



DUNDALK
INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY

INSTITIÚID TEICNEOLAÍOCHTA

DHÚN DEALGAN

Graduate Attributes Workbook

Welcome to Your Graduate Attributes Workbook!

At DkIT our careers research has shown that employability and graduate attributes go hand-in-hand together. Your graduate attributes are the core abilities and values your higher education institute community, including students and graduates, agrees all graduates should develop. They are also the abilities employers deem necessary for today's knowledge workers and graduate success. At DkIT our graduate attribute framework emphasises practical, collaboration, communication, and confidence skills as well as positive, adaptive and resilient mindsets. We advocate '*Graduates Bringing Practical Solutions to a Complex World*' as '*Communicators, Collaborators and Confident Changemakers*'.

Being mindful of your graduate attributes will help you engage with employability as a state of mind and maintain work-readiness through continued professional development or training. Today's job markets requires fast-moving, innovative, and often transformative working mindsets and that is why developing your graduate attributes are so important. This workbook will help you understand the graduate attributes you have developed to discover employment possibilities throughout your life.

"Dundalk Institute of Technology is committed to meeting the expectations of government on graduate skills, employability and economic growth. This workbook is intended to help you understand and evidence base the skills, attributes and qualities affording you a lifelong opportunity to chart your way to careers, even the ones that do not yet exist."



Catherine Staunton
Head of Careers & Employability Services, DkIT

PCs GRADUATE ATTRIBUTES & MINDSETS

Throughout this workbook you will be asked to engage with the PCs Graduate Attribute & Mindsets Framework. Your engagement will provide you with the language of skills and attributes best suited to job application and success. We have consulted a wide range of stakeholders who agree that when twinned with innovative pedagogy, this graduate-attribute framework will produce outstanding graduate job applicants and employees.

PCs GRADUATE ATTRIBUTES

Our Graduate Attribute Framework – *The PCs GRADUATE ATTRIBUTE FRAMEWORK* denotes four key capstone graduate attributes of precedence: *P – Practical*, *C – Communication Skills*, *C– Collaborative Skills*, and *C– Confidence*. The sub-attributes that make up each capstone, such as *Technically Skilled*, *Creative*, *Emotionally Intelligent*, *Operationally Savvy*, or *Professional Confidence*, were each carefully researched to ensure they authentically reflect the DkIT graduate body.

MINDSETS

When added to a robust set of intersecting employability-focused **MINDSETS** including a *P – Positive Attitude*, *A – Adaptability* and *R – Resilience* our graduates are on *P-A-R* with the best and brightest any competitor can offer. Mindsets are the vehicle through which our students are developing their graduate attributes and thus graduate employability.

Who We Are, Where We Belong ,Who We Become...

At DkIT we are committed to developing graduates who possess the necessary attributes to bring practical solutions to a complex world. Our graduates are excellent communicators, collaborators and confident changemakers. Before completing this workbook we ask that you first familiarise yourself with the framework outlined on the next page.



PCS FRAMEWORK

P



PRACTICAL

- ✓ Technically Skilled
- ✓ Knowledgeable
- ✓ Practical
- ✓ Work Ready
- ✓ Enterprising
- ✓ Data Fluent

COMMUNICATIVE

- ✓ Communicators
- ✓ Public Engagers
- ✓ Creative
- ✓ Digitally Fluent
- ✓ Emotionally Intelligent
- ✓ Self-Promoters

C



C



CONFIDENT

- ✓ Professionally Confident
- ✓ Flexible & Adaptive
- ✓ Critical Thinkers
- ✓ Problem Solvers
- ✓ Lifelong Learners
- ✓ Resilient

COLLABORATIVE

- ✓ Team workers
- ✓ Innovative Partners
- ✓ Leaders
- ✓ Networkers
- ✓ Socially Enterprising
- ✓ Operationally Savvy

C



P-A-R MINDSETS

P



A



R



Mindsets include a *P – Positive Attitude*, *A – Adaptability* and *R – Resilience*. Our graduates are on *P-A-R* with the best and brightest any competitor can offer. Mindsets are the vehicle through which our students are developing their graduate attributes and thus graduate employability. Later in the workbook, we will help you reflect on what these mindsets may mean for your future success.

HOW TO USE THIS WORKBOOK

Throughout your programme, you are encouraged to self-assess your acquired skills base to identify particular areas related to the graduate attributes you wish to develop both as individual and prospective employee. This workbook will help you document your self-assessment, development activities and reflections. You may work through the activities at careers workshops, in preparation for placements, or in your own self-study time.

Section A—Mindsets

This section will aid your understanding of what we mean by a having a mindset and how positive, adaptive and resilient mindsets enable work ready ambitions. You will be asked to reflect on and complete some warm up exercises connected to mindsets and the workplace drawing from your own experience.

Section B—Graduate Attributes

Here you will be introduced to DkIT's PCs Graduate Attributes and complete some activities focussing on what might be achievable in terms of what skills/ attributes you have selected for further development and the opportunities you will use to support your development.

Section C—Continuous Reflection

Finally we present reflection prompts for you to measure how successfully you have developed core attributes to your future success. Near completion of your placement, a programme year of choice, or approaching the completion of your programme take some time reflect on your progress with the activities provided in this section.



A. P-A-R MINDSETS

P



A



R



Mindsets include a *P* – *Positive Attitude*, *A* – *Adaptability* and *R* – *Resilience*. Our graduates are on *P-A-R* with the best and brightest any competitor can offer. Mindsets are the vehicle through which our students are developing their graduate attributes and thus graduate employability. Later in the workbook, we will help you reflect on what these mindsets may mean for your future success.

A(i) IDENTIFY with MINDSETS

MINDSET	POSITIVE ATTITUDE
<i>Prompts for Reflection</i>	<i>Now record an example evidencing each prompt from your own experience...</i>
<i>Having an optimistic disposition in every situation in one's life attracts positive changes and increases achievement</i>	
<i>Accept When Things Aren't Perfect</i>	
<i>Positive thinking is a mental and emotional attitude that focuses on the bright side of life and expects positive results</i>	



A (ii) IDENTIFY with MINDSETS

MINDSET

ADAPTABILITY

Prompts for Reflection

Now record an example evidencing each prompt from your own experience...

Being adaptive and flexible, go hand-in hand in learning new ways to do new tasks

Modern workplaces require employees who can apply their knowledge and skills to new situations quickly

Key to adaptability is perpetual readiness to accommodate change and the unexpected



A (iii) IDENTIFY with MINDSETS

MINDSET

RESILIENCE

Prompts for Reflection

Now record an example evidencing each prompt from your own experience...

Resilience helps us survive, recover, and even thrive in an ever-changing working environment

When we face adversity, misfortune, or frustration, resilience helps us bounce back

Finding opportunity to prosper in the face of change and changed circumstances, or adding to acquired knowledge to upskill are examples of workplace resilience



A(iv) Identify Your Mindsets Development

Mindsets:

On a scale of 0 to 10 indicate how well you have developed each mindset...

POSITIVE ATTITUDE

0 _____ 10

ADAPTABILITY

0 _____ 10

RESILIENCE

0 _____ 10

A(v) Identify How You Develop These Mindsets

Mindsets:

List below the activities you think help or will help you develop these mindsets...

POSITIVE ATTITUDE

ADAPTABILITY

RESILIENCE

B. PCS FRAMEWORK

P



PRACTICAL

- ✓ Technically Skilled
- ✓ Knowledgeable
- ✓ Practical
- ✓ Work Ready
- ✓ Enterprising
- ✓ Data Fluent

COMMUNICATIVE

- ✓ Communicators
- ✓ Public Engagers
- ✓ Creative
- ✓ Digitally Fluent
- ✓ Emotionally Intelligent
- ✓ Self-Promoters

C



C



CONFIDENT

- ✓ Professionally Confident
- ✓ Flexible & Adaptive
- ✓ Critical Thinkers
- ✓ Problem Solvers
- ✓ Lifelong Learners
- ✓ Resilient

COLLABORATIVE

- ✓ Team workers
- ✓ Innovative Partners
- ✓ Leaders
- ✓ Networkers
- ✓ Socially Enterprising
- ✓ Operationally Savvy

C



B. GRADUATE ATTRIBUTES

GRADUATE ATTRIBUTE		'We are PRACTICAL'	
<i>Attribute</i>		<i>Descriptor</i>	
Practical		<i>Developing practical attributes involves learning to apply knowledge to solve real-world problems to critical effect for workplaces, the economy and wider community.</i>	
Technically Skilled		<i>Possessing specialized knowledge and expertise needed to accomplish complex actions, tasks, and processes relating to computational and physical technology or a subject-defined diverse group of other enterprises.</i>	
Knowledgeable		<i>Possessing or exhibiting knowledge, insight, or understanding related to one's subject and environment.</i>	

B. GRADUATE ATTRIBUTES

GRADUATE ATTRIBUTE		'We are PRACTICAL'
<i>Attribute</i>	<i>Descriptor</i>	
Work Ready	<i>Possessing the core skills and work-place behaviours required by employers to commence duties from moment employment begins.</i>	
Enterprising	<i>Ready to apply new, innovative and resourceful ways of doing or achieving on the job. Showing initiative, being creative or entrepreneurial.</i>	
Data Fluent	<i>Possessing an understanding of numeracy to express ideas verbally, present numeric information in a visual language or digital capacity, usually to analyse key performance criteria for business strategy .</i>	

B. GRADUATE ATTRIBUTES

GRADUATE ATTRIBUTE		'We are COMMUNICATIVE'	
<i>Attribute</i>		<i>Descriptor</i>	
Communicators		<i>Employees who possess the ability to express themselves clearly, directly, and concisely. Developing interpersonal and collaborative skills, where graduates can convey or share ideas and feelings effectively.</i>	
Public Engagers		<i>Employees who seek to inform, influence or encourage action relevant to the public interest in a myriad of contexts including community and workplace.</i>	
Creative		<i>The ability to imagine original solutions to standard problems. Creative process learning may relate to developing non-linear thinking styles, or strategies to develop insights drawing on the interdisciplinary workings of a group.</i>	

B. GRADUATE ATTRIBUTES

GRADUATE ATTRIBUTE		'We are COMMUNICATIVE'	
<i>Attribute</i>		<i>Descriptor</i>	
Digitally Fluent		<i>An aptitude to effectively interpret information, discover meaning, design content, construct knowledge, communicate and ethically source ideas in a digitally connected world.</i>	
Emotionally Intelligent		<i>The capacity to be aware of, control, and express one's emotions, and to handle interpersonal relationships in the working environment fairly and empathetically.</i>	
Self-Promoters		<i>An ability to promote oneself, one's activities, and achievements and value in an impactful and objective manner.</i>	

B. GRADUATE ATTRIBUTES

GRADUATE ATTRIBUTE

'We are COLLABORATIVE'

Attribute

Descriptor

Teamworkers

Teamworkers understand how to apply the principles of cooperative or coordinated effort to realise goals and objectives.

Innovative Partners

Innovative Partners have the ability to work in different contexts with experts from other fields and the ability to critically select, acquire, use and produce new knowledge to the advantage

Leaders

Leaders manage and supervise companies, departments, teams and their fellow employees. They possess the ability to communicate well, motivate their team, handle and delegate responsibilities, manage projects, and listen to feedback.

B. GRADUATE ATTRIBUTES

GRADUATE ATTRIBUTE

'We are COLLABORATIVE'

Attribute

Descriptor

Networkers

Networkers understand how to reach, engage, and acquire professional or social contacts to further their careers and business prospects. They are adept exchangers of mutual interest among people with a common interest.

Socially Enterprising

Being socially enterprising means prioritising the interests of people and planet ahead of profit. Socially conscious enterprise is based on cause-driven business models aiming to solve social problems.

Operationally Savvy

Operationally Savvy pertains to having or showing perception, comprehension, or shrewdness especially in applying experiential knowledge to practical business matters. .

B. GRADUATE ATTRIBUTES

GRADUATE ATTRIBUTE		'We are CONFIDENT'	
<i>Attribute</i>		<i>Descriptor</i>	
Professionally Confident		<i>The ability to draw on professional knowledge, technical or procedural skills to organise and present oneself capably.</i>	
Flexible & Adaptive		<i>Being adaptive and flexible, go hand-in hand in learning new ways to do new tasks, oftentimes with new or emerging technologies. Key is perpetual readiness to accommodate change and the unexpected.</i>	
Critical Thinkers		<i>Critical Thinkers perceive issues or problems from multiple perspectives. They conceptualise, analyse, and synthesise information to highlight consistencies and inconsistencies in facts or assertions.</i>	

B. GRADUATE ATTRIBUTES

GRADUATE ATTRIBUTE		'We are CONFIDENT'	
<i>Attribute</i>		<i>Descriptor</i>	
Problem Solvers		<i>Problem solvers derive insights to initiate changes to ensure growth in personal and work life. They ignite innovative, flexible and competitive solutions to help their businesses flourish.</i>	
Lifelong Learning		<i>A willingness to proactively engage in acquiring new knowledge, skills and abilities not just at the point of graduation, but throughout one's lifetime and career.</i>	
Resilient		<i>Resilience helps us survive, recover, and even thrive in an ever-changing working environment. When we face adversity, misfortune, or frustration, resilience helps us bounce back.</i>	



Where might you develop attributes?

VOLUNTEERING

PART-TIME WORK

GROUP PROJECT WORK

SPORTS

AGENCY WORK

ASSESSMENTS

RECREATION

COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIPS

WORK PLACEMENT

CERTIFICATES

STUDENT UNION ACTIVITIES

DEGREE PROGRAMMES

FUND RAISING

FAMILY CARING

ROMANTIC RELATIONSHIPS

CHARITY WORK

FRIENDSHIPS

POLITICAL CAMPAIGNS



B (i) Identify Your PCs ATTRIBUTES Development

PCs Graduate Attributes:

PRACTICAL

COMMUNICATIVE

COLLABORATIVE

CONFIDENT

On a scale of 0 to 10 indicate how well you have developed each attribute...

0 _____ **10**

0 _____ **10**

0 _____ **10**

0 _____ **10**

B (ii) Identify How You Develop These Attributes

PCs Graduate Attributes:

PRACTICAL

COMMUNICATIVE

COLLABORATIVE

CONFIDENT

List below the activities you think help or will help you develop these attributes best...

(e.g., student life, personal life, volunteering, part-time work)

B (iii) Choose Your Favourite 4: Any 4

P



- ✓ Technically Skilled
- ✓ Knowledgeable
- ✓ Practical
- ✓ Work Ready
- ✓ Enterprising
- ✓ Data Fluent

C



- ✓ Communicators
- ✓ Public Engagers
- ✓ Creative
- ✓ Digitally Fluent
- ✓ Emotionally Intelligent
- ✓ Self-Promoters

C



- ✓ Confident
- ✓ Professionally Confident
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- ✓ Critical Thinkers
- ✓ Problem Solvers
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- ✓ Resilient

C



- ✓ Collaborative
- ✓ Team workers
- ✓ Innovative Partners
- ✓ Leaders
- ✓ Networkers
- ✓ Socially Enterprising
- ✓ Operationally Savvy

B (iii) Record These 4 Attributes and Tell Us Why

**Your Favourite 4
Attributes:**

1 _____

2 _____

3 _____

4 _____

**Why do you feel a connection with each of the 4
attributes you chose?**



B (iv) Choose Your Favourite 4: One of Each Colour

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B (iv) Now Plan How You Develop These 4 Attributes

**Your Favourite 4
Attributes:**

**Plan the activities you think help or will help you develop
these attributes best...**

(e.g., student life, personal life, volunteering, part-time work)

From Comfort Zone to Growth Mindset

We hear a lot of talk about 'the comfort zone', and how we need to leave it in order to challenge ourselves and learn, which is a key component of a 'growth mindset'. A comfort zone is a psychological state in which things feel familiar to us, and we are at ease and perceive we're in control of our environment, experiencing low levels of anxiety and stress.

Comfort Zone

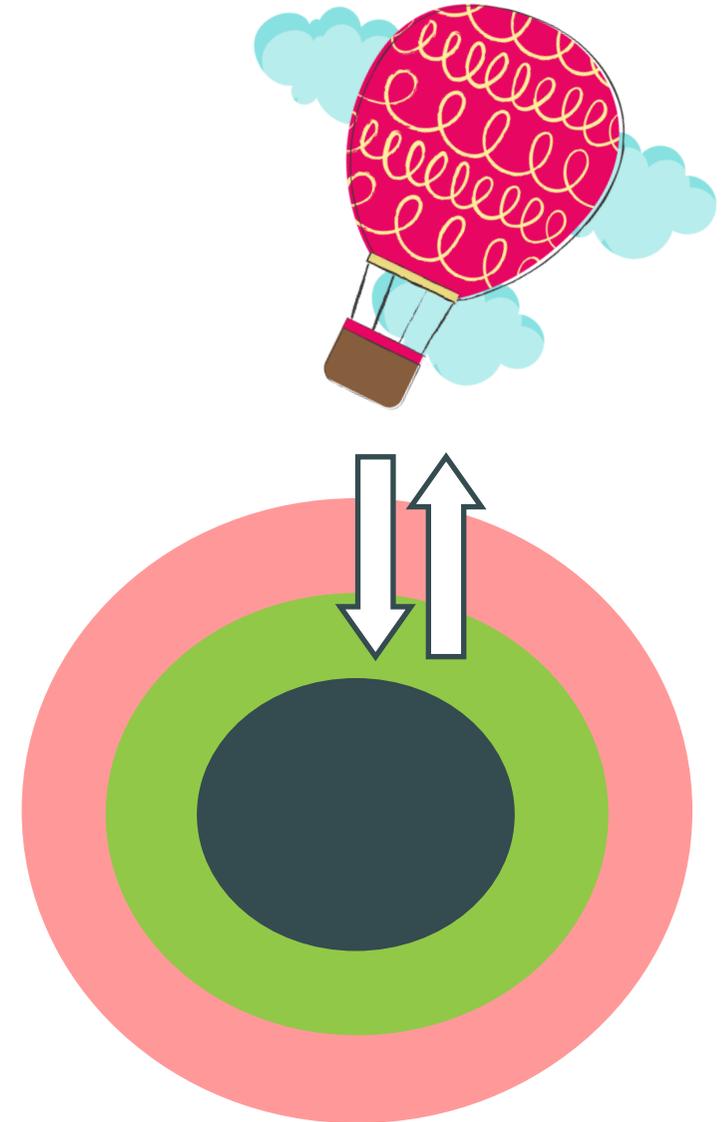
Here, we feel safe, secure, and stable, but also unchallenged and bored. A better name for this might be the Familiarity Zone - we can actually be 'comfortable' in a negative situation, like a toxic work environment, if that's familiar to us.

Growth Zone 

We learn new skills in the Growth or Stretch Zone. We feel more alive, challenged, curious and excited in this zone.

Panic Zone

If we are pushed too far, into the Panic Zone, learning is impossible, as it is blocked by a sense of fear. Here, all of our energy is used up in managing or controlling our anxiety.



B (v) If I Had a PCs Persona...

My PCs Personality

I'm a... *Confident Communicator*

I'm a... *Collaborative Communicator*

I'm a... *Practical Communicator*

I'm a... *Practical Collaborator*

I'm a... *Confident Collaborator*

I'm... *Confidently Practical*



Mark the one that connects with you with X. Explain why...

C. CONTINUOUS REFLECTION

Near completion of a programme year, or approaching the completion of your programme you may wish to indicate how you think each set of capstone attributes has developed. The next exercise allows you to take some time to reflect on your progress with regard to your own graduate attribute development. In particular, we recommend you give some thought to areas where you feel you made progress, the challenges you encountered and how you are going to address these going forward.

On the next pages you may consider any graduate attributes you wish, as long as you focus on at least one attribute from each capstone set. Re-read Section B if you need a refresher on the PCs Framework. Now honestly mark on the scales 0-to-10 where you believe your graduate attribute development lies year on year. That way you can monitor your progress from time to time or approaching job applications as you approach graduation. Or if you are near the end of your programme and completing the exercise for the first time, mark the scale as honestly as you can and reflect on whether or not your attributes have developed year on year, or depending on other factors you may like to consider.

For example, you may think about learning outcomes specified by the professional bodies affiliated with your programme, or modular learning outcomes relevant to the jobs market.



PCS FRAMEWORK

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COLLABORATIVE

- ✓ Team workers
- ✓ Innovative Partners
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- ✓ Socially Enterprising
- ✓ Operationally Savvy

C



ANNUAL REFLECTION

**PRACTICAL
Attributes:**

**On a scale of 0 to 10 indicate how well you have
developed practical attributes...**

PRACTICAL YR 1



0



10



PRACTICAL YR 2



0



10



PRACTICAL YR 3



0



10



PRACTICAL YR 4



0



10



ANNUAL REFLECTION

COMMUNICATIVE Attributes:

COMMUNICATIVE YR 1

COMMUNICATIVE YR 2

COMMUNICATIVE YR 3

COMMUNICATIVE YR 4

On a scale of 0 to 10 indicate how well you have developed communicative attributes...



0



10



0



10



0



10



0



10



ANNUAL REFLECTION

COLLABORATIVE Attributes:

COLLABORATIVE YR 1

COLLABORATIVE YR 2

COLLABORATIVE YR 3

COLLABORATIVE YR 4

On a scale of 0 to 10 indicate how well you have developed collaborative attributes...



0



10



0



10



0



10



0



10



ANNUAL REFLECTION

**CONFIDENT
Attributes:**

CONFIDENT YR 1

CONFIDENT YR 2

CONFIDENT YR 3

CONFIDENT YR 4

On a scale of 0 to 10 indicate how well you have developed collaborative attributes...



0



10



0



10



0



10



0



10





Final Reflections—Some Prompts

Where are my attribute strengths?

Where are my attribute weaknesses?

Did my attribute development surprise me?

Do I know enough about my attributes?

What steps do I need to take to adapt my attributes to the jobs market?

What is my strongest/weakest attribute?

Which attributes do I think will help me get a job?

Did my lack of attribute development surprise me?

How will I commit to developing my attributes by graduation...

Was I disappointed by focussing too much on some attributes at the expense of others?

Does my attribute development make me feel work ready?



FINAL REFLECTIONS

**GRADUATE
Attributes:**

PRACTICAL

COMMUNICATIVE

COLLABORATIVE

CONFIDENT

**Anything you would like to reflect on about year
on year attribute development ...**



My PCs Attributes Action Plan

**GRADUATE
Attributes:**

Finally, review your workbook activities. How do you propose to grow your PCs attributes to enable work readiness?

PRACTICAL



COMMUNICATIVE



COLLABORATIVE



CONFIDENT





Employability & Attributes

APPENDIX I



PCS FRAMEWORK

P



PRACTICAL

- ✓ Technically Skilled
- ✓ Knowledgeable
- ✓ Practical
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- ✓ Public Engagers
- ✓ Creative
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C



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COLLABORATIVE

- ✓ Team workers
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- ✓ Socially Enterprising
- ✓ Operationally Savvy

C



Employability & Attributes

MY TOP 3 TASKS (e.g., Assessments, Duties, Placements, Work)	TOOLS USED	SKILLS	ATTRIBUTES
<u>EXAMPLE</u> Results Section Write-up for a Group Project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Excel Spreadsheet ◆ Microsoft Word 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇒ Numeracy ⇒ Report Writing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Data Fluent (Practical) * Communicator (Communicative)
1 _____			
2 _____			
3 _____			



My Module Attributes

APPENDIX II



PCS FRAMEWORK

P



PRACTICAL

- ✓ Technically Skilled
- ✓ Knowledgeable
- ✓ Practical
- ✓ Work Ready
- ✓ Enterprising
- ✓ Data Fluent

COMMUNICATIVE

- ✓ Communicators
- ✓ Public Engagers
- ✓ Creative
- ✓ Digitally Fluent
- ✓ Emotionally Intelligent
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C



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CONFIDENT

- ✓ Professionally Confident
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- ✓ Resilient

COLLABORATIVE

- ✓ Team workers
- ✓ Innovative Partners
- ✓ Leaders
- ✓ Networkers
- ✓ Socially Enterprising
- ✓ Operationally Savvy

C



My Module Attributes

MY TOP 3 TASKS (e.g., Learning, Assessments, Class Activities)	LEARNING OUTCOMES & TOOLS	SKILLS	ATTRIBUTES
<u>EXAMPLE</u> Results Section Analysis for Assessed Group Project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Proficient in Use of Excel Spreadsheet ◆ Used the Library 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇒ Numeracy ⇒ Library Research 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Data Fluent (Practical) * Knowledgeable (Practical)
1 _____			
2 _____			
3 _____			

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