

Employability Skills Exchange & Study Abroad

Developing and Describing Your Employability Skills

The 'soft' skills you gained through the completion of an Exchange or Study Abroad are relevant to graduate positions. To increase your opportunity of success when applying for graduate jobs it is important to effectively incorporate relevant examples into your job applications and interviews. When deciding which examples to use, take in to account the job responsibilities and the industry you are applying to. Use appropriate language to demonstrate how you developed the soft skills relevant for the workplace environment.

The examples in the table show how Exchange or Study Abroad experiences can develop employability skills. Do not copy the examples, but use the format to identify and describe the employability skills you have developed through your Exchange or Study Abroad experience.

Your Employability Skills

Task/responsibility (alphabetic list)	Appropriate Terminology	Employability Category
Adapted to life in a different country	Gained a greater cultural awareness and developed further sensitivity to cultural differences whilst living and studying in France	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Self management
Found out information about the university at which I was going to study	Researched specific courses at York University in order to make informed subject selection decisions which would enhance my studies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Initiative and Enterprise
Got involved on campus at host university	Embraced campus life through active involvement in the University of Beijing campus basketball team and the University of Beijing Foreign Student Association	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Initiative and Enterprise Communication Team work
Found a place to live	Demonstrated independence and overcame language barriers whilst sourcing appropriate living arrangements while studying abroad in Mexico	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Self management Problem solving Communication
Independently travelled to other countries during holidays	Organised accommodation and travel arrangements to a number of European countries including, Sweden, Estonia, France, Italy, Switzerland and Croatia.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communication
Kept in contact with people from the host country upon return	Continued to maintain relationships with staff from host university, in addition to maintaining friendships made whilst abroad	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communication
Learnt basic foreign language skills to communicate	Developed a moderate proficiency in Spanish in order to effectively communicate whilst on exchange in Argentina	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communication Learning
	Whilst studying at Stuttgart University in Germany, I undertook additional studies in German to enhance my ability to communicate	
Lived in a foreign country	Developed an increased understanding of global, economic, political issues and realities of foreign countries and living abroad.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Self management Problem solving
Made lots of new friends	Studied and developed friendships with a diverse group of multinational students from countries including Bolivia, Venezuela, Japan, Canada, Ireland, Greenland and Denmark.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communication Initiative and Enterprise
Managed personal budget	Applied my budgeting and financial management skills to design and maintain a record of expenses to keep track of my expenditure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Self management Planning and Organising
Organised Visa for country	Undertook independent research and gained advice relating to the Visa requirements for studying and living in Italy, and applied successfully for my Visa.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Self management Planning and Organising

Represented Monash at the host university	Acted as an ambassador for Monash University, and received positive feedback from academic staff from New York University after contributing an article about my study abroad experience to the NYU Weekly Herald	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication • Self management
Spoke to and emailed Monash staff to organise exchange	Liaised with appropriate academic and professional staff to facilitate subject selection for my time abroad at Oxford University	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication • Self management • Planning and Organising
Stepped outside comfort zone	Developed an ability to adapt to unanticipated situations and determine suitable solutions to unexpected travel problems caused by pilot strikes in Botswana	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self management • Initiative and Enterprise
Submitted assignments/other assessments	Maintained a high academic standards (distinction average) in coursework including “The Impact of e-Commerce and Globalisation in Asia” and “Financial Management in European Business”	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication • Learning • Self management
Talked to lecturers/tutors and other staff at host university	Engaged and interacted with lecturers/tutors/other university staff and professionals, resulting in improved communication skills in French	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication
Used technology (eg Skype)	Utilised various Social Media channels, including Facebook, Twitter, blogs and other technology, such as Viber and Skype, to remain in contact with family and friends while away	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Technology • Communication
Was ill and communicated with academics about missing class	Negotiated with academics to receive an extension for an assessment item when ill	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication • Self management
Worked part time in host country	Whilst on study exchange in Norway, I balanced my full time study load with working part time (15 hours per week) in the coffee shop on campus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication • Self management • Planning and Organising
	My experience at Norway University Coffee Shop enhanced my knowledge of Norwegian workplace legislation	

Your Personal Attributes

In addition to the development of employability skills, working in hospitality can help you gain evidence of how you have demonstrated your personal attributes. While thinking of the examples showing your skills don't forget personal attributes.

Persistence	Motivation	Reliability
Common sense	Loyalty	Positive self esteem
Sense of humour	Professional Presentation	Adaptability
Honesty and Integrity	Enthusiasm	Ability to deal with pressure
Commitment	Hard-working	

Further reading

See our resources on Global Employability Skills, the Employability Skills Table and resources about employability skills gained through working in retail, study abroad, clubs and societies and research work.

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Disclaimer: Information was current at the time of writing and is intended as a guide only
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