familiar situations

MODERATION

Moderation is a system designed and implemented to:

- provide comparability in the system of school-based assessment
- form the basis for valid and reliable assessment in senior secondary schools
- involve the ACT Board of Senior Secondary Studies and colleges in cooperation and partnership
- maintain the quality of school-based assessment and the credibility, validity and acceptability of Board certificates.

Moderation commences within individual colleges. Teachers develop assessment programs and instruments, apply assessment criteria, and allocate Unit Grades, according to the relevant Course Framework. Teachers within course teaching groups conduct consensus discussions to moderate marking or grading of individual assessment instruments and unit grade decisions.

The Moderation Model

Moderation within the ACT encompasses structured, consensus-based peer review of Unit Grades for all accredited courses, as well as statistical moderation of course scores, including small group procedures, for 'T' courses.

Moderation by Structured, Consensus-based Peer Review

Review is a subcategory of moderation, comprising the review of standards and the validation of Unit Grades. In the review process, Unit Grades, determined for Year 11 and Year 12 student assessment portfolios that have been assessed in schools by teachers under accredited courses, are moderated by peer review against system wide criteria and standards. This is done by matching student performance with the criteria and standards outlined in the unit grade descriptors as stated in the Course Framework. Advice is then given to colleges to assist teachers with, and/or reassure them on, their judgments.

Preparation for Structured, Consensus-based Peer Review

Each year, teachers teaching a Year 11 class are asked to retain originals or copies of student work completed in Semester 2. Similarly, teachers teaching a Year 12 class should retain originals or copies of student work completed in Semester 1. Assessment and other documentation required by the Office of the Board of Senior Secondary Studies should also be kept. Year 11 work from Semester 2 of the previous year is presented for review at Moderation Day 1 in March, and Year 12 work from Semester 1 is presented for review at Moderation Day 2 in August.

In the lead up to Moderation Day, a College Course Presentation (comprised of a document folder and a set of student portfolios) is prepared for each A and T course and any M units offered by the school, and is sent in to the Office of the Board of Senior Secondary Studies.

The College Course Presentation

The package of materials (College Course Presentation) presented by a college for review on moderation days in each course area will comprise the following:

- a folder containing supporting documentation as requested by the Office of the Board through memoranda to colleges
- a set of student portfolios containing marked and/or graded written and non-written assessment responses and completed criteria and standards feedback forms. Evidence of all assessment responses on which the unit grade decision has been made is to be included in the student review portfolios.

Specific requirements for subject areas and types of evidence to be presented for each moderation day will be outlined by the Board Secretariat through memoranda and Information Papers.

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- Special Needs Education as an Across Curriculum Perspective* 1997.
- Student Guide: Equitable assessment and special consideration in assessment in Years 11 and 12*
- Student Pathways Planning Guide for ACT Government Secondary Schools*
- Unsworth L, *Teaching Multiliteracies Across the Curriculum*, Open University Press, 2001

Web Sites

- MyRead – Strategies for Teaching Reading in the Middle Years, Glenda Raison
<http://www.myread.org/>
- <http://www.qsa.qld.edu.au>
- http://www.boardofstudies.nsw.edu.au/syllabus_hsc/lifeskills_index.html
- www.dest.gov.au/ Australian Core Skills Framework
- http://socialelearning.flexiblelearning.net.au/social_elearning/
- Career and Transitions Services Framework
<http://cmsstage.curriculum.edu.au/mceetya/default.asp?id=12049>
- http://cmsstage.curriculum.edu.au/verve/_resources/c_t_services.pdf
- Stepping Forward: sharing what works
<http://cmsstage.curriculum.edu.au/mceetya/stepping/index.htm>

These were accurate at time of publication.

COURSE FRAMEWORK DEVELOPMENT GROUP

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The group gratefully acknowledges the work of previous groups who developed and revised the Contemporary Transition Course Framework.

All programs of study for the ACT Year 12 Certificate should enable students to become:

	The examples are indicative and not exhaustive. Those in bold relate particularly to the Employability Skills; those in <i>italics</i> to the Across Curriculum Perspectives.
• creative and critical thinkers	exploring, imagining, observing, predicting, thinking laterally, generating ideas, inquiring and researching , interrogating, conceptualising, collecting and analysing data and information, classifying , interpreting, formulating hypotheses, generalising, synthesising, reflecting , justifying conclusions, understanding different perspectives, understanding and application of different thinking strategies, understanding of scientific and mathematical language, using scientific and mathematical techniques (eg estimating, reading and interpreting data, interpolation and extrapolation)
• enterprising problem-solvers	showing initiative, resourcefulness , resilience, persistence, assessing and taking risks, recognising and seizing opportunities, problem-posing, problem-identification, problem clarification , being practical, being innovative , using mathematical techniques, using appropriate technologies, working independently and/or collaboratively to achieve a solution, testing assumptions and solutions, modifying approaches
• skilled and empathetic communicators	oral and written skills in Standard Australian English, matching communication to audience and purpose , using terminology and style appropriate to particular disciplines, using mathematical language , creating and communicating meaning using multi-modal forms, imagining the feelings and views of others , respecting and valuing diversity
• informed and ethical decision-makers	finding information and using evidence as the basis for judgements and decisions, developing awareness of differing perspectives , having integrity, taking action, exploring and critically reflecting on own values, attitudes and beliefs
• environmentally and culturally aware citizens	understanding <i>the interconnectedness of the natural and constructed world</i> ; the <i>multicultural nature of Australian society</i> ; <i>Indigenous perspectives</i> ; and global economic, social and <i>environmental</i> issues; <i>respecting difference</i> , exercising rights and responsibilities, acting in the public sphere , understanding consequences of choices and decisions
• confident and capable users of technologies	having a range of IT skills , accessing and evaluating <i>information</i> , designing and making, communicating using technologies, choosing most appropriate technologies for the task , refining processes, willingness to learn new skills
• independent and self-managing learners	eg understanding self (<i>including gender</i>), having personal goals, evaluating and monitoring own performance, taking responsibility , flexibility in adapting course of action, openness to new ideas, managing time and resources, planning and organising
• collaborative team members	eg contributing to group effectiveness, building trust, capacity to take different roles within a team, respecting differing strengths (<i>including contributions of boys and girls</i>), skills in negotiation and compromise, sustaining commitment to achieve group goals

and provide students with

• a comprehensive body of specific knowledge, principles and concepts	through subjects, cross-disciplinary courses and/or projects, work experience
• a basis for self-directed and lifelong learning	through understanding and managing self, developing capabilities and modelling an approach ('taking stock, taking steps') that prepares for a social and economic environment of greater individual responsibility
• personal attributes enabling effective participation in society	developing social skills and capabilities for citizenship, work experience and recognition of outside learning ; through understanding of a globalised knowledge society

Employability Skills Framework

Skill	Element– (facets of the skill that employers identified as important, noting that the mix and priority of these facets would vary from job to job)
<p>Communication that contributes to productive and harmonious relations between employees and customers</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Listening and understanding ○ Speaking clearly and directly ○ Writing to the needs of the audience ○ Negotiating responsively ○ Reading independently ○ Empathising ○ Using numeracy effectively ○ Understanding the needs of internal and external customers ○ Persuading effectively ○ Establishing and using networks ○ Being assertive ○ Sharing information ○ Speaking and writing in languages other than English
<p>Teamwork that contributes to productive working relationships and outcomes</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Working with people of different ages, gender, race, religion or political persuasion ○ Working as an individual and as a member of a team ○ Knowing how to define a role as part of a team ○ Applying teamwork skills to a range of situations, e.g. futures planning, crisis problem solving ○ Identifying the strengths of team members ○ Coaching, mentoring and giving feedback
<p>Problem solving that contributes to productive outcomes</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Developing creative, innovative solutions ○ Developing practical solutions ○ Showing independence and initiative in identifying problems and solving them ○ Solving problems in teams ○ Applying a range of strategies to problem solving ○ Using mathematics including budgeting and financial management to solve problems ○ Applying problem-solving strategies across a range of areas ○ Testing assumptions taking the context of data and circumstances into account ○ Resolving customer concerns in relation to complex project issues ○ Loyalty ○ Commitment ○ Honesty and integrity ○ Reliability ○ Personal presentation ○ Commonsense ○ Positive self-esteem ○ Sense of humour ○ Balanced attitude to work and home life ○ Enthusiasm
<p>Initiative and enterprise that contribute to innovative outcomes</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Adapting to new situations ○ Developing a strategic, creative, long-term vision ○ Being creative ○ <input type="checkbox"/> Identifying opportunities not obvious to others ○ Translating ideas into action ○ Generating a range of options ○ Initiating innovative solutions

<p>Planning and organising that contribute to long term and short-term strategic planning</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Managing time and priorities – setting timelines, coordinating tasks for self and with others ○ Being resourceful ○ Taking initiative and making decisions ○ Adapting resource allocations to cope with contingencies ○ Establishing clear project goals and deliverables ○ Allocating people and other resources to tasks ○ Planning the use of resources including time management ○ Participating in continuous improvement and planning processes ○ Developing a vision and a proactive plan to accompany it ○ Predicting – weighing up risk, evaluating alternatives and applying evaluation criteria ○ Collecting, analysing and organising information ○ Understanding basic business systems and their relationships
<p>Self-management that contributes to employee satisfaction and growth</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Having a personal vision and goals ○ Evaluating and monitoring own performance ○ Having knowledge and confidence in own ideas and vision ○ Articulating own ideas and vision ○ Taking responsibility
<p>Learning that contributes to ongoing improvement and expansion in employee and company operations and outcomes</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Managing own learning ○ Contributing to the learning community at the workplace ○ Using a range of mediums to learn – mentoring, peer support, networking, information technology (IT), courses ○ Applying learning to ‘technical’ issues (e.g. learning about products) and ‘people’ issues (e.g. interpersonal and cultural aspects of work) ○ Having enthusiasm for ongoing learning ○ Being willing to learn in any setting – on and off the job ○ Being open to new ideas and techniques ○ Being prepared to invest time and effort in learning new skills ○ Acknowledging the need to learn in order to accommodate change
<p>Technology that contributes to effective execution of tasks</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Having a range of basic IT skills ○ Applying IT as a management tool ○ Using IT to organise data ○ Being willing to learn new IT skills ○ Having the occupational health and safety knowledge to apply technology ○ Having the appropriate physical capacity

<p>Personal attributes that contribute to overall employability</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Loyalty ○ Commitment ○ Honesty and integrity ○ Enthusiasm ○ Reliability ○ Personal presentation ○ Commonsense 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Positive self-esteem ○ Sense of humour ○ Balanced attitude to work and home life ○ Ability to deal with pressure ○ Motivation ○ Adaptability A