Title: Enhancing the employability of Science graduates: increasing the awareness of staff and students to the needs of the employers

Communication Skills: Definitions

Higher order skills

Oral communication — ability to explain and present your ideas to different groups of people in clear English. Includes the ability to tailor your delivery to a given audience, using appropriate styles and approaches, and an understanding of the importance of non-verbal cues (see below).

Written communication in English — ability to write effectively in a range of contexts and for a variety of different audiences and purposes with a command of the English language. Includes the ability to tailor your writing to a given audience, using appropriate styles and approaches. This encompasses electronic communication such as SMS, email, discussion boards, chat rooms and instant messaging.

Non-verbal communication — allows ideas and concepts to be expressed without the use of coherent labels, including the use of body language, gestures, facial expression and tone of voice, and also the use of pictures, icons and symbols.

Background skills

Revision and editing is:
• applying techniques to improve writing or presentation. Proofreading for spelling, grammar and style.

Presentation skills:
• oral presentations usually take place in tutorials or seminars;
• an oral presentation is a talk given to a group in which the speaker presents their views on an issue or topic based on their readings or research;
• presentations may be given as an individual or as part of a group.

Academic writing skills:
writing in order to analyse a topic closely, develop a point of view in relation to that topic through research and thought, and persuade your reader that the point of view you have developed is well supported by the ideas and information you present, e.g. essays;
writing a clearly structured document that presents an account of what has happened in a practical session or as part of an experiment, e.g. report; and
writing in a succinct and clear manner, e.g. posters.

Audience awareness is:
• displaying sensitivity to your audience in organising and presenting ideas;
• communicating appropriately with professional colleagues and the public; and
• understanding the needs of an audience and applying appropriate styles of communication.
**Critical listening/reading** is:
- listening to spoken information to have a complete and accurate understanding of the communicated message;
- awareness of both the content of the message and the style and method of communication; and
- understanding of how the content and method combine to create the meaning of the message.

**Personal presentation and body language** is:
- understanding of and ability to use gestures, expressions and non-verbal cues to help communicate a message; and
- awareness of non-verbal communication techniques and their role in communication.